

LEARNING UNIT 1: GETTING STARTED AND ORIENTATION

OVERVIEW

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The getting started learning unit is a practice unit intended to demonstrate how to interact in this module. In this learning unit you will find specific information on how to navigate in this course in order to help you use the different *myUNISA* tools.

1.1 Navigating the course

A hard copy of **Tutorial Letter 101** will be posted to you after registration. However, this TL101 will also be available on *myUNISA*, in the **Additional Resources Platform**, at the top, on the left hand side **MENU** of your computer. This is made available for online readers. For this module, you will **NOT** receive any **LEARNING MATERIAL**, other than Tutorial Letter (TL101) by ground **mail**. Otherwise, **ALL OTHER MATERIAL AND ACTIVITIES WILL BE POSTED ONLINE, ON myUNISA**. You need to frequently visit the **ANNOUNCEMENTS PLATFORM**, where you will find announcements posted to you by your **TEACHING ASSISTANT (TA)** and/or your Lecturers.

1.2 HOW DO I GET WHAT I NEED IN THIS MODULE?

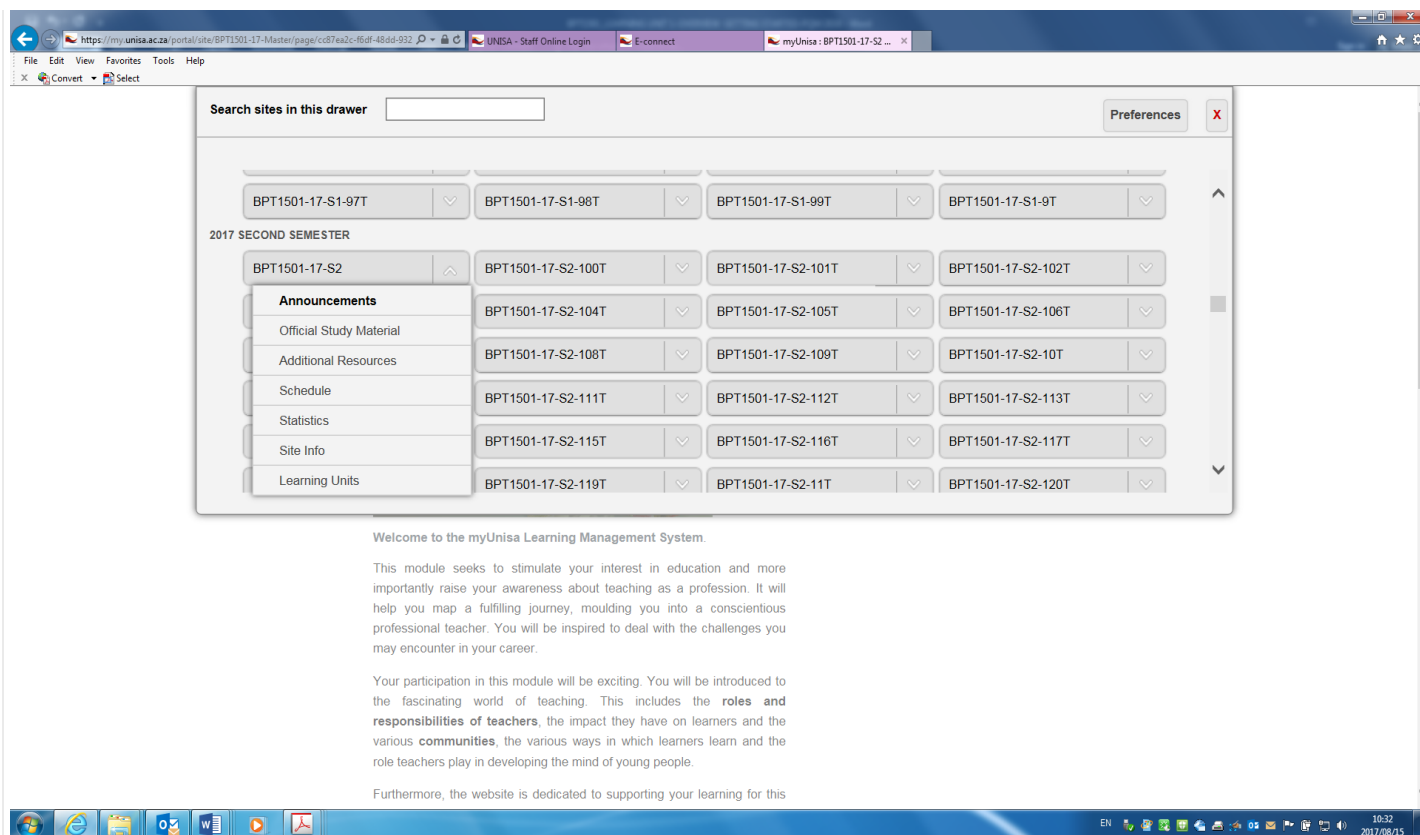
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Being a Professional Teacher (BPT1501) is an online module and offered online. The module is offered in **ENGLISH ONLY**. As soon as your registration for this module has been finalized, you need to go to <https://my.unisa.ac.za> and log in with your student number and password. You will then have access to the website **BPT1501-18-S1** on *myUnisa*. You will see **BPT1501-18-S1** in your row of modules, in the orange bar across the top of the webpage. **BPT1501-18-S1** is the **MASTER WEBSITE**.

