

Beyond Higher Certificates @ Unisa

A complete guide to preparing
yourself for career opportunities



Define tomorrow.

UNISA | 
university
of south africa

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The information in this document was correct as on 15 October 2018. Visit the Directorate: Counselling and Career Development website (<http://bit.ly/2ux94B5>) for the latest version of this document.

How will this brochure help me?

- As a prospective or registered Unisa student, it will assist you to reflect on your career and related study choices and to understand the role of the Higher Certificate in terms of your study planning
- It will provide you with information about the application process and how to change from one qualification to the next
- It will provide you with information about how to explore further career and study opportunities

Overview of Unisa qualifications

Unisa has seven Colleges offering a wide range of qualifications at an undergraduate level. These Colleges are:

- Accounting Sciences
- Economic and Management Sciences
- Law
- Human Sciences
- Education
- Science, Engineering and Technology
- Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

Qualifications are offered at different levels according to the National Qualifications Framework. For example, a completed Higher Certificate is on NQF level 5 and a

completed Bachelor's degree is on NQF level 7. Furthermore, each qualification consists of a specific number of credits in total. For example, a Higher Certificate in Archives and Records Management is on NQF level 5, with 120 credits.

New NQF level	Vocational	Professional	General
10		Doctoral degree	Doctoral degree
9		Master's degree	Master's degree
8	Postgraduate diploma	Postgraduate diploma Bachelor degree	Honours degree Bachelor degree
7	Advanced diploma	Bachelor degree Advanced diploma	Bachelor degree
6	Diploma (240 credits and 360 credits)	Diploma (360 credits)	
6	Advanced certificate (120 credits)		
5	Higher Certificate (120 credits)		

Each qualification at Unisa has its own unique admission requirements. For example, in order to be able to continue to an Honours degree, you would need to have completed at least an NQF level 7 qualification (i.e. a Bachelor's degree), in addition to other requirements.

It is important to note that any undergraduate qualification at Unisa has a set of admission requirements:

- statutory requirement (e.g. an NSC with degree admission),
- College-specific requirements (e.g. English and Mathematics for a BCom degree), and
- The academic points score (APS).

Any student must apply for a qualification for which he or she meets admission requirements. If you do not meet the relevant admission requirements for the diploma or bachelor's degree of choice, you are encouraged to apply for admission to a Higher Certificate. Completing a relevant Higher Certificate will enable you to meet the requirements for a diploma or degree and you can then apply for your next qualification during your last semester of study for the Higher Certificate.

The University has an enrolment management plan in place that stipulates the number of students it can accept per qualification. This means that even though you complete a Higher Certificate you may not be successful upon your first application attempt for the follow-on qualification, based on the number of spaces available for a qualification. In other words, even though completing the relevant Higher Certificate will enable you to meet the admission requirements for your next qualification, you may not be admitted to your next qualification due to the number of spaces available.

You can learn more about all the qualifications that Unisa offers at the undergraduate level (e.g. Higher Certificates, diplomas, and Bachelor degrees) here: <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Qualifications>. The NQF level and the total number of credits for each qualification are listed on the webpage for that qualification.

What Higher Certificates are available?

The table below provides an overview of the Higher Certificates offered by Unisa, the College each Higher Certificate is related to, as well as, where possible, an indication of the purpose of the qualification.

Qualification	College
Higher Certificate in Accounting Sciences (98201)	Accounting Sciences
<p>Purpose</p> <p>This qualification is intended for candidates wishing to pursue a career in the field of accounting sciences but who are uncertain about the discipline in the accounting sciences that most interests them. Owing to the exposure to financial accounting, management accounting, auditing (including internal auditing) and taxation, qualifying students will be better equipped to select the discipline of their choice, either for further studies or when seeking employment once they have qualified. This qualification is also intended for candidates who consider their arithmetic, computing and English communication skills to be below par. Students will develop the necessary skills to perform basic duties under supervision in bookkeeping, costing, auditing and taxation. They will also acquire an understanding of management and administration principles. The purpose of this qualification is to enable qualifying students to: perform basic functions under supervision in the field of accounting sciences, for instance, general bookkeeping, costing, auditing (including internal auditing) and tax calculations; understand basic management and business administration concepts; perform accounting calculations; use a computer for basic business purposes; and communicate in English in the business world.</p> <p>South African Qualifications Authority (http://allqs.saqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=82106)</p>	

Higher Certificate in Animal Welfare (90098)	Agriculture and Environmental Sciences
<p>Purpose</p> <p>Qualifying learners will acquire the knowledge and skills specified by the South African Veterinary Council for the Para-Veterinary profession of Veterinary Welfare Assistant. More specifically, they will be able to demonstrate and apply knowledge of animal anatomy and physiology, behaviour and husbandry, standards for ethical behaviour in relation to animals, and a range of other knowledge and skills related to animal care and well-being. The qualification will equip learners with the core knowledge and skills specified by the SAVC for the profession of VWA. The Higher Certificate will comprise theoretical study as well as a practical component that is to be completed at a registered animal welfare organisation.</p> <p><i>South African Qualifications Authority (http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=101937)</i></p>	
Higher Certificate in Life and Environmental Sciences (98366)	Agriculture and Environmental Sciences
No information available	
Higher Certificate in Adult Basic Education and Training (98615)	Education
No information available	

Purpose

The purpose of this qualification is to provide access, with a reasonable chance of success, to candidates with potential who otherwise would not meet the new minimum entry requirements. The curriculum is aimed at providing these students with the necessary basic skills to succeed within the Open Distance Learning (ODeL) environment and also some articulation into first-year undergraduate Degree/Diploma qualifications offered. The purpose of the learning, therefore, will be to enhance generic competencies within ODeL such as basic language and learning skills, information management skills and teaching skills, as well as some elective subject knowledge.

