

# **PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE**

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## INTRODUCTION TO PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE

At **Pathway to Excellence**, we uphold the belief that self-knowledge and self-understanding are fundamental prerequisites for achieving success. To engage with this concept, let us briefly explore the essence of self-knowledge: it is, at its core, the awareness of one's own identity and characteristics. In our lives, we embody various roles—students, family members, team players, aspirants, and leaders. Each of these identities contributes to our sense of self.

At **Pathway to Excellence**, we are deeply invested in your growth as a future professional or expert, as we recognise that this journey is integral to your current academic path. The subjects you study in school not only enrich your knowledge but are also closely aligned with specific career opportunities in the workforce.

Consider the following examples:

- An accountant must excel in mathematics.
- An attorney must master the art of persuasive argumentation and language.
- A website designer must possess a deep understanding of technology and computers.
- An industrial engineer must have a solid grasp of physics and problem-solving principles.



Each of these careers requires specific knowledge and skills, which are often rooted in the subjects you study at school. At Pathway to Excellence (P2E), we emphasise this critical insight: all of your current subjects - whether mathematical, scientific, technological, or language-based - are directly connected to the expertise you will need for success in future professional or expert careers.

## Let us break down knowledge and careers further

- Mathematics is essential in virtually every career. Whether you are managing finances, analysing data, or solving engineering problems, math forms the backbone for logical thinking and decision making.
- Science related subjects are crucial if you are considering a career in fields like medicine, engineering, environmental studies, or any other science-oriented profession. What you learn now lays the groundwork for advanced understanding later.
- Technology is no longer confined to tech-specific careers; it is present in every workplace and industry. The tech situation is changing rapidly with the arrival of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). From using software tools to understanding digital systems, technological literacy is indispensable in today's world.
- Language skills - both written and spoken - are vital for communication across all career paths. The ability to articulate your ideas clearly, collaborate with others, and present your work effectively is a universal requirement for success.



All professions require a mix of knowledge and skills.

The message is clear: every subject you study has a purpose beyond the classroom. These lessons are not just about passing exams or earning good grades - They are equipping you with the tools you will need throughout your professional career.

So, strive to do your best while you are still in school. Embrace each subject as opportunities to build your future. Your education is not just about today. It is an investment in who you will become, and what you will achieve tomorrow.

## UNIT 1: FOCUSING ON SELF-UNDERSTANDING

Proverbial wisdom refers to the knowledge and life lessons shared through proverbs - short, traditional sayings that often use vivid imagery and clever wordplay to teach important truths. Here are three powerful sayings about self-understanding and knowledge, along with interpretations to help you understand their deeper meanings.

### 1.1 “Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it”.

This saying compares wisdom to the massive and ancient baobab tree, which is so large that no single person can wrap their arms around it. It reminds us that wisdom is vast and cannot be mastered by a single person alone. In life, this means recognising that learning is a life-long journey and that there is always more to discover and learn. For those of us who are students, it encourages humility and openness to ideas, collaboration with others, and the understanding that growth comes from seeking knowledge beyond ourselves.



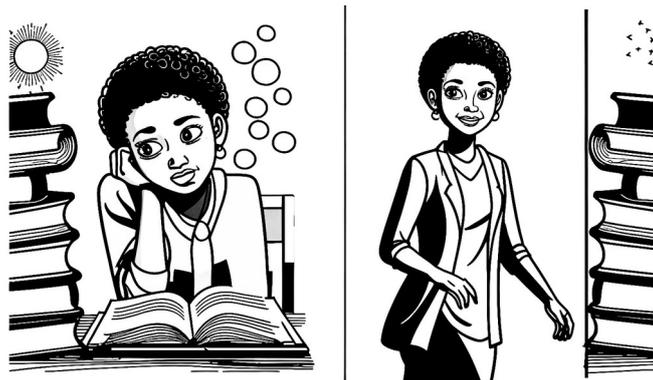
Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one individual can embrace it.

### 1.2 “When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you”.

This saying highlights the importance of self-awareness and inner-strength. The ‘enemy within’ refers to doubts, fears, insecurities, or negative habits that hold us back. If we work on overcoming these internal struggles, we become stronger and more resilient against external challenges, like criticism or failure. For students, this means focusing on building confidence, managing stress, and addressing personal weaknesses so that external pressures do not overwhelm us.

### 1.3 "Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped".

This teaches us to focus on understanding the root cause of our mistakes instead of just dwelling on the outcome. For example, if one fails a test, it is more helpful to figure out why you struggled - was it poor preparation, misunderstanding the material, or something else? By identifying the source of the problem, you can learn from it and avoid repeating the same errors. For students, this encourages reflection, accountability, and a proactive approach to personal and academic growth.



To succeed, we have to face our fears and shortcomings.

### 1.4 Conquer your inner challenges

To succeed, you must first overcome the obstacles within yourself. The saying, "When there is no enemy within, the enemies outside cannot hurt you", teaches us that our biggest battles are often internal. Fear of failure, self-doubt, or procrastination can hold you back more than any external challenge. Facing these internal challenges head-on builds resilience and confidence. For example, if you are worried about exams, create a study plan to manage your time effectively and tackle your fears step by step. When you address your weaknesses and build mental toughness, you will discover that external pressures - like tough deadlines or competition - lose their power to derail you. Believe in yourself, and let your inner-strength guide you to success.

### 1.5 Learn from mistakes to move forward

Mistakes are not failures, they are lessons waiting to be learned. The saying, "Do look where you fell, but where you slipped", encourages us to focus on understanding the root cause of setbacks rather than dwelling on the outcome. If you do not perform well on a project or test, take time to reflect: Was it poor preparation, mis-understanding the material, or something else? Once you identify the issue, you can take steps to improve and avoid repeating the same errors.

High school is the perfect time to practice this mindset because every mistake is a chance to grow wiser and stronger. Success does not come from never failing - it comes from learning how to rise each time you do. Keep moving forward, and let your determination lead you to greatness.

## **ACTIVITY 1: REFLECTING ON BEING A STUDENT AND FUTURE PROFESSIONAL**

In activity one, we want you to reflect on the person, student and future professional that you are today. Here are five reflective questions designed to encourage you to think deeply about your personal growth, academic journey, and future aspirations.

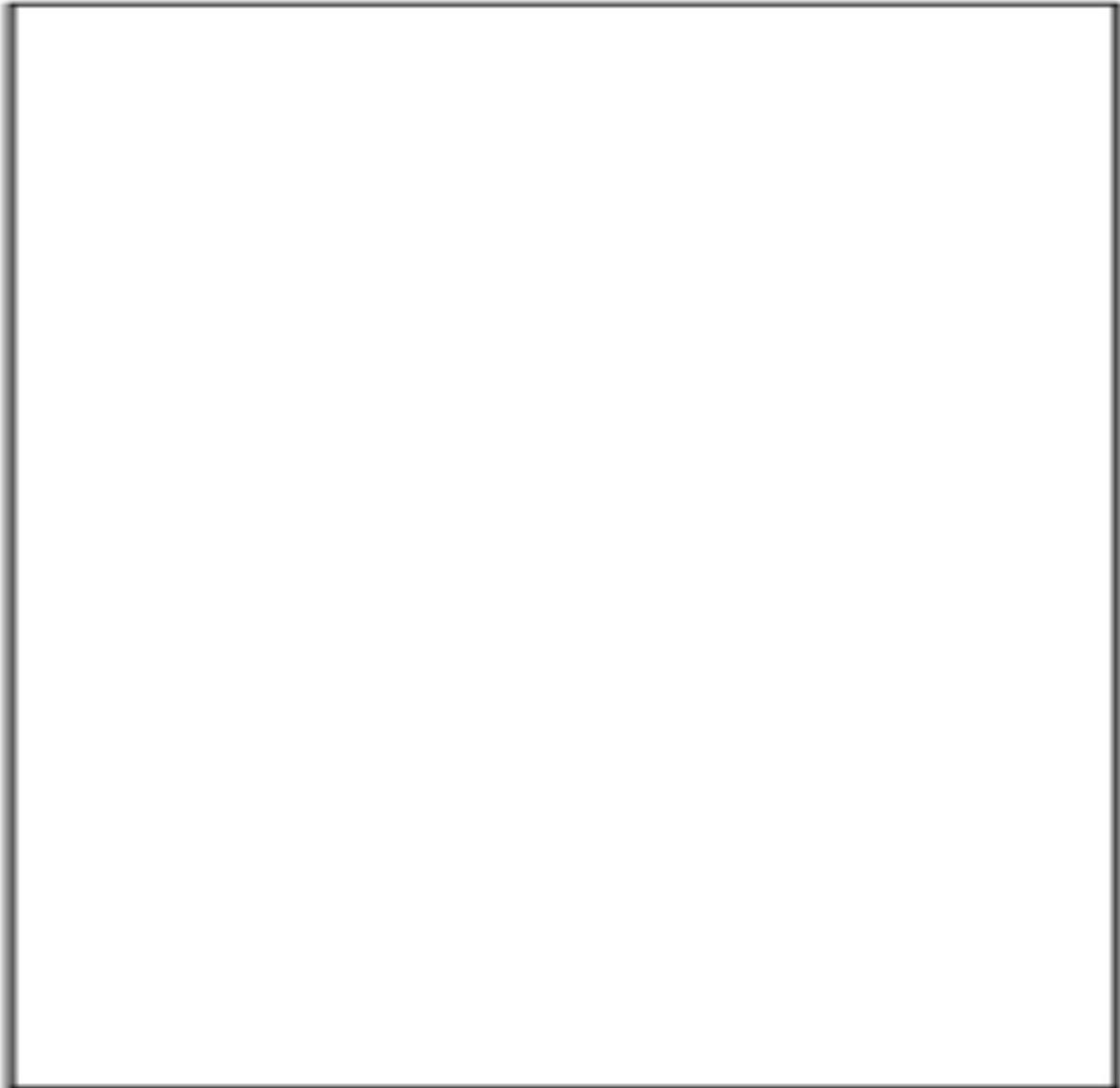
1. What strengths or talents do I currently possess that could align with a potential career path? How can my school subjects help me further these skills?
2. Are there any 'enemies within' - like fear, doubt or procrastination - that might be holding me back from achieving my goals? What steps can I take to overcome them?
3. When was the last time I made a mistake or faced a setback? Instead of focusing on the outcome, what can I learn from where I 'slipped' and how can I use this lesson to improve moving forward?
4. If wisdom is like a baobab tree too large for one person to embrace, which areas of knowledge or skills do I still need to explore?
5. How does each subject I study contribute to building the foundation for who I want to become in the future? Can I identify at least one way every subject connects to my long-term goals?



