|  |
| --- |
| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1086**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 7/05/2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 12 OF 2021**

**Mrs N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(a) At what stage is the funding cut-off for students who keep on studying and failing and then change courses, (b) does the National Student Financial Aid Scheme stop paying for the specified students who sometimes even change universities and (c) at what point is this considered abuse of the funding and/or terms of service?

**NW1273E**

**REPLY:**

(a) Students can change courses as continuing NSFAS funding is based on the NSFAS funding criteria.  In terms of the criteria, continued funding is based on academic eligibility testing, which includes the N+ rule.  N is the minimum qualification completion time, also known as regulation time specified by the institution for a programme of study funded by NSFAS.  N+1 applies to first-time entering students first registered after December 2017, whilst N+2 applies to students who first registered before January 2018. If a student has transferred from any other public university, regardless of whether they were funded at that university, the number of years already registered for the qualification must be counted as part of the minimum qualification completion time.

(b) No, NSFAS does not stop funding because students change institutions.  NSFAS funding stops when the student fails to meet the academic eligibility criteria and the N+ rule.

(c) A student contravenes the rules when they no longer meet academic eligibility requirements, exceed their N+ time, and move between institutions without declaring this. The expectations of students are outlined in the bursary guidelines.