

Kovsie Advice

Quarter 3

2017



Time to Reflect

T: 051 401 7421 | E: advising@ufs.ac.za | www.ufs.ac.za

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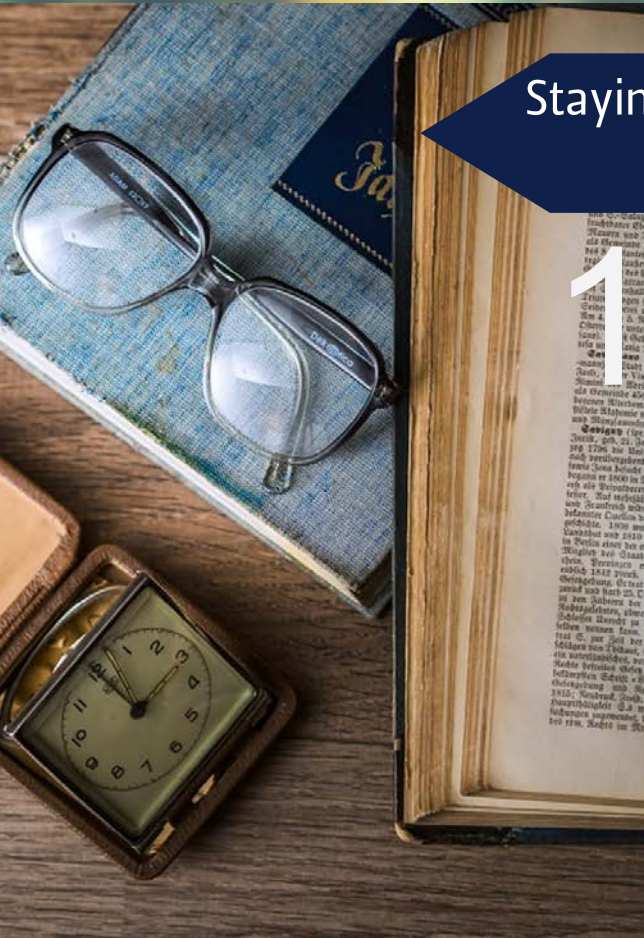
*Inspiring excellence. Transforming lives.
Inspireer uitnemendheid. Verander lewens*

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



UFS·UV
CENTRE FOR TEACHING
AND LEARNING (CTL)
ONDERRIG-EN-LEERSENTRUM
(OLS)

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Why Reflection is Key to Success



It's time to reflect!

You started the year with certain goals and dreams. You may have goals or dreams for your academic work, for your future career, or for personal growth, and that's great! But how far have you progressed towards achieving these goals and dreams? How can you measure your progress? How will you know if you need to realign your actions in order for your goals to be achieved or your dreams to become a reality? The answer lies in self-reflection.

Self-reflection means taking a careful look at your own thoughts and actions.

Self-reflection is compared to looking in a mirror: when you look in the mirror and see something that doesn't look right (for example, your hair has not been brushed), you are then able to fix what you see (for example by brushing your hair).

In the same way, when you self-reflect and take some time to take an honest look at your thoughts and actions, you may notice that something is not working or is not helpful in achieving the goals you have set for yourself. For example, you may have set a goal to achieve a 75% average this year, but realise you need to put in more effort in order to reach your goal only when you reflect.

How to be more Reflective

Try journaling: Write about your actions, thoughts and feelings honestly. Take a few minutes each day to think back over the day that has passed. As yourself if you acted in a way that is in line with your goals and dreams. Was there any situation that you could handle differently next time?

You have already come so far! You can feel proud of that. And now, through self-reflection, you can grow even more and keep moving closer to your goals and dreams.



“**H**onest self-reflection opens your mind to reprogramming, change, **SUCCESS** and freedom.”
-Trudy Vesotsky

Why it is Important and Helpful to Reflect

Stop Negative Patterns

Through self-reflection you can notice negative patterns you keep repeating (always procrastinating, for example). Once you notice these unhelpful patterns, you can stop repeating them.

The Big Picture

If you know what your goals are and you regularly reflect on your actions, you can quickly notice when your actions aren't helpful and realign them with the bigger picture of your goals.

Better Relationships

Reflection on your own actions within relationships (friendships, family, or romantic) can help you notice when you are contributing to relationship problems, so that you can take responsibility and make changes.



Understanding Progression Rules and Prerequisites

Did you know?

that there are certain rules and requirements related to whether or not you are allowed to **progress** (continue) to the next academic year? Do you know if you meet these requirements?