Where do your academic strengths lie?

As you reflect on these questions, remember that every step you take today shapes the person that you will become tomorrow. Self-knowledge is not only about understanding who you are now - it is about recognizing your potential and taking charge of your growth. The challenges you face, the lessons you learn, and the effort you put into your studies are all investments in a brighter future. Trust in your ability to adapt, grow, and rise above any obstacle. You are capable of more than you realise, and with each small action, you are building a foundation for success that will carry you far beyond the walls of your school. Keep believing, keep striving, and let your journey toward excellence inspire those around you.

In the space *below*, draw any picture that represents your attitude towards the future. Then write a short sentence describing it below.



## 1.6 What is self-knowledge and understanding?

Self-knowledge, and understanding, refer to the deep awareness of one's strengths, weaknesses, interests and values. In an academic setting, this means recognising how you learn best, which subjects excite and challenge you, and how your unique abilities, talents, and skills can shape your future goals. For example, some students thrive in creative fields like writing and art, while others excel in areas such as mathematics, physical and natural sciences.

Developing self-knowledge and understanding allows you to make informed decisions about your studies and career path. It helps you identify which subjects align with your passions and where you might need extra support and effort. By reflecting on feedback from teachers, peers and personal experiences, you gain clarity about your potential and areas for growth. Ultimately, self-knowledge empowers you to take ownership of your education and approach challenges with confidence.



“Self-knowledge is awareness that empowers you to take ownership of your education”.

In the broader context of life beyond school, self-knowledge is a critical tool for success. Knowing yourself enables you to set realistic goals, choose careers that match your skills and interests, and navigate challenges effectively. Without self-awareness, it is easy to feel lost or overwhelmed when faced with important decisions about higher education or job opportunities. For instance, if you are naturally curious and enjoy problem solving, you might enjoy pursuing fields like engineering, computer science, or research.

Conversely, if you value creativity and empathy, careers in design, psychology, or teaching could be more fulfilling. Self-knowledge also fosters resilience by helping you to understand how to manage stress, seek help when needed, and stay motivated during tough times. By

cultivating self-awareness now, you can equip yourself with the insight and adaptability required to thrive in both academic and professional environments.

The following task is designed to get you thinking about who you are and how your character traits link with broad career streams. We will intensively engage career streams later in the manual, but for now, we will work with these categories. Bear in mind, most careers or professions will combine two or more of the features in task one below.

## **ACTIVITY 2: EXPLORING SELF-KNOWLEDGE FOR YOUR ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY**

In this reflective writing task, you will explore the concept of self-knowledge and its importance in shaping your academic and future professional life. Reflect honestly on your experiences, strengths and goals as you answer the following questions. Each response should be 2-3 questions long.

1. What are two subjects or skills you feel most confident in, and why do you think these come naturally to you?

Reflect on your strengths and what makes you excel in certain areas.

2. Which subject or skill do you find most challenging, and how do you approach improving in this area?

Consider how you handle difficulties and what strategies help you grow.

3. How do your interests or passions influence the subjects you enjoy studying or the career you might want to pursue?

Think about how your personal preferences align with your academic choices.

4. What feedback have you received from teachers, peers, or family that has helped you better understand yourself as a learner?



Reflect on how others' observations have shaped your self-awareness.

5. How can developing self-knowledge now help you make better decisions about your education or career in the future?

Consider the long-term benefits of understanding your strengths, weaknesses, and goals.



Self-awareness involves identifying one's strengths and weaknesses.

### 1.7 The relationship between self-knowledge and academic success

There are three main ways that self-knowledge can enhance your academic success. While other factors also play a role, consider the following key variables.

1. **Goal setting:** Self-awareness helps you set realistic and achievable academic goals, keeping you motivated and focused.
2. **Effective learning strategies:** Understanding your preferred learning styles allows you to tailor your study methods for maximum efficiency.
3. **Resilience and adaptation:** Self-knowledge fosters emotional intelligence, helping you adapt to stress and new challenges.

Let us explore each of these elements of self-knowledge and their relationship to academic success further.

### 1.8 Goal setting

Self-awareness is the foundation of effective goal setting. By understanding your strengths, weaknesses and interests, you can set realistic and achievable academic goals that align with your personal aspirations. This clarity not only helps you prioritise your efforts, but also keeps you motivated and focused on your path to success.



When you know what you want to achieve and why, you can create a structured plan to reach those milestones, making your academic journey more purposeful and rewarding. Embracing self-knowledge empowers you to take control of your education, turning challenges into opportunities for growth and ensuring that every step you take is a step towards excellence.

### **1.9 Writing your goals**

**Writing** down goals turns dreams into real targets you can work toward. When you put your goals on paper, you are more likely to remember them and feel responsible for making them happen. This simple step is like making a promise to yourself, which helps you stay committed even when things get tough. Having your goals written gives you something to look back at regularly so you can see how far you have come and adjust your plans if needed.



Goal-oriented writing is a self-motivating activity.

Also, when you write down your goals, you think more deeply about what you really want. The process helps you figure out which goals truly matter to you versus those that others think you should pursue. Writing things down makes it easier to break big goals into smaller steps and be prepared for challenges ahead. On bad days, looking at your written goals can remind you why you started and give you the motivation to keep going. Seeing your goals in front of you helps guide your everyday choices toward the future you want.

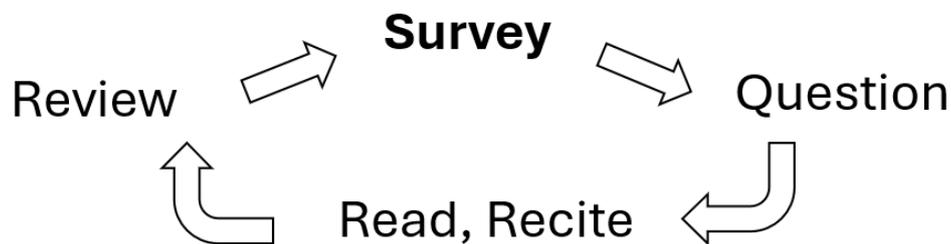
### **1.10 Effective learning strategies**

Self-knowledge is key to discovering the learning methods that work best for you. By understanding your preferred learning styles - whether visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or a combination - you can tailor your study techniques to maximise efficiency and retention (what you can re-analyse in the future). This approach to learning ensures that you are not passively absorbing information but actively, and critically engaging with it in a way that suits you best. When you leverage your strengths and address your weaknesses, you can transform your study sessions into powerful tools for academic success. Embracing effective learning strategies

through self-awareness empowers you to become a more confident and capable learner, paving the way for educational excellence in your education journey.

### 1.11 Introduction to the SQ3R study method

Over the years, researchers have studied the SQ3R method to see how well it works. First, university students who use it tend to remember more information during exams. Second, it helps improve skills like organisation, making connections between ideas, and critical thinking. Third, the initial steps - surveying and questioning - help students build a strong base of knowledge before diving deeper into understanding the material. In addition, the SQ3R encourages the brain to process information more efficiently.



SQ3R study method designed by Francis Robinson.

Despite its many benefits, and like all study and reading methods, students must be aware the SQ3R method is by no means 'easy'. The SQ3R method is not meant to provide short-cuts, it can be time-consuming, and challenging to follow all the steps. However, its proven advantages make it a worthwhile technique to try, especially for students looking to improve their study habits.

### 1.12 Academic benefits of the SQ3R method

Imagine walking into exams feeling confident, knowing you have truly mastered the material - that is the power of the **SQ3R method**. Unlike cramming or passive (inactive) reading, SQ3R transforms studying into an active, engaging process that sticks with you. By surveying texts first (through skimming and scanning), then turning headings into questions, you prime your brain to hunt for key ideas as you read. And when you recite answers aloud and review regularly, you are not just memorising - you are building deep understanding. Say goodbye to forgetting about everything in the post-test phase; SQ3R helps you retain knowledge longer by working with your brain, not against it.

The benefits of **SQ3R** do not stop there. SQ3R is not just about doing well in tests. It is also about becoming a more sharper and organised thinker. When you question the material before reading, you train your mind to analyze and connect ideas like a professional. Are you struggling with dense texts or reading material? SQ3R breaks them into manageable steps, so you stay focused and in control. Plus, the recite and review states force you to confront gaps in your understanding early, saving you from last-minute panic. This method is not just studying - it is strategic learning that builds skills for university and beyond.



So, are you ready to take charge of your success?

**SQ3R** is not magic, it is science. Research shows that students use it to score higher, think critically, and even manage their time better. Yes, it does take practice, but the payoff is huge: less stress, stronger recall, and real confidence in your abilities. So why keep struggling with outdated study habits? Give SQ3R a try for a chapter - you might be shocked how much more you learn, and how much easier it feels. Your future professional self will thank you.



## 1.13 Step-by-step guide to mastering the SQ3R method

### 1.13.1 Step 1: Survey

- a **Skim your text.** Look at headings, subheadings, bold terms, images, graphs and summaries.
- b **Read** introductions
- c and conclusions to grasp the big picture.
- d **Scan** questions or objectives (if available).
- e **Goal:** Get a mental map of what you are about to read / learn - like checking a map before taking a trip.