Very few facilities are available on the Master website menu. Refer to the Master website screenshot below.

1.2.1 THE MASTER WEBSITE

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The **MASTER WEBSITE** will enable you to take full advantage of the following tools and features listed below. Click on the left hand panel at the top of the website:

Announcements: Important announcements will be made by your **Teaching Assistant (TA)** and/or your Lecturer using the announcement tool. From time to time you will be alerted to important information via an announcement. But, you also need frequently to visit this facility.

Additional Resources: You will find the PDF file of Tutorial Letter 101 (TL101) and other documents provided for the module available in this platform.

Schedule: The course schedule tool outlines all teaching and learning events, the assignment due dates, the start/end dates, and the assessment start/end dates.

Statistics: Statistics to show how frequently you use *myUNISA*

Learning Units: Click on this tool to find units of the BPT1501 module. This is your **TEXTBOOK** or **STUDYGUIDE**. You will not receive a hardcopy study guide for this module. Your TA will be guiding you through your study of this module.

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Statistics: Statistics to show how frequently you use *myUNISA*

Learning Units: Click on this tool to find units of the BPT1501 module. Your TA will be guiding you through your study of this module.

The **MASTER WEBSITE** will enable you to take full advantage of the following tools and features listed below. Click on the left hand panel at the top of the website:

This master website only contains the first batch of module materials and information regarding the module. It does **NOT** contain the tool for the **ASSIGNMENTS, DISCUSSION** and **BLOGS**, as these are only available on your **GROUP SITE (BPT1501-18-S1-XXXX)**.

Because you will have registered more than one module, you need to click on **MORE** next to the orange bar across the top of the webpage in order to access the group website. Your group site will show **BPT1501-18-S1-XXXX** across the top of the webpage. Refer to the screenshot below:

1.2.2 THE GROUP WEBSITE

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You will have to belong to a group first in order to access your group site. The grouping of registered students is administered by the system. You will be informed through an SMS that you have been allocated to a group **ONCE** you have paid your initial registration fee. Then, you will be allocated a TA who will be guiding you through the module. Upon receiving the SMS, you then have access to the group website.

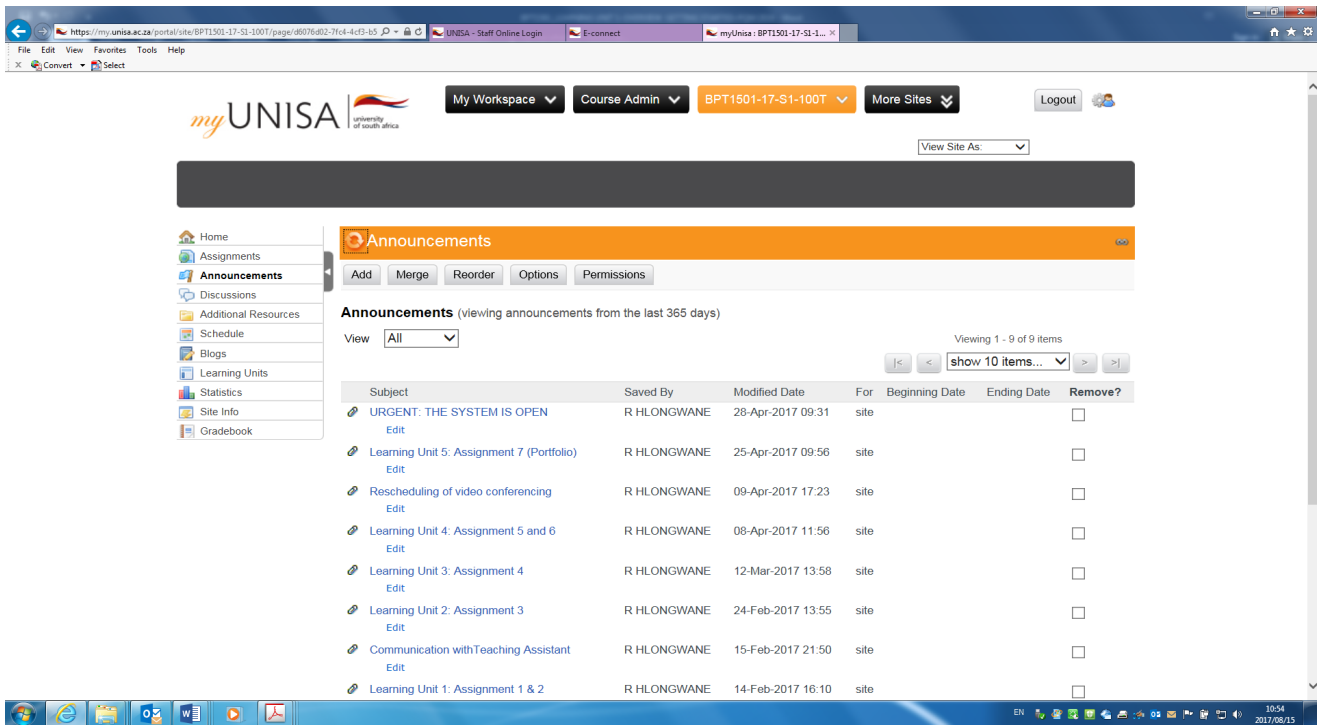
The GROUP WEBSITE should enable you to take full advantage of the following tool and features:

Home page: This gives the general overview of the entire course.