Know the General Progression Requirements

In the first year of undergraduate studies (not an extended programme) you need to pass at least 35% of your first-year modules to be allowed to start with the second year's study.

In the second year of undergraduate studies you have to pass at least 45% of the second-year modules to be able to start with the next year's studies.

In all other years of undergraduate study you need to pass at least 60% of the modules of that specific year to be able to progress to the next year of study.

If you do not qualify for progression to the next academic year of study, you may apply to the dean for permission to register for the failed modules and repeat the current academic year. Permission may also be given by the dean to add extra modules not exceeding 32 credits more than the usual curriculum for a particular academic year.

If you repeat an academic year, you have to achieve at least the requirements discussed above before you will be allowed to continue to the next academic year.

If you have failed a specific module twice already, special permission has to be obtained from the dean to re-register for the module again.

Click Here

for more detailed information about general progression rules.

Faculty-specific Progression Requirements

Each faculty may also have their own rules about progression. You can access the rule book for your specific faculty at this link: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/templates/yearbooks#>

In addition to the progression rules, you also need to know about prerequisite modules. Many modules can only be taken if a student has successfully passed certain prerequisite modules. For example, certain third-year modules cannot be registered for if you have not passed other specific first-year and second-year modules. The list of subjects and modules in each faculty with their prerequisite modules are also given in the rule book of each faculty.

The last thing to keep in mind is that there is a limit to how long you are allowed to take to finish your studies. For undergraduate qualifications you are allowed to take the minimum period allowed for your particular qualification plus two years extra. For example, if you are studying for a BA degree, the minimum period allowed for the qualification is 3 years. Therefore, you are allowed to take a maximum of 5 years to finish the BA degree.

A Fresh Perspective on Your Goals

Most of you have probably set goals (whether formally or informally) for the first semester, and worked hard to achieve them. For some it might have gone well, but for others things might not have worked out quite as anticipated.

Nevertheless, we know that even when things don't go as planned, it is not the end of the world. You can still get to your dream. Let's take Colonel Sanders, founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, as an example. He believed in his chicken recipe despite many failures. His fried chicken recipe was rejected **1009 times** before a restaurant finally accepted it. That is endurance if you have ever seen it! Hey, if he could do it, then so can you. All you need to do is keep at it and believe that what you have is good enough!

Setting goals are an important part of being successful in life and in your studies. The relationship between setting goals and student success has been researched and proved by many. Some of these researchers are Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl and Shore (2010), who wanted to investigate whether an intensive, online, written goal-setting programme for struggling students, leading them through a series of steps for setting specific goals, would have a positive effect on their academic achievement. After a four-month period, students who successfully completed the goal-setting intervention displayed an average improvement of 30% in academic performance. No wonder Albert Einstein said: *"If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal. Not to people or things."*

Let's take a look at the goals you have set in the first semester. Take a moment to reflect on what your goals were, how you went about reaching them, what worked and what did not work, and how you can do things differently this semester to make sure you hit the bullseye in your academic work. Use the space on the next page to guide your thoughts. If you would like to read our previous article on how to set goals for yourself, [click here](#).

What are the three biggest goals you are currently aiming to achieve?

1.

2.

3.

How can you improve your strategies to ensure that you reach your goals this semester?

“All you need to do is keep at it, and believe that what you have is good enough!”

What can you do to stay motivated to reach your goals this semester?

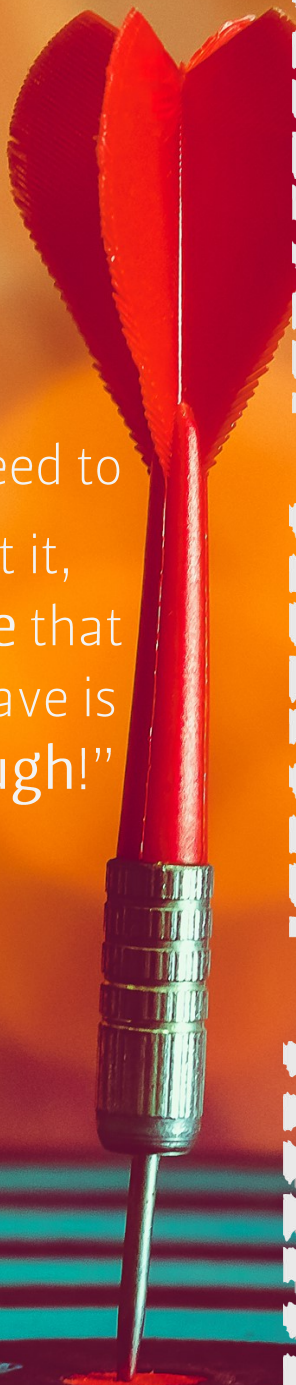
What are the rewards for you when you reach your goals?

