



**MINISTRY
HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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MEDIA STATEMENT

**MINISTER MANAMELA DIRECTS VUT COUNCIL TO ACCOUNT FOR DELAYED ACTION
ON "DEGREE SYNDICATE" ALLEGATIONS**

TO ALL MEDIA

3 DECEMBER 2025

The Minister of Higher Education, Mr Buti Manamela, has noted with serious concern the reports regarding an alleged degree-selling syndicate at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT), involving foreign nationals.

While the Ministry previously indicated it would await the outcome of the University's internal probe, the Minister is disturbed by allegations that senior management may have been in possession of credible evidence from a whistleblower for over a year without taking decisive action.

"It is unacceptable for allegations of this magnitude, which threaten the integrity of our National Qualifications Framework to be met with administrative delays," Minister Manamela said. "If management knew about this a year ago, as alleged, simply 'investigating' is no longer enough. We need to know why the perpetrators were supposedly left in the system to potentially corrupt the 2026 intake," added the Minister.

The Minister has today written to the VUT Council Chairperson, demanding a preliminary report by Friday, 5 December 2025. The Minister has requested specific details on:

1. Why there was an alleged 12-month delay in acting on the whistleblower's report.
2. Proof that "consequence management" is actively taking place.
3. Immediate measures to ring-fence the 2026 registration process to protect it from further manipulation.

The Minister reiterates that the sale of degrees is a criminal offence. Should the University's internal processes prove insufficient, It is a matter that the Department will take to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks).

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