Considering Options Beyond School: A Guide For Parents
CONSIDERING OPTIONS BEYOND SCHOOL: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Beyond School Careers Consultations

The Careers Service offers paid appointments for school leavers considering their options. Our clients are usually Grade 11 and 12 learners who are considering further study, and any potential university applicant who has been out of school for a few years. Learners do not have to be considering UCT as a first choice.

Our service incorporates:

• An hour long one-to-one appointment with a careers advisor
• A pre-appointment questionnaire
• Feedback to parents/guardians at the end of the appointment
• A copy of Considering Options Beyond School: A Guide for Parents

Interested?

For information and bookings:
call 021 650 2497 or 021 650 4398
email careers.service@uct.ac.za
web www.careers.uct.ac.za
Beyond School Careers Consultations

The Careers Service offers paid appointments for school leavers considering their options. Our clients are usually Grade 11 and 12 learners who are considering further study, and any potential university applicant who has been out of school for a few years. Learners do not have to be considering UCT as a first choice.

Our service incorporates:

- An hour long one-to-one appointment with a careers advisor
- A pre-appointment questionnaire
- Feedback to parents/guardians at the end of the appointment
- A copy of Considering Options Beyond School: A Guide for Parents

Interested?

For information and bookings:
call 021 650 2497 or 021 650 4398
e-mail careers.service@uct.ac.za
web www.careers.uct.ac.za

HELP YOUR TEEN IMAGINE BEYOND SCHOOL

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting the scene</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your role as a parent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should we expect a teen to choose a career in high school?</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gift of uncertainty</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A starting point</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life after school</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding the future</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Published by: Careers Service, University of Cape Town Private Bag X3, Rondebosch, 7700

Copyright © Careers Service, University of Cape Town 2015. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted without the written consent of the UCT Careers Service. ISBN 9 78-0-7992-2515-0

Website: www.careers.uct.ac.za
Telephone: +27 21 650 2497
Email: careers.service@uct.ac.za
Introduction

After many years of meeting with young people from diverse backgrounds, we became increasingly aware of the need to address common concerns, confusion and misinformation about life after school. We also realised that parents and guardians need as much information and support as the young people making the decisions. In many cases, parents and guardians are as stressed as their teens and can think they are being supportive. Yet teens can feel pressurised by suggestions which in turn adds to their stress.

This booklet aims to give you, the parent or guardian, an insight into the challenges many high school learners face when thinking about and planning their lives after school. We hope that this booklet will supply information and advice that will equip you to support your teenager in their career development journey.
Setting the scene

Before talking about the various routes and possibilities available to your teen after school, let’s first look at the environment they will enter either immediately or after studying.

The working world is very different to what it was ten or even five years ago. And it keeps changing! It is fast paced and technologically driven and this affects everything: the way we work, where we work and what sort of jobs are available. New jobs emerge all the time, and something your teenager is perfectly suited to may not have been invented yet!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW IT WAS</th>
<th>HOW IT IS NOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictable career paths</td>
<td>Contract work and outsourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer careers with predictable qualifications</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary teams solving problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job identities relatively stable</td>
<td>New jobs emerging all the time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While a qualification is good to have, it is no longer a guarantee for success. The current education system gears the majority of learners for an academic path after school and many people still believe that this is the soundest path to a successful and lucrative future. The reality, however, is that the demand for spaces at universities and universities of technology far outweighs their capacity.

So it is important to take into consideration that this very technologically driven world requires very different things from a new generation. There are many courses of study and a wide variety of types of work to do. It is best to research widely.
Your role as a parent

Before you start the conversation with your teen about their future, it is a good idea to clarify your own intentions. We know parents want the best for their teenager but many fall into the trap of trying to live out their career ambitions through their teens or do not trust their teen to take ownership of the process and end up running it themselves.

How you can provide support:

- **Encourage an exploration** of their options and passions.
- **Talk through their ideas.**
- **Communicate** by keeping an open mind without judging or deciding what is right for them.
- **Check in** with them as to how they are doing.
- **Affirm:** It is helpful to highlight skills, abilities and interests of your son or daughter.

