# Email invitation to students

|  |
| --- |
| Dear [Student Name],  Now that you have been studying at UNISA for a few months, we are interested in understanding your university experiences so far. As staff, we see only a limited part of students’ lives. This is why your opinions are valuable: understanding your experiences with UNISA so far can help support our goal to improve your adjustment to university life. Therefore, we invite you to participate in a research study by completing a questionnaire (link is below).  As a thank you for completing the survey, you will be sent a **detailed report about your results**, including resources for increasing your success during university. In addition, you have the chance to win one of five **1GB mobile data prizes**.  The questionnaire should take you approximately 15 minutes. After the questionnaire, some students may be contacted about participating in a short interview. For more information about the study, please review the attached document. If you have any further questions, you can always contact us at: UNISA, Prof A Gunter, gunteaw@unisa.ac.za Tel: 0114713390.  **To participate, please visit:** [link]  **Please have your Student ID number ready to participate.**  Thank you for considering.  Kind regards,  Prof Ashley Gunter  gunteaw@unisa.ac.za  011 471 3390 |

Informed consent

**Thank you for your interest in participating in this study.**

All answers will be kept confidential and no personally identifying information about you will be shared. More information about the study can be found at: [Link to internal site with information sheet] This survey will take approximately 15 minutes of your time, and will ask you questions about your academic and social experiences while studying with UNISA.

As a thank you for completing the survey, you will be sent a detailed summary of your results, including resources to increase your success while studying at UNISA. All participants who complete the survey will also be entered in a PRIZE DRAWING.

**Agreement to participate**

I agree to the terms and conditions addressed in the study information sheet and wish to participate in this study.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| First name |  |
| Surname |  |
| Student ID |  |

[Next]

Section 1 (Shortened) SACQ

We would first like to ask you questions about your experiences so far with studying at UNISA.

Please respond to the following statements and indicate whether they apply to you (1 = Does not apply to me at all – 9 Applies very closely to me)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Order | Construct | Label |
| 1 | Attach | I feel that I fit in at UNISA |
| 3 | Ac Adj | I have been keeping up to date with my academic work |
| 4 | Pers-emo | I am feeling relaxed lately |
| 5\_neg | Ac Adj | I am finding academic work at UNISA difficult |
| 6\_neg | Pers Emo | Lately I have been feeling down a lot |
| 7 | Soc Adj | My close friends encourage me to study at UNISA |
| 8\_neg | Soc Adj | I would like to have more opportunities to build social connections at UNISA |
| 9\_neg | Ac Adj | I have not been functioning well during examinations |
| 10\_neg | Pers Emo | I have felt tired much of the time lately |
| 11 | Attach | I am pleased with my decision to go to university in general |
| 12 | Attach | I am pleased with my decision to attend UNISA in particular |
| 13 | Soc\_Adj | I am meeting as many people and making as many friends as I would like at UNISA |
| 14\_neg | Ac Adj | I am not working as hard as I should at my course work |
| 15 | Soc Adj | I have several close social ties at UNISA |
| 16\_neg | Pers Emo | I have not been able to control my emotions very well lately |
| 17 | Soc Adj | My family encourages me to study at UNISA |
| 18\_neg | Ac Adj | I have not had much motivation for studying lately |
| 19\_neg | Attach | I wish I were studying at another university |
| 20 | Ac Adj | I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at UNISA |
| 21\_neg | Attach | I have recently been thinking a lot about transferring to another university |
| 22\_neg | Pers Emo | I have been feeling tense or nervous lately |
| 23 | Ac Adj | I am satisfied with the quality of courses available at UNISA |
| 24 | Soc Adj | I am satisfied with the extent to which I have opportunities to build social connections at UNISA |
| 25 | Ac Adj | I am enjoying my academic work at UNISA |
| 26\_neg | Ac Adj | I have a lot of trouble getting started on assignments |
| 27 | Ac Adj | I am satisfied with my courses so far |
| 28\_neg | Ac Adj | I am not really smart enough for the academic work I am expected to do |
| 29 | Pers Emo | I have been feeling in good health lately |
| 30\_neg | Attach | I have recently been thinking a lot about dropping out of UNISA |
| 31\_neg | Attach | I find myself giving considerable thought to taking time off from UNISA and finishing at a later stage |
| 32 | Soc Adj | I am satisfied with my social life at UNISA |
| 33\_neg | Soc Adj | My family does not approve of my study at UNISA |
| 34 | Soc Adj | I have contact with other students at UNISA |
| 35 | Attach | UNISA cares about me |

1. Is there anything that has positively affected your UNISA experience? If so, please describe this in the textbox below.

[Open response]

1. Is there anything that has negatively affected your UNISA experience? If so, please describe this in the textbox below.

[Open response]

# Section 2 – Social Media

# The next part of the questionnaire consists of questions about your use of social media (examples: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, etc).

1. Do you use social media?
   1. Yes
   2. No

**[IF NO, ask question below, then skip to Q59]**

Why do you choose not to use social media?

