

## **NORTHLINK TVET COLLEGE MEDIA RELEASE**

Proclamation R88 of 2022, authorises an investigation into any alleged maladministration in connection with the affairs of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme ('NSFAS') and improper or unlawful conduct by the employees or officials.

It is with great dismay that Northlink College, on Tuesday, 15 November 2022, became aware through various media platforms of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) media report.

Northlink management, upon request for assistance, worked with full co-operation, integrity and transparency with the SIU since 21 September 2022 to provide the necessary understanding of the NSFAS process framework. For this process to now be reported as an investigation of Northlink College is of paramount concern. Furthermore, the College has at all times adhered to reporting to NSFAS on matters related to funds received, disbursements and challenges thereto.

The College has for many years managed the NSFAS process with due diligence to ensure that applicants that comply with the prerequisite criteria, received said payments. On an annual basis the College disclosed to NSFAS, the College Internal Auditors and the Office of the Auditor-General on the status of the R33 million in question, which was subject to a final NSFAS led Project Close-Out Reconciliation process for a signed directive. Of significance is the Unqualified Audit received for three consecutive financial periods (2019 – 2021). Notwithstanding the fact that this process is still pending, the Northlink College Council together with the Principal, and executive management confirms that the College processed the said payment to the SIU in line with Proclamation R88 on Wednesday, 02 November 2022. Matters in respect of the accrued interest is currently subject to a legal directive thereto and a mutually agreed upon meeting between Northlink College and the SIU on Monday, 21 November 2022.

It is important to emphasise that the beneficiaries who qualified during the period in question were not financially disadvantaged. The R33 million received from NSFAS over the period was not utilised due to:

- a. beneficiaries having exited (deregistered, natural attrition etc.) the College system before the completion of their studies and;
- b. these amounts paid in error included, instances of overpayment by NSFAS as well as payment for students not registered with Northlink College at all.

We want to assure all of our stakeholders, existing- and future students that we are an institution that promotes a culture of ethical leadership, integrity, loyalty and mutual trust. Northlink College, as a leading Technical Vocational Education and Training College in the country, awarded top performance status in the National Certificate (Vocational) for 2018 and 2019, prides itself on cultivating a culture of life-long learning and its continued commitment to the provision of affordable and accessible education to all students.

We want to reassure all stakeholders of our unwavering commitment to the continued discharge of our duties with excellence and that we will at all times promote a working and learning environment that is student-centered and that protects the integrity of the learning continuum.

**Signed:**

  
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**Chairperson: College Council**  
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**Principal (Accounting Officer)**

**Date: 17 November 2022**