



Student Support: Sim Cards for Mobile Data

RUconnected and the library website has been zero rated by CellC and Telkom, meaning that these providers will not charge you data for using these websites. MTN has also provided zero rating but with a 500mb monthly limit. We have applied to Vodacom but are awaiting confirmation from Vodacom and will send a communication once this has been confirmed.

PLEASE NOTE:

- **Access to RUconnected** will be free but any links to Google, YouTube or any link in RUconnected that leaves ru.ac.za will incur data costs i.e. you pay to access these sites, reducing your available airtime or data.
- **Access to the Library website** will be free – but any of the databases or links that leave ru.ac.za will incur data costs.

You can purchase, [RICA and activate](#) a prepaid SIM card for Cell C, Telkom, MTN or Vodacom at food retailers such as Checkers, Shoprite and Pick n Pay that are open during the lockdown. You **need** your ID document and proof of address to have the SIM card activated.

SIM cards are low cost. The current prices at Checkers are as follows:

- Vodacom Starter Pack – 0,99c;
- Telkom Single SIM – R 0,99;
- Cell C 3 in 1 – R 3.99;
- MTN Bonanza – R 3.49

However, most SIMs will not be able to access the internet browser unless a small data bundle is loaded (e.g. as little as R7.30 for 25MB for Telkom). The minimum data bundle is therefore necessary to access the zero rated web pages, but no further fees will be incurred. You will need data to download the RUconnected app (14MB) and to install any updates you may need on your device. Please check which of these providers have the best coverage in the area where you find yourself now.

RUconnected app is zero rated

RUConnected is zero rated which means that accessing RUConnected via a web page or by using the mobile app. When using a smartphone, accessing RUconnected via a browser or the app will not incur data costs. The app is useful for working offline, as you are able to download course content to use offline. **RUconnected is currently**

zero rated for CellC, Telkom and MTN (MTN has a 500 MB cap per month and once you reach this limit you will be charged for any further data usage, we have applied to Vodacom and awaiting confirmation). If you are on another network that does not provide zero rating you can purchase a SIM card for one of the other mobile providers from most retail stores, even during lockdown.

See the details below on how zero rating will apply to you:

- **All service providers** require a minimum amount of data to access the internet but once you are on the RUConnected landing page, access is free. You should therefore always maintain a minimum balance of data (it can be a small data bundle).
- **Please note that if you access any other site from RUConnected eg. Youtube, Google and Library resources, you will use data and be charged accordingly.**

More data saving tips:

General tips:

- Disable mobile data on your phone or shut down your router when you are not needing to use data.

Laptop tips:

- Switch off all updates or set them to manually update:
Windows 10: start – settings - updates and security - advanced options - automatically download updates: "off"
- Set your mobile data connection to “metered”.
Windows 10: Go to start - settings - network & internet - show available networks - choose your network which uses mobile data - properties - metered connection: "on"
- Close unnecessary apps.
- Do updates while on Wi-Fi / fibre / ADSL or a lower cost network.

Mobile phone tips:

- Monitor your data usage and set usage limits on your mobile phone or mobile data account, as well as activate warnings as your data gets depleted (i.e. at 50%, 75%) to avoid using out-of-bundle data. With prepaid, the risks are less but the same principles apply. You can set a monthly data limit, select the Smart Data Saver option (or equivalent), or simply set which apps may use mobile and background data.

How to do this: Go to settings - networks – “data usage”.

- Lessen data usage of email apps by deselecting the sync option (Gmail) and deselecting background data.

How to do this (Gmail): Open app – settings – your Gmail account – data usage – deselect “Sync Gmail”.

How to do this (Outlook): Settings – apps – select Outlook – data usage –

deselect

“Background data”.

This does mean that you will have to sync your emails manually. Therefore, make sure to open, sync and view your emails regularly to stay up to date.

- Disable notifications as these also use data. You can set these in the app itself or via the settings function.
- Switch off all updates or set to manually update. Some updates are important for security and to keep your device functioning optimally.
On Android: Play Store - settings - app download preference "over Wi-Fi only";
Auto- update apps - "Don't auto-update apps"
On IOS: Settings - iTunes & App Store - “Off”

Where to get help

- Ask a friend who is familiar with the use of RUconnected
- Ask your lecturer or course tutors
- For device and internet related queries, email the IT student help desk
studentsupport@ru.ac.za
- For RUconnected and RUconnected app related queries, email edtech@ru.ac.za