### 1.13.2 Step 2: Question

- a Turn each heading and subheading into a **question**.
- b **Write** these questions down and say them aloud.
- c **Goal:** Spark curiosity! Your brain will actively seek answers as you read.

### 1.13.3 Step 3: Read actively

- a **Read** one section at a time. Do not rush. Practice skimming and scanning.
- b **Highlight** or jot down key points. But only *after* you understand them.
- c Pause to **answer** your questions from Step 2 in your own words.
- d **Tip:** If stuck, rephrase the information or draw a diagram.



### 1.13.4 Step 4: Recite

- a After each section, close the book or text.
- b **Answer** your questions *aloud*. Teach a peer or an imaginary friend.
- c **Write** bullet-point summaries of your answers. Use your own words.



- d **Important:** If you cannot fully answer the question aloud or in writing, you do not understand it fully yet.

#### 1.13.5 Step 5: Review

- a **Within 24 hours:** Glance back at your questions, summaries and headings.
- b **Before tests:** Revise your notes and quiz yourself < go back to your *questions*.
- c **Bonus:** Create flashcards or mind maps to assist with difficult questions.



#### 1.14 Reflecting on the SQ3R method

Before we continue, let us reflect on the significance and value of the SQ3R method for your academic and professional journey. Take time to reflect and answer the questions that follow.

##### 1.14.1 Engagement and focus

How can the SQ3R method help me to stay focused while studying? For now, refer to one of the sections - **scan, question, read, review, recite**. On your own time, expand your answers.

##### 1.14.2 Understanding versus memorisation

After using SQ3R, do I feel like I truly understand the material, or did I just memorise facts? How did the *question* and *recite* steps change my understanding?

##### 1.14.3 Time and efficiency

Did SQ3R save me time in the long run - or did it feel slower at first? How could I adjust the steps to make the method work better for my schedule?

##### 1.14.4 Confidence and recall

How did my test, assignment performance, or ability to explain topics improve after using SQ3R? Did the *review* step help me to retain information longer?

#### 1.15 Resilience and adaptability

Self-knowledge plays a crucial role in developing resilience and adaptability, two essential traits for academic success. **Resilience** includes the ability to recover quickly from difficulties and

setbacks. When you understand your emotional responses and coping mechanisms, you can better manage stress and bounce back from challenges.

**Question:** What is the first memory you have of having to be resilient?

**Adaptability** is the capacity to adjust to new conditions and environments. By knowing your strengths and weaknesses, you can find ways to adapt your study habits and strategies to different situations, whether it is a new subject, a different teacher, or unexpected changes in your life.

**Question:** What is the first memory you have of successfully or unsuccessfully adapting to a new environment?

### 1.16 Resilience and adaptation strategies

Here are **5 strategies** you can apply. We will revisit these again.

1. **Stay organised:** Use planners or digital tools to keep track of assignments, deadlines, and exams.
2. **Develop a support network:** Connect with peers, mentors, and counselors for academic and emotional support.
3. **Practice self-care:** Prioritise sleep, nutrition, and exercise to maintain physical and mental health.
4. **Embrace flexibility:** Be open to change and adapt your study methods or schedules as needed.
5. **Set realistic goals:** Break down large tasks into manageable steps and celebrate small achievements.



### 1.17 Summary of Unit 1

This unit explored the power of self-knowledge and understanding as the foundation for academic and professional growth. By understanding your strengths, weaknesses, and learning preferences, you can set meaningful goals, adopt effective strategies like the SQ3R method, and build resilience to overcome challenges. Key lessons included:

1. **Self-awareness** helps align your studies with future careers, turning academic subjects into stepping stones for success.

2. **Proverbial wisdom** taught the value of learning from mistakes. Remember, “Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped”. Also, recall your inner-strength, “when there is no enemy within”.
3. **The SQ3R method** - survey, question, read, recite, review - transforms passive writing into active mastery, boosting your retention and critical thinking. It is an effective strategy of reading for understanding with and without digital technology.
4. **Resilience** and **adaptability** strategies - like organisation, self-care, and support networks - prepare you for academic and life challenges.

**Reflection:** How could **SQ3R** and resilience strategies (like organisation or self-care) help me tackle my next academic challenge?

## UNIT 2: CHOOSING AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

Selecting the right institution of higher learning is one of the most important decisions you will make as you transition from high school to university. This choice will shape not only your academic journey but also your personal growth, career opportunities, and overall university experience. With countless options available - each offering unique programmes, campus cultures, and resources - it is essential to approach this decision thoughtfully. In this section, we will guide you through understanding your priorities, researching institutions effectively, and finding the best fit for your goals and aspirations. By taking the time to explore your options now, you will set yourself up for success in the years ahead.



Choosing the right post-high school institution is extremely important.

To begin, we will help you identify what truly matters to you in a university experience. Is it the availability of specific academic programs, the campus location, or the sense of community? Once you have clarified your priorities, we will walk you through practical steps for researching institutions, such as utilising university websites, attending virtual or in-person events, and connecting with current students or alumni. Beyond rankings and reputations, we will encourage you to dig deeper into factors like class sizes, faculty accessibility, extracurricular offerings, and support services. By aligning your personal and academic needs with what each institution provides, you will be better equipped to make a confident decision that sets the foundation for a fulfilling university journey.

### 2.1 Why choosing the correct institution is important

Choosing the right university is more than just picking a name. It is about setting the stage for your future. This decision will shape not only how you learn but also who you will become. The institution you select can influence the friendships you form, the mentors you meet, and the opportunities that come your way. It is a chance to step into an environment where you can thrive academically, grow personally, and build skills that will serve you long after graduation.

At the same time, it is important to approach this process with clarity and intention. Do not let external pressures - whether from family, peers, or societal expectations - dictate your choice. A prestigious school might look impressive on paper, but if it does not align with your needs and values, it could lead to frustration or burnout. Similarly, choosing a school solely because it is

close to home or inexpensive might leave you missing out on experiences that could broaden your horizons.

In this section, we will guide you through understanding what truly matters to you in a university experience. By reflecting on your priorities, researching effectively, and finding the best fit for your goals, you will be empowered to make a decision that feels right - not just for today, but for the years ahead. Remember, there is not a 'perfect' school, but there is one that is perfect for you. Let us get started.



## 2.2 Knowing your academic priorities

Before diving into university or FET brochures or websites, take a moment to pause and ask yourself: *What kind of environment helps me to succeed?* Do you thrive in small classrooms where professors know your name, or do you prefer large lectures that expose you to diverse perspectives? Are you drawn to urban campuses bustling with energy, or would you flourish in quieter, rural settings? These questions matter because they reveal what kind of learner - and person you are.

As you imagine your life at university, think about what truly matters to you - whether it is finding a school with the perfect academic program for your dream career or being somewhere that feels like home, whether that is close by or in a new city. Sure, the idea of attending a sprawling campus in a bustling urban center might sound thrilling, but do not forget to weigh it against the practical concerns like cost, class sizes, and how much financial aid is available. Remember, the best choice is one that balances what you need - like affordability and strong academics - with what makes you happy, like a vibrant social scene or a tight-knit community.

## 2.3 How to identify your priorities

You can identify your priorities by reflecting on what aspects of university life will most directly impact your happiness and success. Start by asking yourself key questions: *What kind of environment helps you learn best?* For example, do you prefer small classes where you can engage closely with professors, or are you comfortable in large lectures?



Consider practical factors like cost and location - would staying close to home or choosing an affordable school ease stress, or would you thrive farther away in a completely new setting? Then, think about your personal preferences: What kind of campus culture excites you? Would you enjoy a diverse environment with endless extracurriculars, or does a quieter, more focused atmosphere suit you better? Writing down your answers and ranking them in order of importance is vital.

### **ACTIVITY 3: MY UNIVERSITIES MAP**

Take a few minutes to reflect on *what truly matters* to you in your university experience. Use the questions below as a guide to identify and rank your priorities. Jot down your thoughts and answer the questions.

1. Learning environment:

- a Do you work best in small, discussion-based classes or large lectures?
- b Write down which setting excites you more and why.
- c Rank \_\_\_\_\_

2. Practical factors:

- a How important is cost and financial aid to you?
- b Would attending a more affordable school reduce stress for you and your family?
- c Do you want to stay close to home, or are you ready to explore a new city or country?
- d Rank \_\_\_\_\_

3. Campus culture:

- a What kind of campus vibe do you imagine yourself thriving in - a diverse, busy place, or - a quiet, academically focused institution?
- b List one or two extracurricular or cultural aspects that would make you feel connected to the community.
- c Rank \_\_\_\_\_

4. Rank your priorities:

- a List your top 5 priorities: learning environment, practical factors, campus culture.
- b Rank them from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important).
- c This will clarify your university preferences and guide your search.

## 2.4 Researching post-secondary institutions effectively

Choosing a university takes effort and careful thought. Since the process is not easy, you should research schools while keeping your academic goals in mind. This process should start as early as possible. However, by grade ten you should already be thinking about institutions of higher learning that match your knowledge and skills interests. There are many resources at your fingertips, so it is easy to feel overwhelmed - or worse, misled.

Start by:

1. **Exploring** official university websites. These offer detailed information about academic programmes, admission requirements, and campus life.
2. **Visiting** university 'fairs' and virtual events to interact directly with representatives and current students.
3. **Access** universities' social media platforms. Often, specific academic departments have their own sites and applications.



Explore universities and post-secondary institutions online.

Choosing a university is a journey that requires effort, curiosity and intentionality - it is not just about finding a school but discovering the place where you can grow, thrive, and achieve your dreams. While the process may feel challenging at times, remember that every step you take brings you closer to a future that aligns with your passions and goals. Start early, start now! By grade ten, begin exploring institutions that resonate with your academic interests and personal strengths.

