MEDIA STATEMENT

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TO:  All media

ATTENTION:  News Editors/ Reports

For Immediate use:

MINISTER NZIMANDE WARNS STUDENTS AND PARENTS AGAINST “FLY-BY-NIGHT” COLLEGES

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Dr Blade Nzimande, warns students and parents to be careful of illegal or “fly-by-night” colleges.

The “Fly-by-night” colleges are not registered as institutions of learning with the correct Sector Education and Training Authorities (Setas), the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) or other relevant bodies.

“These institutions lure and mislead future students into believing that these colleges offer qualification that are recognised by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA),” said Minister Nzimande.

“These illegal colleges offer compromised qualifications which are not recognised for employment purposes or for further studying,” added Minister Nzimande.

The Minister said that the department has been successful in shutting down these illegal operators. However, whilst the department may be hard at work in eliminating these unregistered colleges, there are still many students who continue to register and unlawfully granted these fake qualifications.

“The number of colleges that are operating illegally has decreased tremendously over the years. The decrease can be attributed to our monitoring awareness campaigns and our collaboration with both print and electronic media,” said Minister Nzimande.

The Minister added that the department is working closely with law enforcement agencies to close down on these colleges.

Minister Nzimande advises students who want to enrol at private colleges to check the registration status of such private colleges with the department through its toll-free number 0800-872-222.

Alternatively, students can log on to the website of the department where the 'Register of Private Colleges' is published and updated on a regular basis. The website address is www.dhet.gov.za/resources/registers.
How to check on “Fly-by-night” colleges:

- Before enrolling with a private higher education institution, ask for evidence that the institution and its programmes are registered. This evidence is the certificate of registration and the registration number issued by the department.
- Before enrolling, make sure that the institution offers learning programmes and qualifications at the level at which you want to qualify.
- Claims by an institution that it is offering internationally recognised higher education programmes, while not registered to operate in South Africa, are misleading. Get the right information from the department.

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Issued by:
Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology
DSI Building 53
627 Meiring Naude Road
Brummeria Pretoria
Enquiries: Ishmael Mnisi on 0660378859 or Ishmael.Mnisi@dst.gov.za