

# Matrics: No 2020 varsity placement? It's not too late to enrol

The exams are over, the holidays are here. As thousands of matrics from the class of 2019 take a well-deserved break, excitement will start to build for those preparing to start their first year at university and a new phase of life as a young adult. But what about the many matriculants who were so busy with the business of their last year at school, that they either neglected to consider their post-school options, or simply couldn't manage to get all the university application admin done in time? Or those who didn't consider further study, but have now had a change of heart?



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“Now that all the work and stress of the exams are behind them, and as the view turns to the future, many matriculants are finding themselves in a situation where they have no real plan or focus for the coming year,” says Wonga Ntshinga, Senior Head of Programme: Faculty of ICT at South Africa's private higher education institution, The Independent Institute of Education.

“And this can be very unsettling - facing the blank canvas of the future while around you your peers are buzzing about going to study next year, campus life and their excitement about joining the world of work after graduation. But many may not realise that they still have options to put things in place for next year, and that they don't need to consider 2020 a write-off,” he says.

“So if you were feeling left out, the good news is that you can still get a great strategy in place for next year, to kickstart your future.”

Ntshinga says that although registration for study at public universities are closed, prospective students who left it too late still have excellent options for pursuing their interests at those private higher education institutions which still accept applications during December.

“Your situation might even be a blessing in disguise, because prospective students are increasingly opting for studies at respected private institutions, because of their work-readiness approach and smaller class sizes. There is also a great

focus on employability and guidance before, during and after studies,” he says.

In addition, it should be kept in mind that South Africa has a single quality assurance system and one National Qualifications Framework, so any institution offering a registered and accredited qualification – whether public or private – is offering a qualification of comparable standards and equal standing.

Ntshinga says those who are now keen to study next year but haven’t yet enrolled, should do their research and then go speak to a student advisor at a respected institution about the best course of action.

In a nutshell, their options are the following:

## 1. Enrol for a short course

“You don’t have to commit to a three-year degree if you are not yet sure what you want to do career-wise. But at the very least, commit to developing your skills and not stagnating. There is a wide range of courses on offer in a variety of fields, all of which will allow you to get your foot in the door in the world of work,” says Ntshinga.

“Doing a short course will also allow you to both explore and refine your interests, and could lead to you identifying exactly what it is you want to do with your life if you haven’t been sure until now.”

## 2. Enrol for a higher certificate

A one-year higher certificate provides an excellent foundation, and allows students to attain a full qualification while at the same time mastering the essential skills needed for higher education success.

“A higher certificate is also a good option for those matrics who do not expect to achieve a Bachelor’s pass, as it gives access to degree study,” says Ntshinga.

“With this qualification a student can enter the world of work after only a year of study, which is great news for those who may need to earn while they learn. Higher certificates are on offer across a wide range of disciplines and fields, so make sure that you opt for one which aligns with your career aspirations, and which will allow you to enrol for degree study later if you so choose.”

## 3. Degree study

If you have made up your mind that you want to pursue a degree next year, there is still a chance that you can gain access at a private higher education institution - if you move quickly, says Ntshinga.

He says good institutions will have a range of registered and accredited qualifications very much like those on offer at public universities, and some additional qualifications uniquely geared toward the future of work.

“So have a look at the various faculties – of Commerce, Education, Humanities, ICT and Social Sciences on the institution’s website, and their degree offerings, and see what gets you excited.

“It is worth keeping in mind that a degree from a respected private institution is highly regarded among employers, particularly where the institution has a reputation for producing work-ready graduates who can make a positive contribution from day one, rather than having to struggle to translate the theory they learned at university into real-life application. After you have identified qualifications that look like a match for you, visit the institution, speak to a



Wonga Ntshinga, Senior Head of Programme:  
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Education

student advisor, and commit to a path that will set you up for a successful future.”

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