

MEDIA STATEMENT

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TO: All Media

ATTENTION: News Editors/ Reporters

For Immediate use:

MINISTER BLADE NZIMANDE CAUTIONS SOUTH AFRICANS TO BE CAREFUL WHEN REGISTERING OR RECEIVING HONOURS BY INSTITUTIONS

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Dr Blade Nzimande is concerned about the continuing and recently reported cases of bogus institutions awarding honorary doctorates to unsuspecting individuals, especially targeting local celebrities.

Minister Nzimande urges members of the public to be always circumspect and not accept such qualifications.

The Minister advises members of the public to visit the Registers of private higher institutions and private colleges, which can be found on the Department of Higher Education and Training website at www.dhet.gov.za.

“I have already requested the Council of Higher Education (CHE) to investigate and advise on appropriate action on all the reported cases of the awarding of these bogus honorary degrees,” Minister Nzimande said.

A number of these bogus colleges are not registered with the Department as public or private higher education institutions to provide higher education programmes as required by section 51(1) of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) (“the Act”)

The Department of Higher Education and Training has the statutory responsibility of regulating the activities of private higher education institutions in accordance with the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997) (“the Act”) and the Regulations for the Registration of Private Higher Education Institution, 2016 (“the Regulation”).

In terms of section 51(1) of the Act, no person other than a public higher education institution or an organ of the state may provide higher education unless that person is registered or conditionally registered with the Department as a private higher education institution.

Section 65(D) of the Act stipulates that: “No person may offer, award or confer a degree, or a higher education diploma or a higher education certificate, provided for on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub Framework (HEQSF) unless such a degree, diploma or certificate is registered on the sub-framework for higher education on the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in section 7(b) read with section 13(1)(h) of the National Qualifications Act.”

Section 66 of the Act makes it a criminal offence for an institution to provide higher education without registration.

As the new academic year approaches, Minister Nzimande has reiterated that students should first verify the legality of any programme offered by institutions before enrolling, in order to avoid falling prey to illegal operations.

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