

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR UNISO STUDENTS



A Message from former Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research

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Assalamu Alaykum,

It is my great privilege and pleasure to welcome you to the University of Somalia (UNISO) and thank you for choosing UNISO.

University of Somalia has unique characteristics. First, in the true sense of the name, UNISO is for all Somalis. Translating this fact into reality, UNISO is the most inclusive university in Somalia. As a UNISO student, you will meet a wide variety of students from all parts of the country. Second, it is the best student- centered university in the country; students are valued, respected and well-served. This reflects in two major areas: Academic Excellence and Affordable Tuitions. UNISO offers a wide variety of high quality programs from which students can choose. These programs are taught by experienced and professional teachers. For tuition affordability, students are given greater flexibility in paying their tuition fees. This means that students can pay their tuition fees on a monthly basis. Finally, in UNISO, you will find a team of academics and administrative staff who are always ready to help.

Therefore, the Academic Affairs and Research Office, in collaboration with other departments, has prepared these frequently asked questions, which will help you navigate your way through university life and realize your academic goals. I am fully confident that the following questions and answers will help you understand a lot of academic, financial, and student code of conduct matters relating to the University of Somalia. So, please read these questions and answers carefully.

1.1 The Academic System of the University of Somalia (UNISO)

Q: What kind of academic system is adopted by UNISO?

A: The University of Somalia has adopted the semester system which is divided into two semesters. Each semester lasts for approximately 6 months including all examination periods, public holidays and semester-break. There are 16 weeks of study in each semester. During each semester, students take a series of lectures, tutorials and practical per Course Unit. Students are given assignments and tutorials. Such assignments are assessed and subsequently graded. These grades are added to the examination performance of the student at the end of each semester.

1.2 When do applications for admission begin?

Applications for admission to the first semester (Fall Semester) begin as early as June and continue to the first ten (10) days of September. For the second semester, students are admitted to UNISO starting from February and continue to the first ten days of March. Such admissions do not apply to School of Medicine and Surgery, and School of Laboratory Sciences which have one intake per year.

1.3 How many times does the university enroll students?

The University of Somalia enrolls students twice per academic year. The first time is when new students are admitted and the second time is when current students begin a new academic year. With the exception of the College of Health Sciences where students pay \$50 as registration fees, all other students are required to pay \$25 as registration fees. At the beginning of the academic year, all current students are required to pay \$1 as a renewal of their enrollment.

1.4 Is attendance for classes compulsory?

Yes. Any student with less than 75% attendance in any course shall not be allowed to sit in the final examination of that particular course in a semester. However, if a student brings a valid excuse and such excuse is approved by the dean of his/her faculty, the student may be allowed to write the final examination.

1.5 Can a student switch from a full-time to a part-time status?

Yes, but a formal request in writing must be submitted to the registrar's office within the first ten days of the semester along with \$ 25 as processing charges. Such request must explain the reasons for this change and the student must obtain the approval of the dean of the faculty concerned, the Finance Department and the Academic Affairs Office.

1.6 Can a student switch from a part-time to a full-time status?

Yes, but a formal request in writing must be submitted to the registrar's office within the first ten days of the semester along with \$ 25 as processing charges. Such request must explain the reasons for this change and the student must obtain the approval of the dean of the faculty concerned, the Finance Department and the Academic Affairs Office.

1.7 What should a transfer student need to do?

A transfer student who decided to join UNISO must submit the required documents of transfer which are true and authentic. After verification, the student shall be admitted to the University of Somalia provided that the difference in the number of courses between the two universities must not exceed five courses. Once the student has been evaluated and, consequently, admitted to the university, he/she must complete all outstanding courses.

1.8 At what stage does UNISO accept transfer students?

With the exception of the Faculty of Health Sciences and Faculty of Humanities, UNISO does not accept transfer students after semester IV. The Faculty of Health Sciences will only accept transfer students up to Semester VI while the Faculty of Humanities will only accept transfer students up to Semester III. To be qualified for UNISO degrees, all transfer students must complete at least one-half of their graduation requirements at the University of Somalia.

1.9 Does a student temporarily suspend his/her program of study before completion of the prescribed degree?

Yes, but a formal request in writing must be submitted to the dean of his/her faculty and the Registrar seeking approval. This request must be made after the end of a semester examination. In addition, all tuition fees and other charges should have been paid. Students may be allowed to temporarily suspend their studies twice during the prescribed period of their degree programmes. When the student returns, he/she will be allowed to resume his/her study from the next semester where he/she left off. However, if the student has been continuously absent for a period of two years, he/she must repeat the last semester before suspending his studies. Any student that suspends his/her studies without securing the approval of the aforementioned authorities shall be required to pay all the tuition fees for the whole period of his/her absence.

