

LIFE AFTER SCHOOL GUIDEBOOK



A **Career Guidance Booklet**
for Learners and Guardians



The Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET), a partner entity of the Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation, implements a holistic bursary support and youth development programme.

It assists students pursuing higher education and vocational training, helping them unlock their potential with the right support.

25 years of Legacy - A Lifetime of Change

YOUR FUTURE STARTS NOW!

Leaving school is a big step. Whether you are excited, unsure, or worried about what comes next, **there are many opportunities waiting for you.**

You do not have to follow one set path to succeed. Whether through university, vocational training, entrepreneurship, or work experience, **you have the power to shape your future.**

At the **Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET)**, we believe in **leaving no youth behind.**

This guide will help you and your guardians explore different options after school—so you can find a path that suits your strengths, interests, and ambitions.

Deciding what to do after school can be challenging and stressful for both learners and their parents or guardians. Obstacles include a lack of career guidance and information, financial constraints, and pressure from family expectations. Often, learners are steered towards certain professions due to their perceived prestige or earning potential, rather than personal interest or aptitude.



For a fulfilling career, learners should be encouraged to explore:

- What they enjoy and feel enthusiastic about
- What their strengths and skills are
- What their core values are
- What their understanding is of their career choices

While earning an income is important, a career should also be meaningful and rewarding. This guide provides key considerations for career planning and practical steps to help learners and guardians explore suitable options.



1. WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER SCHOOL?

Many learners feel pressured to follow a certain career path, often based on money, family expectations, or what society sees as "prestigious."

But the best career for you is one that:



Aligns with your interests and passions



Matches your strengths and skills



Gives you a sense of purpose

No matter your academic performance, background, or challenges—you **can** build a meaningful and successful future. Choosing a career path should not be based solely on financial rewards or societal expectations.

Let us explore your options.



2. UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF: THE ROLE OF PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING



Psychometric tests help you understand your **strengths, interests, and personality** so you can make smart career choices.

Not sure what
career suits you?

- *Discover what jobs match your skills and interests*
- *Learn about your working style*
- *Gain confidence in your career decisions*

Try these free career assessments:

- ✓ Standard Bank PluggedIn: standardbank.com/pluggedin
- ✓ Go Study: gostudy.net
- ✓ Central Application Service: cas.ac.za

Take a test and start planning your future!



3. YOUR PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

There is no “one-size-fits-all” career and, you **do not need a university degree to succeed**. Your journey can take different directions, and all of them can lead to success. Consider your options and pick a field that excites you.

Check out these helpful career resources:

- Career Xplora: careerexplora.com
- National Career Advice Portal: ncap.careerhelp.org.za
- FundiConnect: fundiconnect.co.za



CHOOSING A LEARNING INSTITUTION:

A.

Higher Education (Universities & Colleges)

If you qualify, university or college can be an excellent choice. Look at the various universities and colleges, considering the costs, courses offered and practicality for your own personal situation.

3. YOUR PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS (CONTINUED)

B.

Vocational Training (TVET Colleges & Skills Development)

Not everyone wants or needs a university degree. **Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges** offer practical skills in areas like:



Engineering & Manufacturing



Arts & Design



Business & Finance



IT & Technology



Hospitality & Tourism



Construction & Security

TVET qualifications prepare you for the job market **faster**, and students can get financial aid through **NSFAS. South Africa needs more artisans and critical skills trainees.** Attending a TVET College is a respected and practical route to employment!

C.

Online Skills Development

It is important to recognise that learning and ongoing skills development is essential in a world that is fast changing. Youth can learn, explore and upskill themselves through various free or affordable skills training options online.

Visit sites such as:

www.coursera.com

www.linkedin.com/learning

www.udemy.com

3. YOUR PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS (CONTINUED)

D.

