

Your 2026 Study & Career Roadmap: From Uncertainty to Opportunity

1. Part 1: Your Current Standing & The Immediate Action Plan

1.1. Honest Analysis of Your Application Viability (for 2026 Intake)

1.1.1. Your Previous NSC Statement: Why It Cannot Be Used

Your previous National Senior Certificate (NSC) statement, which explicitly states "**The candidate does not qualify for the National Senior Certificate,**" is a definitive barrier to any form of higher education application. In South Africa, a valid NSC is the foundational requirement for entry into any accredited post-school institution, including public universities, universities of technology, and TVET colleges. This result means that, according to the Department of Basic Education's standards, you did not meet the minimum requirements to be awarded a certificate at all. Therefore, this document cannot be used as a basis for applying for any course, bursary, or funding scheme. The only path forward is to successfully complete your Grade 12 rewrite and obtain a valid NSC with a pass that meets the entry requirements for your desired qualification. It is crucial to understand that no institution will consider an application without a valid NSC, as it serves as proof that you have completed your basic schooling and are prepared for the academic rigors of tertiary education. The focus must now be entirely on your current academic year to ensure a successful outcome.

1.1.2. Your June 2025 Results: Why They Are Not Sufficient for a Provisional Offer

Your June 2025 mid-year report, while showing some strengths, does not currently meet the minimum requirements for a provisional offer from a university or university of technology. The most critical issue is the **23% (Level 1) in Accounting**, which is a failing mark. For a Diploma or Bachelor's pass, you need to pass at least six of your seven subjects, and a Level 1 is a fail. Furthermore, your current average of 53% and the specific subject marks would likely not meet the competitive admission requirements for most programs, especially those in high demand. While your strong performance in isiZulu (70%) and Life Orientation (76%) is commendable, the weak performance in core subjects like Accounting and Afrikaans (36%) will be a significant hurdle. Institutions require a solid academic foundation, and your current results, particularly the failing grade, signal a risk that most admissions departments will not be

willing to take, even for a provisional offer. Therefore, relying on these results for a 2026 application is not a viable strategy.

1.1.3. The Critical Importance of Your November 2025 Final Exams

The **November 2025 final examinations are the single most critical event** that will determine your entire academic and professional future for 2026. Your performance in these exams will dictate whether you qualify for a Higher Certificate, Diploma, or Bachelor's pass, which in turn will open or close doors to various educational pathways. A strong performance is not just about passing; it's about achieving the specific subject marks required for your chosen field of study. For instance, if you decide to pursue a career in education, you will need to meet the specific admission requirements for a teaching degree, which often include higher marks in languages. Similarly, a career in business will require a solid pass in subjects like Business Studies and Mathematical Literacy. The urgency of your situation cannot be overstated. The next few months leading up to the final exams must be dedicated to intensive study and preparation. Your entire focus should be on improving your marks, especially in your weaker subjects, to ensure you have a range of options available to you when the final results are released in January 2026.

1.2. The Goal Posts for November 2025: NSC Pass Requirements

To plan your studies effectively, you need to understand the specific requirements for each level of NSC pass. These requirements will determine which post-school options are available to you. The following table outlines the minimum requirements for a Bachelor's, Diploma, and Higher Certificate pass, based on the latest information for 2025 .

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Pass Level	Minimum Requirements	APS (Admission Poin
Bachelor's Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 40% in Home Language – 50% in four other high–credit subjects – 30% in two other subjects – Pass 6 out of 7 subjects 	23
Diploma Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 40% in Home Language – 40% in four other high–credit subjects – 30% in two other subjects – Pass 6 out of 7 subjects 	19
Higher Certificate Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 40% in Home Language – 40% in two other subjects – 30% in three other subjects – Pass 6 out of 7 subjects 	15

1.2.1. Requirements for a Bachelor's Pass

A Bachelor's pass is the highest level of NSC achievement and is the minimum requirement for admission to a university degree program. To achieve this, you must obtain at least 40% in your Home Language, 50% in four other high–credit subjects (excluding Life Orientation), and 30% in two other subjects. You must also pass at least six of your seven subjects. This pass level is essential if you are considering a career that requires a university degree, such as teaching, law, or certain business fields. Given your current subject combination and performance, achieving a Bachelor's pass will require significant improvement, particularly in Accounting and Afrikaans. Your strong language skills in English and isiZulu are a good foundation, but you will need to ensure you meet the 50% requirement in at least four subjects.

