**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR UNACCREDITED COURSES AT WSU**

**Parliament, Thursday, 12 May 2022** – The Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Innovation received a briefing yesterday from a delegation from Walter Sisulu University (WSU) to discuss reports that the university offered unaccredited courses to students.

The WSU delegation was led by the WSU Council Chairperson, Adv Tembeka Ngcukaitobi, and the university’s Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Rushiella Songca, who commenced her duties on 1 April 2021. The WSU Student Representative Council and the Council for Higher Education (CHE) also briefed the committee on the matter.

According to the delegation, only five courses are not accredited: the Advanced Diploma in Internal Auditing; the Advanced Diploma in Journalism; BSc in Zoology; Master of Medicine in Obstetrics and Gynaecology; and Postgraduate Diploma in Chemical Pathology.

The delegation also informed the committee that it is engaging with relevant regulatory bodies in the sector and has submitted proposals on how to address the situation, while ensuring that students are not prejudiced.

The committee was also informed that as part of CHE’s interventions, it has foregone a review of the five programmes of concern and is conducting a full audit of all the programmes the university offers.

The committee recommended that there should be a comprehensive communication campaign to alleviate the fears of those who have been affected by the accreditation status, especially those who have already graduated with uncredited qualifications. The committee urged all stakeholders to communicate with constituents through a variety of platforms and methods.

It also emphasised the importance of expediting interventions to resolve the crisis at WSU and it requested to be continuously updated on the department’s on-going work with the CHE, WSU and all other relevant parties.

The Chairperson of the committee, Ms Nompendulo Mkhatshwa, noted that at the core of this challenge are matters pertaining to capacity. She charged the institution to implement its remediation strategies to build institutional capacity and develop documentary flow processes and warehouses.

Though concerned by the reoccurrence of such related matters in the institution, Ms Mkhatshwa expressed her support for the institution and stakeholders in addressing this matter. She said: “We want to commit ourselves as a portfolio committee to supporting you in any difficult, uncomfortable and unpopular decisions you may take in order to turn the tide at the institution.”

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION, MS NOMPENDULO MKHATSHWA.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:
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