**Education and Training Opportunities**

Obtaining a good education is one of the best things you can do to ensure that you find a job opportunity and that a quality life lies ahead of you. Jobs are so scarce, that only people with excellent skills are taken by employers. Getting a good education will give you the edge over other work-seekers.

Today’s world is one in which technology develops so fast and knowledge is collected and shared so fast, that workers need to continue learning as long as they work to stay ahead and remain useful in their work-place. The concept of *lifelong learning* was coined to show that people actually nowadays learn new things as long as they live.

Here is some information on the different education and training opportunities available. Make sure you understand these different education and training opportunities, to make the best choice amongst them.

**General Education and Training**

General Education and Training refers to the first ten years of schooling all people must undergo, meaning from grade R to grade 9. Education is compulsory up to grade 9. The Department of Basic Education governs this education.

You can study for the above at:

* Early Childhood Development Centres (for pre-school children)
* Public schools
* Private schools (independent schools)(set up by a church group or other community organisation)
* Special needs schools (if you have a disability)
* Some parents provide home schooling to their children

There are a few pointers that you should look out for regarding education and training in the General Education and Training band:

* Make sure you obtain career advice to make the correct subject choice in Grade 9 for grade 10. You can visit [www.careerhelp.org.za](http://www.careerhelp.org.za) for a work-book on Subject choice.
* If you do not have the right subjects when you leave school, you might not get entry to the study direction of your choice.
* Continue school as long as you can and work hard, so you can obtain good marks for your Grades-this will help you to get bursaries and your employer will see that you are a consistent hard worker.
* Choose subjects that will allow you entry into most study directions and for which you will be able to study a scarce skill, so that you can get employment. Look up the ***Scarce skills*** fact sheet to see which skills are in short supply.
* Subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Science will bring you far to enter studies and to find work in South Africa. Remember to take into consideration also, whether you do well enough in these subjects, to enable you to pass them.
* Subjects in the computer field are always safe options, especially in today’s labour market, where all employees must be able to work on a computer.
* Subjects such as Mathematical Literacy and Biblical Studies may look an easy way out, but will not help you to get access into study directions or work.

**Further Education and Training**

After compulsory schooling, most learners try and complete the school years from Grade 10 to Grade 12. This is generally known as falling in the Further Education and Training band.

Important pointers:

* A Grade 12 qualification will provide you with entry into degree courses and Certificate courses.
* Most employers require at least a Grade 12 qualification for a job.
* Get career advice at the end of grade 11 to choose your study direction- the Department of Higher Education and training and the National Youth Development Agency can help you with a career choice. You can also obtain career advice from Universities, Universities of Technology and Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges.
* Applications for entry at post-school educational institutions, such as Universities and Universities of Technology close early in the year before you have to enter the institution-make sure you know the deadline.
* Bursary application deadlines are very often early in your Grade 12 year-make sure you apply on time.
* Make sure that you budget properly for your studies, because you will need registration fees, study fees, books, accommodation and food, transport costs as well as pocket money.
* If you did not pass matric, you can participate in the Second Chance matric rewrite-contact the National Youth Development Agency.
* If you do not have the subjects or symbols required for entry in your chosen study field, you can redo your matric or rewrite the subjects.
* You can take a gap year if you do not know what to study, or did not obtain entry to your course of choice and try and find a work experience opportunity for the year.
* Young women should avoid falling pregnant when they are still at school-bringing up a child and studying at the same time, is very difficult.
* Stay away from drugs and crime, since this will not only give you a bad reputation, but also lower your ability to do your best at school.

**Adult Basic Education and Training**

Some adults never had the chance to complete their schooling and may not even be able to read and write or make sums. These are the most essential skills of all. If they could learn these skills, their chances of getting a job will also be better.

There are two options for adult basic education:

**Kha Ri Gudi:** Helping adults to gain the skills of reading, writing and numeracy.

**National Senior Certificate for Adults:** This Certificate provides a second chance for adults who were not successful at school.

The following points are important:

* There are a number of adult basic education and training centres countrywide that can assist with *Kha Ri Gudi*.
* The Adult Learning Centres will eventually be named Community Colleges.
* For the National Senior Certificate for Adults you must be older than 18, not studying at another school, passed Grade 9, or be able to present an equal qualification.
* Many adult work-seekers can consider these options, especially because it has been found our people have low skills, whilst the jobs that are available, are asking for higher skills.
* Contact a Career Counsellor at the Department of Labour for employment counselling.

