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NEWSLETTER

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## Classroom 2.0: Generative AI Revolutionising Higher Education



- **NWU 365 Microsoft Storage: All You Need to Know**
- **IT Research Breakthroughs at NWU**
- **What is SIS?**



**03. COVER STORY**  
**Classroom 2.0:**  
Generative AI Revolutionising  
Higher Education

**04. Introducing BUA IT!**

**05. What is SIS?**

**06. NWU 365 Microsoft Storage:**  
All you need to know

**07. 5 REASONS**  
To set up multi-factor authentication

**08. IT Research  
Breakthroughs at NWU**

# Embracing the Microsoft Era

*Get to know the editorial team, IT:  
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# Classroom 2.0:

## Generative AI Revolutionising Higher Education

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Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is rewriting the syllabus, reshaping the very fabric of learning, and leaving traditional pedagogy in its digital dust. Picture this: a lecture hall bathed in the soft glow of screens, where students and AI algorithms engage in spirited debates about quantum mechanics. Professors, once the gatekeepers of knowledge, now find themselves sharing the stage with ChatGPT, the resident polymath. And as the chalk dust settles, we witness a seismic shift—a revolution fuelled by ones and zeros, where plagiarism detection algorithms tango with creativity-enhancing bots.

But wait, there's more! The rise of AI in Education (AIED) publications from 2016 to 2022 reads like a blockbuster script. The trailblazer China leads the charge, publishing groundbreaking studies that make Gutenberg's printing press look like child's play. GenAI tools—those digital sorcerers—wave their wands, conjuring poems, essays, and even elegant lines of Python code. Suddenly, the classroom isn't just a room; it's a canvas where pixels and prose collide.

And what about authorship? Brace yourselves because GenAI scoffs at tradition. Who wrote that brilliant essay? Was it the student burning the midnight oil or an algorithm sipping electrons? The lines blur, and we find ourselves in a post-plagiarism world. Hybrid writing—crafted by both humans and AI—becomes the norm. Language barriers crumble, allowing global collaboration to flourish. But fear not, dear mentors and guides; your wisdom still echoes through the digital ether.

**Hold onto your graduation caps because GenAI isn't just a buzzword—it's a superpower. Creativity blooms, personalised learning blossoms, and skills development takes flight. But tread carefully, for this power comes with responsibility.** UNESCO calls for regulation and safeguarding of data privacy and user rights. And as we navigate this brave new world, let's ensure that every student, whether armed with AI or a trusty pen, has a fair shot at success.

Let's rewrite the syllabus, debug the curriculum, and embrace the Age of AI. Welcome to Classroom 2.0, where algorithms attend office hours and the final exam. It's a Turing test.

### GenAI in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities

As generative AI becomes more integrated into education, institutions face challenges maintaining academic integrity. Detecting AI-generated content in assignments and exams remains a challenge. Institutions must address plagiarism, uphold academic honesty, and ensure fairness and equity in AI-generated content. Clear guidelines are necessary for responsible GenAI integration, addressing privacy, data security, and ethical implications.

To enhance academic integrity, institutions can develop robust policies, educate students and faculty about AI tools, promote originality, and implement multi-layered assessment methods.

Additionally, fostering a culture of transparency by encouraging open discussions about the use of AI in academic work ensures that all stakeholders are aware of the potential and limitations of these technologies.

While GenAI revolutionises education, thoughtful planning, ethical considerations, and a focus on student learning outcomes are essential for successful implementation. Let's harness GenAI's potential while preserving the integrity of academic work. Institutions can take several proactive steps to integrate generative AI while maintaining academic integrity effectively:

**Comprehensive Training:** Provide faculty and students with ethical AI use training. Ensure everyone understands how to leverage these tools responsibly.

**Clear Guidelines:** Establish policies regarding AI usage in academic work, including proper attribution practices and consequences for misuse.

**Collaborative Learning:** Encourage students to work together, fostering a deeper appreciation of AI's potential and limitations.

**Promote Innovation:** Emphasize original thought and creativity alongside AI integration.

**Continuous Dialogue:** Engage with AI experts, policymakers, and the educational community to stay informed about best practices and emerging trends.