In completing this qualification to meet the expected NQF Level 5 outcomes, students will have to:

- Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking through active engagement with problem-based disciplinary learning as well as the continuous practice of the planning, acting, reflecting feedback loop.
- Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community through specific collaborative activities in the study materials, in myUnisa online for providing interaction with other students and/or tutors and/or lecturers.
- Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively through guided completion of a suggested study programme to become increasingly more independent in planning and reflecting.
- Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information in order to complete assignments.
- Communicate effectively, using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation through the completion of fundamental modules, written assignments, and ongoing interaction with other students via the myUnisa forum and e-tutoring.

- Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others through completion of the modules on the use of being a teacher (online signature course), the use of technology for teaching and the completion of a module on environmental education.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation through engagement with the core component of the programme and the assessment strategy that requires the ability to adapt to context and to justify changed practice with reference to appropriate experience, theory and policy.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=82106>)

[Higher Certificate in Banking \(98225\)](#)

Economic and Management Sciences

Purpose

The primary purpose of the qualification, closely tied to the rationale, is to introduce learners to the field of banking. Qualifying learners will have a fundamental understanding of bank management theory and principles. This qualification is designed to enable learners to join the financial services sector at the entry level.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=84286>)

Higher Certificate in Insurance (90013)	Economic and Management Sciences
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The typical learner who will enrol for this Higher Certificate will either be employed by short-term insurance companies and insurance brokers. This course will specifically fulfil the Insurance Institutes' requirement for membership on a general membership level. Learners not presently employed in the insurance industry, but who may want to obtain the credits attached to the Higher Certificate in order to obtain employment in the insurance industry will also benefit to enrol for the qualification. The Higher Certificate enhances the employability of learners in the sense that the successful completion of the certificate enables them to become short-term insurance practitioners with a good introductory understanding of the legal framework within which short-term insurance business is conducted, commercial insurance products and practice, transportation insurance and risk management. In addition, all intermediaries in the insurance industry who offer 'advice' on products need to be in possession of suitable academic qualifications and this Higher Certificate is in line with part of such requirements.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=93999>)

Higher Certificate in Marketing (98229)	Economic and Management Sciences
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Purpose

The primary purpose of this qualification is closely tied to the rationale for the qualification and serves to provide learners with a basic knowledge of the field of marketing as well as practical application of these principles based on a case study approach. This qualification provides qualifying learners with basic knowledge of the principles, theories, methods and techniques of the art and science of marketing. In addition it equips them to be able to apply these to be competitive in a South African employment context. The knowledge will be transferred in a practical way as far as possible.

Higher Certificate in Retailing (90014)	Economic and Management Sciences
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Purpose

The purpose of the qualification is to equip learners with knowledge and skills to enter into a retailing environment and to be able to contribute immediately to store management. Successful learners will have a basic knowledge and understanding of all crucial aspects of managing a retail store including sales skills, merchandise buying and the management of human resources.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=94791>)

Higher Certificate in Supervisory Management (90015)	Economic and Management Sciences
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Purpose

The purpose of this qualification is to prepare learners to operate and perform at an operational level in an organisation. This will include competencies and activities like planning, organising, leading and monitoring operations within a pre-set business plan. Upon completion of the qualification the learner will be able to apply fundamental business management principles, methodologies and techniques in order to identify and solve problems pertaining to the operational management activities in the organisations. They will also be able to provide leadership in the field of specialisation or request assistance in an appropriate manner as a team member for making the necessary preparations for establishing the proper procedure for implementing operational management activities.

Furthermore, the learner will be able to present and communicate information and opinions related to the field of operational management activities in the appropriate notation, using well-structured arguments, showing awareness of audience and using professional discourse appropriately. The individual who has successfully completed this qualification will be able to gather and analyse information, identify goals and objectives, create and implement an action plan.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=94630>)

Higher Certificate in Tourism Management (98226)	Economic and Management Sciences
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The primary purpose of the qualification which is closely tied to the rationale is to introduce learners to the tourism field. This qualification is designed to enable students to join the tourism industry sector at the entry level. This qualification will enable qualifying learners to:

- Have a fundamental understanding of tourism management theory and principles.
- Perform basic duties under supervision in the field of tourism management, for instance, general front office duties, do travel bookings, and provide customer care in this context.
- Understand how travel and tourism organisations gain the competitive advantage to achieve their aims.
- Know the principles and benefits of good customer service in travel and tourism organisations.
- Be able to demonstrate the skills, qualities and behaviours needed for effective performance in the tourism workplace.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=101434>)

Higher Certificate in Social Auxiliary Work (90011)	Human Sciences
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Purpose

The purpose of the qualification is to equip learners with the knowledge and skills to practice effectively as a social auxiliary worker under the guidance and supervision of a social worker to achieve the aims of social work. The qualification also develops the competencies of learners in chosen fields of social auxiliary work knowledge and practice, thereby enabling qualifiers to provide supportive services in specialised fields or focus areas of social work. The qualification will enable the learner to register with the SA Council for Social Service Professions as a Social Auxiliary Worker.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saga.org.za/showQualification.php?id=93971>)

Purpose

The Higher Certificate: Archives and Records Management will provide learners with an entry level qualification in the archival and recording keeping field with the necessary underpinning theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for them to apply the required technical expertise in the administration and safekeeping of archives and records. The need for ensuring that records are kept has become increasingly important and applies to a wide range of sectors and industries. Archiving and record keeping professionals should continue to seek out better ways to meet the ever-changing need of identifying, storing, retrieving, preserving and conserving both information and items through well-structured record classification systems and record keeping systems, while keeping pace with changes in the technological field. A learner acquiring this qualification will be able to show responsibility, and independently and effectively manage themselves in the specific culture of the archives and records management environment. In effect, the learners will ensure the effective delivery of relevant and appropriate archives and records management services within the framework of prescribed legislation.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.sqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=86446>)

Higher Certificate in Criminal Justice (90006)	Law
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Purpose

The purpose of this qualification is to prepare learners, who do not comply with the minimum institutional admission requirements for access to Diploma or Degree studies in the College of Law, especially in the various fields in Criminal Justice, for access to qualifications at higher levels. The qualification is intended to introduce learners to the main fields of Criminal Justice theory and practice by imparting systematic knowledge, skills, and theoretical competence within the field to prepare them for more specialised training. It is furthermore the intention of this qualification to deliver graduates who have sound knowledge and the confidence to apply their skills in contemporary society and to enable further study in the College of Law, especially in the various fields in Criminal Justice, or even in other colleges.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=93594>)

Higher Certificate in Law (98751)	Law
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The qualification will introduce learners to some of the foundational legal principles and legal practice by imparting systematic knowledge, skills and theoretical competence within the field to prepare them for more specialised training at a more advanced level. The qualification also will develop graduates who will have sound knowledge and the confidence to apply their skills in contemporary society and to, therefore, enable further study in the institution, or even in other institutions within the NQF.

