

# NSFAS students urged to use allowances to buy devices

Students receiving aid from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) have been urged to use their learning material allowances to purchase learning devices so they can learn remotely during lockdown.



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"Many students, who still have not bought laptops must do so, especially those who have been paid the annual teaching assistance allowance of R5,200, to buy gadgets that will facilitate their learning during this challenging time," said the chairperson of the Select Committee on Education and Technology, Sports, Arts and Culture, Elleck Nchabeleng.

NSFAS qualifying students receive learning material allowance for the year, which includes R5,200 issued once a year to beneficiaries to purchase things like laptops, tablets and books.

Nchabeleng said the committee is satisfied with the proficiency and efficiency with which the NSFAS Administrator, Dr Randall Carolissen has run the entity, even during the Covid-19 distraction.



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Robert Speed 6 May 2020



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The committee also welcomed the task team announced by Higher Education, Science and Technology Minister, Dr Blade Nzimande, over the weekend.

The task team will investigate challenges associated with the move to the student-centred model at NSFAS in 2017.

"The intervention will enhance the work of the Administrator and improve the service to poor students. Commendable work to stabilise the student financial aid scheme is being realised, and that has been demonstrated by how allowances are being distributed to students," Nchabeleng said.

Nchabeleng said the work that NSFAS is doing in support of the departmental objectives to increase the number of poor students in higher education at no cost, is noted.



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He said more work needs to be done around a policy that will ensure access to the category of students who belong to the 'missing middle'.

"NSFAS is now an entity where consequence management is prioritised. Certain employees and criminal syndicates that were operating within the student financial aid scheme have been reported to law enforcement agencies.

"The committee will support NSFAS so that the entity does not regress from the progress that was realised during the administration period. NSFAS is a changed and a well-functioning student financial aid scheme," Nchabeleng said.

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