It's high time to rethink plagiarism and the reliability of AI tools in assessment. Institutions should critically examine the effectiveness of AI detectors and consider the grey areas they encounter. Is it merely about verbatim copying, or should we appreciate the synthesis of information, even if it involves collaboration with AI?

Attribution becomes trickier in a hybrid writing world, where authorship blurs. Let's educate students about AI ethics, emphasising respect for intellectual property, whether human or algorithmic.

By taking these steps, higher education institutions can create an environment where AI enhances learning while upholding the highest standards of academic integrity.

# Introducing BUA IT!

**W**e are about to introduce you to a platform that will make collaboration a breeze. Meet BUA IT, your integrated IT visual and audio hub. This platform will make your work and learning experience more exciting than ever before. With this solution and many other technological advances we'll be unveiling soon, we are slowly transforming our institution into a tech-savvy place of learning. Our goal is to create an institution equipped with all the technological solutions needed for our lecturers to impart knowledge seamlessly and without any boundaries.

## Why BUA IT?

BUA IT is a versatile platform for receiving and sending messages. Its standout feature is its integrated approach, allowing you to do more within one platform. IT training is a crucial element of our department, and thanks to BUA IT, all IT training communication will now take place within the platform. Use it to ask questions, share information, and stay up-to-date with all our internal IT training sessions. Plus, you can harness visual and audio content, thanks to features that allow you to upload and download content in any format.

BUA IT can be accessed on any device with an internet connection and a web browser, including mobile devices, tablets, and desktops.

## Notable features:

**Centralised Information Hub:** A single platform integrating all NWU IT resources.

**Multimedia Content:** Incorporation of images, graphics, videos, and animations to facilitate better understanding and engagement.

**User-Friendly Interface:** Designed to be intuitive and accessible to all users.

**Responsive Design:** Compatible with various devices to ensure ease of access anytime, anywhere.

**Comprehensive Training Modules:** Enhanced IT training through interactive multimedia content.

**Monitoring and Reporting:** Robust system for tracking and reporting IT issues and solutions.

## Here is what makes BUA IT stand out from other collaborative tools:

### Versatile, Agile Platform

BUA IT is a versatile platform that allows you to do more than just send messages. It is user-friendly and easy to figure out. In fact, it's so intuitive that even a technophobe wouldn't have trouble understanding how it works.

### Continuous Improvement

At NWU, we embrace a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. Every day, we identify areas for enhancement and come up with innovative ways to make our institution one of the best. This is thanks to our team of experts who work hard every day to build the right online tools. BUA IT is one such tool that will play a critical role in improving our workplace.

### Harnessing Visual and Audio Multimedia

The BUA IT platform is perfect for sharing, receiving, and consuming visual and audio files. It is designed to accommodate multiple file types in various formats.

### Facilitation of IT Training

Are you looking for the perfect platform to facilitate IT training? Look no further. Our BUA IT platform allows you to conduct IT training seamlessly, no matter where you are.

### Integrate Marketing and Change Management

We can use BUA IT to integrate both marketing and change management. This means we no longer have to hop from one platform to another. All our marketing activities can be handled within this versatile platform. The same goes for change management, which can be managed with just a few clicks. Stay tuned for more updates on BUA IT, and don't forget to check out our new BUA IT website.

## How secure is BUA IT?

BUA IT is hosted within our secure Drupal environment, protected by NWU's Infrastructure and Platforms Department. Security is a top priority, and our architects, engineers, and specialists work collaboratively to ensure our environment is highly secure, capable of safely hosting all our systems and data. Currently, there is no integration between BUA IT and Microsoft applications within our Drupal environment. However, we are actively upgrading our system to enhance our service offerings, including potential future integrations.





# SIS?

Are you wondering what SIS is? SIS is the acronym used for the Student Information System, which supports the administration of the student academic lifecycle. **The NWU has embarked on a journey to replace the current NWU Student Information System (known as VSS),** which is over 20 years old, with a new solution, Anthology SIS, to optimise the Student Administrative Lifecycle.

**T**he new Student Information System will be known as NWU Student. It comprises two modules: Anthology Nexus CRM (for recruitment, admissions and selections) and Anthology SIS (for registration, records, examination, fees, financial aid, progression and graduation).