1.10 Can a student change a program of study?

Yes. Students in the Faculty of Business Administration are eligible for changing a program of study at the end of the second academic year (4th semester). For all other students, switching from a program of study to another depends on the difference in the number of courses between the two programs. Such difference must not exceed three courses. To change a program of study, a student must submit a formal request in writing to the Registrar, and be approved by the dean of his faculty as well as the Exam Office as well as the Academic Affairs Office along with a payment of \$25 as processing charges.

1.11 Can a student transfer from UNISO to another University?

Yes, but a formal request in writing must be submitted to the Registrar, and be approved by the dean of his/her faculty, Exam Office, and Academic Affairs Office. In addition, all tuition fees and other charges due to the University should be paid along with \$ 25 as processing charges.

1.12 Can a student proceed to the next semester with several failed courses?

Yes, but the failed courses must be cleared before the student is permitted to proceed to Semester Five. For the Faculty of Health Sciences students, they are allowed to proceed to Semester Seven while carrying failed courses.

1.13 What happens if a student fails several courses?

A student who fails more than half of the prescribed courses in a final examination, he/she should repeat the semester. However, the student will be required to pay 50% of the tuition fees. For example, if a student takes six courses in a semester, and fails four of them, he/she should repeat that semester.

1.14 What is a valid medical certificate?

It is a certificate issued by UNISO hospital. Under exceptional cases, a certificate issued by a private practitioner may be accepted provided that such certificate must be endorsed by a UNISO medical doctor.

2) Examinations

2.1 When are examinations held?

Each semester has two examinations: Midterm and Final Examinations. The midterm exam for the first semester is usually held in November while the final examination is normally scheduled in February. The mid-term examination for the second semester is usually scheduled in March and the final examination in July of each academic year.

2.2 Who can sit examinations?

Any student who has been registered in UNISO for a particular degree can sit his/her faculty examination when two conditions are met. First, his/her attendance should not be less than 75% for appearing in the examination. Second, the student should clear all outstanding fees or other charges.

2.3 What happens if a student arrives late for an examination?

Any student who arrives late but no later than 30 minutes will be permitted to take the examination. However, he/she is not granted extra time. Students who arrive after 30 minutes will not be allowed to sit the examination.

2.4 Who should repeat a course?

Students who fail less than half of the prescribed courses in a final examination should take a re-examination and pay \$10 as service charges. If he/she fails the re-examination, he/she should repeat that course by registering in a subsequent semester.

2.5 What to do if a student gets sick before an exam?

If a student gets sick and is unable to take the examination or any other valid reason, he/she should inform the dean of his faculty in writing within a period of 48 hours before the date of the examination. Once his/her request is approved, the student is entitled to write a Make-Up Examination.

2.6 What happens if a student misses the mid-term examination?

If a student misses the midterm examination due to financial issue, medical or any other valid reason supported by documents, he/she should write a request for a makeup examination. Such request should be accompanied with \$10 for arranging such examination. If the midterm examination is marked 40%, the makeup examination should be 30%.

2.7 What happens if a student misses the final examination?

Students who miss the final examination of the semester without a valid reason, they will be treated as if they have taken the examination and failed. However, students who miss the final examination with a valid reason, they will be treated as fresh candidates. If the final examination is marked 60%, the re-examination should be 50 %.

2.8 How many repeats are allowed?

A student may not repeat a course more than once. Under exceptional circumstances, a grace chance may be permitted with the approval of the Faculty Board and the Academic Affairs Office.

2.9 Does the University of Somalia grant graduation honors?

Yes. UNISO grants four levels of honors distinction at graduation. These honors are granted to students with the highest marks as follows:

2.9.1 The First Level (Summa cum laude)- is granted to students who have achieved a high cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.85 and above. When converted to percentage, this will be 96% and above.

2.9.2 The Second Level (Magna cum laude)-is granted to students who have achieved a high cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.75 and less than 3.85. When converted to percentage, this will be 93%

2.9.3 The Third Level (Cum laude) is granted to students who have achieved a high cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.65 and less than 3.75. When converted to percentage, this will be 91%.

2.9.4 The Fourth Level (Vice-Chancellor's Honors Distinction)-is granted to students whose cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is 3.60.

3) Financial Matters

3.1 What type of fees does UNISO charge?

There are two types: Tuition fees and other charges

3.2 How can a student pay tuition fees?

The University of Somalia gives you greater flexibility in paying your tuition fees. You can pay your fees on a monthly basis. However, if you can afford to pay the whole amount of semester fees, you are free to do so. This will give you peace of mind.