1.

2.

3.

4.



Dreaming about that *Bright* Future

As an academic advisor, I often hear students ask: “What can I do with a BSocSci degree?” (or whichever degree the student is doing). The answer to this question should not start with what you *can* do with a specific degree, but rather what you *want* to do with your degree. As a former president of India and space scientist, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, once said:

“You have to dream before your dreams can come true.”

University is a time to dream about what you want to have and do one day before you have to enter the world of work. So the question is: “If you could do anything in an ideal world and everyone received the same amount of money, what would you find yourself doing for a job?” Once you can answer that, advisors can help you align your academic path with a realistic career plan that is as close to your ideal career as possible.

However, what if you don't know what you want to do? Then the advisor would start prodding you to think about what your interests are, what you enjoy and what you are good at. We try to find the golden thread running through the things you tell us. This thread is not necessarily a clear link, but rather looser associations that are implied and we make you aware of what we hear in your answers.

If we cannot find that or you do not really know what you enjoy, we ask you to do some research by yourself and explore your interests. If this still does not lead to clarity for you, you can be sent for more formal career counselling.

Did you know that the UFS also has an office where you can receive career counselling if you still feel like you do not have a clue what your bright future looks like? This service is offered by professional psychologists and counsellors at Student Counselling and Development to help you dream about that bright future.

So if you know what your bright future looks like, what then? How do you actually go about making your dreams come true? One way is by actively seeking connections and skills that you can learn to bring you closer to that ideal future. The only way to know more about something is to go research it for yourself. Go and find out what type of skills your ideal job requires, not just what majors you need. Also, go search for a few different job descriptions of the jobs you are interested in.

One possible website with job descriptions can be found at <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions>. You can also look at Careers24 for the different jobs available in South Africa.

If you now know what your bright future looks like and you know what types of skills you need, where do all your modules fit in? A puzzle can be used as a metaphor in this situation. You can think of your bright future as the big picture of the puzzle, i.e. what you eventually want to achieve.

Then, think of all the skills you need as the different parts of the picture that together make one big picture. Your modules (whether majors, electives, or core modules) are the different puzzle pieces that need to be fitted correctly to build this puzzle. How the puzzle pieces fit will depend on how well you can understand the different functions of the pieces. Thus, if you actively find the different skills that each module teaches you, you will be able to fit the pieces together well.

The last pieces of the puzzle consists of your ability to convey the skills you learned throughout your academic path through solid documentation and in an interview. As much as the university teaches you skills, you still need to be able to convey these to your future employer. You may feel like you want to start right off and apply to the highest job level possible and expect to attain it, but then reality kicks in.

Start in the field you want to go into, but be willing to start at a lower level and work yourself up to that ideal job. You can start by regularly updating your CV while you are at university and get help in finding jobs within the sectors you are interested in. Who knows, once you start working you may just stumble upon a perfect job you were not even aware of. To start your CV off on the right foot and prepare for interviews, be sure to visit the Career Development Office, which specialises in applying these employability concepts.

Student Counselling and Development for Career Counselling

Bloemfontein Campus: 051 401 2853
QwaQwa Campus: (058) 718 5029/32/33

[Click Here](#)

Career Development Office

Bloemfontein Campus: (051) 401 7393
Qwaqwa Campus: (058) 718 5377

[Click Here](#)



Create a Personal Vision Board

If you think vision boards are bogus, then the joke's on **you**, says blogger Elizabeth Rider. Creating a visible image of what you want to achieve in life, research suggests, actually helps to turn it into life. How would you go about creating your own personal vision board? Your vision board is your own creation. You can create a vision board by cutting out and sticking images from old magazines, or you can create a vision board using a vision board app.

Five Steps to creating your own Vision Board:

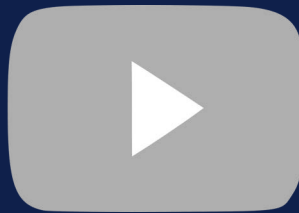
1. Dream about what you want. Imagine what you would like to achieve in your life at a specific point in time (e.g. when you are 30).
2. Find pictures that show what you want. You can cut them from magazines, search on the internet, or draw them.
3. Stick them all on the board. If you do not have a board, or a piece of paper, stick them on your wall or wardrobe.
4. Place the board somewhere where you can always see it.
5. Look at the board as often as you can. Spend a few minutes in the morning, during lunch, or before bedtime to think of all the things you want in life.

