

Almost all universities pay NSFAS February allowances

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has commended the cooperation from all universities and Student Representative Councils (SRCs) who ensured that the February allowances payment was implemented seamlessly.



Source: [Pexels](#)

This follows a media briefing held on 4 March 2024 where NSFAS reported that universities would be facilitating the payment of allowances for the months of February and March 2024.

In a statement issued over the weekend, NSFAS reported that 25 out of 26 universities have paid the February allowances, as per their commitment dates.

The allowances paid include the book, accommodation, transport, food, and personal care allowances.

“The University of South Africa (UNISA) is finalising the process of determining allowances based on the number of modules registered by students. All the universities will also be handling the payment of March allowance,” NSFAS said.

The scheme reminded institutions to allow direct payment service providers to conduct the process of onboarding students, while they continue with payments.

Universities are also reminded that direct payments of allowances for the 2024 academic year will commence in April 2024.

“The process of the payment of allowances to Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges commenced on 6 March 2024 and NSFAS will provide further details on these processes within by the forthcoming week,” NSFAS said.

Private student accommodation

On the pilot private student accommodation project, NSFAS has called on all institutions, both universities and TVET colleges, and students who have not been onboarded on the NSFAS portal to do so immediately, as this is a requirement to

ensure that accommodation allowances are paid without any delays.

“Failure to onboard students will result in delays in the payment of accommodation allowances. Accommodation providers are therefore requested to ensure that leases that are generated through the portal are signed by all students in their residences,” NSFAS said.

The scheme also reiterated that it does not have any arrangements with unaccredited accommodation providers.

“NSFAS is against any form of corruption and bribery that is alleged to be taking place in some institutions, between accrediting agents, accommodation providers, officials responsible for accommodation in institutions, and student leaders.

“This will not be tolerated....the scheme will work with law enforcement agencies to investigate all these reported cases of corruption. NSFAS will conduct sting operation in institutions to ensure that students are not further exploited,” NSFAS warned.

The scheme encouraged students and members of the public to report any suspected fraud to NSFAS through the whistleblowing hotline Vuvuzela. The toll-free number is 0860 247 653 or they can SMS Call-back to 30916.

NSFAS warned it will not take lightly any security compromise from the accommodation provider and will always hold property owners accountable for the safety of students in their properties.

On students' transport, NSFAS reminded accommodation providers who are within a 5km radius and above of their responsibility to provide transport to students to their respective campuses and back.

Intimidation at University of Zululand

Meanwhile, NSFAS has strongly condemned the acts of intimidation and holding of its officials hostage at the University of Zululand (UniZulu).

The incident, which took place on Friday, follows a meeting held by the NSFAS board sub-committee on student accommodation, including UniZulu and Accommodation Providers (APs) on 5 March 2024, to discuss the onboarding and payments of student accommodation.

“The meeting resolved that NSFAS will send officials to assist both students and accommodation providers in the onboarding process for all NSFAS-qualifying students who are currently residing in various private accommodations.

“This intervention was aimed to ensure that private accommodation providers are paid for all NSFAS-qualifying students who have been approved for accommodation allowances,” the scheme said.

Following Friday's incident, NSFAS said it was considering measures to take against the accommodation providers who

participated.

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