



## Starting on the wrong foot: Poor career guidance undermines student success

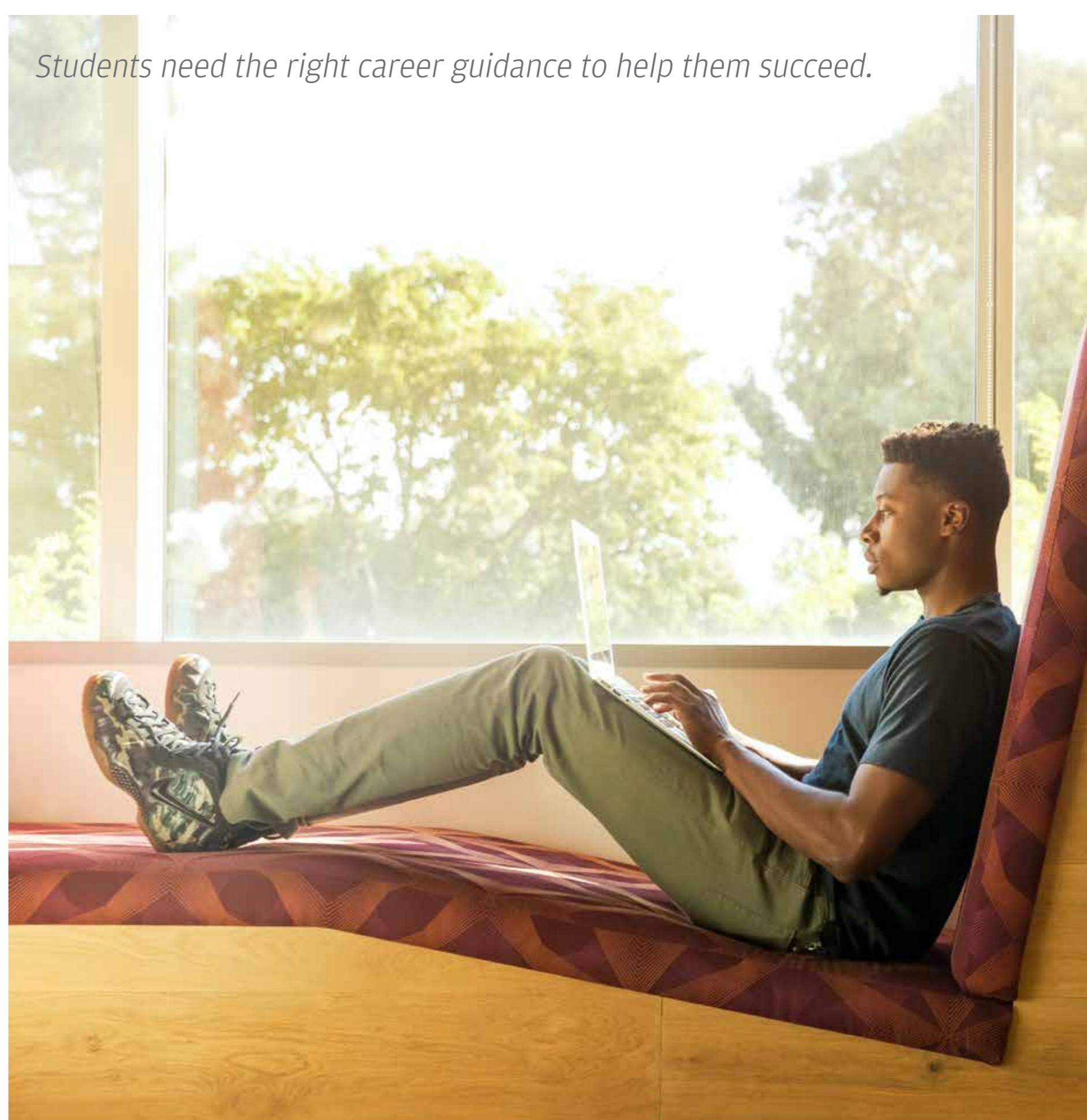
Incorrect career choices start at school level, where inadequate career guidance places students on the back foot from the start.

**Dr Christiane Sitshange** is a student counsellor in education and community psychology at UNISA. She is also a student counsellor in counselling and career development at UNISA based in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape region.

First-year university students pay the price for the lack of proper career guidance and counselling in schools. Thabo chose his career based on what his peers said. Peer influence can affect career decisions, overshadowing self-information and career information or research performed on careers.

With a lack of proper career guidance during life orientation classes at school, first-year students often make their study choices according to what their peers choose, or according to what courses are popular at the time. This leads to many students drifting at university, wasting valuable time and money without knowing what they want to do. They often change courses, hoping to find what they want to do in life, or drop out.

“Research performed in this area has found that career guidance support from teachers at school needs to be improved to help learners make informed, practical study choices,” says Dr Christiane Sitshange. “Incorrect career choices cause frustration and suffocate



*Students need the right career guidance to help them succeed.*

performance and motivation to learn. It can also cause the student to fail and eventually drop out of school.”

Life orientation teachers must

undergo intensive training on career guidance and counselling to place their students on the road to success.



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