The idea of adult basic education is a very good option for adults who have not finalised their school qualifications and want to improve their employability.

**Higher Education and Training**

Higher Education and training consists of all Higher Certificates and degrees post school. You may obtain a Higher Certificate, Advanced Diploma, Bachelor’s degree, Bachelor Honours degree, Master’s degree or Doctor’s degree and even a number of Occupational Certificates where you have gathered work experience and study through your work.

There are very many study fields that you can choose from. There are basically twelve learning areas, such as 1) Agriculture and nature conservation, 2) Culture and arts, 3)Business, commerce and management, 4) Communication studies and language, 5) Education, training and development, 6) Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology, 7) Human and Social Studies, 8) Law, Military Science and Security, 9) Health Sciences and Social Services, 10) Mathematical, Physical, Computer and Life Sciences, 11) Services, 12)Physical Planning and construction. In these learning fields there are many qualifications to choose from.

Important pointers:

* Make sure you receive employment counselling from Department of Labour before you choose your career. Too many people choose degrees in fields such as Human and Social Studies (a Bachelor of Arts or BA degree), where one can find too many people. They thus will not find work easily.
* Choose to study a scarce skill to enable you to find work easily.
* Plan your study budget properly, so you do not find yourself out of money half way.
* Put everything into your studies to make sure you pass well, because this will ensure continued funding from bursaries. You will also be chosen above other work-seekers when you apply for a job.
* Make use of a study mentor if you can or set up study support groups. You can also contact a career advisor at the Student Counselling Bureau for help with study skills.
* Speak to a Psychologist at the Student Counselling Bureau if you lose motivation or have problems that interfere with your study-do not give up. Your education is the most important aspect in your life.
* Enjoy your study years and participate in some free-time activities outside of studying-this will help you to become a well-rounded person.
* Try and study for higher degrees such as Master’s degrees and Doctor’s degrees-our country needs highly qualified people.

**Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

Technical Vocational Education and Training courses are excellent ways of preparing yourself for employment in a trade or craft. Public and Private Further Education and Training Colleges have been renamed to be called **Technical Vocational Education and Training Colleges (TVET) Colleges.** They offer a wide variety of courses, from short courses of a few hours to formal diploma courses of three years. There are also a variety of learning fields to choose from, for example Agriculture, Arts and Culture, Business, Commerce and Management, Engineering, manufacturing and Technology, Building and Construction and Security.

The following pointers should be taken note of:

* If you want to study to prepare for a specific career, you should study at a TVET College.
* Make sure the TVET College is registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training.
* Make sure that the course you are enrolling for is an accredited course.
* TVET Colleges gives the theory and practical training, so you are ready to provide results when you enter work-employers prefer this type of training.
* TVET courses are in study fields that are needed in South Africa.
* You can apply for a bursary at the National Students’ Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and if you pass your exams, you will not have to pay back your bursary.
* Ask for employment counselling from the Career Counsellor at a Labour Centre close by you to choose the study course that will suit you best.

The following types of certificates and diplomas can be obtained at a TVET College:

* **National Certificate Vocational (NCV):** The duration is three years and it is equal to Grade 12. You need to have Grade 9 to enter.
* **Nated course:** The duration is 3 years and you will get a Diploma (N6) which is two years above Grade 12. You need Grade 9 to enter at N1 (Engineering) and grade 12 to enter at N4.
* **National Higher Certificate**: The duration and qualification depend on the programme. The entry requirements are a Grade 12 together with the specific requirements set by the Higher Education Institution or college. The National Higher Certificate is not the same as a degree.
* **Non-formal:**
* These are enrichment courses that are often provided to company employees. The qualification and requirements depend on the course.

**Learnerships:**

Employers say that some learners are not ready for work because they have never worked before and do not know how to apply their knowledge in the work-place.

Learnerships offer people the opportunity to do both classroom training, gather practical skills in the class and gather work experience at an employer to obtain a qualification. In this way the employer with whom they did their learnership, get to know their work ethic and might employ them.