- **Encourage balance:** Studies should be balanced by involvement in clubs, societies, sports, volunteering, and work experience. This will help them to develop into the kind of people employers want to hire.
- **Help** teens set challenging but achievable goals.
- **Recognise** and **reward** teens for their efforts and successes.
### Brainstorming interests and passions:

To help your teen find their passion, start by building on something they love to do. If your daughter wants to be an actor or your son a soccer player, use these ideas and questions to think about other careers they could be interested in:

- What are some of the things they like about that career?
- What other careers have soccer players gone into after soccer, and do any of those interest them?
- When an actor makes a film, what are some of the other careers involved?
Should we expect a teen to choose a career in high school?

It is a common assumption that by the time your teenager leaves school they should have chosen a career. This causes many teens to feel stressed and pressured. There is a good reason for this. Many young people feel uncertain of their options or are afraid of the consequences of making a wrong choice. We hear from teens that they don’t know what is out there and don’t always know what they are interested in.

As careers advisors we are not worried about learners being indecisive or uncertain in matric. In working with young people, we see how much they can develop or change after school. What happens after school usually has far more impact on career decisions than what happens up to matric! This is further supported by what happens when young people go into employment.

Have a look at the table alongside of some working people and their qualifications and the jobs they have done – what do you notice?

Do you notice that some of the jobs these people have do not seem to match their qualifications? Surprising isn’t it? Yet employers in all sorts of organisations are interested in the many different skills one has developed and not only in a qualification and the subject matter it covers. Some examples of these skills would be leadership, initiative, ability to work in a team, technological competence and community involvement. Qualifications are important, but don’t always dictate what career you go into. We call these transferable skills, developed in one area of one’s life and then applied to another area.
What enabled these people to perform in these jobs were some of the following:

- A few years of development after studying
- Exploration of various options
- Work experience
- Discovery of interests and passions
- Further study
- Development of transferable skills

So what does this mean for your teen?

Careers are not chosen as a once-off decision in matric, but rather built over time. If your daughter or son is making a study decision, it is just one step in the process of building a career.

Remember that lots will happen to your teenager after matric that may well shape their choices and give them options they had not yet considered.

What happens after school is unpredictable to a large extent. So encourage your teen to stick to their strengths and interests when they are choosing what to do after school.
One of the most common observations that we have made about matrics over the years is that far more of them are uncertain about their choices than those who seem to know exactly what they want to do after school.

Matrics are extremely relieved when we tell them this. Expecting complete certainty at this stage can be unrealistic and even unnecessary given all the development that is still ahead for them.

In many ways, being uncertain forces matrics to explore various options, which is what they should be doing anyway! But if your teen is set on one particular career or study option, get them to examine their choice carefully. In our experience it is a very common mistake for first year students to start off with a course of study only to find that it isn’t at all what they thought it was. So even those that seem very sure of their choices must still make sure what it is they are choosing.

Being uncertain can actually encourage behaviour that is best practice: researching one’s options. It isn’t wrong for a young person to have very clear ideas, but it doesn’t necessarily mean that the future will be entirely predictable!
A starting point

Whether your teenager has some ideas or none at all, you could help by suggesting some starting points. It can be useful to start with what they know.

Help them think about themselves:

- What do they like?
- What do they not like?
- What interests and inspires them?
- Are there areas of studying or work they have heard about or are curious about?

Take a minute

Use this pie chart to write down what they have already done.

1. Work experience
2. Career research
3. Hobbies & interests
4. Favourite school subjects
5. Other activities at school

- volunteering / babysitting
- sports / cultural
- languages / mathematics / business studies
- on the internet / speaking to people
- computer gaming / fashion
Explore Options

• Encourage them to start researching the world of work and occupational areas by interviewing family and friends who are studying and working. This is a better option than work shadowing. This website will give you more info on informational interviewing [www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html)

• Learners often only know about a few professions, such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, and accountants. However, as we know, there are thousands of different options out there.

• By exploring different work environments, roles, locations and cultures, your teenager will gain a clearer picture of what is available to them.

