

# Universities to decide on 2017 fees

Universities will individually decide on the fee increases for 2017 academic year, Higher Education and Training Minister Blade Nzimande announced on Monday, 19 September 2016.



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The Minister made the announcement at a special media briefing in Pretoria.

This follows the Council on Higher Education (CHE) report for 2017 fee adjustments as well as the Minister's ongoing consultations with key stakeholders.

"Our recommendation is that fee adjustments should not go above 8%," Minister Nzimande said.

He said government is committed to finding the resources to support children of all poor, working and middle class families, with a household income of up to R600,000 per annum, while subsidy funding will cover the gap between the 2015 fee and the adjusted 2017 fee at their institution.

"This will be done for fee increments up to 8%."

All National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) qualifying students, as well as the so-called “missing middle” students will experience no fee increase in 2017, as government will pay for the adjustment.

“This will bring huge relief to nurses, teachers, police, social workers and other parents who work in occupations that do not earn huge salaries, and who have children at university. This will apply to students at universities and Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) colleges.

“Administrative mechanisms will be developed and students informed on how to apply for the gap-funding grant before the end of this academic year,” the Minister said.

While NSFAS will continue to provide loans and bursaries to poor students, the department and universities will continue to mobilise institutional and private sector financial support to enable affordable financial aid options for the missing middle students.

“I have consulted the Ministerial Task Team on funding support for the poor and “missing middle” students, which is developing a model that will be tested in 2017 to provide affordable support to these students.

“We will continue to look for other ways of supporting financially needy students not covered by NSFAS, whilst a long-term solution is being developed to raise sufficient funding from the public sector, private sector and other sources to fund “missing middle” students at universities and TVET colleges.”

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