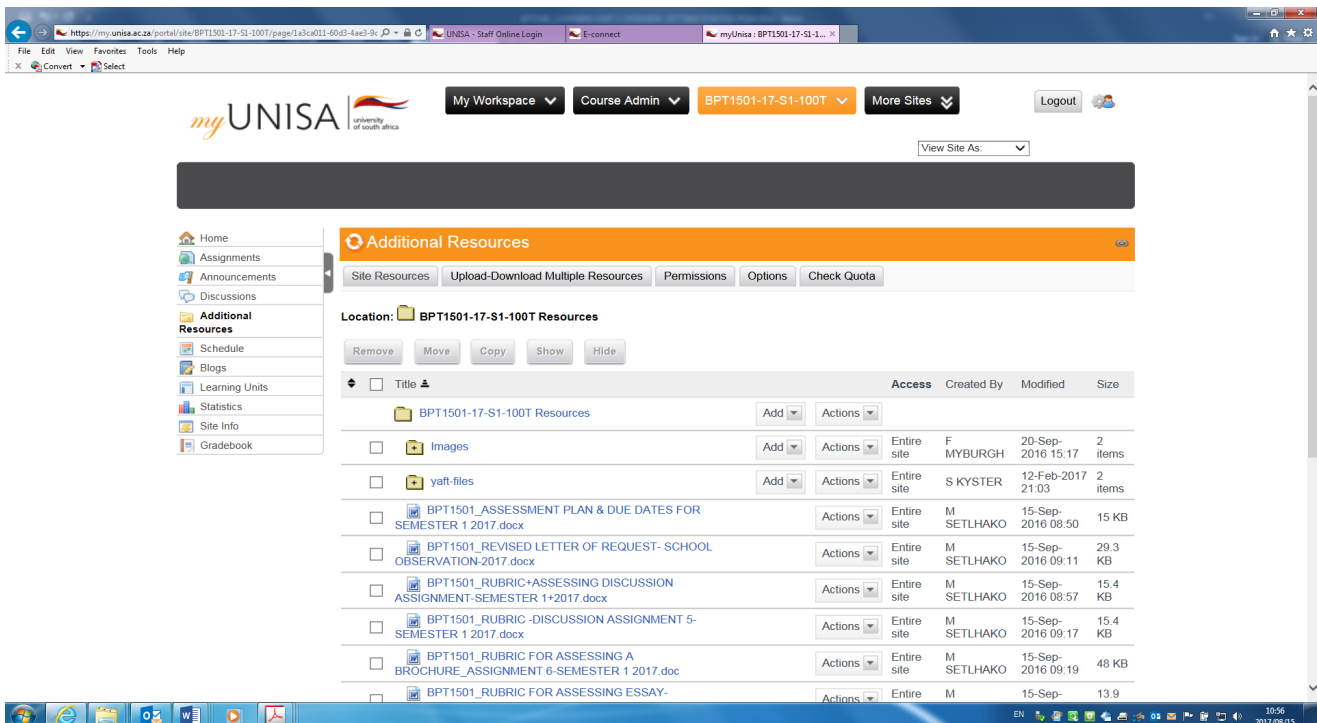
Assignment: You will have to click here to submit your written assignments, Portfolio using the Assignments tool and view your marked assignments as well.

The screenshot displays the myUNISA website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the myUNISA logo, a 'View Site As:' dropdown, and several menu items: 'My Workspace', 'Course Admin', 'BPT1501-17-S1-100T', and 'More Sites'. A 'Logout' button is also present. Below the navigation bar, a sidebar on the left lists various tools: Home, Assignments, Announcements, Discussions, Additional Resources, Schedule, Blogs, Learning Units, Statistics, Site Info, and Gradebook. The main content area is titled 'Assignments' and includes sub-links for 'Assignment Statistics', 'MCQ Marking Reports', 'Assignment Status Report', and 'Marking Statistics'. The 'Student Assignment View' section features a text input field for 'Student Number' and 'View' and 'Cancel' buttons. The footer contains copyright information for The Sakai Foundation and the University of South Africa, along with the server time: 'Tue, 15 Aug 2017 10:51:06 SAST'.

Announcements: Your Teaching Assistant uses the Announcements tool to inform you about the important module-related issues and updated information. You need to visit this area at least twice or thrice a week because important information is posted here. When your TA post an Announcement, you may also receive an email reminding you to check the website.



Additional Resources: You will find the PDF file of TL101 and other documents provided for the module, will be available in this platform. You will find your assignments, additional documents, resources, PowerPoint presentations, and links to articles related to this module.



