

## **New residence for University of Pretoria**

1 February 2016 - The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, officially opened the Tuks Bophelong Student Residence at the University of Pretoria (UP) Prinshof campus for Medical Sciences.

The Tuks Bophelong student residence design includes five residential blocks with 301 single bedrooms, a communal facility and 200 m<sup>2</sup> warden residence. The project cost was R96 million funded by the National Skills Fund. All newly constructed residential blocks and apartments are fully secured with electronic access control and CCTV. A communal facility provides, amongst others, an IT lab, study area, food kiosk and recreation hall.

Student accommodation has been identified as an urgent priority for the university sector. The provision of accessible, decent, safe and academically conducive student accommodation at all South African universities is of strategic importance to the quality of the higher education system and the success of our students, especially those from rural and poor backgrounds. In February 2012, the Minister officially launched the Report on the Ministerial Committee for the Review of the Provision of Student Housing at South African Universities, which led to the publication of a Policy on Norms and Standards for Student Housing at Public Universities in the Government Gazette on 29 September 2015.

In responding to the challenges of backlogs in the provision of student accommodation as highlighted in the student housing report, the Department has allocated to all universities, collectively, close to R1.747 billion for student housing projects, with most (R1.412 billion) of the funding channelled to historically disadvantaged universities. For those universities that did not fall into the historically disadvantaged institutions category, preference was given to universities that have the largest percentage of students without housing and to those that are situated in areas where there is a scarcity of affordable private student housing.