1.2.2. Requirements for a Diploma Pass

A Diploma pass is the second–highest level of NSC achievement and allows you to apply for diploma programs at universities of technology and TVET colleges. The requirements are slightly less stringent than for a Bachelor's pass. You need to achieve at least 40% in your Home Language, 40% in four other high–credit subjects, and 30% in two other subjects. You must also pass at least six of your seven subjects. This pass level is a good option if you are interested in more career–focused, practical qualifications. Many diploma programs in fields like business, engineering, and hospitality are highly regarded by employers and can lead to excellent career

opportunities. With your current performance, a Diploma pass is a more realistic goal, but you will still need to improve your marks in Accounting and Afrikaans to meet the 40% requirement in four subjects.

1.2.3. Requirements for a Higher Certificate Pass

A Higher Certificate pass is the minimum requirement to obtain an NSC and allows you to apply for higher certificate programs at TVET colleges and some universities. The requirements are the least stringent of the three pass levels. You need to achieve at least 40% in your Home Language, 40% in two other subjects, and 30% in three other subjects. You must also pass at least six of your seven subjects. A higher certificate is a great way to gain foundational knowledge and skills in a specific field and can be a stepping stone to further studies. For example, you could complete a higher certificate in business and then use that qualification to apply for a diploma in the same field. Given your current results, achieving a Higher Certificate pass is a very attainable goal and would provide you with a solid foundation for your future studies.

1.3. A Tailored Study Plan for a Social Learner

1.3.1. Leveraging Your Social Learning Style

As a social learner, you thrive in collaborative environments where you can interact with others, share ideas, and learn through discussion. This is a significant advantage, as studying in isolation can often lead to procrastination and a loss of motivation, which you have identified as challenges. To leverage your learning style, you should actively seek out opportunities to study with others. This could involve forming a study group with classmates, finding a study buddy, or even participating in online forums and discussion groups. The key is to create a structured and supportive learning environment where you can hold each other accountable and stay motivated. By working with others, you can gain new perspectives, clarify difficult concepts, and make the learning process more engaging and enjoyable.

1.3.2. Forming Virtual Study Groups and Finding Accountability Partners

In today's digital age, forming virtual study groups is easier than ever. You can use platforms like WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, or Zoom to connect with classmates and create a regular study schedule. When forming a study group, it's important to set clear goals and expectations. For example, you could agree to meet for two hours every Tuesday and Thursday to review a specific chapter or work through past exam papers. You can also assign different topics to each member of the group and have them

present a summary to the rest of the group. This not only helps you learn the material but also develops your communication and presentation skills. In addition to a study group, finding an accountability partner can be incredibly beneficial. This is someone who you check in with regularly to discuss your progress, share your goals, and provide mutual support and encouragement.

1.3.3. Free Online Resources for Your Subjects

To support your study plan, here is a list of high-quality, free online resources that are specifically relevant to your subjects and the South African curriculum. These resources can supplement your textbook and classroom learning, providing you with additional practice and explanations.

- **Department of Basic Education (DBE) Website:** The official DBE website is an invaluable resource for past exam papers, memorandums, and other study materials for all your subjects.
- **Western Cape Government Education Department:** Their website offers a wealth of resources, including subject content for Grade 12, question papers, and memos. They also have an eCentre Programme that provides free internet access and computer training, which could be useful for your online study groups .
- **Siyavula:** This is an excellent online platform for Mathematics and Physical Sciences, but it also has resources that can be helpful for Mathematical Literacy. It offers interactive practice questions with immediate feedback, which is a great way to learn and improve.
- **Khan Academy:** While not specific to the South African curriculum, Khan Academy has a vast library of video tutorials and practice exercises on a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, economics, and finance, which can be useful for your Accounting and Business Studies.
- **YouTube Channels:** There are many South African educators who have created YouTube channels dedicated to Grade 12 subjects. Search for channels that focus on your specific subjects, such as "Accounting Grade 12" or "Business Studies Matric." These videos can provide alternative explanations and worked examples that might resonate with your learning style.

2. Part 2: A Scientific Methodology for Discovering Your Path

2.1. Recommended Career Assessment Tools

To help you navigate your uncertainty and discover a career path that aligns with your strengths and interests, I recommend using a combination of scientifically-backed, free online career assessment tools. These tools are not magic wands, but they can provide valuable insights and a structured starting point for your self-discovery journey. By using more than one, you can cross-reference the results to identify consistent themes and patterns, which will give you a more reliable picture of your potential career fit.