In this respect, the specific purpose is to:

- Prepare learners for studies in the legal sector.
- Improve learners' basic proficiency in the English language in order to study in the fields of law.
- Improve learners' general computer skills, especially for business purposes.
- Prepare learners for higher education in an open and distance learning environment.

South African Qualifications Authority (<http://allqs.saqa.org.za/showQualification.php?id=90851>)

Which Higher Certificate should you choose?

You need to check the admission requirement for the diploma or degree you eventually wish to complete. For example, if you would want to complete a Bachelor of Commerce degree (or any other diploma or degree offered in the College of Economic and Management Sciences), you need to select a Higher Certificate also offered in the College of Economic and Management Sciences in order to ensure that you will meet all the admission requirements for a diploma or degree in that College. See the below requirements for the National Diploma: Safety Management as an example:

National Diploma: Safety Management

Qualification code:	NDSMN
NQF level:	6
Total credits:	0
SAQA ID:	62413
APS/AS	17

- [Admission requirements](#)
- [Student fees and funding your studies](#)
- [Application for admission](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Curriculum](#)

Admission requirements

Qualification admission requirements

Your admission to Unisa is dependent on you meeting the specific admission requirements for your chosen qualification.

A National Senior Certificate (NSC) (Diploma endorsement) with at least 50% in the language of teaching and learning and with at least 40% in Mathematics or at least 70% for Maths Literacy,

or

a Senior Certificate (SC) with at least a D symbol on HG or a C symbol on SG in the language of teaching and learning and with at least an E symbol on HG or D symbol on SG in Mathematics,

or

any Higher Certificate offered in the College of Economic and Management Sciences.

Applicants, who do not comply with the above requirements, may consider enrolling for any of the Higher Certificates offered by the College

You will note that one of the options mentioned is “Any Higher Certificate offered in the College of Economic and Management Sciences” and therefore completing any one of the Higher Certificates offered in the College of Economic and Management Sciences will enable you to meet the requirements for the National Diploma: Safety Management.

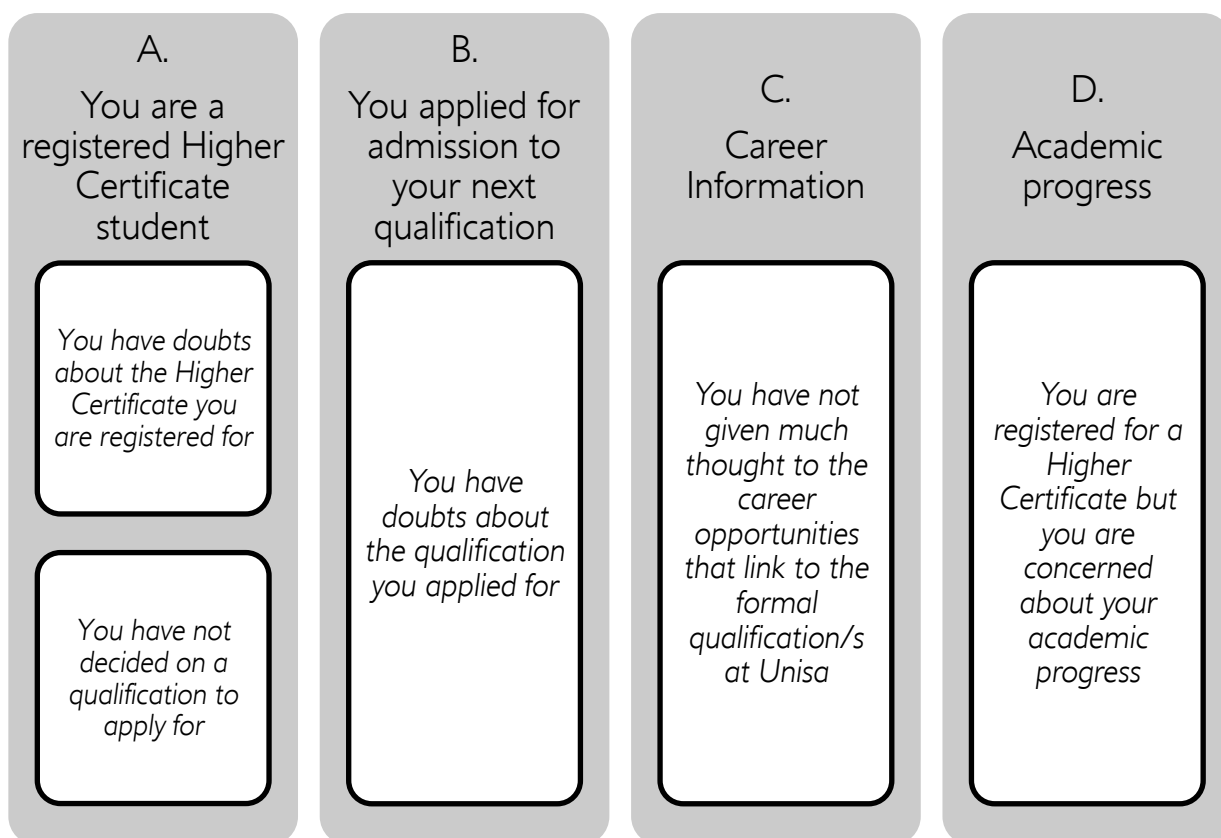
Kindly note that that in the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology, Unisa does not offer a Higher Certificate for students who do not meet the College-specific requirements (mathematics and or physical science), for example, in preparation for any of the engineering diplomas or the BSc degrees.

