



MEDIA STATEMENT

7 May 2021

VUT Financial Aid office pays NSFAS funded students

The Vaal University of Technology processed allowances of NSFAS funded students during the months of April and May 2021. Payments were processed according to the academic calendar of the institution as prescribed by the NSFAS. Classes commenced in April and the first payment was processed on the 16th and 30th April 2021. The last batch was processed on 3rd May 2021. Students were notified via SMS's that their allowances have been paid.

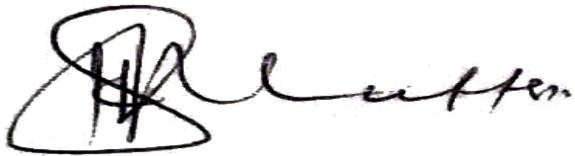
Despite all the challenges students faced before receiving their allowances, the VUT management is grateful that this hurdle has been crossed successfully. On the downside, the institution has noted with concern how some of the students have spent their long-awaited allowances on entertainment rather than food and learning materials which is what led to a protest action on Tuesday, 20 April 2021 where students had an altercation with security officers. The protestors also could not provide a memorandum detailing their concerns and instead demanded to see the management. Students also did not follow proper protocol by lodging their complaints through the interim SRC which is available at VUT and with whom management was always available to meet. Protestors also pelted the police and innocent drivers with stones and damaged several staff vehicles and security fences. The university is experiencing financial constraints, and these only worsen the situation of a university on the brink of a turnaround.

An article published in the Sedibeng Ster entitled "*VUT students and patrons chased out of taverns*" states that students mostly their first years, were seen enjoying their evening drink openly, without wearing masks and adhering to social distancing rules. This happened when the operation "*O kae Molao*" took place on Saturday, 24 April 2021. Quoted on the article, Police Spokesperson Sergeant Gertrude Makhale states that students are not aware of the consequences of their actions.

The Chairperson of the COVID-19 Campus Bio Safety Task Team at the Vaal University of Technology, Prof Riana van der Bank mentioned that she is concerned about the safety of the VUT staff and students now that the Sedibeng District Municipality has been declared a hot spot in the Gauteng Province. The Task Team has recently approved the *#VUT Safe Campus fast pass COVID-19 online self-screening system* to strengthen the screening process and clearance to access the campus. The Task Team would also like to send a strong warning that the disciplinary action will be instituted against to those who will be found to be non-compliant to the set COVID-19 regulations.

THE END

Issued on behalf of the VUT Management by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kediemetse Mokotsi', with a stylized initial 'K'.

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