They can also explore by gaining experiences through:
• clubs and societies,
• part-time or voluntary work
• community involvement

This will help your teen explore their strengths and develop work-related skills.

Make Decisions

• Help your teenager cement their research into some realistic options.
• Having a realistic plan B is essential should a first choice not work out.

Reflection

• Encourage your teen to review and reflect on what they have learned through research and experience.
• This can lead to further insights and ideas.

Help with reality checking

Example:

Many learners who wish to study Medicine, when probed, describe being scared of blood, dead bodies, and an unwillingness to leave their families to study elsewhere in the country. The reality is that courses such as Medicine are highly competitive and long in duration, requiring a strong commitment of ability, time, and energy.
Life after school -
Studying, gap years & working

Deciding what to do after school often brings up a range of conflicting emotions that can result in a lot of stress and pressure to make ‘THE RIGHT’ decision.

What comes after school for your teenager is only the first step in a lifelong process of learning and discovery and not a once-off decision made for life. Decisions are not irreversible and sometimes it takes time to consolidate the direction in which one wants to go. Let’s look at some of these choices: studying, gap years, and working.

**Studying**

Some parents feel that university study is best for their teen, but this must be carefully considered. University is only one option. Many other institutions offer a wide variety of exciting choices.

Most institutions offer campus-based studies, but some offer distance learning that you can complete through correspondence. A good example of this is the University of South Africa (UNISA). Importantly: All institutions have different entrance requirements so it is important to shop around.
Universities:

- Academic institutions, offering mostly full time studies with a strong emphasis on theoretical knowledge
- Offer Bachelor’s degrees, diplomas and postgraduate qualifications (e.g. Honours and Masters)
- Examples of degrees: Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Arts – Law (B.A.LLB)

E.g. University of Cape Town, Rhodes University

Comprehensive Universities:

- Universities combined with Universities of Technology offering a range of diplomas and degrees

E.g. The University of Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (in Port Elizabeth)

Universities of Technology (previously known as Technikons)

- Academic Institutions
- Part time/full time
- More practical education: knowledge that is career-focused and relevant to the workplace
- Offer national diplomas e.g. Graphic Design, Retail Management, Tourism. You would first study a National Diploma, and then build on that for a BTech qualification
- Often includes work experience while studying

E.g. Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges [Formerly Further Education and Training Colleges (FETs)]:

- Occupationally-focused programmes that are linked to business, industry and specific trades (e.g. hairdressing, childcare, building)
- Offer NVC (National Vocational Certificate) that starts at the equivalent of grade 10. Some offer diplomas and certificates at post-matric levels.
- Emphasis on practical skills-based education
- Examples of courses: Higher Diploma in Sports Management, National Certificate in Fitting and Machining, National Certificate in Clothing Production

E.g. Cape College, Central Johannesburg TVET College, Umfolozi TVET College

Private institutions:

- These are not government funded
- Offer a variety of degrees and diploma programmes, part time/full time and short courses
- Education in specialised fields (e.g. photography, film, advertising, fashion design)

E.g. AAA School of Advertising, ETA (Exercise Teachers Academy)

Agricultural Colleges:

- Prospective farmers and people wanting to work in a variety of careers involving land development and management are trained at Colleges of Agriculture.

E.g. Cedara in KwaZulu-Natal and Elsenburg in the Western Cape.

Hotel schools:

- There are many fields of specialisation in this sector and comprehensive Hospitality Studies are available at various independent Schools

E.g. The International Hotel School in most major centres
If you need to find out about any institution, and the level of a qualification they offer, the best place to check this is the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA): www.saqa.org.za.