With so many resources available, it is easy to feel overwhelmed or unsure, but staying organised and focused will help you navigate the noise. Dive into official university websites for detailed information, attend fairs, and virtual events to connect with real people who can share their experiences, and explore social media platforms to get an authentic glimpse of campus life. Each of these steps is a building block toward making an informed decision - one that sets the foundation for your success.

**ACTIVITY 4A: BRAINSTORMING HIGHER EDUCATION OPTIONS**

In the table below, list two institutions that you are interested in. It does not matter how much or how little you know about them at this stage. There is something about them that interests you.

Institution name	Attraction to it?	Offer my degrees? Y/N	Near or far from home? Y/N



Prepare for university now.

**ACTIVITY 4B:**

In the space below, reflect on your academic needs and professional goals; use the 'free-write' style (let it flow) and *describe* your desired post-secondary institution.

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## 2.5 Understanding the higher education (HE) system in South Africa

South Africa's higher education system offers a variety of opportunities for students to pursue their academic and career goals. The system includes universities, universities of technology and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) colleges.

1. Universities focus on academic and professional training.
2. Universities of technology emphasise practical and technical skills.
3. TVET colleges prepare students for specific trades and careers.



## 2.6 Importance of choosing a HE institution wisely

Choosing wisely among South Africa's higher education options is crucial because each type of institution offers distinct pathways that align with different career goals and learning styles.

- Universities provide a broad academic foundation and professional training. This pathway is ideal for students pursuing careers like law, medicine, psychology, sociology, education, the natural sciences, and many others.
- Universities of technology concentrate on practical and technical skills, offering hands-on training and industry-specific national industries.
- TVET colleges are similar to universities of technology. Their focus is on developing hands-on skills training that can be applied in the workplace across various industries.

## 2.7 Higher education reflection

In the space below, write your first inclination to join either a university, university of technology, or TVET college. Write 1-2 sentences identifying which one you prefer and why.

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## 2.8 Types of post-secondary education institutions

	<b>Universities</b>	<b>Uni of Technology</b>	<b>TVET</b>
Focus	Broad academic foundation and professional training	Practical and technical skills	Hands-on skills training
Ideal for Careers in	Law, medicine, psychology, sociology, education, natural sciences, and many others	Engineering, technology, applied sciences, and industry-specific programs	Various trades and careers across multiple industries
Training Style	Academic and theoretical	Hands-on and industry-specific	Hands-on and workplace-oriented
Program Types	Undergraduate and postgraduate degrees	Diplomas, degrees, and industry-specific certifications	Certificates, diplomas, and vocational qualifications
Learning Environment	Classroom-based with research opportunities	Practical labs, workshops, and industry placements	Workshops, practical training, and industry placements

## 2.9 Summary

Universities focus on academic and research-oriented programs, universities of technology blend theory with practical skills, and TVET colleges emphasize hands-on training for specific trades.

## 2.10 Choosing a faculty when applying to a post-secondary institution

Choosing the proper faculty is crucial for new students as it significantly impacts their academic success and overall well-being. Here are some key reasons:

1. **Strengths and aptitudes:** Each student, you, has unique strengths and aptitudes. Selecting a faculty that aligns with these attributes can enhance your learning experience and academic performance. For instance, a student with a strong aptitude for mathematics might thrive in a faculty that focuses on quantitative, numeric subjects. Those of you passionate about communications and human relations may be more suited for the Humanities.



2. **Interests:** Pursuing studies in areas of genuine interest can lead to greater engagement and motivation. When students are passionate about their subjects, they are more likely to excel and enjoy their academic pursuits. Therefore, it is important, to the best of your ability, to choose a faculty that reflects your passions and interests in life.
3. **Learning environments:** Different faculties offer varied teaching styles and resources. A supportive and stimulating environment can foster academic growth and personal development. It is important for students to choose a faculty where they feel comfortable and encouraged to learn. When choosing a faculty, ask yourself if you sense that you will 'feel at home' in it, and among the types of peers and academics who share similar interests as your own.
4. **Career goals:** The right faculty can provide the necessary foundation for future career aspirations. It offers specialised knowledge and skills that are essential for specific professions, helping students to achieve long-term goals. Additionally, universities provide knowledge and skills that you can apply to starting your own business. For example, as a qualified psychologist, you can open your own counselling office. As a qualified attorney or accountant, you can open your own practice. With skills in plumbing, you can provide important services.



## ACTIVITY 5

Reflecting on your own strengths, interests, and goals, describe how choosing the right faculty when applying to a post-secondary institution could shape your academic journey and future career. Consider the importance of aligning your personal attributes with the learning environment and resources offered by the faculty. How might this decision impact your sense of belonging and motivation throughout your studies?

Reflect on how choosing a post-secondary institution can shape your academic career and future career. Consider the list below - what you may or may not know about those institutions.

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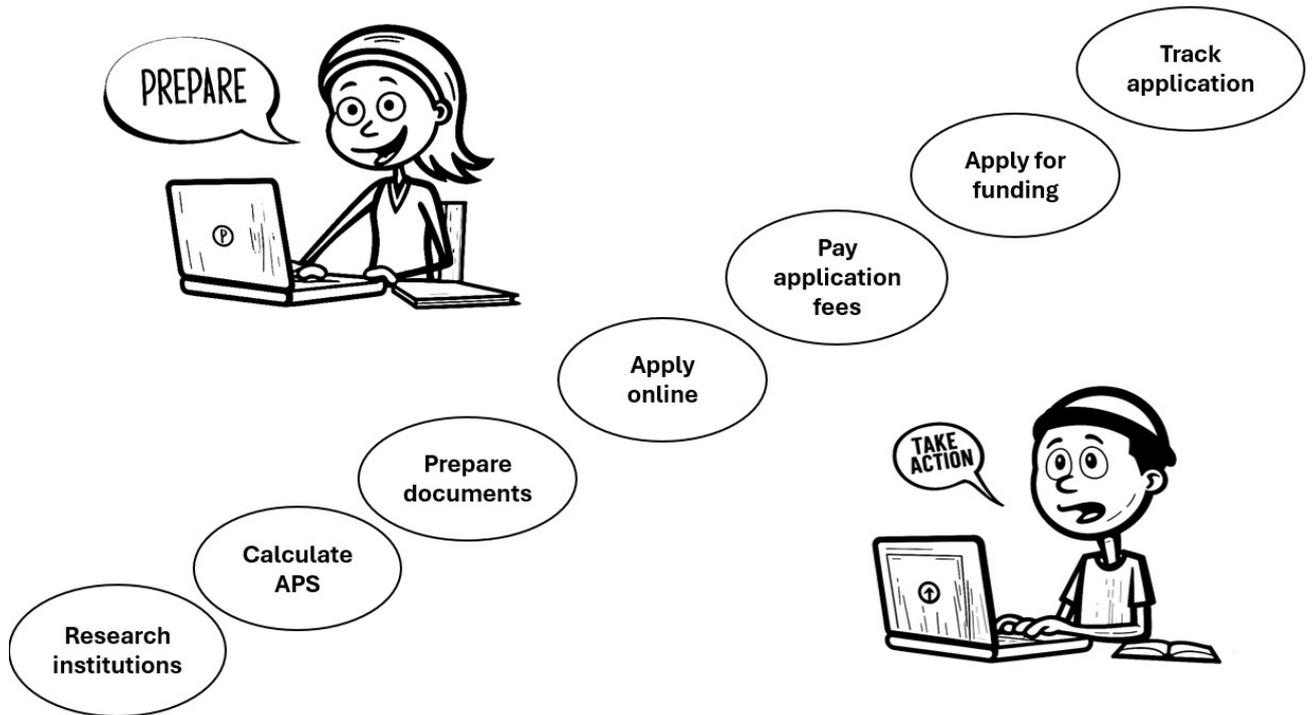




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## 2.11 The university application process in South Africa



## 2.12 7 Steps to applying to post-secondary institutions

### 2.12.1 Research institutions

Identify universities or post-secondary institutions that offer your desired degree or programme. Check their admission requirements and programme details. Consider factors like location, campus facilities, and reputation.

### 2.12.2 Calculate APS

South African universities use the Admission Point Score (APS). The APS is calculated based on your National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, with different programmes requiring varying APS scores. Be sure to check the specific APS requirements for your chosen program on the university's website or ask the P2E chatbot.

### 2.12.3 Prepare documents

Gather necessary documents such as your ID, academic transcripts, and proof of residence. Ensure all documents are certified copies. Keep digital copies ready for online submissions. We recommend that you start with this process in Grade 11, and not Grade 12.

### 2.12.4 Apply online

Submit your application through the institution's online portal before the deadline. South African universities typically have a streamlined online application process. Follow the instructions carefully and double-check all entered information.

### 2.12.5 Pay application fees

Pay any required application fees, which vary by institution. Payment can usually be made online via credit card or EFT. Keep the receipts.



### 2.12.6 Apply for funding

Explore bursary and scholarship opportunities to finance your studies. Check both government and private funding options. Apply early to increase your chances of securing financial aid.

### 2.12.7 Track application

Monitor your application status through the institution's online portal. Respond promptly to any requests for additional information. Stay updated on important dates and deadlines.

**Distance from home:** When choosing a post-secondary educational institution (PSEI), did you think about how far it is from your home? This can affect your daily commute, living arrangements, and overall comfort.

**Qualification alignment:** Does the PSEI offer degrees or programs that match your career aspirations? It is important to ensure that your chosen institution provides the education you need to achieve your professional goals.



**APS scores:** Are you familiar with the Admission Point Score (APS) requirements for the PSEI and programs you are interested in? Knowing the APS scores can help you understand how you need to improve your marks to gain entry into your PSEI.

## UNIT 3: ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS

Academic preparedness begins with mastering effective **study techniques**. We have already introduced the **SQ3R** method to you. Effective study skills include understanding how to manage time efficiently, prioritise tasks, and balance coursework with other responsibilities. Developing a consistent study routine and utilising tools like planners, digital apps can significantly enhance productivity. These skills are essential for maintaining a healthy academic life and achieving success in a post-secondary education institution.



