



Subject Choice for grade 10

The world of work today is dynamic and constantly evolving into new and different modes, requiring skills and knowledge sets that may not yet exist. This changing environment requires young people to be creative, explore their options, and to develop a wide array of transferable skills. Thus, it is important to think broadly about one's options and to be realistic about what career or work opportunities are possible when thinking about subject choices in grade 9 for grade 10. Importantly, though, trying to choose a career at this stage can be very overwhelming, and young people of this age do not know enough about themselves and what is on offer to make an informed decision.

It is important that teachers and parents do not apply pressure to their grade 9s into making career decisions at this stage. However, having said that, it is important for grade 9s to choose subjects that will act as gateway subjects, which if they do decide to study, will open up many options for them when they reach the stage of leaving school. Gateway subjects enable one to pursue a broad range of options after matric.

List of Designated subjects

Teachers and grade 9s must be aware of the designated list of subjects. Everyone has to do 7 subjects, of which the compulsory ones are:

- a home language
- a first additional language
- Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy
- Life Orientation.

To study at a university or a university of technology, you must choose your other subjects off the designated list:

- Accounting
- Agricultural Sciences
- Business Studies
- Dramatic Arts
- Economics
- Engineering and Graphic Design
- Geography
- History
- Consumer Studies
- Information Technology
- Life Sciences
- Music
- Physical Sciences
- Religious Studies
- Visual Arts



Other subjects like Computer applications technology, Design, Dance, Mechanical Technology, Hospitality Studies and Tourism that can be scored, as long as you have at least four subjects on the designated list.

Mathematics, Physical Science and Life Sciences

In terms of Mathematics vs. Mathematics Literacy: learners should always try to do Mathematics if they can. The tricky thing is that different institutions have different requirements and will sometimes differ in what they ask for. Some insist on Mathematics, like most Engineering Faculties, so if you are not sure of what you want, and you are able to do Mathematics, then choose Mathematics over Maths Literacy.. Here, again, it is important for the learner to explore potential areas of interest and study, so as to make an informed decision about whether or not to take Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy.

There are subjects that are useful to have that will open doors to a number of options. We often see learners that have a study idea and then cannot apply for this because they do not have the correct subjects. The key subjects here are Mathematics, Physical Science and Life Sciences. These subjects are required for many options in Engineering, Science, Health Sciences and some business courses.

However, if a learner is very weak at these subjects and hates them, they probably won't enjoy the higher education options and careers that those subjects lead to. One should exercise some wisdom here, aiming to find a balance between gateway subjects and a learner's interests. The danger is that one may overload a learner with the above subjects and they do really badly thereby jeopardizing their chances of doing well academically, and bring their average down so much that they lessen their chance of studying at a tertiary institution.

Strengths and enjoyment

Some learners do not choose History for example, as they cannot see how that subject will be of use to them after school. But if they enjoy it and are able to write well, a subject like History could be a good choice. Ultimately, for their other subjects, grade 9s should try to choose subjects that they are good at and enjoy. It will open up their options if they choose their subjects from the designated list. They will usually then do better in subjects they enjoy which will push up their average and increase the possibility of being accepted into a wider range of courses.