Contact them:
Careers advice helpline SAQA: 0860 35 66 35
Helpdesk: 086 010 3188 SAQA
For general enquiries: saqainfo@saqa.org.za

Different levels of study
Different subjects or career areas can be studied at different institutions, at different levels, and with different entrance requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Level</th>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Qualification Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5</td>
<td>Higher Education and Training</td>
<td>Post-doctoral research degrees Doctorates (10) Masters degrees (9) Bachelor Honours Degree/ Postgraduate Diplomas (8) National first degrees (7) Higher diplomas (6) National diplomas &amp; certificates (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 3 2</td>
<td>Further Education and Training</td>
<td>National certificates - this is below university and tertiary level - includes workplace learning - occupationally-driven work - called vocational and abstract study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Education and Training</td>
<td>Grade 9/ABET Level 4 National Certificates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These levels of study apply to many fields e.g. the requirements to study Mechanical Engineering and being a Motor Mechanic are different. They may cover a similar interest, but Mechanical Engineering requires high academic marks in Maths and Science, whereas being a Motor Mechanic is a far more hands on qualification which may not emphasise high academic results but rather technical, practical skill or ability.
CONSIDERING OPTIONS BEYOND SCHOOL: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

As you can see, there are various Computer and Information System courses at institutions. Their entrance requirements all vary, as do the length of the course. The course content will vary in terms of theory and level of academic difficulty depending on the institution.
Getting into Higher Education

It is important to remember that the choice of matric subjects and the results your teenager receives in their final matric exams will affect or impact the study options that are available. In all South African government schools and in some private schools, matrics write the National Senior Certificate (NSC) exams. There are four subjects everyone has to do: a home Language, an additional language, Maths OR Maths Literacy and Life Orientation.

The designated list of subjects

If your teen wants to study at a University or a University of Technology, they must choose their subjects from what is called the designated list. This is the list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGES (ONE LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION AND TWO OTHER RECOGNISED LANGUAGE SUBJECTS)</th>
<th>VISUAL ARTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Religion Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Studies</td>
<td>Physical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Mathematical Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering, Graphics and Design</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Life Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Arts</td>
<td>Agricultural Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are other subjects like Computer Applications Technology, Design, Dance, Mechanical Technology, Hospitality Studies and Tourism that can be scored as long as you have four other subjects on the designated list.

Levels of achievement in the NSC

These symbols will appear on a matric certificate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Bachelors Pass</td>
<td>Can apply to University if they meet the requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Can apply to University of Technology if they meet the requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Higher Certificate</td>
<td>Can apply to TVET but must check requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Senior Pass</td>
<td>Limited options, may need to rewrite 1 or 2 subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Further study may not be possible unless subjects are rewritten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If this is confusing, or your daughter or son are not sure of where they stand, make sure to ask someone at their school or in your community to help you find out the correct information.

If your teen wants to rewrite a subject to improve their results, you can approach the Department of Education.
The gap year conversation

A gap year usually means taking time off after school and not going straight into full time study. Perhaps you are a parent that feels a gap year is a waste of time. But consider the waste of money if your teen studies further without gathering sufficient information and drops out? Many matrics simply do not feel ready to make some of these decisions and a gap year can provide the mental space necessary to do so. We agree that a gap year should NOT be a year of sitting around watching TV and sleeping, but can be a very valuable time to think, plan, and investigate options.

Some matrics find that they are flung into a gap year unexpectedly when their study plans fall through. This does not need to be the end of the world. A gap year can be a very valuable time that offers great opportunities for personal growth.

*These are some comments from young people who took gap years:*

- Gain valuable work experience
- Gives you time to do things you have never had time to do
- Get perspective on your life and use the time to expand your horizons and experience new things
- Gives you time to research courses in more detail and reduces the pressure to make decisions you are not ready to make
- Helps not to waste money, as you are not jumping into a study option for the sake of it which could lead to failure and disappointment
- Gives you time to grow up and become responsible

**Disadvantages**

- Hard to get work
- If you are not focused you could become lazy
- Some people fall off the tracks and become negatively influenced in their communities
- You could lose touch with academic disciplines
- It could be an unproductive waste of time if you do not use it properly
- Entry requirements of something your teen wants to study may change

For some, gap years offer opportunities to travel overseas and gain work experience. But if your teenager is at home during their gap year there are many useful local activities that can be meaningful and inexpensive.
Here are some constructive suggestions for your teen on how to spend a gap year:

- Get a part time job. Being a waitron, or a shelf packer will give your teen experience of the real working world.