Preparing for university-level exams requires **strategic planning and effective stress management**. Students should learn various study methods, such as *active recall* and *spaced repetition*, to retain information better. Additionally, practicing past exam papers and understanding the exam format can boost confidence. Managing stress through relaxation techniques and maintaining a balanced lifestyle is crucial for optimal performance.

University education often demands **independent research**, making it vital for students to develop strong research skills. This includes learning how to find and evaluate scholarly sources, understanding citation styles, and effectively organising research materials. Familiarity with academic databases and libraries can greatly aid in this process. These skills not only support academic success but also foster critical thinking and analytical abilities.

### 3.1 Managing your time effectively

Managing time effectively is a skill that students should start developing while still in secondary school, as it lays the foundation for academic success in higher education. Early practice in time management helps you to prioritize tasks, set realistic goals, and balance various responsibilities, such as homework, extracurricular activities, and personal commitments.



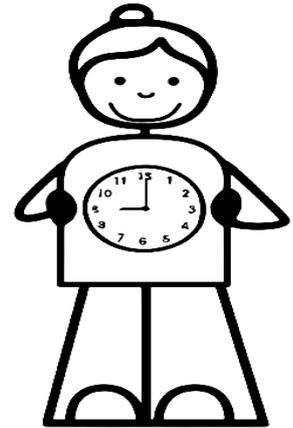
These habits become even more crucial in university, where the academic workload is heavier and more demanding. Effective time management enables students to stay organised, meet deadlines, and reduce stress, ultimately leading to better performance and a more fulfilling

educational experience. Starting this practice early ensures that you are well prepared to handle the challenges of higher education with confidence and efficiency.

### 3.2 Reflecting on time management

One of the ways that we improve our time management skills is to be aware of how we actually manage our time on a daily basis. Doing so has two significant benefits:

1. We become aware of how our time can be used more productively.
2. We also identify periods in the day when we could be more productive, possibly reducing a *waste of time*.



### ACTIVITY 7A

List your daily activities from 05:00-22:00. Be honest and reflect on your routine.

05:00 - 06:00 >

06:00 - 07:00 >

07:00 - 08:00 >

08:00 - 09:00 >

09:00 - 10:00 >

10:00 - 11:00 >

11:00 - 12:00 >

12:00 - 13:00 >

13:00 - 14:00 >

14:00 - 15:00 >

15:00 - 16:00 >

16:00 - 17:00 >

17:00 - 18:00 >

18:00 - 19:00 >

19:00 - 20:00 >

20:00 - 21:00 >

21:00 - 22:00 >

Outside of school, how many of those hours are dedicated to studying?

### **3.3 More benefits of effective time management**

Reflecting on your time management practices can reveal valuable insights into how you allocate your time and where improvements can be made. Effective time management is crucial because it helps you prioritise tasks, set realistic goals, and balance various responsibilities. By managing your time well, you can reduce stress, meet deadlines, and achieve a better work-life balance. This not only enhances your academic performance but also contributes to your overall well-being.

Moreover, developing strong time management skills early on prepares you for future challenges in higher education and beyond. It enables you to stay organised, make informed decisions, and handle multiple tasks efficiently. As you can continue to refine your time management strategies, you will find yourself more confident and capable of tackling complex projects and responsibilities. Remember, time management is an ongoing process, and *regularly reflecting on and adjusting* your approach will help you maintain productivity and achieve your goals.

### **3.4 Time management, organisation with academic performance**



Effective time management is the cornerstone of academic success. When you manage your time well, you can prioritise tasks, meet deadlines, and allocate sufficient time for studying, which directly enhances your academic performance. For example, creating a study schedule that includes regular review sessions can help you retain information better and perform well on exams. Additionally, setting aside specific times for homework ensures that you complete assignments on time and avoid last minute-stress. This organised approach reduces anxiety and allows you to focus better, ultimately leading to higher grades and a more fulfilling educational experience.

On the other hand, poor time management can be a student's downfall. Missing deadlines due to procrastination or failing to allocate enough time for studying can result in lower grades and a constant feeling of being overwhelmed. For instance, cramming for exams at the last minute often leads to poor retention of information and lower test scores.



Similarly, neglecting to plan for assignments can cause you to rush through them, compromising the quality of your work. This chaotic approach not only hampers your academic performance but also takes a toll on your mental and physical health. *The difference between success and struggle often lies in how well you manage your time.* Take control of your schedule, and you will find yourself achieving your goals with greater ease and confidence.

### 3.5 Thando and Thuli: A Tale of Two Students

As the final bell rang, signaling the end of the school day, Thando and Thuli packed their bags and headed out of the classroom. Despite being friends, their after-school routines could not be more different.

### 3.6 Thando's evening

Thando walked home with a sense of purpose. He had a clear plan for the evening, starting with a quick snack and a brief rest. By 4:00 PM, he was at his desk, ready to tackle his homework. Thando believed in the power of time management and had developed a study schedule that balanced schoolwork, extracurricular activities, and relaxation.



He started with Math, his favourite subject, and worked through the problems methodically. After an hour, he switched to history, summarising key points from the day's lesson. Thando knew that breaking his study sessions in manageable chunks helped him stay focused and retain information better.

At 6:00 PM, Thando took a break for dinner with his family. They discussed their day, shared stories, and enjoyed each other's company. After dinner, Thando spent another hour reviewing his notes and preparing for the next day's classes. By 8:00 PM, he was done with his studies and had time to unwind. He played a video game for a while and then read a book before bed.

Thando's bedtime routine was just as structured. He made sure to get at least eight hours of sleep, knowing that a well-rested mind was crucial for academic success. By 10:00 PM, he was in bed, ready to recharge for the next day.



### 3.7 Thuli's evening



Thuli, on the other hand, had a more relaxed approach to her evenings. She left school with no particular plan in mind. After grabbing a snack, she spent the next few hours scrolling through social media and chatting with friends. Home was the last thing on her mind.

By 6:00 PM, Thuli realised she had not started her assignments yet. She hurriedly pulled out her books and tried to cram as much information as possible. Her study environment was chaotic, with her phone buzzing constantly and the TV blaring in the background. Thuli struggled to concentrate and often found herself distracted.



Dinner was a quick affair, eaten in front of the TV. Thuli's family did not have the same structured mealtime as Thando's, and conversations were brief. After dinner, Thuli attempted to finish her homework but found herself overwhelmed. She had not managed her time well and was now facing the consequences.

By 10:00 PM, Thuli was still working on her assignments, feeling stressed and tired. She knew she would not get enough sleep but could not afford to leave her homework unfinished. Finally, around midnight, she crawled into bed, exhausted and anxious about the next day.

### 3.8 The next morning

Thando woke up refreshed and ready to tackle the day. His organised approach to studying and time management meant he was well-prepared for his classes. He felt confident and focused, knowing he had done his best to stay on top of his work.

Thuli, on the other hand, worked up groggy and stressed. Her lack of planning and poor study habits had left her feeling unprepared and anxious. She struggled to keep up with her lessons and felt the weight of her disorganisation.

### 3.9 Outcomes

The contrast between Thando and Thuli's routines highlights the importance of good study habits and time management. Thando's structured approach allowed him to balance his academic responsibilities with relaxation, leading to a more productive and less stressful life. Thuli's lack of planning and focus resulted in anxiety and exhaustion, impacting her overall wellbeing and academic performance.

## ACTIVITY 7B

What can we learn from the experiences and academic learning strategies of Thando and Thuli. Take a moment to reflect and list them in the table below (x3 each). Consider the text and images.

Lessons from Thando	Lessons from Thuli

## ACTIVITY 7C



### 3.10 Independent research strategies

#### 3.10.1 Skimming and scanning

Skimming and scanning are both speed-reading techniques used to quickly gather information, but they serve different purposes. **Skimming** involves reading quickly through a text to get a general overview, focusing on main ideas and key points. This technique is useful when you want to preview material, understand the structure of a text, or decide if it is relevant to your needs. By skimming, readers can build a foundational understanding, which strengthens comprehension when you later read more thoroughly.

**Scanning**, on the other hand, is the process of searching for specific information - such as names, dates, keywords, or answers - without reading every word. It is particularly helpful when preparing for assessments where locating



precise details quickly is essential. Scanning allows you to efficiently review notes, find supporting evidence in texts, or identify important facts, making it a valuable tool during study sessions and exams. *Together*, skimming and scanning improve efficiency in reading and support better preparation for and performance during examinations.

#### 3.10.2 Quick task

In two short sentences, write the difference between skimming and scanning below:

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### 3.10.3 Skimming in higher education

**Skimming** is an essential reading skill for university students, particularly when dealing with large amounts of materials across disciplines like sociology, biology, and physics. In social sciences, skimming allows students to quickly grasp the main arguments of lengthy articles or reports on topics such as urban development or gender studies, helping them identify relevant sources for essays or research projects.

In physical sciences, skimming can help students preview complex textbook chapters or lab manuals, giving them a framework for understanding technical concepts before diving into detailed study. This strategic approach enables learners to manage heavy workloads effectively while building a solid foundation for deeper comprehension.



**Scanning** is equally crucial in a university setting, especially when students need to locate specific information quickly across various subjects. For instance, in psychology courses, scanning helps students find key theories or statistical results in research papers, while in engineering, it allows for rapid identification of formulas, diagrams, or safety protocols in technical documents.



During exam preparation, scanning lecture notes or scientific studies for keywords, definitions, or data points can significantly improve recall and accuracy under time constraints. These skills not only enhance academic performance but also prepare students for professional environments where efficient information retrieval is vital.

### 3.10.4 Notes

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## ACTIVITY 8

### Instructions

1. Read the narrative below.
2. Answer the questions to practice skimming and scanning that follow it.

### **Lebatho and Lerato stand at the crossroads their future**

It was a Tuesday morning in May. Lebatho, wrapped up in warm blankets, felt the chill of the autumn air around his nose. However, his thoughts were not on the weather or the comfortable warmth around his body. His mind was focused on his future. Even though it was just 03:57 Lebatho was as awake as a cheetah sprinting through the bush while being aware of its surroundings at 77 KPH.