[Open-ended]

**[IF YES, complete Q40 – Q58]**

Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

[1-5 scale, 1= Strongly disagree, 9 = Strongly agree]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 39 | Find out about educational opportunities at UNISA |
| 40 | Feel part of the UNISA community |
| 41 | Support my academic work through learning activities assigned by my lecturers |
| 42 | Find resources about my study topics |
| 43 | Discuss my academic work with other students at UNISA |
| 44 | Develop friendships and socialise with other students at UNISA |
| 45 | Communicate with UNISA academic staff (tutors, lecturers, researchers, etc) |
| 46 | Communicate with UNISA administrative staff |
| 47 | Gain the motivation to continue my studies at UNISA |
| 48 | Network for my future career |
| 49 | Other (please explain): [Open-ended] |

**Social media helps me….**

1. Who do you have contact with on social media about your university experiences? (please mark all that apply)

|  |
| --- |
| UNISA students in my courses |
| UNISA students outside my courses |
| My academic tutors or lecturers |
| Other academic staff at UNISA (i.e. not my own tutors or lecturers) |
| Administrative staff at UNISA |
| Friends or family members who are also taking UNISA courses |
| Friends or family members who are taking courses at other universities |
| Friends or family members who are not studying at any university |
| Other |
| None of the above |

If other, please explain

1. Which social media do you use to support your university experience?

(please check all that apply)

|  |
| --- |
| Facebook |
| Twitter |
| Youtube |
| Instagram |
| WhatsApp |
| LinkedIn |
| Other |

If you noted ‘other’ above, please explain which additional social media you use: [short answer]

1. How often do you use social media to support your university experience?

|  |
| --- |
| A few times a year |
| A few times a month |
| Several times a week |
| Several times a day |
| I’m not sure |

1. Do you currently use social media more or less often than you did prior to studying with UNISA?

|  |
| --- |
| More often |
| Less often |
| About the same |
| I’m not sure |

Please rate your agreement with the following statements:  
[1-5 scale, 1 = Strongly disagree, 9 = Strongly agree]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 54 | I would like UNISA to use social media more often for teaching purposes |
| 55 | It is good to get to know teachers informally through social media |
| 56 | Social media have not added to my learning experiences at UNISA |
| 57 | The time I spend on social media negatively affects my academic work |
| 58 | Social media enable me to express my problems or issues about my studies at UNISA |
| 59 | Social media give me an escape from my studies |

Section 3 – Demographic information

We would now like to ask questions about you and your personal situation. Please be assured that your responses are confidential and will not be shared.

1. Which gender do you identify as?

|  |
| --- |
| Male |
| Female |
| I prefer not to say |

1. What is your age? [Drop down list]
2. In which country were you born? [Drop down list]
3. In which country do you have citizenship? [Drop down list]
4. In which country do you currently live? [Drop down list]
5. What is your first language? (Please write in English) [Short answer]
6. How would you describe your current place of stay?

|  |
| --- |
| Urban |
| Rural |
| I’m not sure |
| I prefer not to say |

1. Do you consider yourself an international student?

|  |
| --- |
| Yes |
| No |
| I’m not sure |

1. Do you consider yourself disabled?

|  |
| --- |
| Yes |
| No |
| I’m not sure |
| I prefer not to say |

1. Which ethnicity do you identify as?

|  |
| --- |
| Black |
| Coloured |
| Indian or Asian |
| White |
| Other, please explain: |
| I prefer not to say |

1. What is your current occupation status? (Please mark all that apply)

|  |
| --- |
| Full time student |
| In full-time work |
| In part-time work |
| Looking after the family/home |
| Retired from paid work |
| Unable to work due to long-term sickness or disability |
| Unemployed and looking for a job |
| Unemployed and not looking for a job |
| Other |
| I’m not sure |
| I prefer not to say |

1. For which degree are you currently studying? [Short answer]
2. At what level are you currently studying?

|  |
| --- |
| First year |
| Second year |
| Third year |
| I’m not sure |

1. Are you currently studying full time or part time?

|  |
| --- |
| Full-time |
| Part-time |

1. Did your parents or guardians attend a university?

|  |
| --- |
| Yes, both attended |
| Yes, one attended |
| No, neither have attended |
| I’m not sure |

1. How are you funding your studies at UNISA?

|  |
| --- |
| National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) |
| Other bursary or loan |
| Self funding |
| Other |
| I’m not sure |
| I prefer not to say |

1. How many people are you financially responsible for? [drop down bar]
2. How many people do you share your home with? [drop down bar]

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | At home | At work | In a public setting (internet café, business, library) | At a UNISA centre | Other | N/A |
| Computer |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Internet |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mobile Phone |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Quiet working space |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. From where do you have access to technology or resources on a regular basis? Please mark all that apply

If you selected ‘other’ to any of the above items, please explain: [open ended]

[Submit]

Post-submission page

Thank you for participating in this study. We will provide feedback on your responses after the questionnaire closes to the email address associated with your Student ID number. Some survey participants may also be contacted with an invitation to participate in a short interview. If you have been selected to win PRIZE DRAWING, you will be contacted by email after the questionnaire closes.