2.1.1. Truity's Holland Code Career Test (Free & Scientifically-Backed)

The Truity Holland Code Career Test is a highly reputable and scientifically validated assessment that is based on the well-established Holland Codes (RIASEC) model of career choice. This model categorizes people and work environments into six types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The test will help you identify your top three personality types and then match you with careers that are a good fit for your unique combination. The free version of the test provides a detailed summary of your results, including a list of potential careers, industries, and college majors that align with your personality. This is an excellent starting point for exploring a wide range of options that you may not have considered before. The test is designed to be user-friendly and takes about 10–15 minutes to complete .

2.1.2. MyNextMove's O*NET Interest Profiler (Free & Government-Backed)

The ONET Interest Profiler is a powerful tool developed by the U.S. Department of Labor and is based on the same Holland Code model. It is completely free and provides a comprehensive analysis of your interests and how they relate to the world of work. The profiler presents you with a series of tasks and asks you to rate your interest in each one. Based on your responses, it generates a profile of your interests and suggests a wide range of careers that match your profile. A unique feature of this tool is its direct link to the ONET database, which is a vast repository of information on hundreds of different occupations. For each suggested career, you can access detailed information on the required skills, knowledge, education, and salary, as well as the job outlook. This makes it an incredibly practical tool for not only identifying potential careers but also for researching them in depth.

2.1.3. FundiConnect Career Quiz (Free & Locally Relevant)

The FundiConnect Career Quiz is a South African-based tool that is specifically designed for the local context. While it may not be as scientifically rigorous as the Truity or O*NET assessments, its value lies in its local relevance. The quiz is designed

to be quick and easy to take, and it provides you with a list of potential career paths and the corresponding study options available in South Africa. It also links you to information on bursaries and funding opportunities, which is a crucial consideration for your situation. Using this tool in conjunction with the others can help you bridge the gap between your international assessment results and the practical realities of studying and working in South Africa. It can help you identify which of your potential career interests are actually viable options within the South African education and job market landscape .

2.2. A Practical Guide to Using These Tools

2.2.1. Step-by-Step Instructions for Taking the Assessments

1. **Set Aside Dedicated Time:** Choose a quiet time when you can focus without distractions. Each test will take between 10 and 30 minutes.
2. **Be Honest:** There are no right or wrong answers. The most accurate results will come from being truthful about your interests, preferences, and personality.
3. **Take All Three Tests:** Start with the Truity test, then the O*NET Interest Profiler, and finally the FundiConnect quiz. This will give you a well-rounded perspective.
4. **Save Your Results:** Make sure to save or print out your results from each test. You will need them for the next step.

2.2.2. How to Cross-Reference Your Results for Common Themes

Once you have completed all three assessments, the next step is to analyze the results and look for common themes. Create a simple table with three columns, one for each test. In each column, list the top 5–10 career suggestions or personality traits that were highlighted. Now, compare the lists and look for overlaps. Are there any careers that appear on two or all three lists? Are there any common skills or work environments that are consistently mentioned? For example, if all three tests suggest careers that involve working with people, helping others, and communication, then a career in a field like Education, Human Resources, or Social Work might be a strong contender. This process of cross-referencing will help you filter out the noise and identify the most promising career paths that are a genuine fit for your personality and interests.

2.2.3. Creating Your Personal "Decision Matrix" to Compare Career Options

To turn your abstract assessment results into a concrete decision-making tool, I recommend creating a personal "Decision Matrix." This is a simple table that allows you to systematically compare your shortlisted career options against a set of key criteria that are important to you. This will help you make a more informed and rational decision, rather than relying on gut feeling alone.

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Career Option	Genuine Interest (1–5)	Existing Skills (1–5)	Job
Example: Foundation Phase Teacher	4	4 (Languages)	5 (H)
Example: Human Resources Officer	3	3 (People Skills)	4 (M)
Your Option 1			
Your Option 2			

How to use the matrix:

- List Your Shortlisted Careers:** Based on your cross-referencing, choose 3–5 careers that you are most interested in and list them in the first column.
- Define Your Criteria:** The criteria in the table are just a starting point. You can add or remove criteria based on what is most important to you (e.g., salary potential, work-life balance, opportunities for travel).
- Score Each Option:** For each career, rate it on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 is the best) for each of the criteria. Be as objective as possible.
- Calculate the Total Score:** Add up the scores for each career.
- Analyze the Results:** The career with the highest total score is not necessarily your final answer, but it should be your top priority for further research and consideration. This matrix is a tool to help you think critically about your options and to have a more structured conversation with your career counselor or family.