In the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, admission requirements for some qualifications in this College can be met by completing the Higher Certificate in Life and Environmental Sciences (e.g. Diploma in Nature Conservation).

More information about the admission requirements for each qualification can be found on the application website at <http://www.unisa.ac.za/qualifications>. In addition, the general admission requirements for each College can be found on this webpage: <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Qualifications/General-admission-requirements>.

Reflect on where you are...

Have a look at the diagram below and identify the statement(s) A-D that feel most suitable at this point. Then have a look at the table below and take the necessary steps to resolve the current issues. Feel free to make contact with a student counsellor if you feel that you are stuck and cannot seem to find a resolution.

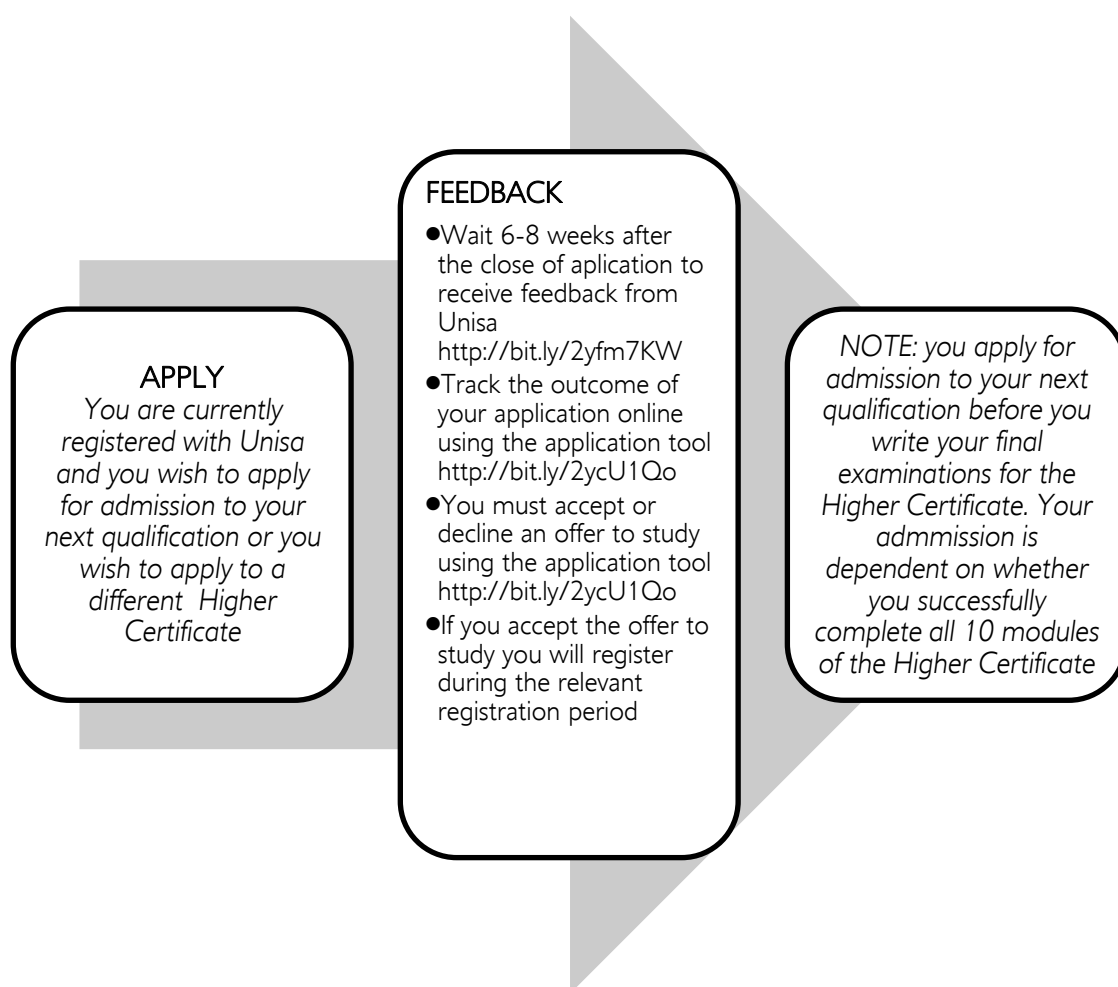


Option		Specific actions you can take
A	You have doubts about the Higher Certificate you are registered for or you have not decided on a qualification to apply for admission to	<p>Reflect on how you made the decision to select your current Higher Certificate. It could be that you did not meet the admission requirements for the formal diploma or degree at Unisa and you were re-directed to this alternative pathway.</p> <p>If you do not understand how you do not meet the relevant admission requirements then find your qualification on the qualifications website (http://www.unisa.ac.za/qualifications) to review the admission requirements for each qualification.</p> <p>If you have not decided on a qualification to apply for then take time to explore the career and study options linked to specific career fields here: http://bit.ly/2hTUWwW.</p> <p>NEXT STEP: Once you have chosen your next qualification, ensure that you apply for admission during the relevant application periods. Change of qualification from Higher Certificate to degree or diploma is not automatic.</p>