Discussion: You will find a Forum for discussion for each Learning Unit, as well as a Topic for applicable discussion assignments within each of these. You will interact with your fellow students

regarding the topic under discussion in this platform. You will also communicate with your Teaching Assistant here.

If you click on this icon, you will be able to see all discussion areas in this course. Use the discussion tool in this module to share valuable information related to assignments, topics that are related to this module etc. Make sure that you are in the correct discussion. Please abide by netiquette rules when talking and interacting with your classmates/group mates/peers.

The screenshot shows the myUNISA interface with the 'Discussions' section active. A sidebar on the left contains navigation links like Home, Assignments, Announcements, Discussions, Additional Resources, Schedule, Blogs, Learning Units, Statistics, Site Info, and Gradebook. The main content area displays a table of forums:

Forum	Topics	Messages	Unread	Last Message	Options
DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 1	1	255	255	15 May 2017 @ 09:54	Edit
DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT 5	1	183	183	15 May 2017 @ 10:05	Edit
QUERIES	1	12	12	19 Apr 2017 @ 21:21	Edit
WELCOME TO BEING A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER: DISCUSSION FORUMS	6	59	59	2 Mar 2017 @ 18:55	Edit

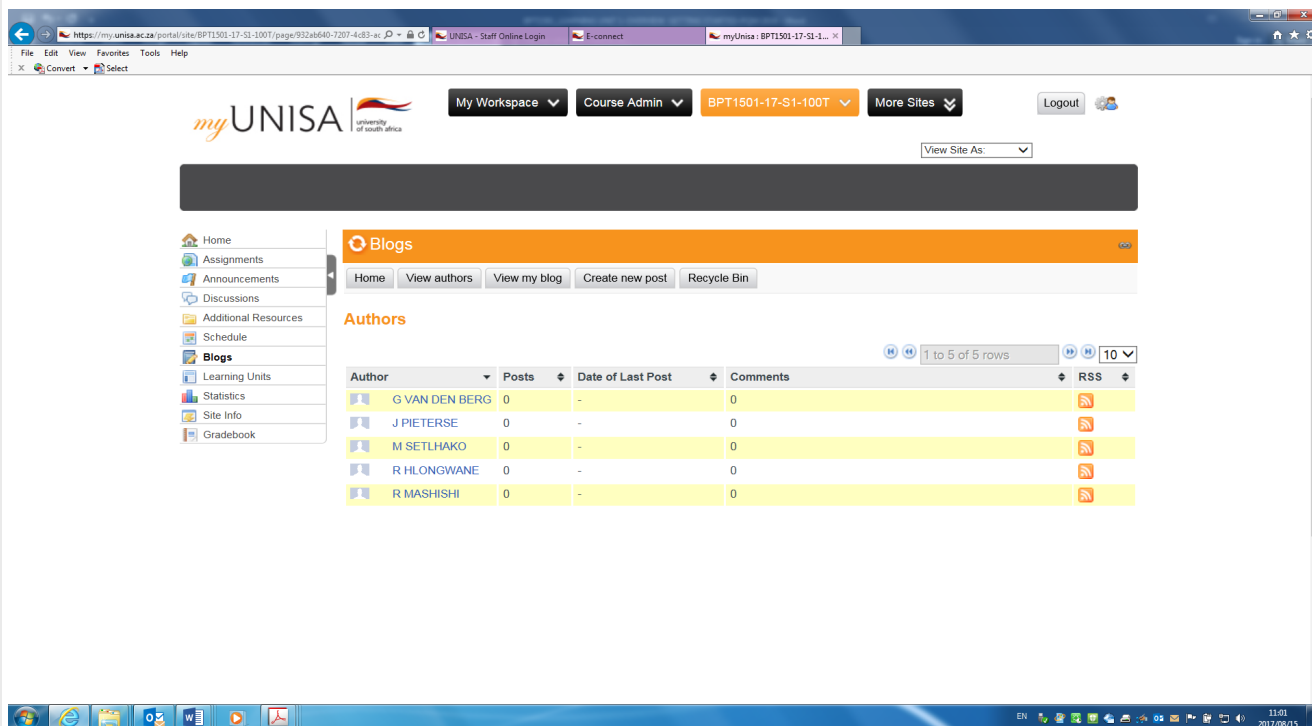
At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with copyright information and server details: 'Copyright 2003-2013 The Sakai Foundation. All rights reserved. Portions of Sakai are copyrighted by other parties as described in the Acknowledgments screen. myUnisa - myUnisa - Sakai 10.5 (Kernel 10.5) - Server lmk0-mtc26px.int.unisa.ac.za Server Time: Tue, 15 Aug 2017 10:48:15 SAST'.

Schedule: Click here to check for your official assignments submission dates.

The screenshot shows the myUNISA interface with the 'Schedule' section active. A sidebar on the left contains navigation links similar to the previous screenshot. The main content area displays the 'Calendar by Week' view for the week of Sunday 13 August 2017 to Saturday 19 August 2017. The calendar grid shows time slots from 8 AM to 2 PM for each day of the week. Navigation buttons for '< Previous Week', 'Today', and 'Next Week >' are visible. There are also buttons for 'Printable Version' and 'Set as Default View'.

