

CAREER GUIDANCE MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2026

#IAMANEDUCATIONCHAMPION

ISSUE 38

RSCE2026
HIGHLIGHTS

EDUCATION CAREER GUIDANCE MAGAZINE

HERITAGE- INSPIRED OFFICE FASHION

Minimalist pieces, sophisticated classics, and earthy colours.

PRE-EXAMS ESSENTIALS

A list of must-have to keep your mind healthy throughout the exam preparation period

AI & MENTAL HEALTH

Perspective by teacher, Christine Zeelie on how best to digitalize learner's wellness

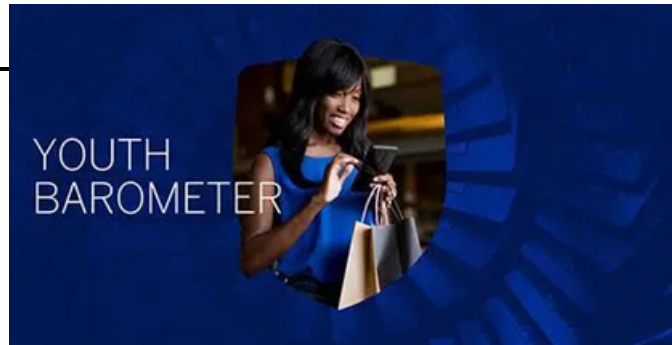
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CAMPUSCONNECT

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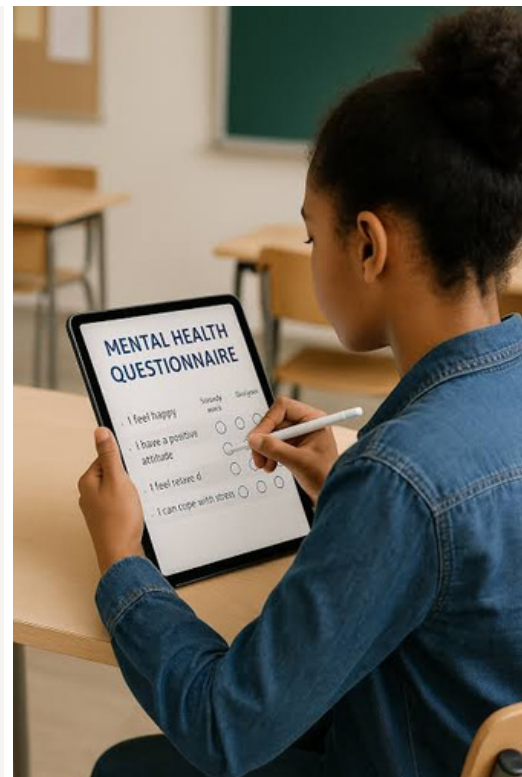
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Out & About



The Rising Stars Career Expo buzzed with energy throughout the Johannesburg and Durban legs, highlighting key focus areas that defined the 2026 experience: Preparing for the Future of Work: Exhibitors focused heavily on future-proof industries. Artificial Intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, cloud computing, and data analytics took center stage, educating learners on how to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving digital economy.



Financial Aid & Mentorship: Recognizing economic barriers to higher education, the expo provided critical information regarding student loans, bursaries, and funding options, alongside access to invaluable mentorship networks.

Interactive Engagement: Powered discussions hosted on ``#IAmAnEducationChampion Podcast`` (featuring Tembisa Commercial High School learners Grade 10 Learners), the momentum didn't stop when the venue doors closed.



The success of the 2026 expo underscores a vital truth: when we invest in youth, we invest in the collective economy of South Africa. Bridging the skills gap requires a collaborative effort between schools, government bodies, corporate partners, and passionate educators.

-

CAREER SPOTLIGHT:Thembeka Khumalo, Senior Client Experience Manager at Satrix

Finding your ideal career path is often an unexpected journey. Just ask Thembeka Khumalo, Senior Client Experience Manager at Satrix. Though her initial interest was in psychology during high school, a lack of visible role models in that field shifted her direction. As she explains, "However, not having someone I looked up to who looked like me or even had a similar background to me, and was in the field of psychology, deterred me from pursuing that course of study."

Inspired by her aunt who worked as an accountant, Thembeka pursued a BCom degree. This qualification opened doors to the banking sector, setting the stage for her eventual transition into investments. Recalling her turning point, she says, "The opportunity to get more involved with investments came when the then Head of Operations at Satrix handed me a job spec after a business meeting we had. I never looked back!"