Option	Specific actions you can take
	<p>NOTE: WHEN TO APPLY</p> <p>Ensure that you apply for admission to your next qualification when you are in your final semester of registration of the Higher Certificate.</p>
<p>B</p> <p>You have doubts about the qualification you applied for</p>	<p>Take time to ensure that you have selected a qualification/s that will help you prepare for future career and study opportunities. Complete career exploration activities here: http://bit.ly/2OIUA16.</p> <p>Reflect on what is making you feel doubtful about the qualification you applied for admission to. Do you need further career information? If yes, then go to http://bit.ly/2hTUWwW.</p> <p>Do you need more information about alternative study options? For example, is there a second or third degree study option that will enable you to specialise in a specific subject or field? Talk to a student counsellor (http://bit.ly/2fEexxa) if you feel uncertain.</p>
<p>C</p> <p>You have not given much thought to the types of careers that link to formal qualification/s (diploma or degree) at Unisa</p>	<p>Explore the career options related to specific qualifications here: http://bit.ly/2hTUWwW.</p> <p>Also, download the Career Research brochure (http://bit.ly/2hgTfJq) for more ideas about how to research career opportunities linked to a qualification.</p>
<p>D</p> <p>You are registered for a Higher Certificate but you are concerned about your academic progress</p>	<p>The maximum time to complete a qualification at Unisa can be found on page 10 of the Student Rules and Policies document (http://bit.ly/2Cboot7). You will note that a Higher Certificate (which consists of 120 credits) must be completed in three years.</p> <p>It is also important to note that you need to complete a certain number of credits each year in order to be re-</p>

Option	Specific actions you can take
	<p>admitted to study at Unisa. If you do not meet the re-admission requirements, you run the risk of not being allowed to study further at an undergraduate level. Read more about admission and re-admission rules here: http://bit.ly/2QaPc0E.</p>

The application process outlined



How to make a career and related study choice:

Identify opportunities with career research

How do you identify opportunities?

Your career research will connect you to others who will help you to answer questions you have with relation to your career choice; expand your understanding of the opportunities related to your career vision; identify “hidden” career paths that you did not think of previously; and think about how you could plan to pursue specific opportunities.

Prepare

Think about what you still need to find out: what questions do you have? You will use these questions as a starting point to structure your research. Examples of questions include: *What can I do with a specialisation in electrical engineering? How much do accountants earn? or What must I study to be an advocate?*

Keep track of information

Keep track of your research by making notes about what you learn and what you still need to find out.

Evaluate

Evaluate the information that you are finding: Who wrote the information (person/organisation)? Which country does the information relate to? When was the information last updated? After you have visited a number of websites, you could compare your notes with the information you found – what are the similarities and differences? What else do you need to find out?

Further ways to do career research

1 Online search

Use a search engine such as Google to search for information related to your questions. For example, you need to find out about career opportunities related to law. You could start with using keywords such as “law careers” and then to further contextualise your findings, you could search keywords such as “law careers Africa” and “law careers South Africa”. Scan the brief descriptions of the first ten results and decide which website you would want to explore first. Skim read through the information on the website (start with the headings) to get an understanding of the content of the page and to find information related to your question. Also, check whether there are links to other websites that you could further

explore. As you are reading, make a summary of the information. You could use the information you find to make lists of job titles related to your field of study, organisations that employ individuals in these fields and professional organisations.

Remember to bookmark pages that you would want to return to and make notes about what you find and what you would still like to find out about. Use online services or apps such as Evernote (<http://www.evernote.com>), Diigo (<http://www.diigo.com>) or Google Bookmarks (<http://www.google.com/bookmarks/>) to keep track of your research online.

Activity

Use Google to find specific job titles related to your area of interest.

Job title	Website
Example: Attorney	Quintcareers.com

2 Occupational information websites

The following websites will help you to learn more about specific job titles:

Website	Description
Unisa Counselling & Career Development http://bit.ly/2fE0Xd0	This website provides more information about opportunities related to qualifications at Unisa.
National Career Advice Portal (NCAP) http://ncap.careerhelp.org.za/occupations	Search for information about specific job titles.
Career Planet http://www.careerplanet.co.za/	Learn more about career areas such as IT, tourism, engineering and more. The website also contains information about learnerships and student finance

Website	Description
O*Net http://www.onetonline.org/	Explore job titles related to different categories such as your interests, skills, values, typical work activities, and more. You could also browse through groups of occupations related to specific industries or economic sectors.
Prospects http://www.prospects.ac.uk/	Explore different job titles related to job sectors, as well as what you could do with your major subject.

Activity

Use the above website to find more information about specific job titles related to your area of interest. Make notes about what you find.

Job title	Notes
Example: Accountant	Example: There are different types of accountants (e.g. management, financial, CA, etc)

3 Job-search portals

Another type of website that is useful in terms of researching specific job titles linked to different industries is job search portals. Finding jobs

advertisements that interest you is a worthwhile activity, even if you are not currently applying for jobs. You may not yet be eligible to apply for your

dream job, but you can still gain a lot of information for your career planning. For example, you are interested in law, but you are not sure which specific job titles are linked to this field.

You can use this information to make career goals and to think strategically about how you can develop experiences that will help you meet more of the selection criteria in the future.

Job search sites include

- PNet (<http://www.pnet.co.za>)
- Careerjunction (<http://www.careerjunction.co.za>)
- Careers24 (<http://www.careers24.com/>)
- Indeed (<http://www.indeed.co.za>)
- Government positions (<http://www.gov.za/aboutgovt/vacancies.htm>)