SUNSET

SPACE

life.

View this video on
creating a vision board
for yourself:



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INSIGHT

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Wisdom Keepers

Changing Direction

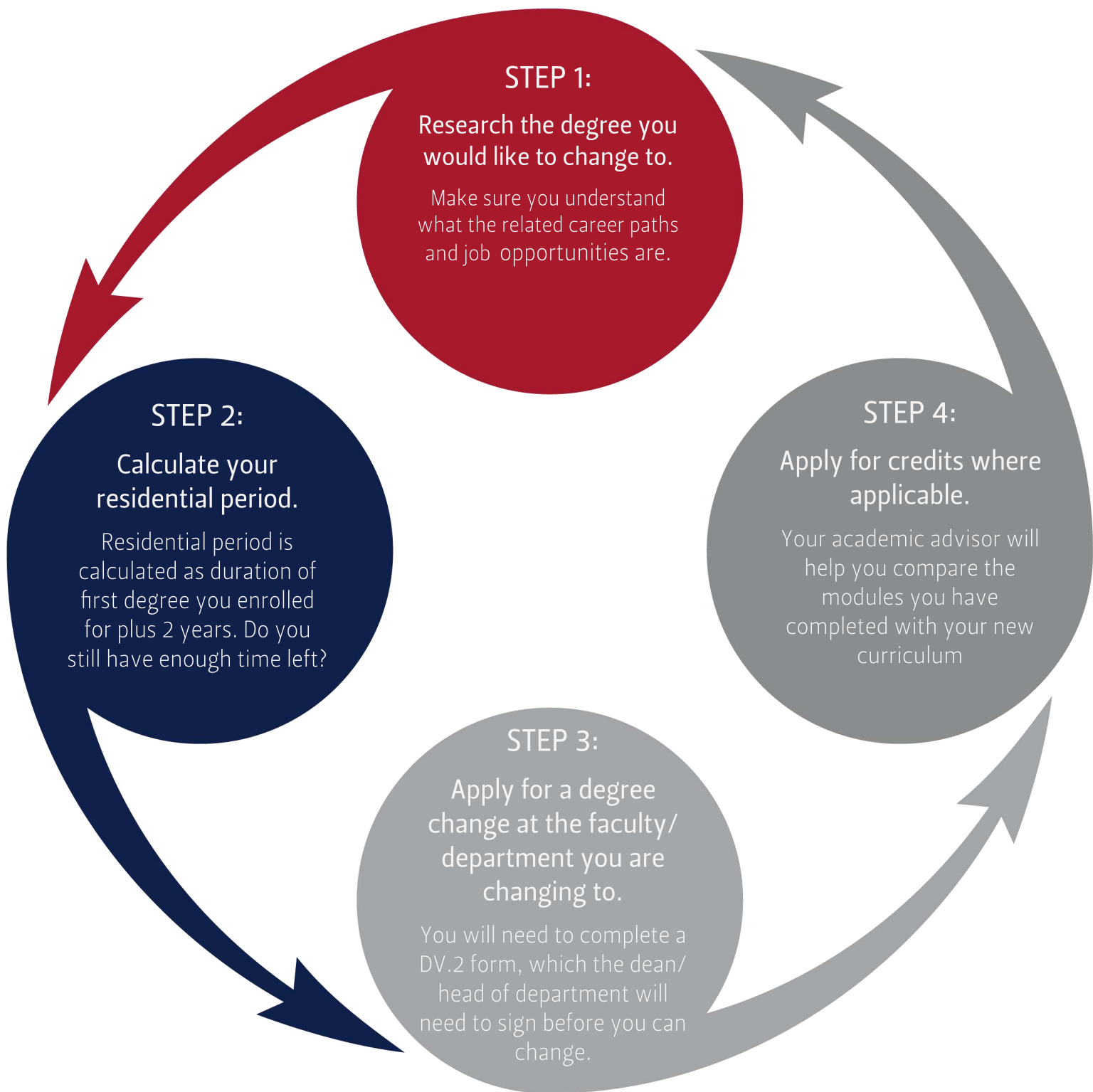
Yup! We all thought that university would be simple: register, study, graduate. But the truth is that many students end up changing their degree somewhere down the line. Having to change degree can be daunting. We've been there, and would therefore like to help make the transition as smooth as possible.

