



COMMUNIQUE ON REGISTRATION RELATED MATTERS

DATE: 18 July 2017
TO: UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY
FROM: OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
SUBJECT: SECOND SEMESTER REGISTRATION MATTERS

This communique informs the University Community of key issues that are related to the 2017-second semester academic programme; i.e. the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), Student Accommodation and registration processes. Inclusive of both the Durban and Midlands Campuses, on Monday, 17 July 2017, the Office of the Registrar convened a consultative meeting between the Student Representative Council (SRC), Office of the Vice Chancellor and various departments within the Office of the Registrar.

NSFAS

Since 27 February 2017, the University Management and relevant administrators have constantly identified and/ or anticipated challenges related to NSFAS that may affect students in the 2nd semester of 2017. Besides a meeting involving the DUT Vice Chancellor and Chair of the NSFAS Board, towards resolving a number of challenges, we have also physically visited NSFAS offices. Further, NSFAS officials have been extensively engaged on a 13-long list of items; requesting solutions or their finalisation. The SRC is aware of these engagements, and have visited NSFAS offices. To date, only three of the 13 items presented to NSFAS have been resolved. Mainly, the problematic issues are classified as follows: -

- S Bux and Private Accommodation
- System errors with Loan Agreements Forms (LAFs)
- Student category: "Subject-to-Availability-of-Funds" (AF 17)
- Student category: "Funded-for-Tuition-only-without-Accommodation"

At the above-cited consultative meeting of 17 July 2017, the meeting arrived at the following resolutions, sharing of information and understanding, i.e.

- To date, 5359 NSFAS-funded semester students have been unblocked for registration.
- Request NSFAS officials to come to DUT to resolve outstanding issues.
- Review the **academically excluded students** list; some students have been erroneously accorded the "FAILED status". If they were erroneously captured, the Financial Aid Office have unblocked them. The remainder of this category of students should present their appeals to NSFAS.

- As required by NSFAS, identify and resubmit to them, students that matriculated in Quantile 1, 2 & 3 schools for SASSA-alignment. Students from this cohort of schools shall be approached through their Faculty Offices/ Departments.
- DUT shall act upon a NSFAS instruction to unblock-for-registration the category of students known as "Awaiting-Availability-of-Funds".
- As an additional measure, working with academic departments, during lecture times, the Financial Aid Office shall identify students that have not signed their LAFs.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Within DUT owned and outsourced residences, the University provides accommodation to 5311 students in the Durban (DBN) residences, and 2311 in the Midlands residences.

As NSFAS is yet to resolve a number of student accommodation-funding issues, this status quo is directly affecting our allocation of students in the residences.

Relative to the 2017 first semester, we anticipate fewer challenges in the second semester. However, due to a growing number of financially needy students, outstanding fees from the previous semester, inability to secure surety for signing of instalment plans - besides academic exclusions, some students may not be able to secure accommodation.

At the above-cited consultative meeting of 17 July 2017, the meeting arrived at the following resolutions, sharing of information and understanding:

- Request Finance Department to review the status of annual students in the residences. Despite their annual registration status, they are registered as semester students in the residences.
- NSFAS-funded students that have not signed LAFs will be unblocked for registration and residences, and actively pursued to sign their loan agreement forms.
- Student Housing **is not responsible for unblocking students**. All clearances are carried out by the Finance Department.
- New DBN residences' applicants (2780) have not been placed, awaiting confirmation of 398 students that did not apply online; a resolve arrived at with the SRC.
- The Midlands residences had 207 new applicants; allocations are made on availability of spaces.
- Acknowledging challenges in this area, the DBN Student Housing Department commits to constantly engage the SRC about the status and suitability of outsourced residences.

REGISTRATION ISSUES

In order to be unblocked for registration: -

- Students owing fees from the first semester are urged to settle their fees immediately.
- Students that are unable to pay fees should follow a Finance Department critical path.

The next consultative meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 20 July 2017.