Yesterday at school, Mrs Chauke told Lebatho's grade 11 English class that the time for taking a relaxed approach to their future plans is over. What made Lebatho sit straight up, like a pencil writing furiously in the hand of an eager scholar, was her remark that, "Grade 11 decisions are as important as Grade 12". He could not stop thinking about this statement, and annoyed his close friend, Lerato, with endless questions about her post-secondary education.



Lebatho was firing questions at Lerato faster than a speeding car on the highway. "Do you want to go to university? Which one do you want to go to? What are your top choices? What do you want to be in the future? Do you have the marks needed to get into university? Lerato, learning against the side of the tuk shop, just rolled her eyes. She was busy unwrapping chocolate and focused on eating it to get a sugar rush. That did not stop Lebatho, though. His mind was racing

with thoughts about his current marks, faculties, degrees, subjects, careers - anything related to education and his future.

Earlier in the day, Mrs Chauke returned the essay everyone had written in the literature class. In the previous week, Lethabo spent time working on this assignment from 23:00 to nearly 03:58 in the morning. He was convinced that given the hours he dedicated to it, he was going to get an excellent mark. However, when Mrs Chauke returned his essay, she looked him straight in the eye, and without saying a word, it felt like she gave him a message saying, "Good effort, but, are you serious"? Like two slow motion raindrops, Lethabos' eyes dropped to his page. In large red letters were the numbers, 47/100.

As if a bucket of ice cold water had been poured on his head, Lethabo's shoulders dropped. He looked around at his smiling peers who were happy, sharing their marks with each other. But inside, it felt as if a huge knot made of rope had got stuck in his stomach. All of a sudden, the room started to spin like the merry-go-rounds in the park. Sweat began to pour from his forehead. It felt as if the laughter and happy chats of his peers started to echo in his mind. Lethabo closed the essay, put it in his



bag, stood up like a rocket, and like a quick breeze - walked out of the classroom without greeting anyone.

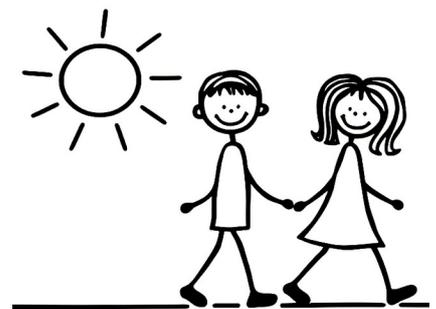


Like a lion charging its prey, Lethabo walked straight to the door and out of the classroom, then through the busy hallways, crowded with uniformed students, and out of the building. He saw and heard his friend Siphso shout at him to “wait up” in the distance, but he just kept marching. He wanted to get off the school property as a matter of urgency. As soon as he exited the door-sized iron gate, his mind slowed, but just a little bit. Now, in his own space, and away from his peers, he could reflect on his essay mark. Then guilt hit him like the smack in the face by a three year old child who does not know their own strength. “What was I doing? What was I thinking? How could I start and finish an assignment worth 100 marks late at night, that is due the next day?”



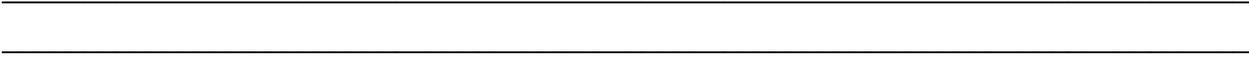
Then the reality of his mistakes surrounded him like balls of hail dropping from the sky. Next to Mrs Chauke’s mark were comments. “Where is the essay’s required title? Did you read the essay question? Why are you writing in all caps? Are you sure these are your own words? Did you revise and edit your final draft before submission?” Lethabo’s heart turned into ice. Then, his feet sweated for a minute. His eyes darted back and forth like a man lost in a foreign city. Then, he looked nervously up at the sky, totally unaware of Lerato tugging at his bag. It suddenly dawned on him: he could have done much better in preparing. Indeed, he misinterpreted the essay question and did not follow up for support. The worst thing is that he had to admit to himself that he did not check his spelling or edit his document. The mistakes were like ants crawling all over the page.

After swimming in circles within a pool of thoughts, it was then that Lerato caught his attention. She asked him a question that made him turn abruptly toward her, as if a bee was flying near his ear. “Where do you want to go to university after Grade 12?”, she asked. As if getting less than 50% was not like eating bread with sand, now Lerato was asking him about his future, and - university of all things.



Then, Lethabo’s questions started to flow. Lerato looked at the sky, nibbled on her chocolate, and giggled to herself. She was literally trying to get his attention for a full three minutes, and now he would not stop asking questions. In her backpack were two applications to apply for university bursaries, and she wanted to share one with him. Slowly, they walked home together with hundreds of students around, while planning an amazing future.





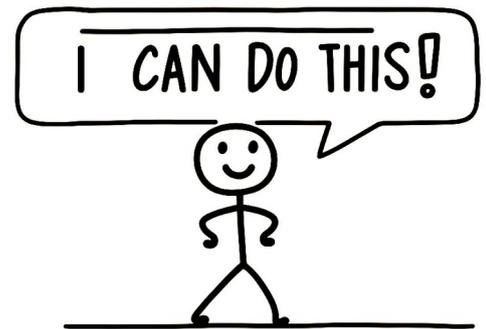
## UNIT 4:                    STARTING THE UNIVERSITY APPLICATION PROCESS

Sometimes in life, the most important step we can take is the first one. There are many reasons for this. Anything that is new represents the unknown. As a result, when it comes to taking new and first steps in any major, we may experience hesitation, nervousness, self-doubt, isolation, or even fear. While these emotions may not appear progressive or positive, they do have value in your journey toward joining a post-secondary institution and preparing your professional future.

### 4.1 Getting started

Here are some steps we recommend you take before starting the actual steps of applying to universities, universities of technologies, or TVET's.

1. **Acknowledge your feelings.** Tell yourself, "It is perfectly natural to feel a bit nervous about a new phase and activity in my life".
2. **Be self-encouraging.** Tell yourself, "You have got this. You are a winner! You were born to succeed no matter the hurdles and challenges.
3. **Share peer practical advice.** In your chats, remind each other to focus on the positives and the things you can control. Also, set small and achievable goals in the application process.
4. **Support each other.** Regular meet and have planning and brainstorming meetings. Tell each other, "I am here to support you if needed" and listen to each other's concerns.
5. **Practice and encourage self-care** as you approach your higher education future.



**Based on 1-5 above, what do you need to work on the most? Answer below.**

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#### 4.1.1 Step 1: Identifying institutions and contacting them

One of the first practical steps toward applying to a university is to access and **connect** with them to get the necessary information you need. However, before emailing or phoning them, check and see if the information that you need is online. This means working wisely with your data and airtime, going to the library if you need access to a computer, working in your school's lab (if possible), or connecting with family or friends to access the Internet and information you need.

*Below*, we have shared up-to-date contact information related to the universities in South Africa. As links and numbers change, we will update them on our website that we will share with you. For now, feel free to copy and paste them into your Internet browser.

##### 4.1.1.1 Faculty advisors in Post-Secondary Institutions



Faculty advisors play a crucial role in universities by providing academic guidance and support to students throughout their educational journey. They help students navigate their course selections, ensuring that they meet the requirements for their degree programmes while also exploring their interests and career aspirations. Faculty advisors often assist in identifying opportunities for research, internships, and extracurricular activities that can enhance students' academic and professional development. Additionally, they serve as mentors, offering advice on academic challenges, personal issues, and future career paths.

By fostering a supportive and collaborative relationship, faculty advisors contribute significantly to students overall success and wellbeing in the university environment.

#### **4.1.1.2 Recommendations**

When visiting university websites, we advise you to:

1. *First* identify the faculties of your choice.
2. *Locate* the contact information for the faculty advisors.
3. *Contact* the faculty advisors through email and phone, and schedule an appointment with them if possible.

#### **4.1.1.3 Questions you can ask faculty advisors**

1. What courses should I take in my first year to stay on track for my degree?
2. Are there opportunities for undergraduate research or internships in my field of interest?
3. What resources are available for academic support, such as tutoring or study groups?
4. How can I get involved in extracurricular activities or student organisations related to my degree?
5. What career paths do graduates from this program or degree typically pursue, and how can I prepare for them?

#### **4.1.1.4 Post-Secondary Application Plan (PSAP)**

Having a Post-Secondary Application Plan (PSAP) is essential for prospective students, as it provides a structured approach to navigating the complex and often overwhelming process of applying to TVET and universities. A well crafted PSAP helps you identify your academic and career goals, ensuring that you select institutions and programmes that align with your aspirations.

A PSAP allows you to manage application deadlines, gather necessary documentation, and prepare for standardized tests in a timely manner, reducing stress and increasing the likelihood of success. Additionally, a PSAP can include strategies for securing financial aid and scholarships, making higher education more accessible and affordable. Overall, a PSAP empowers you, the students, to make informed decisions and enhances your chances of gaining admission to your desired institutions.