- Visit institutions and take time to speak to people about study options.

- Play sport and get involved in the organisation of a local club. Your daughter or son may have had little time while in matric to play in a local team. Now would be a great time to focus on a sport that they enjoy.

- Apply to be an extra in a film or ad shoot. This pays quite well and can be a lot of fun. It would not suit people who have other commitments during the day.

- Do things they have always wanted to do but not had the time to! See the year as one of adventure and discovery. Later on when life is full of responsibilities, one does not have the freedom of time that this year can offer.

- Research career ideas by reading up on and finding out what appeals to them.

- Get a driver’s license or passport.

- Do voluntary work. Suggest organisations that interest or inspire them: the local library, animal rescue organisations, religious organisations, Habitat for Humanity, soup kitchens, and clinics.

- Do a short course that would help them gain a specific skill or that may give them experiential information in an area that they are considering studying the following year: e.g. cooking, computers, photography, bookkeeping.

- Coach sport or help as a teacher aid at a local school or crèche. There are possibilities where they may be paid for this work.

- Do some informational interviewing: This is when you approach someone that works in a job or organisation that interests you. Ask them if you can interview them for 30 minutes on what they do. Find out what their qualifications are, what the job entails, and what the best and worst part of the job is. This will help you to do some reality checking on what jobs actually entail. See pg12 for more information.

- Do some voluntary work.
The most important thing is to realise that if your teen is keen to study, but does not feel ready because of a lack of information, there is not a massive disadvantage in taking a gap year. However, when your teenager is ready to study they will be competing with new cohorts of newly matriculated learners and there is no guarantee that they will be granted admission.

Working

Any sort of work experience will develop skills and exposure to the working world. But work will not come looking for them. Many employers do not advertise in the newspaper for entry level or casual work. Your teen will be more successful if they think creatively and connect with as many people as possible.

Look around and be proactive

A good place to start is your immediate environment. Spread the word that your daughter or son is looking for employment. Post notices at your local café, library and community centre. They could consider offering babysitting, dog walking, car washing and gardening services. Elderly people may need assistance with shopping or admin tasks.

Voluntary Work

If there is an organisation that they are really interested in, they could offer to do voluntary work for them. Doing voluntary work will give them work experience, even if they are not paid. It also says a lot about your teen that they are willing to work just for experience.

Remember, any employer is in the position to give a reference, so make sure your teen arrives on time and speak to them about what it means to behave professionally.

Skills Development Programmes in South Africa – Alternate ways of getting trained

The Higher Education system introduced skills development through the establishment of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). The main aim of the SETAs, is to deliver skills needed for the economy to grow, especially in sectors where there are a shortage of skills.

There are currently 21 SETAs which represent different sectors of the economy for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SETA</th>
<th>Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BANKSETA</td>
<td>Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CETA</td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FASSET</td>
<td>Financial and Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWSETA</td>
<td>Health and Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TETA</td>
<td>Tourism, Hospitality and Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W and R SETA</td>
<td>Wholesale and Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSASETA</td>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The role of the SETAs is to help unemployed and employed people receive skills development and training in the workplace environment. They work with the Department of Labour and companies to place people in programmes known as learnerships and apprenticeships.
The Role of the Department of Labour
Your teen’s first step if they want to get connected to possible training and employment opportunities is to register with a Department of Labour office and have their name and relevant details placed on the national database.

The Department is involved in selecting, recruiting and referring candidates to organisations and companies who are looking for suitable learners to train. Visit their website for more information: www.labour.gov.za

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)
Another route to take when trying to find opportunities is the NYDA. Their purpose is to mainstream and integrate youth development for sustainable livelihoods. The Youth Advisory centres provide information, counselling support, training and referral services for young people. There are walk-in centres in most urban areas. The NYDA is developing a Job and Opportunities Seekers’ Database for youth and employers to register and search for jobs, internship and learnership opportunities.

Visit their website: www.nyda.gov.za
Click on ‘Find a NYDA branch’ for details of a branch in your area, or call 0800 52 52 52, Fax: 086606 6563

The Department of Labour, the SETAs and the NYDA are all connected in some essential way in that they provide opportunities for learning and training in programmes known as learnerships and apprenticeships through various organisations. Let’s take a closer look at what learnerships and apprenticeships are all about.