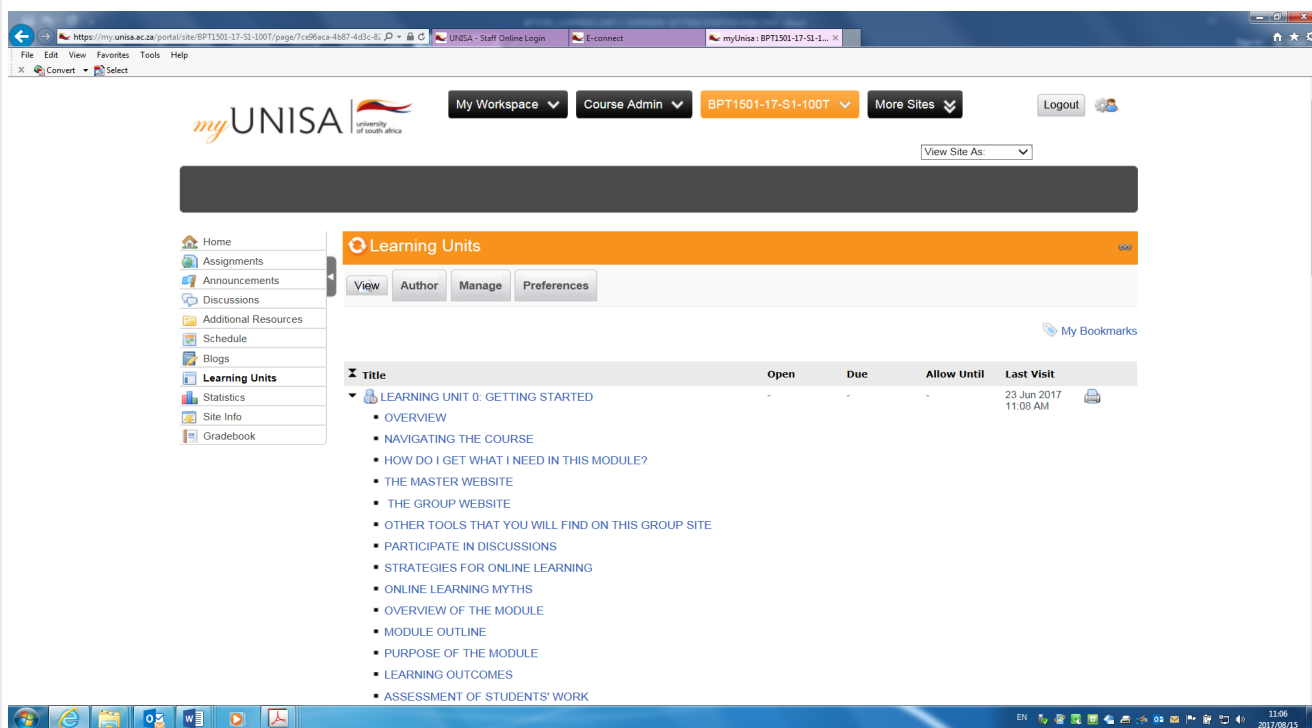
Blogs: Click here to post your ideas and see what other students have posted about the module or any other educational related issues. If you do not see your name on the first page of the listed

names, click on **AUTHORS** to see your name. Then click on your name, the window will open to give you space to write. Then follow instructions to post your blog.



Learning Units: Individual units are presented here. There are separate learning units for each unit of learning. Click here to read all about the module. Learning units are used to organize learning events. Start with the Module Overview and Orientation work through the different sections to become familiar with what the module is all about. **THIS IS YOUR TEXTBOOK OR STUDY GUIDE.**

Refer to the example of the screenshot below:



Statistics: You do not need this information at this stage. But, we are able to check how often you use this website.

Site Info: You do not need this information at this stage.

Gradebook: Records your discussion marks but you will not be able to view your marks here. Your TA and the Course Coordinator are the only ones having access to this platform.

NB: TO ACCESS YOUR GROUP SITE YOU MUST HAVE PAID YOUR INITIAL FEE. THEN, YOU WILL BE GROUPED AND ALLOCATED A TA. YOU WILL RECEIVE AN SMS INFORMING YOU OF YOUR GROUP NUMBER AND YOUR TA's NAME.

1.2.3 OTHER TOOLS THAT YOU WILL FIND ON THIS GROUP SITE

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We recommend that you use the Internet in addition to some backup readings. The myUNISA master and group website for this module are of fundamental value.

You need to have access to both the **MASTER SITE: 'BPT1501-18-S1'**, as well as the **GROUP SITE: 'BPT1501-18-S1-XXXT'** regularly.

You also need to set up your **myLife email account** so that you receive the Announcements and e-mails on your cell phone.

1.2.4 PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS

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It is important to participate in discussion forums for each Learning Unit or as required by the assignment. The Topic for discussion will be opened by your TA to set up the scene. All you need to do is to read the question under discussion, and then respond to the question asked. You also need to respond to other students' responses by clicking on: **REPLY. The window will open to enable you to write and contribute to the discussion.** Then, read your contribution before you scroll down to find **PUBLISH** (down below), to check whether your construction of sentences correct and spelling mistakes. Then click on **PUBLISH** to submit your **DISCUSSION** and allow your group members to see your discussion and make their contribution. It then means you submitted your discussion.