#### **4.1.1.5 Questions to prepare your PSAP**

1. Have I narrowed down my top post-secondary options to 2-3 institutions?

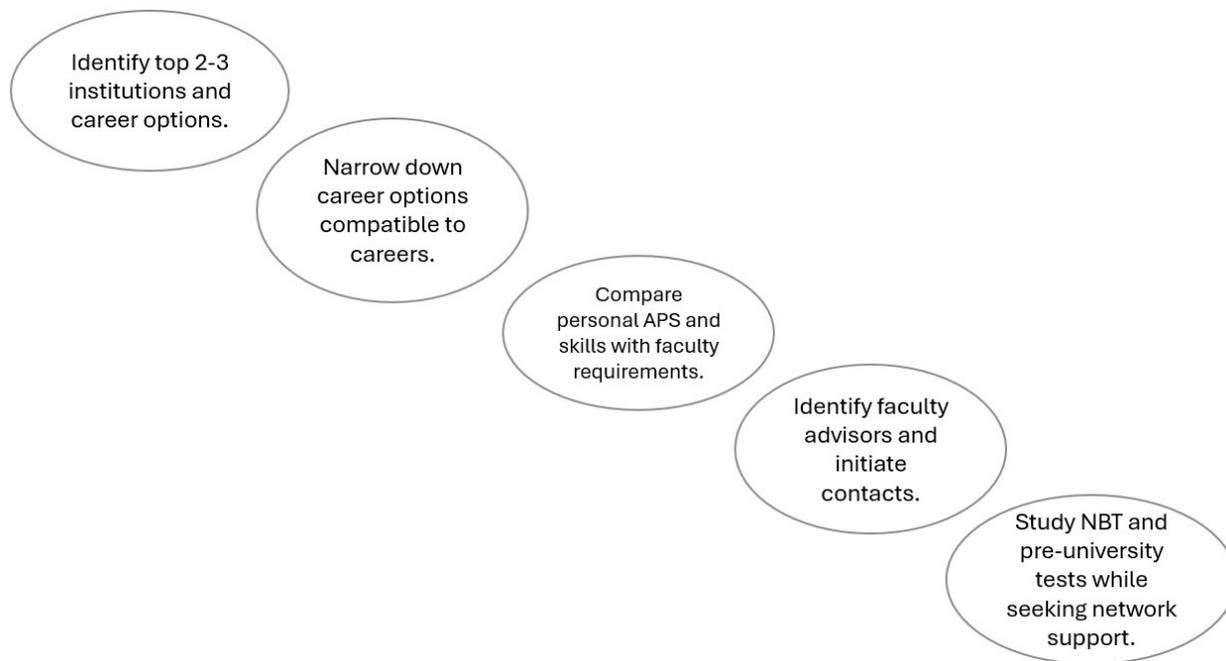




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## ACTIVITY 9: STARTING MY PSAP PLAN



### 4.2 To do list

4.2.1 Step 1:

4.2.2 Step 2:

4.2.3 Step 3:

4.2.4 Step 4:

4.2.5 Step 5:

## WRITING A PROFESSIONAL EMAIL TO FACULTY ADVISORS

Writing professional letters and emails before and during and after your admission to a university of the utmost importance. A professional email is one:



1. That has a clear subject line.
2. Includes a professional greeting.
3. Has concise content.
4. Is properly formatted.
5. Has a polite closing.
6. Does not use excessively emotive language.

Here is an example of a professional email written to a faculty advisor at the University of Limpopo.

### **4.3 Subject: Inquiry About Application Closing Date**

Dear Ms. Gomba,

I hope this message finds you well. Could you please provide information on the closing due date for applications to the University of Limpopo? Additionally, are there any specific requirements or documents needed for the application process?

Thank you for your assistance.

Best regards,

Dimpho Kgatla

dimpho.kgatla@example.co.za

+27 72 123 4567

#### **4.3.1 Notes**

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Here is an example of an unprofessional email written to a faculty advisor at the University of Limpopo.

#### 4.3.2 Subject: Info Needed

Hey Gomba,

What's the deadline for applying to Limpopo Uni? Also, what stuff do I need to send in? Can you hurry up with the response? I don't have all day.

Later,

Dimpho

dimpho123@randommail.com

+27 72 987 6543



#### 4.4 Email analysis and questions

1. Subject line: Which email has a clear and specific subject line? Wh?
2. Greeting: Which email uses a professional greeting with the recipient's title and name?
3. Content clarity: Which email clearly states the purpose and additional questions in a polite manner? Why?
4. Tone: Which email maintains a respectful and courteous tone throughout?
5. Closing: Which email uses a polite and professional closing salutation?
6. Contact Information: Which email provides complete and professional contact information?

##### 4.4.1 Notes

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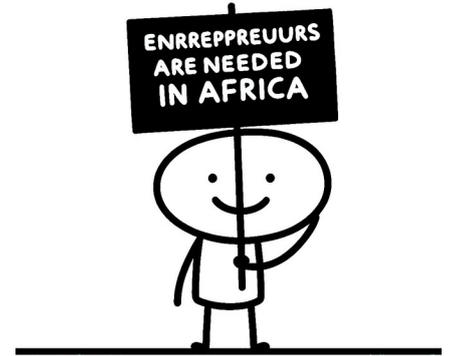


## UNIT 5: THE IMPORTANCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa needs new generations of entrepreneurs, meaning - you - to help break the legacy of poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment in our communities. While our nation is alive with possibilities and potential, we still face many serious challenges that require solutions from you as future professionals and experts.

Consider the following facts:

1. In the global media, South Africa is regularly referred to as the most economically unequal country in the world.
2. South Africa's youth unemployment rate is currently above 60%.
3. Many people, including youth, have lost hope and are even starting to give up looking for employment.



The above picture of South Africa is concerning. However, as the youth - you must understand that you have a crucial role to play in reversing this dire economic situation. South Africa needs new industries and businesses that accommodate the masses of the people who currently sit on the economic margins.

Here are five reasons why South African youth should consider **entrepreneurship**:

- *Job creation* – You can tackle high youth unemployment by creating your own opportunities.
- *Economic empowerment* – You can build wealth and reduce dependency on limited formal jobs.
- *Innovation* – You can solve local problems with fresh, local-specific ideas.
- *Flexibility* – You can gain control over career paths and work-life balance.
- *Community impact* – You can drive social change and uplift your communities.



To be a successful entrepreneur, you have to have passion for the product or service you intend to sell. Similar to choosing a career or a degree in a university, choosing an entrepreneurial path requires awareness of your interests, skills, and strengths in life. Take a look at the table below, which links interests, skills and personal strengths to entrepreneurial activities.

**Table 5.1: Connecting entrepreneurship with strengths, skills and interests**

Strengths / Skills / Interests	Entrepreneurial Pathways
Visionary thinking, innovation, tech-savvy	Tech Startup Founder
Social awareness, empathy, community focus	Social Entrepreneur
Creativity, design thinking, storytelling	Creative Entrepreneur (e.g., media, fashion, art)
Financial acumen, analytical thinking, strategic planning	Franchise Owner / Business Consultant

As is evident, being an entrepreneur is a lot more than running a business - it plays a key role in personal growth and social change. Looking at recent statistics, South Africa’s unemployment rate stood at 31.9%, in the last quarter of 2024, a slight drop from 32.1% in the previous quarter. Several challenges contribute to this high unemployment rate, including limited education and training opportunities, as well as the long lasting effects of apartheid. Young people are particularly impacted, with youth unemployment remaining a major concern - particularly for young women, whose unemployment rate was estimated at 49.4% in 2024.



This is where entrepreneurs can make a difference. By creating businesses, providing jobs, and introducing innovative solutions, they help reduce unemployment and drive economic growth. Encouraging more young people - You - to embrace entrepreneurship *can lead to lasting change*, benefiting individuals, communities, and the country as a whole.

South African youth can turn to entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic empowerment and social impact. Young entrepreneurs can identify opportunities for growth by closely observing

community needs, leveraging local resources, and tapping into emerging market trends. Whether it is through addressing gaps in community needs, education, healthcare, or financial services, or by embracing the digital economy through tech startups and e-commerce, these innovators recognise that solutions rooted in their own experiences often have the greatest potential for success.

## ACTIVITY 10

By considering your local community, identify needs and then entrepreneurial *opportunities* that can arise from these *needs* and provide solutions to them.

Community need	Solution	Entrepreneurial Opportunity

### 5.3 Self-knowledge and entrepreneurship

South African students are uniquely positioned to identify entrepreneurial opportunities by aligning their personal strengths with the pressing needs of their communities. Growing up navigating complex social and economic challenges, many of you have developed resilience, creativity, and problem-solving skills that are essential for innovation. By reflecting on their own experiences, talents, and passions - whether in technology, education, agriculture, or the arts - you, students, can pinpoint areas where your abilities intersect with community gaps, such as limited access to healthcare, education, or sustainable services.

This process not only fosters self-awareness but also builds purpose-driven ventures that address real-world issues. Furthermore, engaging with local stakeholders, mentors, and networks can help refine these ideas into viable business models. In this way, South African youth can create enterprises that are not only economically sustainable but also socially impactful, contributing to development from the ground up.



As indicated, South Africa faces a deepening employment crisis, with the jobless rate rising to 32.9% in early 2025, leaving 8.2 million people without work. Again, youth unemployment is severe, with some arguing between 46-60% of the youth are unemployed. Many South Africans are forced to seek alternative paths to financial stability, and entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital solution. With formal employment shrinking, starting a business offers a way to generate income, create jobs, and drive economic growth.

However, initial challenges such as access to funding, developing business skills, and identifying mentors can slow you down as an entrepreneur if you are not resilient. Nonetheless, by pursuing knowledge, skills, and mentorship in starting a business - you, the young people - can reduce poverty, strengthen local economies, and create a more sustainable future. Without bold action, millions risk being permanently excluded from economic participation, deepening inequality and social instability.

#### **5.4 Essential business skills you need to develop now**

Here are ten essential skills and knowledge you need to acquire now while you are still in school. We will explore each of them now, and the importance for your future success.

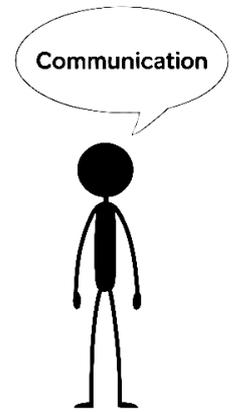
##### **5.4.1 Financial management**

Financial management involves planning, organising, directing, and controlling financial activities such as procurement and utilisation of funds. It ensures that an organisation maintains a healthy cash flow, meets its financial obligations, and achieves long-term profitability. Effective financial management supports strategic decision-making and sustainable growth.