Here is an example:

Netcare is an employing medical company who is recruiting nursing staff.

They will approach

The Department of Labour – for suitable recruits.

Who will then approach

The relevant SETA (Health and Welfare SETA) for funding of the trainees.

Often the classroom learning happens at a TVET but in this example Netcare has its own Nursing College where the theoretical learning happens.
Learnerships
A learnership is a work-based learning programme that leads to a nationally recognised qualification. Learnerships can be in many different career fields and are created to address the skills shortages within the economy and contribute to creating jobs.

Three key features make up any learnership
• Structured learning which is theoretical and takes place in a classroom
• Practical work experience which takes place in a workplace environment.
• A NQF qualification which shows the learner has achieved competence in that chosen field.

A major advantage for people in a learnership is that they get a qualification while working. Learners also benefit from work experience and opportunities to network for jobs within that sector. The learner is assessed throughout by a qualified assessor and, if successful, receives a National Certification.

Apprenticeships
An Apprenticeship is technical training that includes theoretical and practical input. These are offered in particular trades and after passing a trade test, the learner is recognised as an artisan and will be awarded a National Trade Certificate.

They are job-focused and relate directly to that specific trade. Apprenticeships must be workplace-approved and then the learner will be linked to that trade via The Manpower Training Act.

It is important to connect with a conveniently situated TVET College to find out about the courses offered to fulfil the theoretical part of the training.

Getting to understand how all this connects can be a complicated process, but one that might just provide your teen with a way to gain access to the economy and a sustainable living.
Funding the future

Whether your teenager wants to work or study after school the prospect of financing their future can seem daunting, especially given today’s high costs of living and study programmes. There are options available for you and your family, so this is not a burden you need shoulder alone.

Remember, your teenager needs to be in the driving seat of this process; you are there to guide and support them in becoming independent adults. Include them in the planning process so that they are aware of the value of your efforts and contributions.

Bursaries

A bursary often has conditions attached to it, like having to work for the company after you have studied. Bursaries are usually offered by companies or trusts.

Ask the institution to which your teenager is applying if they have a financial aid book with bursary information. Some bursaries are only awarded to students in their second year of study, as organisations sometimes want to see that your daughter or son can pass their first year. Many students fund their studies through the National Students Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for their first year at an institution, and then apply for a bursary for the remaining years of their study.

Many organisations and companies offer bursaries, sometimes for very specific types of study, but some do not dictate where and what you must study. A good compilation of bursaries across the country is a book called the Bursary Register. You have to buy it, but your community library may have it. If you would like to find out more about it phone: (011) 672 6559, or 072 226 1684 or email rlevin@mweb.co.za

There are also compiled details of bursaries on the internet. If you do a Google search using the term “bursary booklet” and the year your teenager wants to study, you will find helpful information.

Financial aid

Apply to an institution first!
Your teen must have applied to an institution in order to secure funding. It may seem the
wrong way around, but they need to get that process sorted out first. Many matrics think they have to secure finance before applying, but this is not the case. In some institutions an application for financial aid is part of the application form. If you are not sure how this works for the institution your teen wants to apply to, contact the institution’s Financial Aid Office, or the Student Support Centre at a TVET College.

When we speak with learners and parents about financing their future prospects the first thing they ask is about bursaries and, while many learners do benefit from these, they are not the most prolific source of funding for many South Africans. We encourage our clients to seek out financial aid from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

Your teen’s best chance of funding is from NSFAS. This is a government agency that administers funds to assist South African students. It is funding provided to all public institutions.

**NSFAS funding is available at:**
- SA Universities
- Universities of Technology
- TVET Colleges

If you are able to show financial need, and your teenager the potential for academic success, your family could be a likely candidate. NSFAS provides loans, which the recipient has to pay back only once they start working, as well as bursaries for those who work hard and do well in their courses. A NSFAS bursary does not have to be paid back.