Interview was conducted in
2023



Today, her primary mission centers around client satisfaction and long-term value. "My focus is largely on creating a world-class experience for our clients and ensuring that each time they engage with us, they walk away with a really good feeling," she shares. Her role spans strategic decision-making, monitoring engagement teams, and understanding client needs. While Satrix is largely digital, face-to-face interactions remain meaningful: "Being able to see how what we do makes a difference to people, first hand - that's the rewarding part of my job!"

For high school students inspired by her career path, Thembeka recommends degrees that offer strong exposure to financial services, such as a BCom in Investment Management, Finance, or Economics. To recent graduates who have just started earning, her guidance is straightforward: "Start early! Build those healthy investment habits right from the very beginning of your career, before incurring other financial debts that come with 'adulthood' (e.g. buying a car or a home).

Office Opulence Inspired by Heritage Month

By Pearl Nzama
Photography by House of Fabrosanz and Khosi
Nkosi Fashion



Khosi Nkosi Fashion

Khosi Nkosi



House of Fabrosanz



African Bank Staff Uniform designed by Khosi Nkosi Fashion

CONQUER PRE-EXAMS CHALLENGES

By Rato Masilela

As the final examinations approaches, students face the intense pressure. Managing pre-exam anxiety requires practical strategies and emotional resilience:



Identify the Source & Manage Time: Pinpoint whether your stress stems from a fear of failure, time pressure, or volume of work. Build a structured study routine that includes adequate sleep and regular breaks.

Maintain Healthy Habits & Mindfulness: Support your mind and body with balanced nutrition and physical activity while avoiding excessive caffeine. Incorporate deep breathing exercises or meditation to calm your nerves.



Overcome Setbacks: Life can throw unexpected challenges like financial difficulties, loss, or illness during exam season. Reach out to your institution's financial aid office, counseling services, or professors immediately to request appropriate accommodations.

Remember, you are not alone. Lean on family, friends, academic advisors, and professional networks like the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). Believe in your capabilities—exams are merely one step in your broader journey toward success.

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How Young South Africans **ARE SHAPING THEIR FINANCIAL FUTURE**

YOUTH BAROMETER



The 2026 Standard Bank Youth Barometer Report

How Young South Africans Are Shaping Their Financial Future
Dealing with adulthood in today's economic climate presents significant challenges e.g High inflation, shifting labour markets, and broader economic volatility which forces individuals across all demographics to re-evaluate how they manage, spend, and save their money. Yet, data from the Standard Bank Youth Barometer Report reveals that young South Africans aged 18 to 35 are demonstrating remarkable resilience and pragmatic decision-making. Far

Pragmatic Spending and Strategic Asset Building
Young adults are actively entering major asset markets despite tight budgets, recognizing that early entry into property and reliable transport lays the groundwork for personal independence and wealth accumulation. Toni Anderson, Head of Home Services at Standard Bank, highlights this ongoing ambition: "Youth are aspirational and determined to enter the property market. For many, owning a home represents both stability and a long-term investment, even if they have to stretch affordability to get there". Similarly, personal mobility remains a critical priority for unlocking career opportunities and maintaining daily

Building Financial Safety Nets
Beyond physical assets, understanding credit dynamics and balancing broader family responsibilities are central to youth financial habits. Credit is increasingly viewed not as a trap, but as a strategic tool to build a robust credit score while optimizing rewards. Ultimately, young South Africans are redefining what it means to be financially savvy. By cultivating practical savings habits early, using credit deliberately, and prioritizing long-term value over short-term consumption, they are proactively securing their own financial destinies while uplifting their families.

QUICK HOMEMADE ICE CREAM



By Lwazi Feni

A great chocolate cake depends on balance: enough cocoa for depth, enough moisture for tenderness, and careful mixing so the crumb stays light rather than heavy.

Flavour travels through technique and tradition. Fermentation, roasting, preserving, and slow cooking can turn familiar ingredients into something distinctive.

Homemade ice cream rewards patience. A smooth base, gentle heat, and proper chilling create a creamy texture while allowing seasonal flavours to remain clear.

Homemade ice cream rewards patience. A smooth base, gentle heat, and proper chilling create a creamy texture while allowing seasonal flavours to remain clear.