3.3 When should students pay the tuition fees?

Students should pay their tuition fees within the first week of each month.

3.4 What is the process to be followed by newly enrolled students?

Newly enrolled students are required to pay one full month of tuition fees, \$25 as registration fees and \$5 for student ID cards. For students applying to the College of Health Sciences, they are required to pay \$50 as registration fees.

3.5 Are there any other fees charged by UNISO?

Yes. There are other fees including \$10 for taking makeup examination, \$25 for changing program of study, \$25 for withdrawing from the University, \$25 for suspending your study before the completion of the intended degree. (Please contact the Finance Office of your campus for further information).

3.6 What happens if a student fails to pay the tuition fees?

Students must pay their tuition fees one week prior to the start of the examination. Any student who fails to do so will not be allowed to take the examination. Similarly, any student with tuition arrears of up to two months will not be allowed to attend classes without first being cleared by the Finance Department.

3.7 What should I do to get the following documents: Seminar Participation Certificate, Testimonial Letter, and Recommendation Letter?

You should submit a written request to the Registrar and pay \$2 for the Participation Certificate and \$1 for the letters.

3.8 Am I eligible for fee refund if I withdraw from the courses?

Yes. You are entitled to a fee refund in two conditions. First, if the program for which you applied is not offered by the University, you are entitled to receive a full refund. Second, if you decide to withdraw or discontinue from the courses after you have already started, you are entitled to a fee refund. But for full details of refund arrangements, please contact the Finance Office in your campus.

3.9 What happens if a student is a scholarship recipient?

Scholarship recipients are exempted from paying tuition fees. However, they are required to pay all other charges. They are also required to renew their scholarships and discount status at the beginning of every semester. Please contact the Finance Department and the Academic Affairs Office for further information.

3.10 Am I eligible for fee discount if I score the highest mark in a semester?

Yes. Undergraduate students with cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.85 or above are given a discount of 25% for the next semester.

3.11 Are Finance Offices on different campuses open during the first day of examination?

No. Students are strongly advised to clear all their outstanding balances at least one day before the beginning of the exams to avoid inconveniences.

4) Code of Student Conduct

Students joining the University of Somalia are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is in line with the teachings of our religion as well as with our nation's most cherished values and traditions. However, any student that commits serious offences on campus will be subject to punishment. Therefore, students should avoid the following offences that may affect their study.

4.1 Serious Offences

4.1.1 What happens if a student commits an act of physical violence against a member of the University's administrative staff, teachers, and senior management team?

Any student accused of such offence will be expelled from the University and he/she will not receive any transfer documents that may allow him/her to join another university.

4.1.2 What happens if a student threatens a member of the administrative staff, teachers, and senior management team?

Any student accused of such offence will be suspended from the University and must leave the campus until he/she brings her/his parents or guardian.

4.1.3 What happens if a scholarship recipient makes such threats?

His/her scholarship will be cancelled. In addition, he/she will receive the penalty stated in clause 4.1.2.

4.1.4 What is the process to be followed when a student brings a weapon to campus?

The campus director will be immediately informed of such incident. The student involving in this misconduct will be arrested and handed over to the security guards. In addition, the student will be given a serious warning and he/she must give a pledge in writing that he/she will never repeat such offence.

4.1.5 What happens if a student causes damage to the University property?

If a student accidentally causes damage to UNISO property he will not be held liable. However, if this damage is intentional such as vandalism, he must repair the damage. In addition, the student must sign a written pledge that he will never repeat such offence.

4.1.6 What happens if a student is accused of theft on campus?

If such accusation is proved, the student will be ordered to return the stolen thing and he/she will be expelled from the university for one semester. In addition, if he repeats such offence, he/she will be subject to the possibility of final expulsion from the university.

4.2 Examination Misconduct

4.2.1 What happens if a student is caught cheating on exam?

If a student is caught cheating on exam and evidence of such cheating is provided, he/she will be given a failing mark “F”.

4.2.2 What happens if a student is caught with a fake “Pass Card”?

If a student is caught with a fake “Pass Card”, his/her current semester will be cancelled.

4.2.3 What happens if a student is caught cheating on exam, but evidence for such cheating is not sufficient?

The student will re-sit the examination and a copy of the decision letter and related material will be kept in his file.

4.2.4 Does a student has a right to appeal against a decision made by UNISO Disciplinary Committee?

Yes, but the student is required to submit an appeal letter to the Academic Affairs Office within a week from the date the decision has been rendered

N.B: All UNISO students are strongly advised to obtain their ID cards as well as pass cards once they pay their tuition fees. This will allow them to easily get into the examination and the campus.