3. Part 3: Exploring High-Potential Career Clusters (Informed by Data)

Based on your academic profile—strong language skills, a significant improvement in Mathematical Literacy, and a clear weakness in commerce subjects—I've identified several high-potential career clusters that align with your strengths and offer promising

job prospects in South Africa. These clusters are also informed by the Department of Higher Education and Training's list of occupations in high demand, ensuring that your future career path has a strong foundation in the current job market.

3.1. Cluster A: Education (Foundation Phase Teacher)

3.1.1. Job Demand and Security in the Education Sector

The education sector in South Africa, particularly for Foundation Phase teachers, is experiencing a significant and growing demand. This is driven by several factors, including an aging teacher workforce, with nearly half of all teachers expected to be 50 years or older by 2025 . This demographic shift is creating a wave of retirements and a subsequent need for new, qualified teachers to fill the gaps. Furthermore, there is a critical shortage of teachers who are proficient in indigenous African languages, especially for the Foundation Phase (Grades R–3) . This creates a unique opportunity for individuals like you, who have a strong command of isiZulu. The government's Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme is a clear indicator of this demand, as it specifically prioritizes the funding of students who wish to specialize in high–need areas like Foundation Phase teaching . A career in education offers not only job security but also the profound satisfaction of contributing to the development of future generations.

3.1.2. Leveraging Your Strong Language Marks (isiZulu & English)

Your exceptional marks in **isiZulu FAL (70%)** and **English HL (57%)** are your greatest assets and are perfectly aligned with the needs of the Foundation Phase teaching profession. The ability to teach in a learner's home language is crucial for their cognitive and academic development in the early years of schooling. Your fluency in isiZulu, in particular, is a highly sought–after skill, as there is a dire shortage of new teacher graduates who can use indigenous African languages as the language of instruction . This gives you a significant competitive advantage in the job market. Your strong English mark also ensures that you can effectively teach English as a First Additional Language, which is a core component of the Foundation Phase curriculum. By pursuing a career in education, you would be directly applying your natural strengths to a field where they are desperately needed, setting yourself up for a successful and impactful career.

3.1.3. Qualification Pathways: B.Ed. at UJ, UKZN, and TUT

To become a qualified Foundation Phase teacher, you will need to complete a four–year **Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree** with a specialization in Foundation Phase

teaching. The good news is that your subject combination, including Mathematical Literacy, is accepted for many of these programmes. For example, the University of Johannesburg (UJ) offers a B.Ed. in Foundation Phase Teaching that requires a minimum APS of 28, with a **60% pass in Mathematical Literacy** being a key admission requirement . Other institutions like the University of KwaZulu–Natal (UKZN) and the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) also offer similar programmes. The Central University of Technology (CUT) also has a B.Ed. in Foundation Phase Teaching, which requires a 50% pass in English and any one of several indigenous languages, including isiZulu . These programmes are designed to equip you with the pedagogical knowledge, subject content expertise, and practical teaching skills required to excel in the classroom. The practical component of these degrees, which includes teaching practice in schools, will also provide you with valuable hands–on experience.

3.2. Cluster B: Business & Logistics

3.2.1. Job Demand in Business, Management, and Logistics

The business and logistics sector is a major contributor to the South African economy and offers a wide range of career opportunities. There is a high demand for skilled professionals in areas such as management, marketing, finance, and logistics. According to a report on in–demand jobs in South Africa for 2025, careers in logistics and supply chain management are particularly sought after . This is due to the growth of e–commerce and the increasing complexity of global supply chains. A career in this field can be both challenging and rewarding, with good prospects for advancement.

3.2.2. Qualification Pathways: Higher Certificates and Diplomas at UJ

With your subject combination of Mathematical Literacy and Business Studies, you are well–suited for a career in business and logistics. The University of Johannesburg (UJ) offers a range of diploma and higher certificate programs in this field that accept Mathematical Literacy. For example, the **Diploma in Management Services** and the **Diploma in Operations Management** both require a minimum APS of 19–22 and a Level 5 (60%) in Mathematical Literacy . These programs are designed to provide you with the practical skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the business world. A higher certificate in a business–related field could also be a good starting point, as it would provide you with a solid foundation and could be used to gain entry into a diploma program later on.

