



National Student Financial Aid Scheme

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**DATE:** Tuesday, 10 March 2026

**TO:** All media

**ATTENTION:**

**News Editors/ Reporters for immediate use:**

### **NSFAS WELCOMES THE OUTA STUDENT ACCOMMODATION REPORT AND OUTLINES STRATEGY FOR STUDENT ACCOMMODATION MANAGEMENT**

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) acknowledges and welcomes the recent student accommodation report released by the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA). NSFAS will carefully review the report and consider its findings and recommendations inline with our ongoing initiatives to improve student accommodation management.

The OUTA report is the result of sustained engagement between NSFAS and OUTA, including the provision of substantial information through a Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) request. We value such collaborative efforts, as they enhance transparency and provide critical insights that help strengthen our approach to student accommodation.

NSFAS remains committed to continuous improvement in this area and will ensure that all relevant recommendations are integrated into our broader student accommodation strategy.

The NSFAS student accommodation project was launched in 2023. Upon its appointment, the current NSFAS Board recognised the significant challenges in this domain and immediately began addressing them. The Board's initial priority was to stabilise the function by clearing payment backlogs, introducing stricter controls, and preventing mass evictions of students. By the end of 2025, these objectives were largely achieved.

Subsequently, the NSFAS Board commissioned a comprehensive legal and forensic review of the student accommodation function, including its mandate, regulatory framework, and contractual agreements established by previous administrations. The findings, presented to the Board at the end of 2025, underscored the need for NSFAS to build the necessary capacity to assume full responsibility for student accommodation management through a phased approach.

In line with the review's recommendations, NSFAS began implementing changes and, at the start of 2026, announced the transition to direct payment of accommodation providers, moving away from reliance on solution partners. This phased implementation will continue, with regular updates provided to all stakeholders.

It is also important to note that, as per the Proclamation, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is conducting an investigation into student accommodation. NSFAS is fully cooperating with the

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SIU and will continue to support the investigation as required.

Furthermore, NSFAS has initiated a national audit of student accommodation accreditation, which will take place throughout 2026.

For the 2026 academic year, NSFAS has introduced additional controls and measures to ensure robust processes for the registration, onboarding, and placement of students in accredited accommodation, as well as accurate and timely disbursements to accommodation providers. Placement for 2026 has, by and large, been smooth and stable.

NSFAS is resolute in ensuring that any student, accommodation provider, service provider, or staff member found to have defrauded NSFAS, and by extension the state, is held accountable, with appropriate consequence management measures implemented.

We are further committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders—including higher education institutions, housing associations, student bodies, civil society organisations, and the Department of Higher Education and Training—to address both the short-term and long-term structural challenges in the student accommodation sector.

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