4 LinkedIn

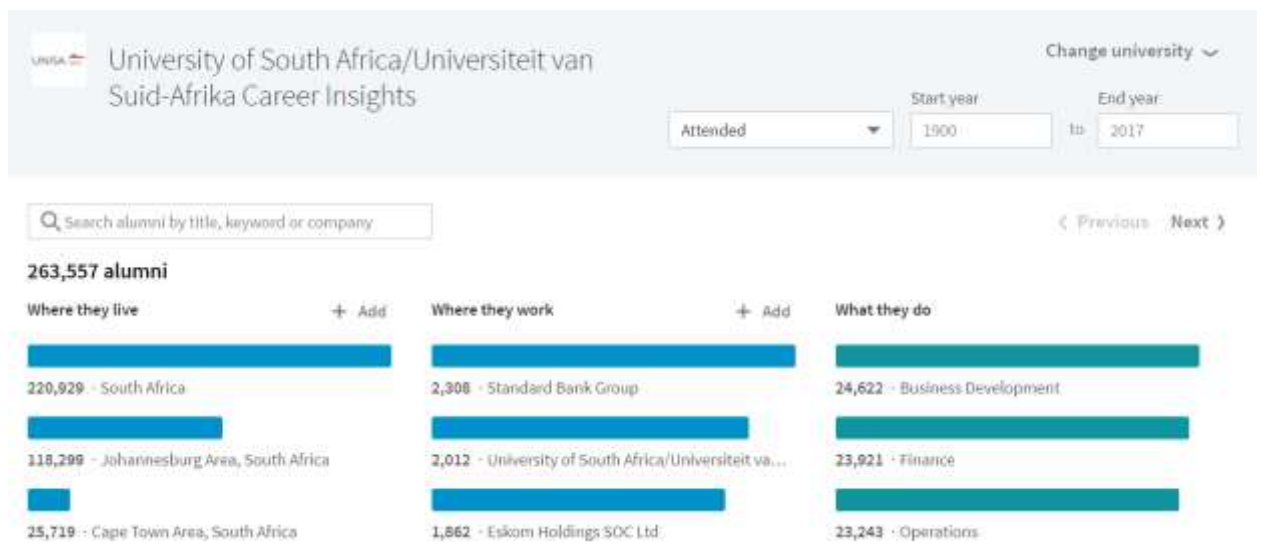
If you have not done so already, start building your network on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>) today!

Register for a free account and start connecting with your network online. Join groups relevant to your career field so that you could participate in discussions, ask questions and provide answers about specific topics and search for people, organisations and jobs in your field of interest. Do research about companies and employees to help you identify opportunities. To learn more about using LinkedIn effectively, go to <http://bit.ly/2gyOAzS>.

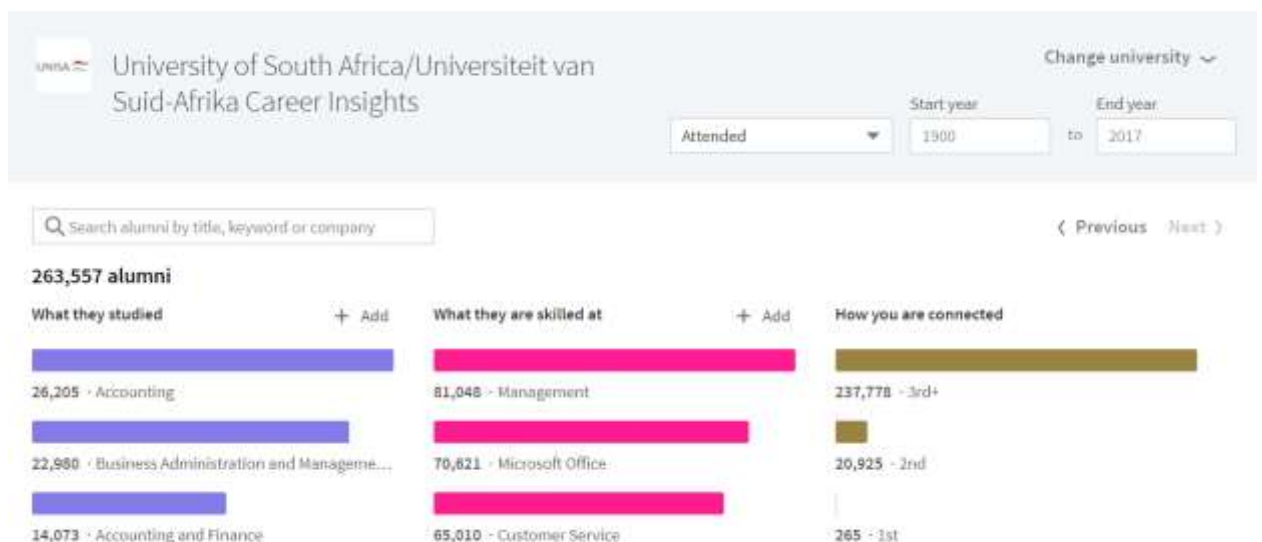
Activity

1. Go to www.linkedin.com and sign in to your LinkedIn account. If you do not have an account yet, then create one.
2. Make sure that you have captured your current or previous studies at Unisa on your LinkedIn profile.

- Once you are signed in, go to the University of South Africa page at <https://www.linkedin.com/school/12049/>.
- Click on the “See alumni” button.
- You will now be presented with a page with Headings and graphs beneath the headings (e.g. Where they live, Where they work, What they do).



- Click on the “Next >” link to go to the next set of headings (What they studied, What they are skilled at, and How you are connected).



- Click on “+Add” next to the heading “What they studied”
- Start to type “law” in the search box.
- Choose one of the options that you would want to explore.

10. You will notice that the graphs for the different headings adjust. You have now filtered the information to contain information about Unisa graduates who work in the field you searched for.
11. You can now see how many graduates in these fields are on LinkedIn, where they work, what they do, what they're skilled at, etc.
12. You are also able to view the profiles of alumni who meet the criteria you searched for. For example, you can filter your search results to those alumni who indicated that they studied law, and work at a specific financial institution.

5 Talk to others (informational interviewing)

Once you have done some research about specific options, your next step is to talk to individuals in the type of job/ industry that you are interested in. The goal of these conversations is to explore your career options, to expand your network, to build confidence, to access information and to identify your own strengths and areas of development. For example, you read an article about the provision of legal advice to community members. You could contact one of the authors of the article to ask if they would be willing to share how they went about gaining access to the information they needed for their evaluation. Before you interview someone, do research about what you would want to discuss with them – you could ask this person to “fill

in the gaps” for you. Start with people you already know: friends, family, neighbours, colleagues, lecturers, tutors and fellow students. Use online social networks such as LinkedIn to further identify potential people. For more information on how to go about this and suggestions for questions that you might want to ask, go to <http://bit.ly/2riGpQq>. Also, watch this video to learn more: The Dos and Don'ts of Informational Interviews: <http://youtu.be/ixbhtm8l0sl>.

Remember to keep track of the information you have gathered and how you make sense of this. Also, track the questions you still have and how you think you would be able to get answers to these questions.

