

# New bursary agreements for NSFAS recipients

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has reminded first year students, who have qualified to get a bursary from the NSFAS, to ensure that they have signed their agreements by 31 July 2018.



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NSFAS recently announced that it was implementing its new National Student Financial Aid Scheme Bursary Agreement (NBA) after government's fee-free education announcement.

The NBA is only applicable to first-time entering students and senior students who applied to NSFAS for the first time this year.

NSFAS sent an email notification to students from the universities of Cape Town, Sol Plaatje, Mfolozi, Port Elizabeth and Motheo technical vocational education and training colleges in early May.

Notifications will be sent to all other universities and colleges through the course of the year.

The email notification contains a link, which students must click and it takes them to an online version of the NBA, which they have to sign by the deadline. Each student will receive the email directly.

“NSFAS is concerned that the process is moving slowly. By 15 May, we had generated 37 893 NBAs, but only 5 063 had been signed,” the scheme said in a statement.

Affected students who fail to sign the NBA by 31 July 2018 will not have their bursaries paid.

The NBA also has new terms and conditions which students need to adhere to.

Students who sign an NBA:

- Can't relinquish, assign, transfer or delegate any of their rights or obligations under the agreement.
- Must focus on their studies and adjust themselves to university life in a responsible and disciplined manner.
- Must comply with academic requirements, such as attending and participating in lectures, tutorials and academic support programmes.
- Must complete all set assignments and tasks and undergo all tests and examinations (written and oral).
- Must pass at least 50 percent of all courses in the first year and pass sufficient courses in subsequent years.
- Students who immigrate have to pay the bursary back in full before they leave the country.
- From the second year of study beneficiaries must participate in a minimum of 10 days or 80 hours of community service or special project work per year.

If students do not honour these obligations the NSFAS can terminate the NBA.

## How to sign the NBA

All students affected by the NSFAS NBA have to sign the new bursary agreement by 31 July 2018. The NBA can be signed online or manually.

- **Online signing process**

- You will receive an email from the NSFAS.
- The email will contain a link. Click this link. You will be directed to an online portal.
- Input your ID number. The system will send an SMS to you, which contains a One Time Pin (OTP). The OTP will be sent to the cell phone number that you registered with the NSFAS.
- Use the OTP to sign the NBA online.
- When you have done this, you will see a notification that says that the NBA terms and conditions have been submitted.

- **Manual signing process**

If the online signing option is not functioning optimally, the NSFAS will make a manual NBA available for onsite physical signing. This will be driven by the NSFAS Servicing Team at the scheme's offices.

This option should only be used as a last resort as manual forms will delay approval and payment.

“We encourage all institutions to assist us to get students to sign the NBA by the required deadline,” NSFAS said in a statement.

If your cell phone number has changed you must email a certified copy of your green barcoded ID or smart card and an affidavit stating that you have changed your number and indicating your new number to [uds@nsfas.org.za](mailto:uds@nsfas.org.za).

For more information, contact the NSFAS at 0860 067 327 or +27 (0)21 763 3200.

*\*This article first appeared in Vuk'uzenzele.*

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