



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA ALERT

PUBLIC NOTICE ABOUT ILLEGAL UNIVERSITY IN MPUMALANGA

13 January 2017

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is warning students who are seeking study opportunities against fraudulent private online colleges and universities that are targeting students for the 2017 academic year.

In particular, the DHET has received several complaints from Nelspruit in Mpumalanga regarding an illegal institution, Watchman University of Theology (Pty) Ltd.

The initial investigation, conducted by the Department, reveals that the institution neither has a physical address nor does it respond to phone calls on its listed contact numbers (mobile) 071 044 4265 or 083 394 6370.

The Department also confirms that the Watchman University of Theology (Pty) Ltd is promising enrolment without proof of a matric or national senior certificate.

Watchman University of Theology's modus operandi includes requesting payment for registration through a Capitec Bank account number (1233565638) via Whatsapp. It also advertises on the website, <http://whattuniversity.wixsite.com/whatt/admissions>. Investigations into the Watchman University of Theology are continuing.

The Department is concerned about the growing tendency of fraudulent online universities and colleges. Some of these bogus institutions, presumably based in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, are also known to fraudulently use the DHET's name and logo.

Early in 2016, the Department forcibly shut down several fake colleges during an impromptu inspection blitz in Braamfontein and downtown Johannesburg for operating fraudulently and contravening the Higher Education Act, 1997 and the Continuing Education and Training Colleges Act, 2006.

The Department urges matriculants and students seeking study opportunities to be vigilant and to authenticate the accreditation credentials of institutions before enrolling.

Prior to enrolment, students are urged to thoroughly verify the credentials of private colleges or institutions with the DHET by:

- Contacting the Call Centre on 0800 87 2222

- Going online to the Department's website: www.dhet.gov.za - a full list of both registered and unregistered private higher education institutions, private Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and skills providers is available at www.dhet.gov.za/SitePages/DocRegisters.aspx

Information can also be obtained by visiting the Department's Client Centre at 123 Francis Baard Street in the Pretoria CBD or by contacting DHET local district offices directly. Local district office details are available on www.dhet.gov.za.

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