Remember the majority of students are funded through NSFAS. For more information contact:

**NSFAS:**
**TEL:** 021 763 3232
**EMAIL:** info@nsfas.org.za
**SMS** to 32261 (std sms rates)
**ADDRESS:** Private Bag x1, Plumstead 7801, South Africa
**WEBSITE:** [www.nsfas.org.za](http://www.nsfas.org.za)

**Loans**
Financial institutions such as banks are another option when seeking assistance.

- Personal loans: start paying back once you receive funding
- Student loans: only pay when you graduate and begin work

To apply for a loan, your teen must have a letter to prove that they are accepted as a student at an institution.

There is also an organisation called Eduloan which specialises in study loans. Contact them at their call centre: **0860 5555 44** or sms ‘edu’ to **32150** or visit their website: [www.eduloan.co.za](http://www.eduloan.co.za)

**Scholarships**
Scholarships are usually awarded to those learners who have excellent school results. It is a reward for doing well. Some scholarships one can apply for, but sometimes the institution that your teenager has applied to will award a scholarship if they do very well in their final matric results.
Conclusion

“Parents can only give good advice or put their children on the right paths, but the final forming of a person’s character lies in their own hands.”
- Anne Frank

Now that you’ve reached the end of this booklet, one of the most important factors to take into account is that your teenager will change over time. Be conscious of these changes and factor this into the process they will go through.

Chance also has a role in career development and learning to be flexible and adaptable will help both you and your teen deal with the unexpected.

Remember, it is important that you allow your teenager to explore the different options available to them. Your goal is to empower them to make their own decisions about their futures and for you to enable them to make informed decisions that will help them to live their lives meaningfully.

Finally, don’t forget, career development is an ongoing process, a journey that only the individual can make.
About Author

Tauriq Hartley is the Beyond School Programme Coordinator at the University of Cape Town’s Careers Service and advises grade 11 and 12 learners.

About Contributors and Editors

Ingrid van der Merwe is a Senior Careers Advisor at the University of Cape Town’s Careers Service and advises UCT students.

Lois Bloch is an Educational Psychologist; she works as a school psychologist and is a part-time advisor at the University of Cape Town’s Careers Service.

Liza Hitge is the New Media, Communications and IT Manager at the University of Cape Town’s Careers Service.

Athi Matinise is a Careers Advisor at the University of Cape Town’s Careers Service; he advises UCT students and facilitates Beyond School workshops.

Lead Designer: Kim Wyeth for Deep Agency
Printers: RSAli thro
Plan your future workshop

Who
Grade 11 and 12 Learners

What
Free workshop during school holidays

For more information: click on the “School Leaver” tab on our website www.careers.uct.ac.za/

Beyond School Careers Education Workshop

Who
Grade 9-12 Teachers from any discipline / Anyone who is mentoring young people who are making study and career decisions / Youth workers in any community organisation

What
Find out more about:
- Challenges presented by a fast moving, technological and uncertain world of work
- Key issues that affect young people’s career decision making ability
- Career development theories
- Practical ideas to equip young people with strategies to manage their choices

Where
Careers Service, Hoerikwaggo Building, Upper Campus, University of Cape Town

Sign Up | Email: Careers.Service@uct.ac.za  Space is limited!
Advice and comments from students

Koebraa:
When I found out about financial aid it took so much stress away, as my mom is a single parent and we could not have afforded to pay fees.

Murray:
Engage with your parents, not against them, which is not easy, but you are the one who will be living your life, not them.

Inka:
I found out that drama was not as glamorous as I thought it would be.

Mathew:
It is important to study something you are good at and that you enjoy.

Immanual:
I found out that if I work hard and get good marks, my NSFAS loan can be converted to a bursary.

A thi:
At school I thought Actuarial Science was about Science, but when I started studying it I found out it was about Statistics and Finance, which I had not expected.

Chris:
I found out what I really wanted to study while I was working in my gap years, which was different to what I wanted to do when I was in matric.

Mthupi:
I come from a disadvantaged background but I am not disadvantaged internally. Information about studying was confusing at first, but I asked a lot of questions of students who were already studying.