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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1547**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 28/05/2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 15 OF 2021**

**Dr S S Thembekwayo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

What (a) is the root cause of the failure of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to pay disbursements due to students at the University of South Africa and (b) interventions have been made by his department to resolve the problem?

**NW1750E**

**REPLY:**

1. NSFAS has made payments in advance to all universities and as such; there should be no unpaid allowances to compliant students. Universities have their own payment processes to distribute allowances to students. The advance payments were made as an intervention to ensure that universities pay allowances to students, in a timely manner.

There are currently 179 068 UNISA students funded through the DHET Bursary Scheme.  Total disbursements to funded student amounted to R931, 8 million of which NSFAS provided an advance of R774.6 million and UNISA an amount of R102.9 million from their own funding. 170 564 students who qualify for the learning material allowance in terms of the 2021 DHET Guidelines received their allowances. 4 254 opted for the laptops. Incidental allowance has been paid for the months of Feb-July 2021 to 88 625 students who qualify in terms of the 2021 DHET Guidelines. Please note only those students who carry a course load of 10 and more qualify for the incidental allowances.

4 204 have not received allowances based on following reason:

-2020 results uploaded by funding not migrated to 2021

-N+ Rule: Higher Certificate students starting Degree/Diploma in 2021

-LLB students not migrated

-Pipeline National Diploma students, funding not migrated

-Students switching institutions

2 403 applications for NSFAS appeals for returning students were considered and 1 360 were recommended for further funding support. These students have not received allowances as UNISA are still waiting for final outcome from NSFAS.

(b)  The Department has scheduled the 2021 transfers for university and TVET college bursaries to NSFAS as shown in the table below, to ensure that NSFAS has the necessary cash flow resources.

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| **April 2021**  **R’000** | **June 2021**  **R’000** | **August 2021**  **R’000** | **October 2021**  **R’000** | **Total** |
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