Restaurants earn loyalty when food and service feel connected. A confident menu, attentive pacing, and genuine welcome often matter more than unnecessary spectacle.



The pleasure is simple: cook with attention, taste as you go, and serve the result while it is at its best.

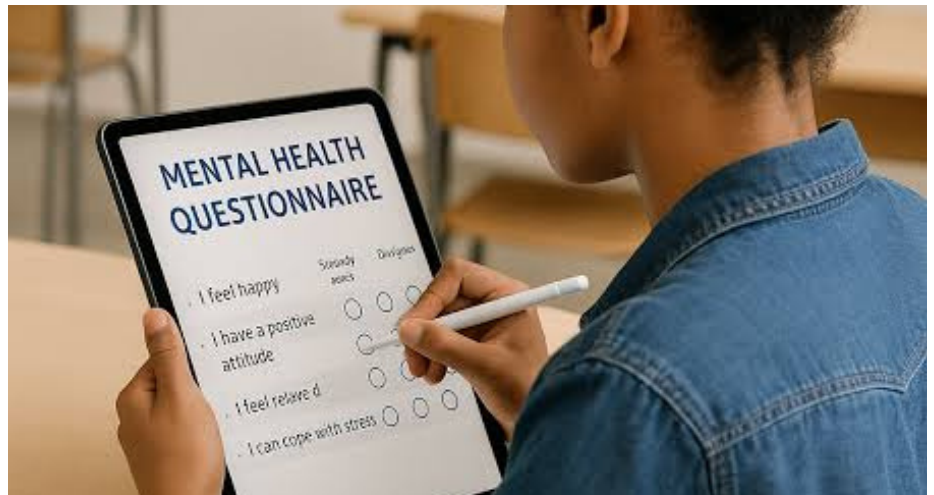
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Soleil Dining builds its experience through small decisions. Ingredient sourcing, timing, hospitality, and a clear sense of place work together from the first course to the last.

down all the titles to set up your table of contents. You can add a brief description for each article or keep it simple and paste the feature titles on the page. Don't forget your page numbers!

AI & MENTAL HEALTH ON HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS



By Rato Masilela

In an era where artificial intelligence is seamlessly integrated into our daily routines, high school students are increasingly turning to AI chatbots for answers, advice, and even emotional comfort. While these tools offer instant availability and a non-judgmental space, relying on them for mental health support poses significant risks to young minds.

Christine Zeelie, Head of Adaptive Technology and Information Technology at Dainfern College, offers a critical perspective on this growing trend. With over 15 years of experience in education, Zeelie highlights the fundamental difference between the appearance of empathy and genuine human understanding.

Understanding the Illusion of Connection

When a student chats with an AI, the experience can feel remarkably personal. However, Zeelie explains that this is entirely mathematical. "AI chatbots do not think, feel, or possess consciousness. Instead, they operate through sophisticated statistical models and pattern recognition..

They predict the most likely sequence of words to produce a response. While chatbots can generate responses that appear caring and compassionate, they do not experience emotions or genuinely understand the people they are interacting with." — Christine Zeelie
This illusion is heightened by anthropomorphism—the natural human tendency to attribute real emotions to non-human entities that communicate in familiar ways.

Ethical and Relational Risks

While companion AI might seem like a safe harbor, Zeelie warns that relying on algorithm-driven interactions threatens the development of real-world relationships.

GRADUATES HR INSIGHTS



Avoid Obsolete Careers and Stay Market-Ready

The modern workplace is evolving faster than ever. With rapid shifts driven by automation, computers, and artificial intelligence (AI), many roles that once seemed secure are becoming obsolete. As certified career coach Mpume Ncube-Daka points out, "Jobs do become obsolete because of the changes that are happening in the world... Certain jobs are no longer in existence because of the emergence of automation, computers, new technologies, artificial intelligence, etc." When asked which career paths recent graduates should avoid, Ncube-Daka emphasizes personal responsibility and thorough investigation rather than strict prohibitions. "I don't believe that anyone has the absolute right to tell people what careers they should or should not follow," she explains

"My advice is that each person should conduct their own research to assess which careers are becoming obsolete. Also, the research should focus on which skills are in demand in the marketplace, in order for them to increase their chances to find work."