I REPEAT: To participate in a **Discussion** you need to **CLICK ON "REPLY"** and a window will open. You then write your response or argument in relation to the topic under discussion. Then, read your response and make corrections before you **publish it**. Then, scroll down below and click on **"PUBLISH"**. This, then means you have submitted your discussion.

1.3 STRATEGIES FOR ONLINE LEARNING

Online learning is new to many of you. This means you will be acquiring new mode of learning. In addition, the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ's) requires that all teacher students demonstrate ICT skills. Upon successful completion of this module, you will then have both the knowledge of teacher education and the skills component, the use of ICT. Furthermore, if you wish to be successful in using the online environment, you must be aware of some of the truths and myths about taking online modules.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS THE BPT1501 STUDENT?

2. Go online regularly
4. Engage with your peers and/or group members on *myUNISA*
6. Engage with and request support from your allocated TA.
8. Complete the Learning Unit Activities outlined in your learning units as required
10. Post your activities in your **BLOG** as you will need this information later in the semester. It is advisable to save your **BLOG ACTIVITIES** separate on your computer in case your blog is removed.
12. Complete assignments on time and submit in the correct spaces. You have **DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS**: Submit in the **DISCUSSION PLATFORM ONLINE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT**: Use the **ASSIGNMENT PLATFORM** to submit your essays, newspaper articles, case studies, PowerPoint presentations etc.
14. Do not submit **ONLY** assignments of your choice as **ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE COMPULSORY** in this module. **SUBMIT ALL ASSIGNMENTS**
16. Ask for help when you need it. Request help from your TA first before you send an e-mail to the lecturer. In most cases your TA has all the information you require. Your TAs are very resourceful.
18. **WORK HARD AND SMART TO PASS THE MODULE**

1.3.1 ONLINE LEARNING MYTHS

In order to learn more about the myths of online learning, you need to watch the video about online learning myths and facts. You need to click on the link below and read more: Myths and Facts about online learning:

<https://online.unlv.edu/content/students/ten-myths-about-online-learning>

What "types" of students successful in using online learning?

<https://www.thoughtco.com/ways-to-be-a-successful-online-student-1098013>

Click on the links below and read about common traits of highly successful students that allow them to learn and navigate the online environment.

http://www.fairmontstate.edu/academics/distancelearning/successful_student.asp

<https://www.careerwise.mnscu.edu/education/successonline.html>

The following link provides guidelines on how to develop online skills and become a successful online student:

<http://er.educause.edu/articles/2007/1/how-students-develop-online-learning-skills>

Below is a summary of successful online students' traits (extract from SLN Students Orientation).

- A high level of individual motivation and self-discipline
- Be open minded, share your distance learning experience and make it part of your learning process
- Time management skills and organization.
- Excellent reading comprehension and writing skills
- Communicate through writing
- Technical ability

1.4 OVERVIEW OF BEING A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

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To have the best schools in South Africa, the country needs to produce good quality teachers. The quality of teachers we want to produce can only be achieved through proper quality education and training of our prospective teachers. This module is about preparing you to become aware of the responsibilities and contribution of the profession you intend pursuing. You are in the process of undertaking an interesting and challenging but rewarding profession.

Society's expectations of teachers are very high. As a teacher you are expected to play many roles in your everyday life. In addition to having to meet the diverse needs of our children, and understanding and using a variety of teaching methods and skills to reach all learners in the classroom, you will also be expected to understand and utilize current technologies. Like an actor, you are required to be flexible and adaptable at all times. Teachers play multiple and important roles in our society and especially in the development of our children. You have not made a mistake by enrolling for this module which allows you to positively influence the life of a child.

This online signature module is set on NQF Level 5 for 12 Credits (equivalent to about 120 hours of learning) in the field of Teacher Education. It is a **COMPULSORY MODULE** for all those students who would like to obtain an undergraduate qualification in education at UNISA. It is offered in **ENGLISH ONLY**. Those interested can become teacher assistant in a school, unless they plan to pursue a degree in education and so achieve fully qualified teacher status.

On completion of this module you should be able to demonstrate your knowledge of what it entails to become a professional teacher, understand the challenges that teachers face in South African classroom and make a positive difference in learners' lives.

There are no prescribed books for this module. So, you are free to source any information related to your topic of discussion but you are required to **ACKNOWLEDGE ALL YOUR SOURCES to AVOID PLAGIARISM**. Plagiarism is a serious offence at university level and is taken seriously. Avoid being penalised for plagiarism. Readings related to the topic of discussion will be recommended to use as a guide.

You need to register with *myUnisa* and make sure you familiarize yourself with the MyUnisa platform and frequently visit the site. You will need to visit the **BPT1501** module site at least twice or thrice a week, as you will need to participate in the discussion forums and respond to the online activities,

assignments and projects designed for this module. The responses to online activities should be posted in your **BLOG** and a mark will be given for posting your ideas.