It is important to note that, according to the general rules of the UFS, a student is only allowed to change their degree twice. It is therefore important that you do not take this decision lightly, but consult with an academic advisor to help guide you. You can make an appointment for academic advice by emailing advising@ufs.ac.za.

Okay, but what if you are already sure of what you would like to change to, and would like to get the ball rolling? On the next page you will find a layout of the steps you need to follow in order to change your degree.

"Will I get credits for modules already completed?" you might ask. The answer is yes. You may get credits for modules already completed in another programme if you are transferring from one UFS programme to another, and if the modules passed are part of the new curriculum. However, if you are transferring from another institution to the UFS, only 50% of your credits can be granted, with the restriction of 25% being in the highest NQF level of the qualification.

Steps for Changing your Degree:



Staying on Track with Year Modules

Shaking off modules completed in the first semester after the exams is always a great feeling of accomplishment. Unfortunately, you might have to endure some year modules, which are only half way done by now. Together with these, you will also have new modules for the second semester, which will require a lot of attention to get started. It is important that you do not lose focus on your year modules at this stage. Think about the goals you have set for each year module, and reflect on the marks you have accumulated thus far. Remember, you did not write exams in these modules, and you thus need to make sure that you are on track with the content. You can ask yourself these practical questions to help you evaluate your progress:

- Are you on track with your reading work in this module?
- What is your progress mark thus far for this module?
- How far are you in achieving your desired mark in this module?
- Are there any assignments you need to plan for at the moment?
- What can you do differently in the second semester to help boost your progress mark?

It is easy to get demotivated with year modules, because the reward of completing the module is further away than in the case of semester modules. Making sure you have short-term wins for tasks completed might help you stay motivated.

Celebrate each achievement, and tune into your books as often as you can. Remember that you also need to schedule time to revise the first semester's work again, as you will need to study it for the exam at the end of the year as well.

Lastly, know that you can do it! The mere fact that you have been able to master the first-semester modules, is an indication that you will be able to master the year modules as well. It might require a little more endurance, but the reward is around the corner!



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Third-Term *Crunch* Time!

Use helpful
students apps.

[Click here](#)

Be effective
when you work.

[Click here to
read more.](#)

“Being ready for third-term crunch time will help you manage your workload and feel in control of your surroundings.”

With the third-term kicking off, your time will be packed with classes, academic activities, assignments, tests, practicals and campus activities. Because the fourth term only consists of a few weeks before the main examination, the third term is always packed with academic activities and assessments to make up for lost time. Being ready for third-term crunch time will help you manage your workload and feel in control of your surroundings.

Practical tips to help you deal with the crunch are provided in the circles below.

Stick to your
study
timetable
[Click here](#)

Apply the
80/20 principle.
[Click here to
read more.](#)



Crunching

Content



Most students are challenged by large amounts of work to study with little time to cover the work. Here are some tips that might help you deal with it:

Apply the SQ3R method of studying. [Click here to read more.](#)

Form study groups and help each other to summarise all the work. [Click here to read more.](#)

Scan your reading material before you start studying. [Click here to read more.](#)

Predict exam questions and important sections and spend more time working on those sections of the work.

Learn to distinguish between important and not so important work. [Click here to read more.](#)

Making the Most of Online Learning Resources

We know that you are very good at using the internet and social media to stay connected with your friends and family. But did you know that the internet and social media can be good for your social life AND academic life? Here are some of the online resources that can help you excel.



Blackboard

At the UFS, Blackboard is used to make lecturers' and students' academic lives easier and better. Lecturers make use of Blackboard in many different ways, which can include:

- having online discussions with you;
- sharing videos or important links;
- sharing important notices about class;
- uploading extra reading material which may be helpful for you, or reading material that has to be prepared for lectures; and
- using Blackboard as a space where online assessments can be uploaded.

It is important that you frequently log on to Blackboard so that you can stay up to date with important information that will play a role in your academic success.



Turnitin is a tool that checks your assignment against various electronic sources for matching text in order to test your work for plagiarism and close the feedback loop between lecturers and students.



Blackboard also has a Success Portal where you can access a lot of helpful resources about different topics such as time management, study, leadership and academic writing skills (plus lots more).



Facebook is another resource which can improve your academic life! A number of the faculties and departments at the UFS have Facebook pages or groups that can help you stay informed about important information. The academic advisors at CTL have also created a Facebook page where helpful information is shared and where you can connect with the advisors.

Click the icons to open.