3.2.3. Career Progression and Industry Links

A qualification in business and logistics can lead to a variety of career paths. You could work in a corporate environment, for a government agency, or even start your own business. With experience, you could advance to management positions, such as operations manager, logistics coordinator, or business analyst. Many institutions, like UJ, have strong links with industry, which can provide you with opportunities for internships and work–integrated learning. This can be a great way to gain practical experience and make valuable connections in the industry.

3.3. Cluster C: Human Resources & Public Administration (Backup)

3.3.1. Job Demand in HR and Public Service

Human Resources (HR) and Public Administration are two other fields that offer good career prospects for individuals with strong communication and organizational skills. There is a consistent demand for HR professionals in both the private and public sectors, as companies need to manage their most valuable asset: their people. Public Administration is a broad field that encompasses a wide range of roles in government and non–profit organizations. A career in this field can be very rewarding, as it offers the opportunity to contribute to the development of society.

3.3.2. Qualification Pathways: Diplomas and Degrees

To pursue a career in HR or Public Administration, you could enroll in a diploma or degree program in a related field. Many universities and TVET colleges offer programs in Human Resource Management, Public Administration, and Office Administration. These programs typically cover topics such as labor law, organizational behavior, public policy, and financial management. With your strong language skills and interest in business, you would be well–suited for these programs. A diploma in a related field would be a good starting point, and you could always pursue a degree later on to advance your career.

4. Part 4: The Financial and Logistical Plan

4.1. Funding Deep Dive – NSFAS

4.1.1. NSFAS Eligibility Criteria for 2026

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a government–funded bursary scheme that provides financial assistance to eligible students from low–income and

working-class families. To qualify for NSFAS funding in 2026, you must meet the following criteria :

- **South African citizenship:** You must be a South African citizen or permanent resident.
- **Financial need:** Your combined household income must be **R350,000 or less per year**. If you have a disability, the household income threshold is R600,000.
- **First-time entering student:** You must be a first-time entering student at a public university or TVET college.
- **Academic requirements:** You must have passed Grade 12 and meet the admission requirements of the institution you plan to attend.
- **Approved qualification:** You must be enrolled in an NSFAS-approved course at a public institution.

4.1.2. How Mathematical Literacy Affects NSFAS Funding

The good news is that **having Mathematical Literacy does not disqualify you from receiving NSFAS funding**. NSFAS funding is based on financial need and academic eligibility for an approved course, not on the specific subjects you took in matric. As long as you meet the admission requirements for a diploma or higher certificate program that accepts Mathematical Literacy, and you meet the household income criteria, you are eligible to apply for NSFAS. This is a crucial point, as it opens up a wide range of career-focused qualifications to you, even without Core Mathematics.

4.1.3. Application Deadlines and Process

The NSFAS application window for the 2026 academic year is expected to open in **September or October 2025**. It is essential to apply as soon as the window opens, as late applications are typically not considered. The application process is done online through the NSFAS website (www.nsfas.org.za). You will need to create a myNSFAS account and provide the following documents:

- A certified copy of your South African ID or birth certificate.
- A certified copy of your parent or guardian's ID.
- Proof of income for your parent or guardian (e.g., salary slip, SASSA letter, or affidavit if unemployed).

- A completed and signed consent form.

4.2. Other Funding Avenues

4.2.1. Funza Lushaka Bursary for Teaching

If you decide to pursue a career in education, the **Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme** is an excellent funding option. This is a government–funded bursary that is specifically designed to attract and train new teachers for the public school system. The bursary covers tuition fees, accommodation, and a living allowance. In return, you are required to teach at a public school for the same number of years that you received the bursary. This is a fantastic opportunity to fund your studies and secure a job after graduation.

4.2.2. University–Specific Bursaries and Study Grants

Most universities and universities of technology offer their own bursaries and study grants to students who meet certain academic and financial criteria. These bursaries are often funded by private companies, trusts, or alumni donations. It is worth researching the bursary opportunities available at the institutions you are interested in attending. The financial aid office at each university will have information on the available bursaries and the application process.

4.2.3. Learnerships and Apprenticeships

If you are interested in a more hands–on, vocational career path, you could consider a learnership or apprenticeship. These are work–based learning programmes that combine theoretical training with practical experience. They are offered by a wide range of companies in various industries, including engineering, finance, and IT. Learnerships and apprenticeships are a great way to gain valuable work experience and earn a qualification at the same time. They are often fully funded by the employer, which means you can study and earn a stipend without incurring any student debt.