### What is the purpose of NWU Student?

NWU Student will serve as a cornerstone, driving the NWU's digital business strategies and supporting long-term goals for enrolment, retention and student success. This project goes beyond system implementation; it is an optimisation and transformation initiative impacting most operations, encompassing staff, processes, technology and data related to the student administrative lifecycle. The focus is on principles such as digitalisation, standardisation, alignment, automation and optimisation, paving the way for future digital transformation.

#### NWU Student aims to:

- Enhance client-centricity with self-service options, automated responses, and readily accessible information for students.
- Optimise operations for greater effectiveness and efficiency.
- Transform the student administrative lifecycle to empower and benefit students, staff and other stakeholders.

Moreover, NWU Student will integrate with various systems and processes across different business areas, improving overall process effectiveness.

#### Planned phases of NWU Student and timelines

The first phase mainly involved implementing the Nexus CRM module with a focus on the recruit-to-enrol process. It went live on 16 February 2024, with the 2025 application cycle opening on 2 April 2024.

The second phase will implement the SIS module, focusing on registration through to graduation, with a target go-live date of January 2025.

### What is its role in NWU Student?

The implementation team is composed of a diverse group, including the service provider Anthology, NWU-IT, and subject matter experts from various business areas such as SALA, Student Finance, Teaching & Learning (T&L), and other representatives. The implementation team is managed by a project management team consisting of representatives from SALA, T&L, NWU-IT, Student Finance, and a programme manager. Corporate Communication plays a vital role in the communication efforts of the project.

NWU Student is the number one priority project of NWU-IT, with resources seconded and dedicated to the project. Concurrently, a new integration platform was established to integrate new solutions including NWU Student into the NWU ecosystem. These two priority projects challenge IT in various aspects, including the implementation of new technologies, the first enterprise-level software-as-a-service (SaaS) and cloud solutions, and addressing identified gaps through the development of new solutions and third-party services. The NWU-IT team embraced these challenges with determination, agility, and resilience to take the NWU forward.

### What is IT's responsibility?

IT's primary responsibility is data migration from the current system to NWU Student and developing integrations for 15 downstream systems (see diagram below) that utilise student information in related processes. The dedicated IT team also plays a vital role in other project phases, including blueprint development, business process optimisation, classroom pilots, training, user acceptance testing, cutover to production, and post-implementation support.

Quoting Steve Jobs: **“Great things in business are never done by one person; they are done by a team of people.”** Acknowledgements go to the IT teams - Business Systems, Infrastructure and Planning, Academic Office Solutions and Architecture, as well as the chief director Mr Boeta Pretorius, all of whom have made pivotal contributions to the project. More information

#### For more information:

Visit the project website: [SIS Eagle Project Home](#).  
Contact the project team at [Talk2SIS@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Talk2SIS@nwu.ac.za).

# NWU 365 Microsoft Storage: All You Need to Know



## Best practices to manage your OneDrive cloud storage:

Only keep official day-to-day active data in your OneDrive.  
Do not keep duplicates of your data.  
Regularly clean up your OneDrive.

### Outlook

Outlook has an Online Archive/In-Place Archive that does not contribute to the NWU pooled storage. Move in-active mail to the Online Archive/In-Place Archive to keep your mailbox storage within the limits of 10 GB for staff and 1 GB for students.

## Best practices to manage an Outlook mailbox:

- Keep your active mailbox size within the set limits.
- Use your Online Archive/In-Place Archive for in-active email items.
- Regularly clean up your mailbox, as it will only be active while you are at NWU.
- When sharing documents internally with your colleagues, use a link instead of attaching a file to the email.
- Mail can be exported to a local file for backup purposes or to take with you when you leave the university.

### Teams (SharePoint)

The Teams platform empowers seamless collaboration and efficient content management, enabling diverse groups such as project teams that promote teamwork, document sharing, collaborative work, and collective project oversight. Notably, the Files tab within Teams hosts documents stored in the integrated SharePoint environment, delivering a robust and organized framework for document management and collaboration.

## Best practices to manage your Teams (SharePoint) cloud storage:

- Only keep working data in your team.
- Perform regular data clean-ups within the team.
- Clean up the Teams files when a project is completed.

