

Subject choices and how to make a wise decision

Choosing subjects for matric can be daunting considering the impact your decision can have on your future career.

Here, Kay Vittee, CEO of Quest Staffing Solutions, suggests various factors to keep in mind.

When you love your work, it doesn't feel like work

"Grade 9 students have to choose three subjects, as it is compulsory for each student to take two languages and either maths or maths literacy. When making this decision, it is important to remember that when you love your work, it doesn't feel like work. So making choices that enable you to turn your passion or subjects you have an aptitude for into a career will provide the biggest returns in terms of your overall productivity, wellbeing and happiness," says Vittee.

She explains that there are certain subjects, like maths and science, which open many doors but one should not see this as the be-all and end-all. "If you want to become a doctor, accountant or engineer, maths and science are crucial and should be at the top of your subject choice list. However, if you have struggled and continuously achieved bad results in these subjects in the past, there are many alternatives for you to consider."



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Vittee explains that the aim of maths literacy is to develop mathematical skills for everyday situations like drawing up a monthly budget. "For some jobs like a chef, writer, beautician, air hostess and many careers in hospitality, maths literacy is enough and science is not a requirement. Now is the time to think about which subjects offer the best opportunities and whether these subjects match your individual aptitude."

"When considering your subject choices, remember that when exam time comes, it is important to achieve good results as this will increase your odds of standing out when applying for a job or to study for a diploma or degree that is in high demand. If you battle to achieve top marks in a specific subject but would like to follow a career which requires the subject, use this to motivate you to increase the amount of time you spend studying or consider tutoring. Alternatively, if you are unsure of where your strengths lie or what job you want to do one day, it may be beneficial to complete an aptitude test," says Vittee.

When choosing subjects in Grade 9:

- Take a deep breath and really think about what subjects you love, which you would be happier leaving behind, and what opportunities the subjects you love can offer you in terms of a future career;
- If you have an idea of a job you want to pursue one day, research the qualifications required for that job. Once you know what qualification you will need, find out which subjects are required for that qualification;
- Don't sell yourself short. If you are passionate about helping people and want to become a doctor, push yourself to achieve the marks you need to study medicine;
- If you are unsure of what career you want to follow one day, complete an aptitude test; and
- Play to your strengths. If you are a whiz in the kitchen and hate science, take home economics instead of science. Imagine: you could end up doing what you love in the kitchen of a top restaurant!

"Everyone is different and there are jobs out there that cater to this," concludes Vittee.