Activity

Write a list of any people you know who might work in the fields you are interested in. For instance, do any of your parents' friends work in any of the fields you are considering? Also, write a list of those people who could give you information about any careers you are considering.

You may have identified a lot more people than you thought! Imagine how much information you can gather about the career you are interested in just by talking to these people. Each person will give you fresh insights opinions and valuable information about the careers you are considering, whether they are currently working in that field or are only remotely related to or associated with it.

6 Attend a careers fair event

Attending a careers fair event gives you the opportunity to speak to people from different industries. You may be studying a qualification that does not seem to have a direct link to the exhibitors or the presenters, but they have one thing in common: they employ people, who work in organisations, who do business with all kinds of suppliers and services. Somewhere in this value chain, your qualification will find a place to fit – either as a customer or as an employer or employee.

The annual Unisa Careers Fair usually takes place in March, July and August at various venues. Go to <http://www.unisa.ac.za/counselling> for more information.

7 Experience studying topics related to your field of interest

Watching and listening to online lectures and reading free open textbooks will help you explore your field of study. These resources will enhance your understanding of the various related fields and the various career opportunities related to these fields.

Search for engineering related courses and open textbooks on these sites:

- Khan Academy (<https://www.khanacademy.org/>)
- Coursera.org (<http://www.coursera.org/>)

- Udemy (<http://www.udemy.com/>)
- Saylor Academy (<http://www.saylor.org/books/>)
- Open Textbook Library (<http://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>)
- College Open Textbooks (<http://www.collegeopentextbooks.org/textbook-listings/textbooks-by-subject/>)
- MITOpenCourseware (<http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm>)
- Open Culture (<http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses>)
- iTunes University (<http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/>)
- FreeVideoLectures (<http://freevidelectures.com/>)

8 Join a professional organisation

Many professional bodies offer student registration categories to enable those who are still studying towards a qualification in the field, to join and receive specific benefits such as training, development and networking opportunities. The professional bodies websites are also valuable sources of information should you wish to do research related to specific occupations. Many professional websites also list practitioners or organisations in the field and allows you to identify individuals who you could contact for further conversations about your career. Access a list of professional bodies related to Unisa fields of study here: <http://bit.ly/2PAr9YQ>. You can also search for recognised Professional Bodies and Professional Designations here: <http://pbdesig.saqa.org.za/>.

Frequently asked questions

I completed a Higher Certificate or will be completing a Higher Certificate with Unisa and I am ready to apply for my next qualification – must I pay the application fee again?

You only pay the application fee once. Returning students, therefore, do not pay an application fee.

As a current Higher Certificate student, is my admission to a degree/ diploma for which I applied automatic?

No, every time you change qualifications you will be subject to the application and selection processes as per the admission policy of the University. You must bear in mind that the Enrolment Management Plan applies to all qualifications – there is a limited number of students accepted per qualification.

What documents are required when I apply for admission for my next qualification?

Review the documents needed here:

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Apply-for-admission>

The Higher Certificates that Unisa offer do not match my interests, long-term career goals or follow-on qualification (degree or diploma).

Note that the University does not offer Higher Certificate programmes linked to every subject or field of specialisation. The purpose of the Higher Certificate is to assist

students who do not meet direct admission requirements for a formal degree or diploma to gain such opportunity. The information in this brochure about the purpose of each Higher Certificate, the curriculum information for each Higher Certificate on the Unisa registration webpage

(<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Register-to-study-through-Unisa/Undergraduate-&-honours-qualifications/Find-your-qualification-&-choose-your-modules>), as well as your further career research, will assist you to understand how a specific Higher Certificate may be related to your career goals.

I applied for the wrong qualification – what can I do?

You must wait to apply for admission to the new qualification during the next application period. Only if there are modules that appear in the qualification that you are accepted into, and the one you wish to apply for admission to, then register for these. During the next application period, apply for a change of qualification and if successful you can then apply for relevant credits to be transferred.

I applied for admission and Unisa responded by indicating that my qualification is under enrolment management – what does this mean?

It means that your application for the qualification was assessed and that you meet the requirements for the qualification. The next step would be for Unisa to rank all the applications received for the qualification once all applications for this qualification has been processed. Once the applications have been ranked, you will receive feedback on whether you are made an offer to study. You will then have to accept or decline such an offer.

Is Unisa registered with the Council of Higher Education?

The University of South Africa (Unisa) is recognised by the CHE as a higher education provider as per the stipulations of the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997 (as amended). The higher education qualifications (NQF 5-10) that Unisa offers are registered by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) on the

Institution's Programme and Qualifications Mix (PQM) after being accredited by the Council on Higher Education (CHE).

I am passionate about working with animals and I, therefore, registered for a Higher Certificate in Life and Environmental Sciences but I now feel that I would increase my chances of securing employment with a Diploma in IT

As you are studying, your career goals and needs may change. You can then apply to change to another Higher Certificate that would be more appropriate, or you could consult with the Application or Student Administration and Registration department at Unisa to ensure that your Higher Certificate will assist you to gain admission to your next qualification. If you wish to change to a different Higher Certificate, you will need to apply for admission to the new Higher Certificate.

I completed a Higher Certificate and decided that I don't want to continue with my diploma or degree at Unisa. How can I use this qualification?

If you are offered the opportunity to study with Unisa and you accept the offer the University will then be able to sign the documentation to apply for matric exemption from the Matriculation Board. You can use this document to apply for admission to other Universities that require a matric exemption certificate. The matric exemption document takes some time to be issued – usually about 12 months. You can verify with the institution you are applying to as to what documentation will be needed when you apply. Kindly note that you will need to meet other requirements as stated by the institution of your choice and completion of a Higher Certificate at Unisa does not guarantee you admission to any other Higher Education Institution.

How do I apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

You must first apply for admission to a relevant follow-on qualification. If accepted, you can then apply for RPL. Visit the RPL webpage at

[https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-\(RPL\)](https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-(RPL)).