1.4.1 MODULE OUTLINE

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In this module you will learn more about “**Being a Professional Teacher**” and various aspects associated with the teaching profession. The module is organized into 6 Learning Units. See Outline illustration below:



1.4.2 PURPOSE OF THE MODULE

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On completion of this module you should be able to demonstrate your knowledge of what it entails to become a professional teacher and demonstrate your understanding of being a professional teacher. You will also acquire knowledge and understanding of the challenges that teachers face in the classroom and what teachers need to do in order to make a positive difference in the lives of learners.

Remember that the delivery mode of this module will be via *myUnisa*, and access to the internet is of vital importance. This is an interactive course and you will be expected to interact with your fellow students, form groups for your discussion forums and to submit group assignments as requested in the course. *myUnisa* is a very important communication tool as your lecturers and Teaching Assistants (TA's) will be utilizing this tool and e-mail to communicate with all the students.

1.4.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

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You need to familiarize yourself with the learning outcomes of this module. You will be exposed to different outcomes that have to be met at the end of each learning experience. This requires you to work through various activities which includes discussion forums, case studies, report writing, compilation of a portfolio and other forms of assignments. All these activities are built around

outcomes and assessment criteria, which can only be realized through your active participation and involvement throughout the course.

When you have completed this module you will have achieved the following four specific learning outcomes:

Specific Outcome 1: Comprehend and explain the roles and responsibilities of a professional teacher

Specific Outcome 2: Develop a personal teaching and learning philosophy

Specific Outcome 3: Explain multiple teaching and learning strategies appropriate to mediate learning

Specific Outcome 4: Design basic technology integrated solutions to promote innovative teaching and learning practices.

1.4.4 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' WORK

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One of the most important aspects of teaching and learning is assessment. We are required to assess your work for understanding of the various issues discussed, which will then inform us whether you have achieved the outcomes as set out in this module. We will then use **formative** and **summative assessment methods** to assess your learning.

Formative assessment for this online module means you will be assessed for actively participating in your online discussion forums with other students in your group, the quality of your writing and posting your assignments on time. You will receive feedback on your submitted work to help you pay attention to specific areas and improve your future work. So, your discussion forums are a major part of this module.

Your participation in two (2) discussion forums and submission of four (4) written assignments as required by the module is important. These assignments count towards your year mark. In order to accumulate a good year mark, you need to submit all six (6) compulsory assignments. These assignments count 80% towards your examination mark. Kindly refer to your Assessment Plan in TL101 for more information.

Summative assessment does not provide feedback. However, you will be required to submit a portfolio of evidence. This is our authentic way of assessing the work you have done throughout the course, reflected upon and submitted for assessment. Your summative assessment is in the form of a portfolio. Your portfolio counts 20% towards your examination mark. You need to refer to your Assessment Plan in TL101.

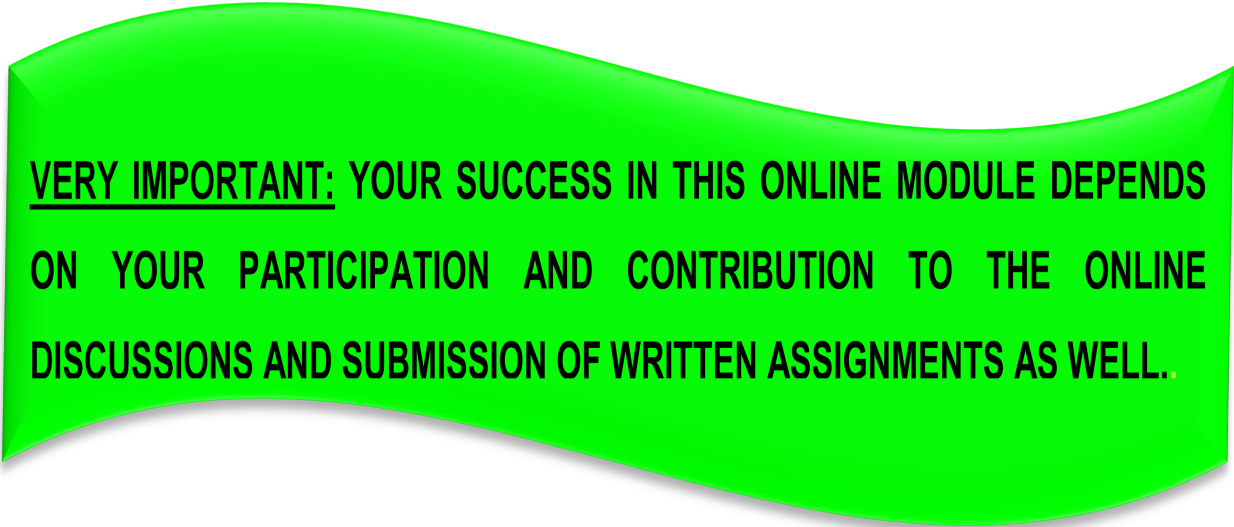
You will be given guidelines on how to complete your portfolio of evidence and this information will be available in Learning Unit 6.