Other Online Tools:

Mind-Mapping Software (Mindjet, XMind, Coggle, MindMapple, etc)

Mind-mapping is a helpful way to condense large amounts of information when studying. It's extra helpful if you're a visual learner (someone who studies easier using pictures and diagrams). Take a look at the following link: <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/8-free-mind-map-tools-best-use/>

Graphic Organizer Software (Creately, Storyboard That, etc.)

Graphic organizer software allows for verbal information to be changed into graphics. This is also helpful for visual learners. The following link leads to a website that in turn provides links to 10 sites for creating graphic organizers: <http://www.techlearning.com/blogentry/9736>

OneNote

OneNote is a computer program which allows you to gather written or typed notes, drawings, and audio clips in one place, after which these notes can be shared with other people on the internet: <https://www.onenote.com/>



PASS: Supporting You Through University

PASS (Programme for Academic Student Success) is a transition programme designed to support students with the challenges they face at university.

This support takes place through monthly workshops, with the focus on academic success skills, academic and career advising, financial management, motivation and leadership, and health and wellness.



PASS sessions left for the year:

Wake Up and Shake Up

Come ready to reflect on the first semester and plan your second semester.

28 July 2017

Time: 11:00–13:00 or
14:00–16:00

Venue: Education Auditorium

Motivation Session

Hear from speakers who have been there and learn how to be successful after university.

18 August 2017

Time: 11:00–13:00 or
14:00–16:00

Venue: Education Auditorium

25 August 2017

Time: 11:00–13:00 or
14:00–16:00

Venue: CRS Senate Hall

Funding My Future

Need to find out more about funding next year's tuition fees?

8 September 2017

Time: 11:00–13:00 or
14:00–16:00

Venue: Education Auditorium

16 September 2017

Time: 11:00–13:00 or
14:00–16:00

Venue: Education Auditorium



What Our PASS Students have to Say...

Ofentse Morwane is a final-year BSocSc student. She has been attending PASS since 2013. We interviewed her to find out more about her experience of the PASS programme...

Q: Why do you attend PASS workshops?

PASS for me has been like home. It has been a place where I can be comfortable and I can grow and one thing I love about it is that it has helped me feel motivated. For me attending PASS was beneficial to my personal growth. It helped me develop confidence and intrinsic motivation. As much as you do have a full timetable, it's not class, and it's not pressure. When you attend, you can see it as your lunch hour. It is something that is going to benefit you outside the class. You can see it as relaxation, as your me-time. It is that time where you sit down and you reflect – it is time for introspection. You get inspired – with every workshop you believe in your own abilities. It makes you want to work harder and work smarter and there is always something that you come home with that you can apply.

Q: What have you learned from the PASS workshops that you have been able to apply?

Time management and discipline. Regarding discipline, you go to the PASS workshop and when you get there they tell you what you are supposed to do, but at the end of the day you have to put in the hard work. You have to incorporate what you were taught and you have to keep up that pace and decide what your goals are and what you want to achieve.

Q: What was your favourite workshop?

All of them. Because all of them are different. You learn different things from all of them and they are all applicable to student life. You should try all of the workshops, not only attend one or two.

Q: Is there a take-home message that you want students to get from this interview?

When I started with PASS, I was so overwhelmed with my schoolwork. I felt like I need to do well because of where I come from, my background. I'm a first-generation student. I was struggling to transition into university properly. I did believe that I could improve; I just did not know how. Sometimes you lose motivation and you just run on adrenalin. You need someone who is going to help you feel motivated and who's going to help you understand that you've got the capacity and ability. PASS has been that for me. I didn't believe I could get the marks that I do (distinctions) – I work hard and PASS helped me maintain that. By attending PASS I felt that I was doing something worthwhile with my time, and getting the motivation and inspiration I needed to continue working hard.



Meet The PASS team



ALL students are welcome! Like our Facebook page for reminders, and book your seat on the Thakaneng Bridge. Just look out for our station in the week of each workshop.



“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”
-Eleanor Roosevelt

Getting Ready to Graduate

The late nights, tight assignment deadlines and test dates in between attending class, tutorials and practicals are all the ingredients that will earn you that qualification!

The day-to-day experiences bring a mixture of laughter, tears, smiles and indeed excitement. While many might question the value of studying if you are going to be a statistic among the jobless graduates, the real question you need to ask yourself is what would make you an employable graduate?

Did you know: According to the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) an average full-time equivalent student is expected to study for a 40-hour week, thus requiring a minimum credit-load of 120 credits per academic year for certificates, diplomas and bachelor's degrees and 180 credits per academic year for master's degrees and doctorates (CHE, 2013).