Must I meet the academic points score (APS) requirement for my next qualification (after the Higher Certificate)?

The successful completion of a **relevant** Higher Certificate will result in the statutory requirements being met, in the College requirements being met and in the APS score being adjusted upwards.

Kindly note that, for example, should you complete the Higher Certificate in Law and you now wish to apply for admission to the Bachelor of Commerce degree, the Higher Certificate in Law will not enable you to meet the mathematics requirement if you did not complete mathematics at grade 12 level with the required percentage or score.

I completed modules that are also part of degree/ diploma I am applying for – will I get credits for these in my new qualification?

You must apply for admission to your next qualification and if the application is successful, you can then register for your next qualification and apply to transfer relevant credits. You can direct all credit enquiries to [Student Administration and Registration](#).

I have problems with NSFAS – who do I contact?

Contact NSFAS at 0124415600/5463/5461.

I failed a module – what do I do?

You must re-register for the module during the relevant registration periods and pay the full fees for the module. Registration dates can be found when you visit <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Register-to-study-through-Unisa>. Also learn more about dealing with exam failure on the Directorate: Counselling and Career Development website here: <https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/About/Service-departments/Counselling-and-Career-Development/Manage-your-studies/Exams>

I have some questions with regard to registration at Unisa

Visit the Registration FAQs webpage at

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Register-to-study-through-Unisa/Undergraduate-&-honours-qualifications/FAQs> for more information.

How do I cancel or de-register modules that I have registered for?

More information about cancelling modules is available in the Unisa Rules for Students document (). Contact Student Administration and Registration at your closest regional centre for further enquiries or assistance

(<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Contact-us/Regional-Centres>).

Unisa informed me that I qualify for a supplementary examination – how does this process work?

Pay the supplementary fee as stated on

<https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Register-to-study-through-Unisa/Undergraduate-&-honours-qualifications/Calculate-your-study-fees/Miscellaneous-fees>.

More information is also available in the Unisa Rules for Students document (page 13, rule 18) here:

https://www.unisa.ac.za/static/corporate_web/Content/Apply%20for%20admission/Documents/Unisa-rules-for%20students-2018.pdf.

What should I do if I do not qualify to study at Unisa at all?

You will need to consider other study alternatives related to your career- and study goals. The other options include (but are not limited to):

1) Complete a recognised qualification at NQF level 5 with at least 120 credits:

- The Department of Higher Education and Training's REGISTER of Private Higher Education Institutions at <http://www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/DocRegisters.aspx> can help you to identify registered institutions.
 - As this document, the "Private Higher Education Institutions REGISTER", is continually updated, ensure that you consult the latest edition. Note that only some Higher Certificates and Diplomas will be relevant for consideration when applying for admission to a formal Unisa qualification. Should you wish to complete a qualification at another institution, it would be your responsibility to check whether this qualification will enable you to re-apply for a formal qualification at Unisa. If you are planning to apply for Unisa qualifications offered by the College of Economic and Management Sciences, or the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, ensure that you include mathematics (for both Colleges) and physical science (for College of

Science, Engineering and Technology) subjects in your Higher Certificate.

- The organisations on the register that offer distance learning options are: Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa, Boston City Campus and Business College, Embury Institute for Higher Education, IMM Graduate School of Marketing, Independent Institute of Education, International Hotel School, Lyceum College, MANCOSA (Management College of Southern Africa), Milpark Education, Open Learning Group, Red and Yellow School of Logic and Magic, Regent Business School, Richfield Graduate Institute of Technology, South African College of Applied Psychology, South African Theological Seminary, Southern Business School, Theological Education by Extension College, and Towerstone. Consult the register for further provisionally registered institutions that offer distance learning options.

2) Complete a diploma at a TVET (Technical Vocational Education and Training) College:

- Government TVET
Colleges: http://www.tvetcolleges.co.za/Site_Public_FET.aspx
- Private
Colleges: [http://www.dhet.gov.za/Registers_DocLib/Register%20of%20Private%20Colleges%20\(22%20March%202018\).pdf](http://www.dhet.gov.za/Registers_DocLib/Register%20of%20Private%20Colleges%20(22%20March%202018).pdf)
- Completing an N4, N5, N6 level is not a completed qualification and is not recognised for admission to Unisa - you will need to complete the National Diploma at the TVET College in order to consider further study options.

3) Upgrade your National Senior Certificate or Senior Certificate/ completing a National Senior Certificate:

If you completed your Senior Certificate before 2008, you may contact your local district of the Department of Education for more information about completing the Amended Senior Certificate, or search for institutions that offer tuition for this online. You can find the contact details for the Department of Education

here: <http://www.education.gov.za/ProvincialDepartments/tabid/326/Default.aspx>.

The Amended Senior Certificate will enable you to apply for admission to a Higher Certificate qualification. You can also do an online search for institutions that offer contact and distance learning options to upgrade/ complete your NSC. Please read this article: <http://www.umalusi.org.za/show.php?id=3115> for more information about the accreditation of institutions.

Counselling and career development services at Unisa

The Unisa Directorate for Counselling and Career Development offers career-, academic- and personal counselling services to Unisa students and the broader community. You can talk to a counsellor about:

- **Career decisions.** I am not sure which career path to follow; I don't know which qualification would be best; I want to change my career direction...
- **Career information.** How can I find out more about a career in ...
- **Employability.** How do I market myself to employers? How can I look for work? How can I compile an effective CV? How do I go about networking with others? How do I put together my career portfolio? How can I meet potential employers? How can I improve my interview skills?)
- **My studies at Unisa.** How can I get started with my studies? How do I plan my studies? How can I study more effectively? I don't feel motivated to continue with my studies... I feel worried about preparing for/ writing the exams. I failed my exams – what now? I need to improve my reading/ writing/ numeracy skills
- **Personal issues.** How can I have better relationships with others? How can I cope more effectively with issues that impact on my studies?

Visit our website at <http://www.unisa.ac.za/counselling> to access many self-help resources, or talk to a counsellor by e-mail to counselling@unisa.ac.za.