

NSFAS extends application deadline

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) board has extended the deadline for applications for student financial aid to 15 February 2023.



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The decision was taken during a meeting between the NSFAS board and the South African Union of Students (SAUS).

The NSFAS board, led by Acting Board Chairperson Professor Laurens Van Staden, met with the South African Union of Students (SAUS) Executive, led by President Yandisa Ndzoyiya, to discuss NSFAS's state of readiness for the beginning of the academic year, where the parties agreed on the extension of the 2024 bursary application period.

The meeting also agreed that the NSFAS Loan Scheme will be opened on 2 February 2024 and close on 15 February 2024.

The new Comprehensive Student Funding Model aims to support students including those currently not supported by NSFAS bursary and funding policy.

This category includes students who come from families who have a total income of more than R350,000, but not more than R600,000 per annum.

In a joint statement issued on Thursday, the parties agreed that students who have already applied for the NSFAS bursary scheme need not submit a new application for the student loan scheme.

“All students who did not meet the bursary scheme eligibility criteria, however, meet the loan scheme eligibility criteria, will be automatically offered a loan for their consideration,” the statement said.

Prospective loan scheme applicants can apply through an online application form, where they create a profile, apply, and submit the application.

The application form can be accessed on the NSFAS website on www.nsfas.org.za.



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In order to qualify for the loan, students should meet the following criteria:

- Students whose annual household income is between R350,000-R600,000;
- TVET and university (public) students;
- Undergraduate or postgraduate students;
- 70% science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programmes (which may be adjusted to include commercial programmes that are in demand in the labour market or entrepreneurial programmes);
- 30% Social Sciences programmes; and
- Students willing to sign a loan agreement.

NSFAS reminded all applicants for both the bursary scheme and the loan scheme to submit a consent form to verify relevant information from third parties.

“The information is required to verify the employment status and income level of the parents, guardians, or spouses of the applicant. It is mandatory for applicants to download and upload a completed Consent form on the NSFAS website, portal, or mobile app,” Van Staden said.

1,745 applications received

Meanwhile, NSFAS has received 1,745,226 applications, as of 30 January 2024.

The scheme said of the 1,745,226 applications, 940,682 are provisionally funded, 269 915 are awaiting evaluations, while 48,643 have been withdrawn by the student; 232,559 are in progress, and 136,531 applications on the not-started status, as applicants only created profiles and did not submit applications.

“NSFAS has rejected 102,201 applications; 1,093 appeals have been lodged so far,” Van Staden said.

The meeting agreed that funding decisions will continue to be communicated, as and when applications are processed, and that the application portal will continue to be updated upon confirmation of the funding decision.

Institutions have been encouraged to continuously check the updates on the NSFAS applications portal on funding decisions, which will also cover allowance types that students have qualified for.

“NSFAS will upon making the funding decisions commence with the appeals process in order to ensure that appeals decisions are communicated to students and the institutions on time.”

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