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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 151**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 05/07/2019**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 03 OF 2019**

**Mr S L Ngcobo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology:**

(1) Whether his department has plans in place to help provide accommodation for the students in technical and vocational education and training colleges to deal with unhealthy and dangerous squatting which in most cases expose students to drug abuse and other related criminal elements; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether all accommodation of the deserving students will be paid for or subsidised by his department; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the roll-out plan?

**NW1109E**

**REPLY:**

1. The development of decent, affordable student housing for universities and TVET colleges is a priority of government. The Student Housing Infrastructure Programme has been developed to accelerate the provision of 300 000 beds over 10 years, which includes
100 000 beds for TVET college students. A pilot project is currently underway at the King Hintsa TVET College with the Lephalale and Northlink TVET Colleges forming the next projects in the pipeline. A further six colleges will be selected for consideration during the course of this year.

The Department is also assisting TVET colleges with the repairs and maintenance of existing student accommodation through the College Capital Infrastructure Efficiency Grant.

The Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation is also working towards supporting the development of student housing as part of their social housing developments.

1. Given the substantial increase in the bursary allocation from R2.437 billion in 2017 to R5.164 billion in 2018 and R6.517 billion in 2019 for the introduction of fee-free education, the Department is able to provide accommodation or travel allowances to qualifying TVET college students. In view of the increase in funding, the Department has standardised rates for allowances to ensure that TVET students’ basic needs are met to be successful in their studies.

NSFAS assesses the financial eligibility of all applicants while the colleges’ financial aid committee verifies the students’ supporting documents to make a determination on eligibility for either a travel or accommodation allowance. NSFAS pays out the allowances to students in accordance with the recommendation of the college financial aid committee, based on the College Bursary Rules and Guidelines developed by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

In 2018, approximately 115 000 students qualified for accommodation allowances.