

High demand careers that don't require a degree

Many of the students completing their matric this year won't, for various reasons, have the option of going to university to earn a degree. However, this doesn't exclude them from entering the job market. Some of the highest in-demand jobs in South Africa can be accessed without a graduate degree, an education expert says.



Siyavuya Makubalo, marketing manager at Oxbridge Academy

“While it is unfortunately so that university study isn’t accessible to everyone, whether it be because of finances, personal circumstances, or academic results, that doesn’t mean matric is the end of the road for these young people,” says Siyavuya Makubalo, marketing manager at Oxbridge Academy, a private college that serves more than 20,000 South African distance learning students every year.

She says some of the most in-demand careers, as identified recently in a large survey by jobs portal CareerJunction, are within attainable reach of young people who can’t or don’t want to go to university, whether because of circumstances or personal choice.

According to the CareerJunction survey, job seekers within admin, office & support, and warehousing and logistics, have been experiencing improved employment prospects since the start of 2022, with vacancies increasing by over 17% since the fourth quarter of 2021.

Vocational training

Client and customer support, admin clerk, human resources, secretarial positions and call centre leadership positions have all seen a marked increase, according to the survey.

“This should come as excellent news to ambitious young people who want to further their studies and equip themselves with the skills and accreditation they need to get a foot in the door of these industries,” says Makubalo.

“Because all of these careers are accessible through vocational training, part-time and via distance learning. This means that even if you need to start work after matric, you can still start developing your skills in a specific sector. In addition to

getting you ready for a specific career, vocational training is often shorter in duration, and fees are also likely to be lower.”



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Furthermore, vocational training allows students to build on previous qualifications within the NQF framework, meaning that they can start searching for a position within an industry upon achieving their first qualification, and then continue to build upon their qualifications while working.

Makubalo points out that students considering vocational training and distance study should ensure their institution of choice equips them appropriately to contribute to the workplace from day one.

“When looking at distance learning options, ask the institution how they ensure students gain the practical knowledge and skills they need to find a job, over and above the theoretical principles that form part of the curriculum. Additionally, ask them about Work Integrated Learning opportunities, student support and how their qualifications are structured to allow for further study.”

Makubalo points out that National Courses, for instance, are nationally accredited and equip students with the vocational skills and formal qualifications that prepare them for working in their chosen field. Students who completed a course at N6 level, combined with evidence of 18 months relevant practical experience, may go on to apply for a National Diploma. There are also Short Learning Programmes designed to equip students with workplace-relevant knowledge and skills in a short period of time.

“The jobs marketplace remains highly competitive, but it should come as some comfort that some professionals remain in-high -demand, and even more so that these high-in demand professions are not catering exclusively to university graduates. We encourage young people to consider their options to reach their full potential and eventually professional success. The road isn’t always easy, and it isn’t always the only road you imagined leads to success, but the road is certainly there.”

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