



Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University  
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Honourable MP Mapulane, MP  
Chairperson: Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology  
National Assembly  
Parliament  
Cape Town  
8000

Dear Honourable Mapulane

**RE: PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE APPOINTMENT OF PROFESSOR PETER MBATI AS THE VICE-CHANCELOR OF THE SEFAKO MAKGATHO UNIVERSITY**

I hereby provide response to the Portfolio Committee's letter dated 17 June 2020 addressed to the Institutional Forum Representative of Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University on the appointment process of the Vice-Chancellor;

**Question 1.1.1: Whether the IF members were aware of the allegations of sexual harassment levelled against Professor Mbatl?**

The members of the Institutional Forum were not informed about the allegations of sexual harassment levelled against Prof Mbatl when the shortlisted candidates were invited to deliver a presentation before the joint sitting of Council, Senate, and Institutional Forum (IF), on Wednesday, 11 March 2020.

**Question 1.1.2: How were the IF members informed about the allegations and who informed them?**

See response to question 1.1.1

**Question 1.1.3: At what point of the recruitment process were the IF members informed about the allegations**

See response to question 1.1.1

**Question 1.1.4: How the IF members deal with the information on the allegations and at what point of the recruitment process was the information deliberated on?**

- (i) What were the outcomes of the deliberations?
- (ii) Whether there was a unanimous support amongst the IF members to support the recommendations of the selection panel recommending that Prof Mbatlana continue with the recruitment process or was it a case of the majority rule?

See response to question 1.1.1

**Sub question 1.1.4 (iii): If the IF members were not aware of the allegations of sexual harassment levelled against Professor Mbatlana, was that going to influence their voting in any way?**

The members of the Institutional Forum would have deliberated extensively on the matter. However, voting on the suitability of the candidates for appointment is conducted by means of a closed ballot under the supervision of the Registrar as stipulated in the Higher Education Act, 1997.

**1.2. Poor infrastructure governance at the University of Venda (see the attached Report from the Department of Higher Education and Training, which was presented to the Committee in November 2019 and the Letter to the Portfolio Committee)**

**Question (a): Whether the IF members were aware of the Report of the Department of Higher Education and Training on poor infrastructure governance at the University of Venda, during the tenure of Professor Mbatlana?**

The members of the Institutional Forum were not aware of the report of the when the shortlisted candidates delivered a presentation before the joint sitting of Council, Senate, and Institutional Forum (IF), on Wednesday, 11 March 2020. This matter did not form the deliberations of the IF on the suitability of short listed candidates.

- i. If so, how did they become aware and who made them aware?
- ii. (iii) Whether the information contained in the Report used during the appointment process or not?
- iii. If so, how and why?
- iv. If not, why?

**Sub question (iv): If the IF members did not have this information during the recruitment process, was the information as contained in the Department's report going to influence its decision to appoint Prof Mbatlana and why?.**

The members of IF would have deliberated extensively on the matter. However, voting on the suitability of the candidates is conducted by means of a closed ballot under the supervision of the Registrar as stipulated in the Higher Education Act, 1997.

Sincerely

Prof Madiba  
Acting chairperson institutional Forum

29 June 2020

