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 **Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1419**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 15 OF 2018)**

**Prof B Bozzoli (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

(1) With regard to reports of unpaid National Student Financial Aid Scheme bursaries resulting in student protests, (a) what number of students have been affected by the delay and (b) of this number, what number is due to (i) information not being received from their institution for the purposes of generating agreements and (ii) agreements having been generated but students not signing the agreements;

(2) (a) what number of (i) universities and (ii) technical and vocational education and training colleges have experienced disruptions as a result of the delay since
1 January 2018 and (b) what steps are being taken to resolve the problem?

**NW1521E**

**REPLY:**

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme has provided the data in response to the questions posed.

1. (a) In respect to universities, the following universities have experienced disruptions as a result of the delay since January 2018 (data as at 28 May 2018):

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Universities**  | 1. **Applications affected by the delay in payment of 2018 bursaries**
 | 1. **(i) Applications that are provisionally funded but where registration records have not been matched**
 | 1. **(ii) Applications where the bursary has been generated but not signed by students**
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| Durban University of Technology | 7195 | 6003 | 1192 |
| Mangosuthu University of Technology | 4680 | 4460 | 220 |
| Nelson Mandela University | 4781 | 4107 | 674 |
| University of Fort Hare | 3013 | 2833 | 180 |
| University of Limpopo | 4050 | 3350 | 700 |
| University of South Africa | 35001 | 26754 | 8247 |
| Walter Sisulu University | 12918 | 12918 | WSU has submitted no registration data |
| University of Venda | 4129 | 3726 | 403 |
| Central University of Technology | 4186 | 3423 | 763 |
| University of Zululand | 6203 | 5195 | 1008 |
| University of KwaZulu-Natal | 9888 | 9609 | 279 |
| Cape Peninsula University of Technology  | 4919 | 4536 | 383 |

In respect to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, the following colleges have experienced disruptions as a result of the delay since
January 2018 (data as at 28 May 2018).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Colleges**  | 1. **Applications affected by the delay in payment of 2018 bursaries**
 | 1. **(i) Applications that are provisionally funded but where registration records have not been sent**
 | 1. **(ii) Applications where the bursary has been generated but not signed by students**
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| Buffalo City  | 1513 | 488 | 1025 |
| Ingwe  | 1514 | 1514 | The college has submitted no registration data |
| Mopani South East | 1108 | 317 | 791 |
| Umgungundlovu  | 2345 | 1536 | 809 |
| Umfolozi  | 644 | 610 | 34 |
| Tshwane North | 4199 | 3804 | 395 |
| Northlink | 1746 | 753 | 993 |
| Goldfields | 1182 | 1182 | The college has submitted no registration data |
| Maluti | 2872 | 2523 | 349 |
| Flavius Mareka | 1210 | 237 | 973 |
| Vhembe | 2678 | 998 | 1680 |

TVET college students apply directly to the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for financial aid and to the colleges for allowances. In a bid to expedite payment of allowances, the Department has requested TVET colleges to proactively identify all students in need of allowances and submit their details to the Department for intervention.

1. (a) Twelve (12) universities and eleven (11) TVET colleges have experienced disruptions since 1 January 2018. In respect of universities, it should be noted that not all disruptions relate to NSFAS delays, and often features as part of a combination of other issues. Other matters such as security issues on campuses and student housing have also featured as causes of student protests.

(b) Upfront payments have been advanced to all universities and TVET colleges between January and April 2018, to ensure that funded students (first time entry (FTEN), senior and returning students) receive their allowances while NSFAS works on finalising the implementation of the bursary agreement, standardised allowances and data integration issues to enable it to generate the agreement forms and get contracts signed. To date, all universities and colleges have received three (3) upfront payments totalling R4.5 billion for the university sector and R2.5 billion for the college sector.

The universities where NSFAS is disbursing allowances directly to students through the sBux system have had intermittent disruptions due to unpaid allowances. This has been as a result of unloaded registration data for both new and returning students, and/or on account of records from 2017 not successfully migrating to 2018 (either because academic results were not loaded successfully in 2017, or 2017 Loan Agreement Form/Schedule of Particulars (LAFSOPs) were signed only in March and April 2018, and their statuses were not updated accordingly). Interventions at these institutions have therefore focused on assisting these universities with the successful uploading of academic results and registration data, thereby allowing for the disbursement of allowances. There have also been meetings with university officials, through the Office of the Executive and the University Servicing Team; ensuring that a solution is reached speedily with the university on how best to capture the data and effect disbursement.

For universities not on the sBux system, NSFAS has ensured that universities are aware that they are expected to use upfront payments – paid by NSFAS to all universities – to pay allowances to NSFAS-funded students. In some instances, where universities have cash flow problems, NSFAS has paid additional up-front funds to ensure that student allowances are paid.

In the case of TVET Colleges, NSFAS disbursed R18.7 million directly to 19 033 students through sBux. For colleges not on the sBux system, NSFAS has also ensured that these colleges are aware that they are expected to use upfront payments – paid by NSFAS to all colleges – to pay allowances to NSFAS-funded students.

The Department is working closely with NSFAS and institutions to ensure that challenges are resolved as a matter of urgency.