



The “How to Get Ahead During and After School” Series

Part 3 – Grade 12, a survival kit and life after school

Introduction

This article is the third and final in a series that aims to give learners information on how to make better decisions about their future. The series was in response to an article that was published in *Science Matters* by the National Research Foundation (NRF). The box below gives an excerpt from that article. Here, we provide some guidance and suggestions for you for Grade 12 and for life after school.

The National Senior Certificate (NSC) is the current matriculation (matric) certificate with Grade 12 as the matriculation grade. The NSC, previously known as the Further Education and Training Certificate (FETC) replaced the Senior Certificate in 2008.

Matric is a highly valued grade because you need to pass Matric in order to be awarded a NSC which is a qualification you need to study further after school and sometimes also to find work.

There are many subjects in Matric, however, you need to study seven subjects. There are four compulsory subjects: your Home Language subject; a First Additional Language

subject; Life Orientation; and a Mathematical subject (either Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy).

Then, there are three elective subjects that you choose to make up the total seven subjects. These elective subjects might be Economics; Physical Sciences; Life Sciences; Agricultural Sciences; Business Studies; Accounting; History; Geography; and Religious Studies. Some schools may offer different elective subjects and some schools may have restrictions on the combination of elective subjects you can choose. These issues are usually discussed with you in Grade 9 when you make your subject choices for Grade 10.

In Grade 12, it is important to take school seriously from the very first day that the school year starts. The year is a busy one with learning new information, writing practice exams and then writing the final exams. Some subject material from Grade 11 may also form part of what you need to know for your Grade 12 year.

Grade 12 is a year that requires you to work consistently and not leave tasks for the last minute. This can cause

anxiety and stress – two things you should avoid! Pay careful attention in class to ensure you understand the work. Take your textbook to class every day and open it at the topic of discussion. Try to re-read the topic you did

in class at home after school the same day. Complete your homework daily. When you are unsure about a topic, ask your teacher for help. Doing all of these things will help you understand and remember your work.

Grade 12 Survival Kit

- Have a positive outlook and a strong desire to try your best.
- Attend school every day and pay attention to your teachers.
- Have the right textbook and stationery for each subject.
- Plan for the year and how you will stay on top of work. Use a diary or a notebook for your planning.
- Before exams, make a study plan that includes time for revision as well as relaxation and exercise.
- Find past papers and practice by answering them. Ask a teacher for help if you aren't sure of an answer.
- Get enough sleep and eat healthy food. Remember, 'Healthy body, Healthy mind'.

What is active learning?

Active learning means that when you are practicing and studying, you are focused and absorbing the information you are reading and processing in your head. It's the opposite to passive learning when you write notes without really thinking about what you are writing.

Active learning can also be speaking topics out loud to yourself or someone else, or making up songs or rhymes about theories or lists you need to remember.

Is my way of studying working for me? If not, what should I do?

Everyone learns differently. Some people prefer mind maps, others like lists and some people like lots of colour. It is important that you research different ways of studying and find a method that works well for you. You will know it works well for you when you feel confident that you can remember what you have learnt. If someone asks you a question, you can recall what you studied and provide an answer with confidence.

If you are finding that the way you are studying is not helping you remember and understand the material, try a different method as soon as possible to stay ahead in your learning journey.

I am so stressed about school, I can't focus. What should I do?

Finding ways to manage your stress in Matric is very important. Instead of holding the things that are stressing you out in your head, sometimes writing them down or talking to a teacher or friend may help.

Being prepared and making a schedule at the very beginning of the year also helps to show you there is time

for you to put in the work and effort to achieve your goals. Five ways to manage stress are:

1. Exercise (even a short walk helps).
2. Being mindful (think about what is worrying you and find ways to help resolve the problems).
3. Talking to someone.
4. Time management.
5. Getting enough sleep.
6. Finding a stress-busting method that works for you.

Sometimes having a study buddy can help but this arrangement needs to be taken seriously, with work done when you meet while also making time to chat about shared worries about Matric.

Life after Grade 12

It might seem like Grade 12 will never end, or it might fly by, but it does end and life after school does begin. Some people know what they want to do after school, such as study and further their education to get the qualification for the job they wish to pursue.

Some people prefer to work after school to save up for university or college. Working after high school also helps you learn soft skills (e.g. how to interact with people in the workplace, be responsible etc.) and hard skills (e.g. core elements of a job) that will be needed in your future career.

Other people take a gap year before committing to studying or working. They might volunteer or work overseas or travel.

As a young adult you may feel free from the routine of school, but it is also a time that comes with responsibilities. You might feel overwhelmed or lost, but

give yourself time to find a new way of being. Talk to your family and friends. There are lots of opportunities waiting for you after school.

My plans for life after school didn't work out. What should I do?

Sometimes things don't go as you planned and what you had hoped to do after school doesn't work out. Don't give up! If you didn't get into the university of your choice, try a different university, a university of technology or a Technical and Vocational Education and Training college. This may take you on a different route but will help get you to where you want to be.

Think about what you enjoy doing and how you can make a career from that. You could ask to volunteer at a place where you would like to work and build your curriculum vitae (CV) with experience in that field. You could then go

on to study part-time and slowly build your qualifications. There are many websites that offer free or affordable short courses online that would also help you focus your skills for the career of your choice.

Websites for more information about Grade 12:

- <https://www.matric.co.za/the-meaning-of-matric-in-south-africa/>
- <https://wcedportal.co.za/study-tips-for-grade-12>
- https://www.westerncape.gov.za/text/2010/4/wced_grade_12_tips_for_success_booklet_1.pdf
- <https://www.careersportal.co.za/matric/matric-advice/how-can-i-make-my-matric-year-successful>
- <https://careerprep.co.za/5-tips-for-surviving-the-matric-exams/>

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Indlela yokuzinakekela uma ufunda umatikuletsheeni

- Hlala ubuka izinto ngendlela enhle futhi ube nentshisekelo yokuzama ngokusemandleni akho
- Hamba njalo uye esikoleni futhi ulalele othisha bakho
- Phatha njalo incwadi kanye nakho konke okudingwa isifundo ngasinye
- Hlelela unyaka nokuthi uzohlala kanjani wenza umsebenzi wesikolo
- Ngaphambi kwezivivinyo, hlela ukuthi uzofunda kanjani, isikhathi sokubuyekeza, ukuphumula nokuzivocavoca
- Thola amaphepha ezivivinyo amadala uwaphendule. Uma kukhona ongakuqondi kahle, buza uthisha.
- Qinisekisa ukuthi ulala ngokwanele futhi udla ukudla okunempilo. Khumbula umzimba owondlekile usho umqondo owondlekile.

Translated by Zamantimande Kunene