Important pointers:

* Unemployed people can only participate in a learnership if there is an employer that is willing to provide the required work experience.
* You can do a learnership in any trade area, but also in other learning fields, such as tourism and health care services.
* A specific Sector Education and training Authority (SETA) will oversee your training.
* A learnership usually takes a year, but some courses take two or three years.
* You can set up a small business or find a job more easily with a learnership, because you would have had experience in a work-place.
* You can get a learnership qualification through a TVET College, or by responding to an advertisement by an employer or through Recognition of Prior Learning (see below). Employers advertise in newspapers, or place adverts in the community, city, town or community.
* You need to meet the entry requirements for the learnership which may differ from learnership to learnership. You might find that the entry requirements relate to the field of study, such as Mathematics at school level.
* You do not need to pay to study the learnership.
* All learners must be paid a learner allowance by the employer.
* You need to sign a Learnership Agreement with the training provider and the employer. You also need to sign a short-term employment contract with the employer if you are unemployed.
* The employer and training provider will provide the training.
* You will be assessed by a qualified assessor.
* You need to do a trade test at the end of your training at a trade test centre, after which you will receive the Red Seal Qualification and be recognized as an artisan. Contact the Sector Education and Training Authority overseeing your qualification, for an application for a trade test or speak to the training provider.
* You can enquire at the Department of Labour for possible learnerships in their opportunity database.
* It is not guaranteed that you will get a job after your training, but you will have a qualification, that will make it easier to find a job.
* Contact a Career Counsellor at Department of Labour to help you decide which learnership to choose.

**Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships are limited to technical trades, while learnerships can be for any career, for example tour leader. An apprenticeship is based on the Competency Based Modular Training (CBMT) system, meaning that an apprentice must pass the relevant modular and phase tests, as well as a final trade test to be recognized as an artisan. Apprentices need to work for the employer for a minimum/maximum period as prescribed in the relevant conditions of apprenticeship. Learnerships are outcomes-based, thus if learners can demonstrate their competencies during assessment, they receive the qualification or credits.

Apprentices receive CBMT for a period of 3 to 5 years, depending on the prescribed duration of the designated trade. Apprentices need to complete each module of training and pass the relevant module test before they can continue to the next module or phase of the training. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to pass the said tests, the apprentices will be informed that the apprenticeship contract will be cancelled/terminated in terms of the relevant conditions of apprenticeship. As already indicated, apprenticeship training is structured and the qualification is nationally recognized. Learners on learnerships can continue to do other unit standards as long as they meet the “learning assumed to be in place” requirement of the unit.

Important pointers:

* Apprentices entering apprenticeships should at least be 15 years of age
* Each sector such as the manufacturing and engineering sector, has different approved conditions of apprenticeship regarding entry requirements etc. and you will be best advised to get information on the apprenticeship requirements from the relevant Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)
* Unemployed people must be employed by the employer for the duration of the apprenticeship. Unemployed people can thus only enter an apprenticeship if there is an employer who is willing to take unemployed people into an apprenticeship programme.
* You will enter into a contract of apprenticeship with the employer
* The training provider will provide your theoretical training
* The Institute for Development of Learnerships and Learnership Assessment (INDLELA) and other decentralized Accredited Trade Test Centres do the trade tests.
* You can enquire at the Department of Labour for possible apprenticeships in their opportunity database or be on the look-out for advertisements in newspapers
* Contact a Career Counsellor at Department of Labour to help you decide which apprenticeship to choose.

**Internships**

Graduates sometimes find themselves in a dead-end street, because they do not have the necessary work experience. Graduates might have never worked before and are then in a situation where work rules apply. They also find that they struggle to apply their theoretical knowledge in a practical situation. Work experience is important, because it can assist you, as the work-seeker, to build up the necessary set of work behaviours, such as being honest, working hard and coming to work on time. You can also learn how to use your knowledge in real life situations. Also, employers can rest assured that they get an employee who knows the ropes already.

Pointers to note:

* Internships could be from six months to a year.
* A mentor will be appointed for work-seekers, to help them learn how to do the work and to track their progress, so that they can also learn skills.
* Unemployed people can apply for an internship with employers, if there is an employer calling for applicationsof unemployed people. Employers advertise in newspapers, or place adverts in the community, city, town or community.
* You can also enquire at the Department of Labour for possible internships in their opportunity database.
* You can check with the various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to apply.

**Skills programmes/short courses**

Sometimes a short course or skills programme may add valuable work skills. Perhaps you just need to top up your already existing skills, before an employer will take you on. You can also add another skill to your already existing skills, so that you are multi-skilled and more employable. You can become re-skilled, so you can re-enter the labour market in another job. The competition in the labour market is so strong, the more skills you can offer, the better your chances of getting employed. A short course/skills programme is offered in a specific area of learning, such as for example a Nature Site Guide (Dangerous Game Area), where you will learn how to guide tourists amongst lions. Other examples are for example project management or computer programmes.

