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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1675**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 29/11/2019**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 31 OF 2019**

**Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology:**

What (a) amount does the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) allocate to each individual student for text books in each year, (b) is the total annual amount for each academic year since 1 January 2016 respectively that had been allocated by NSFAS nationally for text books for students and (c) is the projected amount allocated for text books for students by NSFAS for the 2020 academic year?

**NW3070E**

**REPLY:**

1. Effective from 2018 for first time entering university students (FTENS) that qualify for the DHET Bursary (combined gross family income of R350 000 per annum), the learning materials allowance (sometimes referred to as a book allowance) was standardised and capped as follows:

2018 – R5 000

2019 – R5 000

For the DHET Grant continuing students (combined gross family income of R122 000 per annum and capped funding), the allowance amount was set at the institutional allowance in 2017 with an inflation linked increase annually, provided that the learning materials allowance does not exceed the DHET Bursary allowance amount of R5 000 for FTENS.

The above pertains to contact institutions. Allowances for students in distance education programmes are calculated based on the number of courses registered, up to a maximum of R5 000.

It should be noted that the learning materials allowance could be used for a range of learning support materials and not only traditional textbooks.

1. The table below outlines the total amount paid as learning support materials in each academic year.

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| **Funding Year** | **Disbursements: Books** |
| 2016 | R 108 981 929.00 |
| 2017 | R 911 995 140.87 |
| 2018 | R 1 501 759 167.00 |
| 2019 | R 1 688 649 464.00 |
| **Grand Total** | **R 4 211 385 700.87** |

The proposed learning materials allowance for 2020 is still under consideration and will be communicated once this decision is finalised.