## Summary

SharePoint/Teams, Outlook and OneDrive that store data or files in the cloud contribute to the NWU pooled storage. Please be aware of keeping your storage within the set limits.

A year ago, we introduced you to NWU 365 Microsoft Storage and a few months later, Microsoft implemented changes to all educational institution's storage use worldwide and implemented pooled storage. In this article, we highlight some of the changes.

Before we dive into it, it's important to note that NWU has adopted a Digital Transformation Strategy that guides us on which applications to use and which ones not to use, including platforms for storing our information.

## Maintenance and Management of NWU Storage

The maintenance and management of storage within NWU remain among our top priorities. That's why we have a dedicated team to ensure all changes are properly implemented. Our goal is to ensure that your data and our information remain confidential and secure. Data security has become a high priority with these changes, leading to the implementation of quotas to support this initiative.

## What are the applications that contribute to NWU MS 365 Pooled Storage?

### OneDrive

OneDrive provides personal cloud storage for official files and documents, allowing users to store, access, and share their files from anywhere, anytime, and from many devices.

# 5 REASONS TO SET UP MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is an advanced technique requiring two or more methods to verify a user's identity, such as email and text codes, authenticator apps, and biometric authentication. Simply choosing a strong username and password is no longer enough to keep your digital documents safe. Hackers have developed various methods to steal credentials and gain unauthorised access to private accounts. Setting up MFA adds an extra layer of protection to safeguard your information. Enabling MFA helps protect you from breaches, and data and financial loss.

## 1. MFA provides added security for your account

MFA requires additional validation of login credentials, so even if cybercriminals manage to access a user's password, they'll still need to confirm their identity in various ways. The more authorisation methods, the more secure accounts will be.

## 2. Mitigates the Risk of Unmanaged Devices

Remote work often involves using personal devices and insecure internet connections, increasing the risk of cyberattacks. Personal devices lack the robust security of company-owned machines, making them more vulnerable to malware that can compromise the organisation's network. MFA eliminates concerns about the security of employees' personal devices and Wi-Fi connections.

## 3. Enhances Network Defence and Alerts Against Unauthorised Access

MFA prevents cybercriminals from accessing the network with stolen passwords, ensuring other security tools function properly. It also acts as a warning system, alerting employees to report unexpected secondary authentication requests.

## 4. Enhances Employee Convenience and Flexibility

MFA enhances security without the hassle of frequent password resets. Users can sign in with a fingerprint scan or a single-use code, improving convenience. It also enables secure remote access, allowing employees to work safely from home or while traveling.

## 5. Assists with Compliance

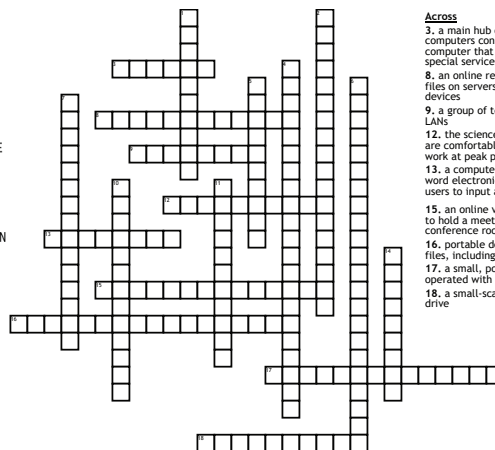
Laws such as the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) require organisations to have strong authentication processes, especially when handling sensitive data like personal addresses. By securing your online documents, MFA ensures compliance with national laws.

*MFA is a security method commonly required among cloud service providers and with all these benefits, setting up MFA is worth the effort!*

## Online Safety

T	P	R	I	V	A	C	Y	O	A	S	Y	F
N	O	I	T	A	M	R	O	F	N	I	R	E
L	P	E	R	S	O	N	A	L	P	O	K	P
M	S	P	T	S	B	P	C	R	T	O	R	C
T	E	L	I	A	M	E	N	S	O	E	Y	P
H	C	S	L	L	R	A	I	B	D	B	P	Y
G	U	D	A	O	A	H	E	A	E	D	S	A
I	R	R	T	E	A	C	T	R	O	S	T	I
R	E	O	I	A	A	O	C	W	E	O	S	D
Y	I	W	G	F	R	R	N	R	R	I	I	M
P	A	S	I	S	I	L	D	D	O	M	A	I
O	T	S	D	M	O	D	R	R	D	E	P	P
C	R	A	E	A	A	S	P	A	R	E	N	T
A	L	P	D	T	S	S	P	A	M	L	R	E

