



FREE DOWNLOAD · MATRIC 2026

The Road to Level 8

A practical study plan and method for Mathematics,
Physical Sciences and Life Sciences — built around the
real October/November 2026 NSC exam dates.

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Your Real Exam Dates

Official dates from the Department of Basic Education's October/November 2026 NSC Examinations Timetable. All papers start at 09:00.

**Mathematics Paper 1****Friday, 23 October 2026****Mathematics Paper 2****Monday, 26 October 2026****Physical Sciences Paper 1 (Physics)****Friday, 30 October 2026****Physical Sciences Paper 2 (Chemistry)****Monday, 2 November 2026****Life Sciences Paper 1****Friday, 13 November 2026****Life Sciences Paper 2****Monday, 16 November 2026**

Writing IEB? Your school sets its own timetable, usually close to these dates but not identical — confirm your exact dates with your school. These are the official CAPS/DBE dates.



Source: Department of Basic Education, "October/November 2026 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations Timetable," published February 2026.

The Level 8 Method

Level 8 (80-100%) isn't about working harder for longer — it's about working on the right things. Five steps, in order.

1

Diagnose honestly, first

Before you "study everything," find out what you actually don't know. Use the Exam Generator on each topic and Mark My Answer to get a real, specific score — not a guess. Most learners lose marks in 3-4 topics per subject, not all of them.

2

Rebuild the weak topics properly

Don't just redo the same questions. Use Work Through It: it teaches the concept, shows a worked example, then gives you a fresh question — and won't let you move on with a guess. This is where real marks get recovered.

3

Practice retrieval, not re-reading

Rereading your notes feels productive but barely helps. Closing the book and trying to solve a problem from memory — then checking — is what actually builds exam-day recall. Every ExamAce tool is built around this.

4

Simulate real exam conditions weekly

Once a week per subject, do a full paper (or half) timed, no notes, no help. The exam tests speed and pressure as much as knowledge — practice both, not just the content.

5

Review the gap, not everything

After every practice paper, spend your time on what you got wrong, not what you got right. This is the single highest-leverage habit in this whole method.

✓ **Honest note: no study method — this one included — can guarantee a specific mark. What this method does is put your time where it actually moves your mark, instead of spreading it evenly across everything.**

Your Phased Plan

From today until your last paper — three phases, not one long grind.

PHASE 1 · NOW THROUGH MID-OCTOBER (~4 WEEKS)

Diagnose & Rebuild

45-60 minutes per subject, most days. This is where you fix the gaps.

- Run the Exam Generator across every major topic in each subject — find your real weak spots
- Use Work Through It on every weak topic until you can solve a fresh question unaided
- Keep a short "gap list" — topics you're still shaky on — and revisit it every few days

PHASE 2 · 2 WEEKS BEFORE EACH PAPER

Timed Practice

Shift from learning to performing. One full timed paper per subject per week, under real exam conditions.

- No notes, no help, a real clock — treat it like the actual exam
- Mark it honestly with Mark My Answer straight after
- Spend the next session only on what you got wrong

PHASE 3 · FINAL WEEK BEFORE EACH PAPER

Consolidate, Don't Cram

No new topics this week. This is about sharpening what you already know.

- Review your Formula Sheet daily — little and often, not one long session
- Redo 2-3 of your previously-wrong questions to confirm you've actually fixed them
- Sleep and rest properly — a tired brain loses more marks than an unrevised topic

Putting It on a Calendar

Here's how the phases line up against your real dates.

Window	Mathematics	Physical Sciences	Life Sciences
22 Sep – 12 Oct	Phase 1: Diagnose & rebuild	Phase 1: Diagnose & rebuild	Phase 1: Diagnose & rebuild
13 – 22 Oct	Phase 2: Timed practice	Phase 1 continues	Phase 1 continues
16 – 22 Oct	Phase 3: Consolidate (P1 Fri 23 Oct)	Phase 2: Timed practice	Phase 1 continues
24 – 25 Oct	Phase 3: Consolidate (P2 Mon 26 Oct)	Phase 2 continues	Phase 2: Timed practice
27 – 29 Oct	Done ✓	Phase 3: Consolidate (P1 Fri 30 Oct)	Phase 2 continues
31 Oct – 1 Nov	Done ✓	Phase 3: Consolidate (P2 Mon 2 Nov)	Phase 2 continues
3 – 12 Nov	Done ✓	Done ✓	Phase 3: Consolidate (P1 Fri 13 Nov)
14 – 15 Nov	Done ✓	Done ✓	Phase 3: Consolidate (P2 Mon 16 Nov)

 **Tip: Life Sciences papers are last — that's a real advantage. Don't let Phase 1 for Life Sciences slide just because it feels far away; the learners who start it in September are the ones who walk in calm in November.**

Start Phase 1 Today

Every week you delay Phase 1 is a week less for Phase 2 and 3. The plan works — but only once you start it.

Try 5 Free Questions with Chat with Ace

Start with the Exam Generator to find your real gaps — no card needed.



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