



## Media statement – 2 February 2022

### Universities SA commends Government for assuring all qualifying and accepted NSFAS recipients of funding in 2022

Universities South Africa (USAf) has commended the Government for resolving a funding shortfall of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) for the 2022 academic year.

In the words of Professor Sibongile Muthwa, Chairperson of USAf, the unequivocal statement released by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, late yesterday, to the effect that all students qualifying for the NSFAS grants, who have secured admission into the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector, will be funded, was “most encouraging and settling. It was also heartening to hear that this is true of both the first time-entering cohort as well as our returning students.”

Professor Muthwa, who is also the Vice-Chancellor and Principal of Nelson Mandela University, said Government deserves commendation for their stance to not exclude academically deserving students from the PSET system on account of their disadvantaged socio-economic status.

To the new 2022 entrants to higher education, the USAf Chair expressed her own congratulatory words, and assured them that universities are ready to welcome them into their next phase of study. “As Minister Nzimande stated yesterday, the past two years have been very difficult for all institutions of higher learning. However, together, we successfully navigated the pandemic terrain and now benefit from that experience to make 2022 an even better year.

“Indeed, the sustainability of the system for future generations of students hinges on successful and timely completion of studies for current recipients of NSFAS. We, therefore, invite both our new and returning students to avail themselves to all support “infrastructure” that is in place at their institutions.

“As we prepare to increase in-person teaching and learning in 2022, we implore the Minister to proceed with speed in bringing about more policy certainty and stability in the funding regime of the post-school sector”.

In conclusion, Professor Muthwa said Universities SA can only pledge to work alongside government, student formations, and the rest of society, to ensure that the stability of the sector is maintained, and the integrity of the knowledge project is enhanced, even in these challenging economic times.

**For media inquiries:** ‘Mateboho Green (072 807 4677)