Let's quickly do the math:

A 3-year degree = minimum 360 credits, other professional 4-year/ 5-year degrees = 480 credits.

As a student preparing to graduate from the University of the Free State (UFS) it is important for you to focus on the number of credits you have passed (accumulated) each year, because they are your key to graduation.

If you first need information to understand credits, visit your faculty advisor or [click here](#) and follow the 5 simple steps to do your own credit audit.

If you are a final-year student and will be graduating at the end of this semester (i.e. December 2017), remember to check in with your faculty and complete the necessary 'intention to graduate' forms.

Remember! After graduation day, you need to know what follows: the world of work or postgraduate studies.

Read the Graduate Career Guide to solidify your plan!

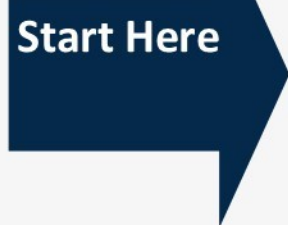
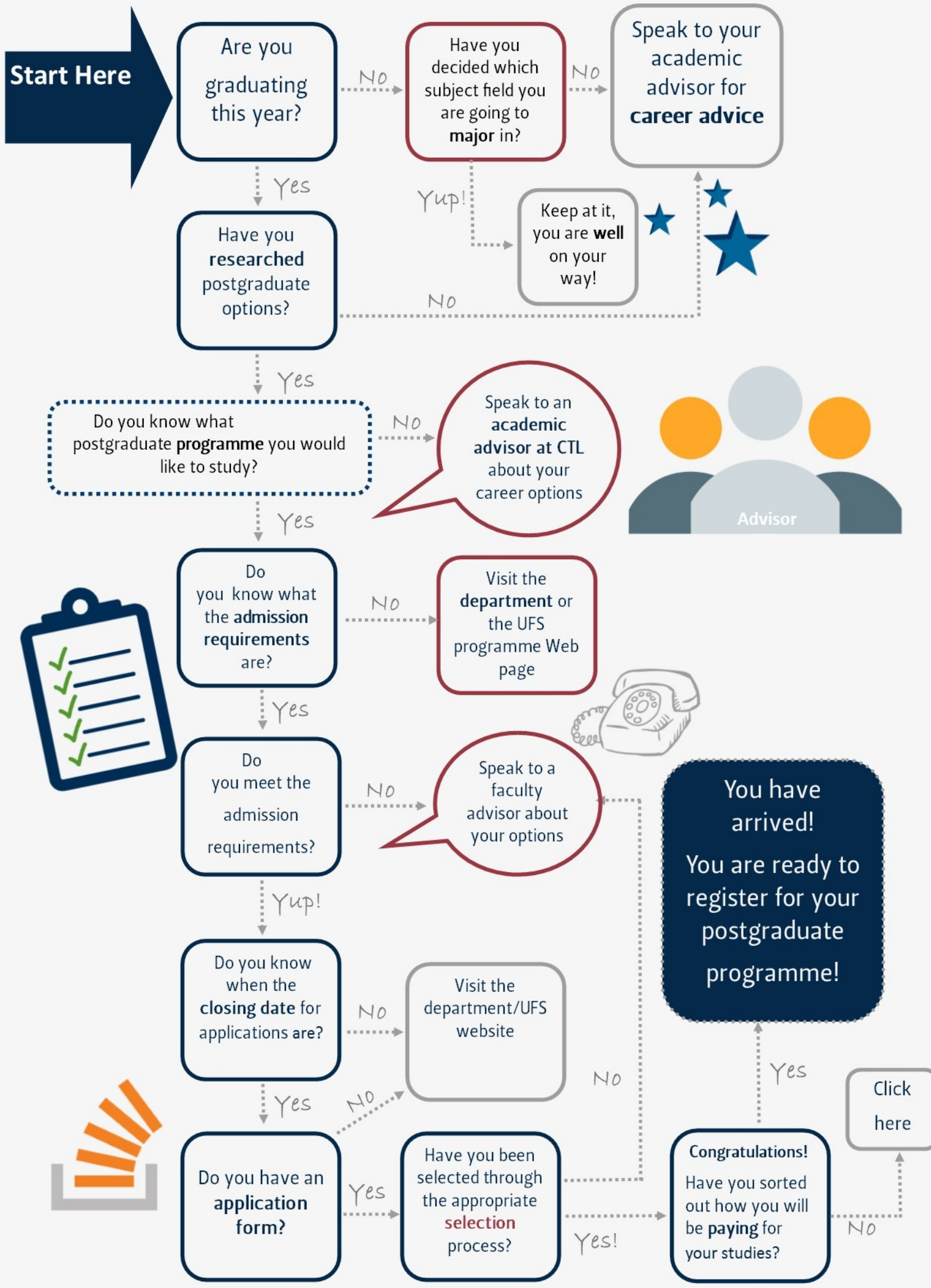
[CLICK HERE](#)

to download the latest Graduate Career Guide.