HISTORY  
DOMAIN  
PREDATORS  
DOWNLOAD  
DIGITAL  
PERSONAL  
FACEBOOK  
CYBERCRIME  
SPAM  
COPYRIGHT  
ADDRESS  
PRIVACY  
INFORMATION  
FIREWALL  
PASSWORDS  
PARENTS  
SECURE  
E-MAIL



### Across

- 3. a main hub of storage for many different computers connected through a network; a computer that runs server software and provides special services to client computers on demand
- 8. an online repository that allows you to save files on servers instead of on your personal devices
- 9. a group of technologies for networking in LANs
- 12. the science of designing workplaces that are comfortable and safe and allow people to work at peak performance
- 13. a computer file used to convey the written word electronically and in print by allowing users to input and modify text and images
- 15. an online video conference that allows you to hold a meeting with others who are not in the conference room
- 16. portable device to store all types of digital files, including photos, movies, and music
- 17. a small, portable computer that is operated with a touch
- 18. a small-scale version of an external hard drive

### Down

- 1. a way to organize files based on specific criteria, such as date, type, or category
- 2. a term describing how and where you store digital information
- 4. a wall-mounted board onto which information is projected through a digital projector connected to a computer
- 5. a mobile phone with advanced computing abilities, such as texting, video chatting, and e-mailing
- 6. software used to write and format documents
- 7. a computer with separate hardware components for the monitor, keyboard, and mouse
- 10. the interaction people share with others
- 11. the websites and apps that enable you to keep in touch with friends, family, and coworkers by sharing text, images, and video
- 14. a portable electronic textbook that is viewable on a computer

### Word Bank

- social media
- virtual meeting
- thumb drive
- ergonomics
- interactive whiteboard
- desktop computer
- information storage
- document
- tablet computer
- server
- external hard drive
- filesystem
- meeting
- Ethernet
- e-textbook
- communication
- smartphone
- word processing software
- cloud storage

## IT WORD SEARCH

# IT Research Breakthroughs at NWU

**I**n this article, we are about to share some of the significant research being conducted and how it is impacting the broader tech industry. NWU has recommitted itself to the eResearch effort, which will help NWU IT continuously improve within the research space. IT AOS has a Research Analyst dedicated to working with researchers and research data.

NWU IT hosts and teaches researchers new skills via the Carpentries. This is done via Data, Software and Library Carpentry workshops. IT is in the process of upgrading the NWU HPC to ensure we provide the best service possible to the researchers.

## How does North-West University foster innovation in its IT research programmes?

AOS has a dedicated Research Analyst that focuses on the research environment and the researcher needs. The role of the RA is to engage with researchers on a regular basis and determine timely and effective solutions to business functions and processes that will better the environment within IT.

## Examples of successful collaborations between North-West University and industry partners in IT research

IT has worked with the Carpentries since 2015 as a Member organisation. This membership allows the NWU to host and teach workshops that focus on bettering the researcher's programming skills and teaches best practices in working with data.

IT also created and maintained the Nextcloud storage cluster in collaboration with Nextcloud.com. NWU IT has helped to improve the platform within the educational spectrum, having a keynote speaker at their conference in 2018.

## What challenges do researchers at North-West University face?

Research Niche areas had some issues with regards to software needed, hardware needed, getting equipment registered within the NWU IT Infrastructure, support from service desks and the knowledge needed to best support specific niche software. Continuous training of users and support desks are in place to better the knowledge of specific areas within IT as well as software used within the NWU environment.

## What future trends or emerging technologies in IT is North-West University focusing on?

AI is becoming more and more used within the research environment. This will help to automate a lot of tasks as well as support the research areas in getting more information quicker. A lot of faculties and schools are using niche software that needs support and thus IT will need to work closely with these schools to know how to best support them.