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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1616**

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

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 15 OF 2021**

**Ms C V King (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(a) Which technical vocational education and training colleges breached the funding claims regulations in (i) 2020 and (ii) 2021 and (b) what measures are in place to address this?

**NW1822E**

**REPLY:**

(a) The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) pays allowances directly to students enrolled at 44 Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges through the wallet system. Furthermore, NSFAS transfers funds for the allowances of qualifying students enrolled at six colleges that are responsible for making payments to their respective students. The following TVET colleges make allowance payments to their NSFAS students:

* College of Cape Town;
* Northlink;
* False Bay;
* Boland;
* West Coast; and
* South Cape.

The below responses are based on data obtained from NSFAS, as the Department is still in the process of obtaining the necessary information from the six colleges responsible for disbursing allowances.

            (i) **2020**

In terms of the NSFAS report, 12 colleges contravened the Bursary Rules and Guidelines by lodging student claims for tuition fees exceeding their respective tuition allocations. Furthermore, 26 colleges contravened the bursary policy by lodging claims for accommodation for more than 40% of its NSFAS recipients. Given the broad geographic footprint of TVET colleges with 265 campuses across the country, the Bursary Rules and Guidelines stipulates that colleges may lodge accommodation allowances to a maximum of 40% of its NSFAS recipients.

(ii) **2021**

In terms of the latest NSFAS report, allowances have been paid to all qualifying students. The report indicates that 22 colleges are not complying with the requirement on claims for accommodation, as their claims exceeded 40% of their NSFAS recipients.

(b) The Department has introduced various measures to address these challenges and issued a communique in March 2021 compelling colleges to ensure that the awards for allowances are made within the available budget, as the funds earmarked for allowances have been fully allocated to colleges for 2021. The Department, together with NSFAS, convened a meeting on 13 May 2021, with colleges exceeding the stipulated percentage regarding student claims for accommodation. These colleges were urged to work on a strategy that will ensure their compliance with the Bursary Rules and Guidelines in respect of the awards for allowances. Some of these colleges have already shared the strategies they are putting in place to manage the excessive demand for accommodation allowances.