Learnerships & Apprenticeships

Learn and earn at the same time! Learnerships provide work-based training in:



Finance &
Banking



Engineering
& Trades



IT & Digital
Marketing



Healthcare &
Social Services

Find opportunities here:

- SA Youth: sayouth.mobi
- YES4Youth: yes4youth.co.za
- Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator: harambee.co.za

E.

Entrepreneurship (Starting Your Own Business)

If you have a business idea, why wait? **Many successful businesses start with a simple skill or passion.** Whether it is selling products, offering services, or starting an online business, you can be your own boss.



Organisations that can help young entrepreneurs:

- National Youth Development Agency (NYDA): nyda.gov.za
- Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA): seda.org.za
- Black Umbrellas (a Cyril Ramaphosa Foundation partner): blackumbrellas.co.za

3. YOUR PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS (CONTINUED)

F.

Employment and Work Experience

Some learners go straight into jobs or internships.

Gaining experience early can help you grow professionally!

If you want to start working immediately, look for **entry-level jobs** to gain experience. Many successful careers start this way!

Check out job platforms like:

- SA Youth: sayouth.mobi
- Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator: harambee.co.za



G.

Volunteering & Community Work

Not all learning happens in a classroom. Volunteering helps you **gain experience, grow networks, and build confidence**. Many employers and bursary programmes value community service.

- UNICEF South Africa Volunteer Programme: unicef.org/southafrica/volunteer
- ForGood: forgood.co.za

4. HOW TO GET FUNDING

If you need financial support for your studies, explore these options:

Bursaries and Grants

- National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS): nsfas.org.za
- Xhuma Bursaries: xhumatech.com
- ZA Bursaries: zabursaries.co.za

Student Loans

Some banks and organisations offer loans to fund your education. Remember that loans must be repaid with interest.

CRET Bursary Programme

The CRET Bursary is not just about money for tuition - it offers holistic support, including:

- Tuition, accommodation, textbooks, and study materials
- Tutors, mentors, and psychosocial support
- Mentorship & career guidance
- Work readiness, workplace experience and driver's licence training

CRET Bursary Requirements:

- South African citizen, currently unemployed, aged 16-27
- Must have proof of application at a registered and accredited public institution or training college
- Strong motivation for selected study stream, including demonstrated leadership, communication, and entrepreneurial skills
- Proven financial need (household income below R650 000)

Visit cyrilramaphosafoundation.org for bursary application updates



5. A MESSAGE TO PARENTS & GUARDIANS

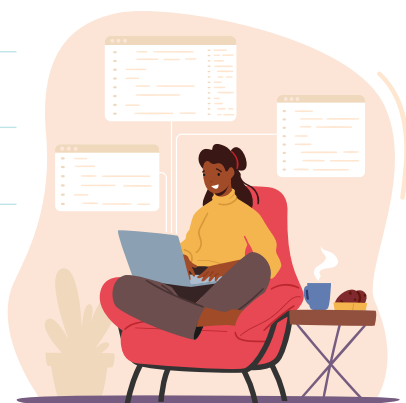
**Your support and encouragement play a vital role
in your child's success.**



Here is how you can help:

- **Encourage open conversations** about interests and career goals
- **Maintain a sense of hope and optimism** - whether your child is academically gifted or challenged, there are options for all our youth. They just need the support and guidance
- **Explore all options together** - university is not the only path
- **Help with research** - attend career expos, investigate TVET colleges, and seek financial aid
- **Support vocational and skills-based training** as valuable career paths.
- **Be patient and understanding** - the transition from school to work/study is challenging
- **Encourage volunteerism** - any act of kindness will reflect positively on a CV and build personal character

NOTES



YOUR FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS!



No matter where you come from or what challenges you face, you **CAN** build a successful future. Believe in yourself, explore opportunities, and take the first step today.

Your journey starts NOW!

This guide is brought to you by the **Cyril Ramaphosa Education Trust (CRET)**, committed to nurturing youth potential and broadening access to meaningful career opportunities.

For more information, visit:
www.cyrilramaphosafoundation.org