If you are employed, you can be up-skilled and you will then be more productive and can bring more profit to the company, or you can bring in innovation, which may save the company money. You can also move to a higher position or a post which you enjoy more. Doing a short skills programme can help to stimulate you to have different views on issues and to make you a more interesting person. In today’s world of work, technology and work methods change so rapidly, it is required of employees to stay on top of developments, to remain relevant.

Pointers to note:

* The short skills programme may, or may not be credit-bearing (meaning full recognition for your efforts). If a short skills programme is not credit-bearing you will only get a Certificate of Attendance.
* If the short skills programme is credit-bearing, it means that you will receive acknowledgement of the course towards a qualification.
* The short skills programme is not a qualification in itself, but gives further access to a qualification, if it is credit-bearing.
* Once you have received the credit for the skills programme, you are deemed competent and will never have to be assessed on that course again. Always enquire whether the short skills programme is credit-bearing, before you enroll for it.
* Make sure your training provider is registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training and whether the course is credit-bearing.
* Contact a Career Counsellor at Department of Labour to assist you to choose a skills programme.

**The National Qualifications Framework**

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a way of organizing and presenting the different types of education and training qualifications, so that people can understand them more easily. The NQF makes it easier for learners to move from one qualification to another and also to get credits for courses they have already done and therefore need not repeat. It shows you learning pathways. Employment counseling can help you choose qualifications or skills courses which will build on your previous qualifications.

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| **NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK** | | |
| **LEVELS** | **DIFFERENT QUALIFICATION TYPES** | |
| 10 | Doctoral Degree |  |
| 9 | Master’s Degree |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8 | Bachelor Honours degree  Post-graduate diploma  Bachelor’s degree (4 years) | Occupational Certificate (Level 8) |
| 7 | Bachelor’s degree  Advanced diploma | Occupational Certificate (Level 7) |
| 6 | Advanced Diploma Certificate | Occupational Certificate (Level 6) |
| 5 | Higher Certificate | Occupational Certificate (Level 5) |
| 4 | National Certificate (Grade 12) | Occupational Certificate (Level 4) |
| 3 | Intermediate Certificate (Grade 11) | Occupational Certificate (Level 3) |
| 2 | Elementary Certificate (Grade 10) | Occupational Certificate (Level 2) |
| 1 | General Certificate (Grade 4 to Grade 9) | Occupational Certificate (Level 1) |

Qualifications on NQF levels 1 to 4 represent schooling (General Education and Training and Further Education and Training) up to Grade 12. If you leave school at grade 10, you will obtain an Elementary Certificate at NQF level 2. Qualification levels 5-10 represents Higher Education and Training at Universities and Colleges, whilst the **Occupational Certificates** refers to special training that you can undergo that will prepare you for a specific job, for example in a trade or as a garden worker. The Occupational Certificates span from NQF level 1 to NQF level 8.

If you for example have done one course for a Higher Certificate on NQF level 5 and you have passed that course, you need not repeat it-you will have the credit should you want to continue your studies.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Some people learn to do things by doing them outside of formal education and training institutions. Often a person has learnt to fix a motor vehicle in his back yard or has done various jobs as a handy man. You can obtain credits for the knowledge that you have built up in this manner, by requesting an accredited provider or work-place to assess your knowledge to see whether you can get a qualification in the career, or which courses you must still master to be able to obtain the qualification. The process above is called Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

You will first have to decide which qualification you want to study and for which courses you possibly might be able to gain recognition for work experience. Ask a Career Counsellor at your closest Labour Centre to assist you with that, if you need help. The Career Counsellor will also be able to refer you to the correct Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA), who can refer you to an accredited training provider that does RPL. All Universities and Colleges should also be able to assist you, should you want to study at those institutions. Normally you will have to pay a fee for the RPL. You will be required to do an examination or submit a Portfolio of Evidence on your skills-the latter takes the form of tasks that you have to complete.

Visit the website of the Department of Education and Training at [www.dhet.gov.za](http://www.dhet.gov.za), to find a list of educational institutions, such as Universities, Further Education and Training Colleges (FET), Technical Vocational Educational Colleges (TVET), and SETAs.

**SOURCES**

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