Preparation is key and rather than jumping into short-lived trends, graduates must focus on long-term sustainability. As Ncube-Daka advises, "Some occupations have a short lifespan. They may be trendy for a year or two, and then what after that? Whatever you do, make sure that it is sustainable and it is long term."

With AI taking over repetitive tasks, roles that rely purely on manual execution or basic "digital labor" (such as hourly-rate digital tasks or basic data retrieval) are at higher risk of automation.

To build a resilient career, look toward high-growth sectors where technical and strategic expertise are actively sought after:

Technology & AI: Artificial intelligence, machine learning, cloud computing, data science, cybersecurity, and software development.

Sales & Marketing: Digital marketing and business development.

Banking & Finance: Auditing, tax-related roles, commercial finance, and mergers & acquisitions.

Engineering & Manufacturing: Quality assurance and control, plus product engineering.

Legal Industry: Corporate law, compliance, ICT/fintech lawyers, and company secretary roles.

By staying informed, continuous learning, and focusing on high-value skills, you can future-proof your career and stay ahead of the curve.



A culture **built on innovation and growth** is key to attracting top talent.

UNISA OPENS DOORS TO OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING EXCELLENCE



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By Thulisa Mangcotywa
Photography by UNISA



Choosing a university is one of the most important decisions a young person will ever make. For thousands of first-time applicants leaving high school, the transition into higher education can feel overwhelming. The University of South Africa (UNISA) continues to make that journey more accessible by providing quality education that reaches students wherever they are.

As Africa's leading comprehensive open distance and e-Learning institution, UNISA is empowering the next generation of graduates with qualifications that are relevant, flexible and recognised both nationally and internationally. "Distance learning requires that you study in your own time and in your own space, but that doesn't mean you're on your own." – UNISA

As a comprehensive university, UNISA offers vocational and academic programmes that include undergraduate and postgraduate certificates, diplomas, bachelor's degrees, postgraduate diplomas, master's and doctoral qualifications. The university also provides short learning programmes designed to meet the changing needs of industry and society.



Well-designed interactive study material allows students to balance education with work, family and personal responsibilities while pursuing their career aspirations. Every qualification opens the door to a meaningful career.

UNISA's academic colleges offer career pathways across almost every profession. The College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences prepares graduates for careers in environmental management, agriculture, animal health, horticulture, geography, life sciences and consumer sciences. The College of Accounting Sciences delivers professionally accredited qualifications that equip graduates for careers in accounting and finance, while the College of Economic and Management Sciences remains one of Africa's largest providers of business education.

"UNISA provides various facilities and services to cater for its diverse student population." – UNISA

As UNISA prepares to communicate its 2027 application dates through its official campaign, the institution continues to encourage young people to dream boldly and plan confidently. By combining academic excellence, accessible learning, comprehensive student support and career-focused qualifications, UNISA remains committed to developing graduates who are equipped to lead, innovate and contribute meaningfully to South Africa and beyond. For every learner ready to shape a brighter future, the journey starts with one application and the courage to pursue lifelong learning.



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Education is the ultimate equalizer, the greatest gift a parent can give, and the foundation upon which a child's dreams are built. Yet, for many South African families, life's unpredictability threatens to disrupt schooling before studies are ever completed.

As parents, we plan for tomorrow—saving for uniforms, textbooks, and tuition—but what happens if life takes an unexpected turn? True education champions don't just fund schooling today; they safeguard it against the unforeseen.

The Pick n Pay Education Protector Plan is designed for parents who refuse to leave their children's future to chance. Offering peace of mind from just R75 per month, this plan ensures that school fees continue to be paid directly to the educational institution if the insured parent passes away.

Guaranteed 5-Year Benefit: Up to R20,000 per year per child for five academic years.

Comprehensive Family Cover: One single policy covers up to 5 children under 18 at the start.

Hassle-Free Access: Quick, easy sign-up with no medical questions and no underwriting required.

Although life is unpredictable, your child's education shouldn't be. This education policy is available to parents and legal guardians aged 20 to 55. It offers a practical, highly affordable way to build a financial safety net. Need to cover more than 5 children? Reach out directly via toll-free support at 0800 388883 or email info@futurewise.co.za.

By taking proactive steps today, you ensure that no matter what tomorrow brings, your child's classroom seat remains secure. How are you currently planning to safeguard your family's educational milestones against life's unexpected turns?



Pick n Pay Education Protector

You can protect your child's education.

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