##### **5.4.2 Marketing and sales**

Marketing and sales encompass the strategies and actions used to promote and sell products or services to customers. Marketing focuses on understanding customer needs, creating value, and building brand awareness, while sales involve direct interactions to close deals and generate revenue. Together, they drive business growth and customer engagement.



### **5.4.3 Communication**

Communication is the process of exchanging information, ideas, and emotions through verbal, non-verbal, or written means. It is essential for collaboration, conflict resolution, and relationship-building in both personal and professional settings. Effective communication enhances clarity, trust, and productivity.

### **5.4.4 Strategic planning**

Strategic planning is the process of defining an organisation's direction and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue long-term goals. It involves setting objectives, analysing internal and external environments, and formulating actionable plans. This helps organisations stay competitive and adapt to changing conditions.

### **5.4.5 Problem-solving and adaptability**

Problem-solving is the ability to identify challenges, analyse root causes, and implement effective solutions. Adaptability refers to the capacity to adjust to new conditions, learn from experiences, and remain flexible in dynamic environments. Together, they enable individuals and organisations to navigate uncertainty and drive innovation.

### **5.4.6 Leadership and team management**

Leadership involves guiding, motivating, and inspiring individuals or teams towards achieving common goals. Team management includes organising tasks, resolving conflicts, and fostering collaboration to ensure effective performance. Strong leadership and management skills are crucial for building trust and achieving results.



### **5.4.7 Customer service**

Customer service is the support provided to customers before, during, and after a purchase to ensure satisfaction and loyalty. It involves addressing enquiries, resolving issues, and creating positive experiences. Excellent customer service builds brand reputation and encourages repeat business.

#### **5.4.8 Digital and technological skills**

Digital and technological skills refer to the ability to use digital tools, platforms, and technologies effectively in various contexts. These skills include data analysis, software proficiency, cybersecurity awareness, and digital communication. They are essential in today's tech-driven world for productivity and innovation.

#### **5.4.9 Network and relationship building**

Networking and relationship building involve creating and maintaining professional connections that can provide support, opportunities, and collaboration. It requires communication, trust, and mutual benefit. Strong networks can enhance career growth, business development, and knowledge sharing.

#### **5.4.10 Time management and organisation**

Time management is the ability to plan and control how time is spent on specific activities to increase efficiency and productivity. Organisation involves structuring tasks, resources, and priorities to achieve goals effectively. Together, they help individuals meet deadlines, reduce stress, and maintain work-life balance.

### **5.5 Summary**

Mastering these essential business skills—financial management, marketing and sales, communication, strategic planning, problem-solving and adaptability, leadership and team management, customer service, digital and technological proficiency, networking, and time management—lays the foundation for entrepreneurial success. These competencies equip future business leaders with the ability to make informed decisions, drive growth, adapt to challenges, and build strong relationships in an ever-evolving marketplace. By developing these skills early, aspiring entrepreneurs can confidently navigate the complexities of running a business, seize opportunities, and create sustainable ventures that thrive in competitive environments. Investing in these areas now ensures long-term resilience, innovation, and leadership in the business world.

### **5.6 Reflective questions**

1. Which of these ten business skills do I feel most confident in, and which ones do I need to develop further? How can I actively work on improving these areas while still in school or early in my career?

2. As an aspiring entrepreneur, how can I integrate these skills into a real-world business scenario? Which skill do I believe will be the most critical for my success, and why?

## UNIT 6: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

South Africa's future depends on leaders like you who recognise that sustainability is not just a trend—it is the only way forward. Our country faces urgent challenges: inequality, unemployment, climate change, and resource scarcity. These are not merely problems for policymakers—they are your opportunity to lead with purpose. Social sustainability means creating fair, inclusive opportunities for all, while environmental sustainability ensures our natural resources endure for generations.

By embracing these principles now, you will future-proof your career and amplify your impact. Global businesses and investors prioritise leaders who understand Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) values—this is your chance to stand out. Imagine building enterprises that do not just profit, but also uplift communities and protect our environment.

You have the power to drive change. Demand accountability. Innovate solutions. Turn challenges into opportunities. Sustainability is not about sacrifice—it is about smarter, more resilient leadership. South Africa needs your vision, courage, and action. Will you rise to the challenge?

### 6.1 Examples of social sustainability projects

You have unique talents and business skills that can transform communities while building sustainable enterprises. Consider these opportunities where self-knowledge meets social impact:

1. **Digital literacy hubs** – Your tech skills could establish training centres in underserved areas, creating employable coders while generating revenue through corporate partnerships.
2. **Inclusive recruitment platforms** – Your network-building abilities might fuel a job-matching service connecting skilled township youth with employers who value diversity.
3. **Community tourism ventures** – Your marketing knowledge could help local artisans develop cultural experiences that preserve heritage while creating jobs.
4. **Upcycling social enterprises** – Your problem-solving mindset might turn textile waste into school uniforms, employing single mothers through ethical manufacturing.
5. **Mental health apps** – Your emotional intelligence could shape affordable digital tools making counselling accessible to students and workers.

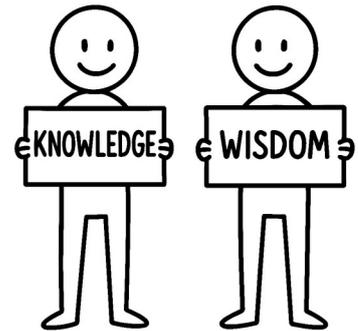




## UNIT 7: REFLECTING ON MY FUTURE

As a future scholar, expert, professional, and possible entrepreneur, it is important for you to be aware of the difference in knowledge and wisdom. Consider this proposition:

1. **Knowledge** refers to the accumulation of facts, information, and understanding about a particular subject or domain, often acquired through education and experience. It is primarily cognitive and can be quantified through tests or assessments.
2. **Wisdom**, on the other hand, encompasses the ability to apply knowledge effectively in decision-making, integrating emotional insight, and ethical considerations. While knowledge can inform an individual's thoughts, wisdom guides actions based on a deeper understanding of life and human experience.



Understanding the *distinction* between **knowledge** and **wisdom** is vital when selecting a university or future career path because it encourages you - students - to seek not only factual information but also deeper insights into your fields of interest.

This awareness helps you assess whether a particular university offers not just educational credentials but also the wisdom necessary to navigate real-world challenges. Moreover, recognising the value of wisdom can guide students in choosing a career path that aligns with their values, ethics, and long-term goals rather than just immediate financial benefits. Ultimately, this informed approach fosters not only academic success but also personal fulfillment and professional responsibility.

**KNOWLEDGE IS THE MAP  
THAT GUIDES US, BUT  
WISDOM IS THE COMPASS  
THAT ENSURES WE NAV-  
IGATE OUR PATHS WITH  
PURPOSE AND INTEGRITY.**

### ACTIVITY 12: ACADEMIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY



## ACTIVITY 13: COMPLETING APA SCORES

In South Africa, **APS (Admission Point Score)** is a system used to determine whether high school students qualify for university admission. It is calculated based on their **Matric exam results**, with each subject earning a score between **1 and 7**, depending on the percentage achieved.

### 7.1.1 Why you, high school students should be aware of APS:

- **University admission** – APS determines eligibility for different degree programs. Each university sets minimum APS requirements for various courses.
- **Career planning** – Understanding APS helps students align their subject choices with future academic and career goals.
- **Scholarship opportunities** – Some funding programs require a specific APS threshold for eligibility.
- **Early preparation** – Knowing APS requirements allows students to focus on subjects that impact their chances of admission.



#### 7.1.1.1 APA Score Scale

APS Points	Percentage (%)
7	80-100%
6	70-79%
5	60-69%
4	50-59%
3	40-49%
2	30-39%
1	0-29%

## ACTIVITY 14: CALCULATING APS SCORES

5. **List Your Subjects** – Write down all subjects from your Matric results.

6. **Determine Your APS Scores** – Convert your percentage marks into APS points using the standard scale.
7. **Identify Your Top 3 Degree Choices** – Research the APS requirements for your preferred university programs.
8. **Complete the Table Below** – Fill in your scores and compare them with admission requirements.

Subject	Current APS Score	APS required for Degree 1	APA required for Degree 2	APA required for Degree 3

## ACTIVITY 15: REFLECTING ON APS SCORES

Understanding your APS score is key to shaping your academic and career journey. Follow these steps to reflect meaningfully on where you stand and where you want to go.

### 7.1.1.2 Step 1: Analyse Your APS Scores

- Look at your current APS total and individual subject scores.
- Compare them to the requirements for the degrees or careers you are interested in.







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## 7.2 Conclusion

As we come to the end of our contact sessions and journey, there are final thoughts we want to share with you.

1. **You are ready!** – You have gained the knowledge, skills, and confidence to step into the next chapter. Trust in your preparation and embrace the journey ahead.
2. **Growth never stops** – Learning is not just about exams and grades; it is a lifelong process. Stay curious, ask questions, and continue expanding your understanding.
3. **Challenges build strength** – There will be obstacles, but every struggle is a stepping stone toward success. Face difficulties with resilience, knowing you have the ability to overcome them.
4. **Your path is yours alone** – Do not compare your journey to others. Your story is unique, and success comes in different forms. Define what success means to *you* and pursue it boldly.
5. **Mistakes are lessons, not failures** – Every mistake carries wisdom. Instead of fearing them, use them to improve, adjust, and refine your approach to learning and life.
6. **Your dreams are valid** – Whatever goals you hold close—academic, career, or personal—they are worth pursuing. Keep striving, keep believing, and keep moving forward.

**You are more than just a student** – Your education is important, but it is only one part of who you are. Nurture your passions, invest in meaningful relationships, and never forget to enjoy the process.

Dr Oscar Eybers

Tshwane, South Africa, 11 June 2025