Planning for

Postgraduate studies?





Are you graduating this year?

Have you decided which subject field you are going to major in?

Speak to your academic advisor for **career advice**

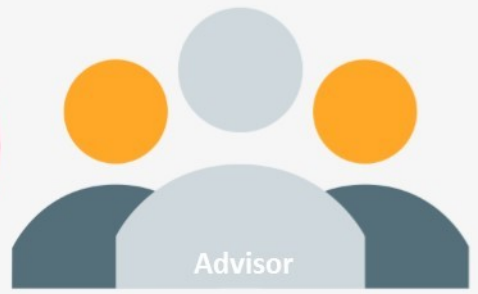
Have you **researched** postgraduate options?

Keep at it, you are **well** on your way!



Do you know what postgraduate **programme** you would like to study?

Speak to an **academic advisor** at CTL about your career options



Do you know what the **admission requirements** are?

Visit the **department** or the UFS programme Web page



Do you meet the admission requirements?

Speak to a **faculty advisor** about your options

You have arrived!
You are ready to register for your postgraduate programme!

Do you know when the **closing date** for applications are?

Visit the department/UFS website



Do you have an **application form**?

Have you been selected through the appropriate **selection** process?

Congratulations!
Have you sorted out how you will be **paying** for your studies?

Click here

Practising Mindfulness

What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness or being mindful means that you are fully present in every moment as it happens. Mindful people are focused on what is happening now, not regretting the past or worrying about the future.

Why is Mindfulness Important?

- It improves your ability to concentrate and helps you focus better on what you are currently busy with.
- It helps lower your stress/anxiety levels.
- It will help you be more flexible when faced with challenges.
- It leads to increased relationship satisfaction.
- It helps you increase your working speed.
- It helps improve your physical health.



Mind Full, or Mindful?

How can you Become More Mindful?

In the case of mindfulness, practice makes perfect! Most of us are not naturally good at being mindful, but you can practise being mindful, and soon it will come naturally. Here are some tips to help you practise mindfulness:

- **Start small:** use every time you drink a cup of tea/coffee as time to practise being mindful. Really pay attention to the activity itself. Use as many senses as possible: notice how the cup looks and feels, smell your coffee/tea, pay attention to the taste of your drink, notice how it feels when you swallow the coffee/tea.
- **Allow yourself to be present in every activity or conversation** you have without thinking about what you need to do after the activity. If your thoughts start to wander to the future (or the past), notice the thought, but purposely focus your attention back on what you are currently doing.
- **Listen to a guided mindfulness meditation video on YouTube once a day** (click on the icon at the bottom of the page)
- **Don't feel that you need to fill up all your time with doing.** Take some time to simply be. When your mind wanders to thinking, gently bring it back to your breath.
- **Notice what you are doing as you are doing it and tune into your senses.** When you are eating, notice the colour, texture and taste of the food.





Looking into

Financial Aid

Click here for
different
options to pay
your fees.

Click here to read
more about the
differences between
bursaries, loans, and
scholarships.



Closing date
for
2018 NFSAS
Applications is
31 October

We all come from different backgrounds and environments as students. As soon as a child passes their Matric (Grade 12), parents rejoice. They become so proud and hopeful that their lives and conditions are about to change because this child will get better education. In order to be in a higher institution of learning there has to be some sort of financial security; financial stability to get you through tertiary life (academic and social) means to survive and adapt to the new environment that's preparing you for the future. Many of our students come from low-income households, which makes it impossible for parents to provide for their children during their times of study; therefore they depend on bursaries and NSFAS. Here are some important links that can help you sort your financial aid for next year.

[Click here to find out where you can apply for financial aid at the UFS](#)

[Click here to access online applications for NSFAS.](#)

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- Time-management
- Career advice
- Setting up an educational plan
- Referring students to UFS support services

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“Life is just a mirror, and what you see out there, you must first see inside of you.”

-Wally ‘Famous’ Amos