

## **The University of South Africa is the First University to Implement Shadowmatch Behavioral Benchmarking for All of its Students**

*Unisa finds additional tool to facilitate academic success by partnering with Shadowmatch. Results of pilot conclude that behavioral benchmarking of successful students within declared majors share the same habits and behaviors.*

Addison, Texas ([PRWEB](#)) August 12, 2014 -- The University of South Africa (Unisa), one of the world's mega universities with more than 350,000 students, released findings from a pilot program conducted with [Shadowmatch](#), an online tool that identifies and predicts habits and behaviors responsible for success. More than 9,500 students completed the Shadowmatch worksheet and results showed that students who perform well in any given major typically share the same habits and behaviors.

Unisa identified an opportunity to enhance the success rate of its undergraduate and postgraduate students by predicting how student habits and behaviors will serve them in a specific major. Although the institution has multiple systems in place to capture, store and analyze a wide range of student data, very little information was available on students' habits and behaviors.

“Based on the pilot program, the congruency of habits and behaviors are significant enough to prove that it is possible to create behavioral benchmarks for each major at our institution,” said Professor Oupa Mashile, Executive Director: Tuition and Facilitation of Learning at [Unisa](#). “Shadowmatch is one of the tools Unisa employs to support student success and retention as part of its teaching and learning mandate. The Shadowmatch project is being guided and supported by the Student Success Forum (SSF) at Unisa and is being implemented by the Director: Institutional Research.”

The pilot began in 2012 and was concluded in 2013. The pilot was executed in three phases:

**Phase One** - The project began with the assessment of successful students’ habits and behaviors in order to establish benchmarks of success for comparison with the broader student population. Six colleges at the institution were requested to provide the majors for inclusion in the benchmarking process and 170 successful major benchmarks were established across the colleges. The intention was to obtain a representative sample of both students and majors. The sampling frame of the study constituted students who had graduated within these majors, with the highest marks and within a specified time frame – with graduation being regarded as one of the indicators of a successful student. The top 25 graduates from the previous year (2011) in the selected majors were identified for participation by means of the Shadowmatch worksheet.

**Phase Two** - Following the fieldwork to establish habit and behavior benchmarks for top performing Unisa students, the Shadowmatch worksheet was circulated to current Unisa students in the selected major for completion. This data was used to determine the fit or match between the students’ current habits and behaviors and those of high performing students in the same majors – as determined through the benchmarking process. Based on the student’s match to the benchmark for their major, students were provided with an automatically generated personal development plan to support the development of habits and behaviors associated with success in the particular majors.

**Phase Three** – In this phase Unisa students who participated in the pilot were surveyed to capture their experiences and perceptions of the Shadowmatch tool. Of the students surveyed, 92% indicated that they would

recommend Shadowmatch to fellow students.

The University of South Africa (UNISA) is the first South African University to implement Shadowmatch© with all registered students, across the institution. Shadowmatch is part of the suite of tools that UNISA employs to learn more about their students, identify students at risk and provide support and referrals to improve student success and retention.

Students can access support through their chosen mentors, the Frequently asked Questions page, Shadowmatch staff, tutors as well as the Department of Career Counseling and Development.

#### About the University of South Africa

The University of South Africa (Unisa) is South Africa's oldest university. With more than 350,000 students, Unisa is one of the world's mega universities attracting students from 130 countries globally. The university has a rich tapestry of study disciplines that includes the humanities, business and management, law and criminal justice, agriculture and environmental sciences, and science, engineering and technology. For more information on Unisa, visit [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za).

#### About Shadowmatch USA

Shadowmatch USA, based in Dallas and the exclusive provider and administrator of the Shadowmatch behavioral benchmarking tool in the U.S., is committed to positively impacting individuals and teams to accelerate business performance. The Shadowmatch system and services identify and predict specific employee habits and behaviors responsible for team's success. Armed with these powerful insights, business leaders can better build, manage, develop and deploy their teams and individual employees. Follow our news on Twitter @ShadowmatchUSA or like us on Facebook.



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