The main assessment tool to be used for all the activities in this module will be a rubric. A **rubric** is a scoring tool that specifies the criteria for assessing various activities such as a discussion, case studies, essay assignments and the characteristics expected for several levels of quality. As students you need to understand the criteria used to evaluate your work and this will make assessing your work quicker and more consistent.

1.5 FORMING A LEARNING OR DISCUSSION GROUP

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In this module students are required to interact, share and exchange ideas. Opinions are also accepted but only if they are supported with facts and rational discourse. It means this online module is interactive and discussions play a significant role in the entire course. Your discussions will be monitored, assessed and marks will be allocated at the end of the discussion session. It is therefore important to form discussion teams/groups to enable you to engage with fellow students and exchange ideas.



VERY IMPORTANT: YOUR SUCCESS IN THIS ONLINE MODULE DEPENDS ON YOUR PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE ONLINE DISCUSSIONS AND SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AS WELL.

1.5.1 FORMING A DISCUSSION TEAM

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Each group of students is divided into large groups of 50. This is a large number to steer a conversation and keep track of the discussions. It is therefore important to break these large groups into smaller and manageable teams. Your TA will therefore divide you into smaller groups to allow you to have meaningful discussions.

1.5.2 YOUR INITIAL CONVERSATION

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Introduce yourself by posting a message to your class mates, telling them who you are, what your interests are and where you live, for example. It is also important to give a short explanation telling your group why you are interested in sharing your learning ideas with them. However, your Teaching Assistant (TA) will divide you into smaller groups in order to track and manage your discussions.

Below is an example of how your initial discussion may begin. But it is also advisable to go through the assignment, discussion questions etc before you start with your conversation:

- Hi! I'm not sure exactly what the project is as yet, but it looks like I need a team. Anyone interested?
- Hallo good friends- Does anyone want to collaborate with me on the project/assignment? I know Refilwe expressed an interest, anyone else? We should also start a dialogue about how to

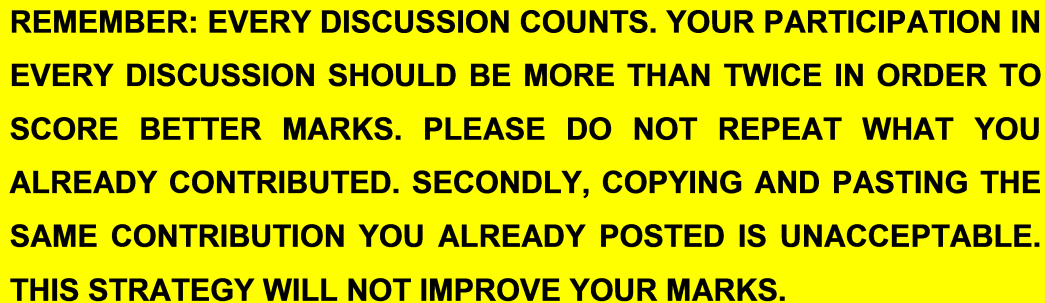
get a teaching qualification? Or I have some ideas to tease around since I've been reading about a school in North West on school debate.....

- Sakkie and I hooked up for the project and let us know if interested in joining us.
- First, let's confirm who's in the group: Your idea sounds fine with me, especially if you have some leads. I'd suggest we decide a team leader and then determine how to proceed then how the work should be divided. Did you have in mind something like...? Maybe that's a way to divide the essay/writing.
- I agree Neria should be the leader as long as she's willing to take it on. There will probably be other "opportunities" for the rest of us to lead a project in other assignments. How about Fanuel, he seem to have the drive and ready to steer the wheel?

ACTIVITY 1: WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT FROM THE EXAMPLE ABOVE?

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Introduce yourself first and then respond to this question in your discussion forum thereafter.



REMEMBER: EVERY DISCUSSION COUNTS. YOUR PARTICIPATION IN EVERY DISCUSSION SHOULD BE MORE THAN TWICE IN ORDER TO SCORE BETTER MARKS. PLEASE DO NOT REPEAT WHAT YOU ALREADY CONTRIBUTED. SECONDLY, COPYING AND PASTING THE SAME CONTRIBUTION YOU ALREADY POSTED IS UNACCEPTABLE. THIS STRATEGY WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR MARKS.

1.6 EFFECTIVE ONLINE DISCUSSION

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The discussion space is created to discuss and exchange ideas and post your work online. This space is created for you to have a social interaction with students doing the same course with you and to learn from each other.

In this space you are also afforded the opportunity to post questions to your TA about anything in the course or you can refer the question to your fellow students. The lecturer or your TA will respond to your question to help you in your studies. You then need to keep in mind that these discussion forums are public places and are used by all students and everybody will be able to view your questions and answers. As a result, you will have to adhere to the following rules:

- Respect the contribution of each member of the group

- Be friendly and use correct and acceptable language
- **PLEASE DO NOT USE SMS LANGUAGE AS THIS IS A DISCUSSION FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES**
- Keep the length of your messages/discussions short and not more than 150 words.

We hope that you have found these guidelines useful and wish you every success in your studies.

[Switch to Full View](#)