

MTN Online School launches

This morning, MTN officially launched its online school, developed in partnership with Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT). The MTN Online School is a free online portal that provides a comprehensive digital curriculum for Grades R-12 and will also offer additional features like video lessons, assessments and extra-tuition lessons for Gr10 - 12 learners.



Image: Supplied

The solution is aimed at increasing access to curriculum-aligned educational content, as endorsed and provided by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in SA for Grades R-12 and for Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN), using a digital platform. It aims to address the 21st century learning needs of SA's children and closing the concerning gap in access to quality education among the youth.

Zero-rated

The integrated online educational portal is supported and housed on the MTN network and is zero data rated for MTN customers, which means it can be used without any data. The full content library will be added to the platform and made available over a period of three years, focusing on key subjects.

Speaking at the launch, which was also attended by Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga, MTN SA's CEO Godfrey Motsa said: "Digital transformation takes place within a huge ICT ecosystem and for that ecosystem to flourish we need young people to be able to access quality teaching and learning essential to play their part in changing the world. The Covid-19 pandemic laid bare the urgent need in South Africa for accessible and approved online curricula and we are delighted to deliver the MTN Online School to do just that.

"Our aim is to enable the youth to access educational fundamentals to tackle the demands of the fourth industrial revolution in a manner that allows them to access future opportunities. Today's launch is a product of great partnerships and shows how together, we can do more, be more and achieve more," Motsa continued.

"We believe in the future of SA and the education of the future generation, which needs to accelerate its recovery from the economic and personal devastation of Covid-19 to embrace future opportunities made available through quality education and learning. The MTN Online School has been developed hand-in-glove with the Department of Basic Education and we are so proud to deliver this portal that will immediately start creating value, for South Africans," he said.



MTN Online School is specifically focused on using the power of the digital world to supplement and support the physical classroom.

"Building on the success of our partnership with Siyavula in 2020, this new platform aims to give the power of online tools to support teachers in adding value to their lessons, in teaching digital skills and reaching those learners who need additional support," said Jacqui O'Sullivan, MTN SA's Executive for Corporate Affairs.

To enhance and attract more learners to the virtual world now at their fingertips, the portal will also focus on areas such as financial skills, entrepreneurship, arts and culture, as well as career guidance content, with a focus on key careers where there are skills shortages in SA.

Sign language inclusion

Among the key innovations, video lessons will be provided with a sign language interpreter to accommodate deaf learners. The portal includes an introduction to the early childhood development curriculum and African storytelling, with over 2000 stories, to equip children with good reading skills and improve confidence, enabling them to learn and read independently.

Additional features for FET Phase (Gr10-12) include:

- Support to learners after-school, on weekends, during school holidays and dedicated lessons leading up to exams
- A timetable to drive transparency and structure
- Learners can work at their own pace as lessons will be available on-demand
- Online tutoring service will be provided to learners via a help function interface
- Pre-assessments (test existing knowledge)
- Pre-recorded lessons to watch
- Tutoring sessions
- Feedback questions to work through
- Live sessions presented by a teacher, recap of key concepts, focus on weak areas identified by assessments
- Post assessments
- Learner analysis reports
- Learners can also request help at any time, or submit questions via the platform or WhatsApp chat line

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