

MEDIA RELEASE

Announcement on the Official Commencement of UNISA's Academic Year and the Decrease in the Number of First Time Entering Students

Approved for public release

Date: 05 January 2021

Arising out of the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation and the Department of Higher Education letter on the over-enrolment of Unisa's student numbers, the Executive Committee (EXCO) of the Council of the University of South Africa (UNISA) met on 02nd of January 2021 to deliberate on Unisa's shape and size and the effective support for students to succeed in the pursuit of their studies. Below are the issues which require Students and Staff's attention:

- **That the 2021 academic year will commence in March 2021**

The academic year will commence in March 2021 to ensure that UNISA's Calendar aligns with the Post Education and Training Sector (PSET) with first-year registrations in March 2021. This has been necessitated by the announcement by the Basic Education Minister that Grade 12 results will only be released on the 23rd of February 2020. Additionally, many universities will only be completing their academic year by March 2021. This will enable new students entering the university sector and those transferring from other institutions to enroll at Unisa.

- **Decrease in the number of first-time entering students in 2021**

This resolution is meant (1) to enable the University to effectively support the students, and (2) to guarantee the sectoral financial resources and sustainability of the University and the sector.

- **Registration**

In order to ensure that the students are not unduly disadvantaged, registration of returning students will proceed during the next two months. This decision was taken to ensure that the University does not have a backlog when the academic year starts in March 2021.



- **Supplementary examinations**

Arrangements will be made to ensure that students who need to take supplementary examinations, as well as examinations for Honours students during February, are accommodated.

Finally, Council acknowledges that these are unusual times for both the University and the country, hence the need to manage these matters in a transparent manner, whilst ensuring that all the students are not unduly disadvantaged. The University is committed to the provision of all the assistance that the students would require in dealing with these matters. Unisa continues to wish its staff and students wellbeing and success in 2021.

~End~

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