4.3. Choosing Your Institution: University vs. TVET vs. University of Technology

Choosing the right type of institution is just as important as choosing the right course. Each type of institution offers a different learning environment and a different set of qualifications. The following table provides a comparison of the three main types of institutions in South Africa.

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Institution Type	Focus	Qualifications Offered
University	Academic and theoretical	Degrees (Bachelor's, Honours, M Certificates
TVET College	Vocational and practical	National Certificates (N1–N6), N Programmes
University of Technology	Career–focused and applied	Diplomas and Degrees

4.3.1. Universities: Focus on Degrees and Higher Certificates

Universities are the traditional choice for students who want to pursue a degree. They offer a wide range of academic programmes and are known for their research–intensive environment. If you are considering a career in a field that requires a university degree, such as teaching, law, or medicine, then a university is the right choice for you. However, universities also offer higher certificate programmes, which can be a good option if you want to gain foundational knowledge in a specific field.

4.3.2. TVET Colleges: Vocational and Skills–Based Training

TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) colleges are focused on providing students with the practical skills and knowledge needed for a specific trade or occupation. They offer a range of vocational programmes, from short courses to national diplomas. If you are a hands–on learner who wants to enter the job market quickly, then a TVET college might be the right choice for you. TVET colleges are also a good option if you want to pursue a career in a technical field, such as engineering, construction, or hospitality.

4.3.3. Universities of Technology: Career–Focused Diplomas and Degrees

Universities of technology, formerly known as technikons, offer a blend of theoretical and practical learning. They are focused on providing students with the skills and knowledge needed for a specific career. They offer a range of diploma and degree programmes in fields such as business, engineering, and IT. If you are looking for a career–focused qualification that will prepare you for the world of work, then a university of technology might be the right choice for you. Many of their programmes

include a work–integrated learning component, which gives you the opportunity to gain hands–on experience in your chosen field.

5. Part 5: Your Step–by–Step Action Plan (September 2025 – January 2026)

5.1. Phase 1 (September 2025): Focus and Self–Discovery

5.1.1. Implement Your Social Study Plan

This is the month to fully commit to your studies. Form your virtual study groups, find your accountability partner, and start using the free online resources. Your goal is to create a consistent and productive study routine that will carry you through to the final exams. Focus on your weaker subjects, especially Accounting, but don't neglect your stronger subjects.

5.1.2. Complete Your Career Assessments

Set aside a few hours to take the three career assessment tools recommended in Part 2. Be honest with yourself and take your time. The results of these assessments will be the foundation for your career exploration and decision–making.

5.1.3. Research Your Shortlisted Career Clusters

Based on the results of your career assessments, identify 3–5 career clusters that you are most interested in. Start researching these fields in more detail. Look up job descriptions, salary information, and the required qualifications. This will help you to narrow down your options and make a more informed decision.

5.2. Phase 2 (September – October 2025): Applications and Funding

5.2.1. Submit Provisional Applications to Institutions

Once you have a good idea of the career path you want to pursue, start submitting applications to the institutions that offer the relevant qualifications. Remember, these will be provisional applications based on your June results. You will need to update them with your final results in January. Pay close attention to the application deadlines for each institution.

5.2.2. Apply for NSFAS and Other Bursaries

As soon as the NSFAS application window opens, submit your application. Don't wait until the last minute. Also, research and apply for any other bursaries or funding

opportunities that you may be eligible for. This is a crucial step in ensuring that you can afford to study in 2026.

5.3. Phase 3 (October – November 2025): Final Exam Preparation

5.3.1. Focus Entirely on Your Final Exams

This is the most critical phase of your journey. All your energy and focus should be on preparing for your final exams. Stick to your study plan, stay motivated, and believe in yourself. This is your chance to prove what you are capable of and to open the doors to your future.

5.4. Phase 4 (January 2026): Results and Final Decisions

5.4.1. Receive Your Final Matric Results

In early January 2026, you will receive your final matric results. This is the moment of truth. Your results will determine which of your provisional applications can be confirmed and what your options are for the 2026 academic year.

5.4.2. Confirm or Decline Your Provisional Offers

Based on your final results, you will need to confirm or decline any provisional offers you have received. If you have met the admission requirements for your chosen programme, you can accept the offer and start preparing for your first year of tertiary study.

5.4.3. Apply for Late Application Windows if Necessary

If you did not receive any offers or if you want to apply for a different programme, you can apply during the late application windows that some institutions offer. This is your last chance to secure a place for the 2026 academic year. Be sure to act quickly, as these windows are often very short.