

MEDIA ADVISORY

Bloemfontein. At the beginning of every year, multitudes of young people yearning for education flock to many educational institutions seeking academic registration. These young people and the families are often faced with many obstacles to realize their dream of studying in tertiary academic institutions. Obstacles range from limited space, affordability, distance and sometimes, bad planning from students themselves. These challenges, unfortunately, present unscrupulous business people with an opportunity to take advantage of these desperate, eager to learn young people. Many dreams get shattered and many families are conned out of their hard earned money by unregistered institutions, otherwise known as Fly by Night Colleges.

Whilst some of these institutions are found in dingy places, some are found in upmarket areas and are situated in plush buildings and operate what on face value looks like a legitimate educational facility. They have basic on convincing things like physical addresses, land line, website and even post photos of their graduates. Unfortunately many people only realize that these institutions are bogus after they have already lost time, effort and money.

What are Educational - Fly by Night Institutions?

- Fly-by-night educational institutions are those institutions that are not registered with the correct SETA, Department of Basic Education or the Department of Higher Education and Training or other relevant body as institutions of learning.
- These institutions mislead prospective students into believing that they are legally registered and accredited by accreditation bodies, such as the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- In some instances they are only accredited for certain programmes or the registration is still pending or provisional.

Students/learners should be aware that:

- Properly registered institutions or places of employment do not recognize certificates issued by these unregistered institutions.
- Unregistered institutions mislead people, in particular the poor;
- Unregistered institutions exploit people's emotions and take advantage of poverty and unemployment;
- Unregistered institutions take advantage of the stringent entrance requirements in recognized institutions of learning and subsequently admit students who do not meet these requirements;
- Unregistered institutions change premises often to avoid being traced; and

People should only pay registration fees or other fees after confirming that the institution is properly registered and is accredited to offer the course they want to study for the full duration of the course.

What Pointers should consumer remember?

You have rights as a consumer. Understand them. Enforce them.

Before one registers at any institution or sign any contract/agreement with an educational type of an institution, ensure that you have confirmed whether:

- The institution is registered/ accredited to offer this qualification with one of the institutions listed in the table on the last page.
- It is accredited by the relevant accreditation body and the validity of the skills offered by them; e.g. South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), Skills Education Training Authorities (SETA) and the National Qualification Framework (NQF);
- Recognised institution recognises the qualifications offered by the educational institution.

In the event of doubt about the credibility of the academic, institutions, members of the public are advised to immediately contact the department of education. The following information must be provided when you contacting the Departments of Education and National Qualification Framework on the details below:

- The name and address (province) of the institution you are querying.
- The specific course you are enquiring about.
- The duration of the course.

DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION	DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING	NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK (NQF)
<p>Switch board: 012-357 3000</p> <p>012-312 5911</p> <p>Call Centre: 0800 202933</p> <p>Callcentre@dbe.gov.za</p> <p>info@dbe.gov.za</p>	<p><i>Institutions offering Diplomas and upwards:</i></p> <p>Call Centre : (012) 312 5253</p> <p><i>Public FET Colleges:(012) 312 5520</i></p> <p><i>Private FET Colleges (012) 312 5878</i></p>	<p>086 0111 NQF (673)</p> <p>help@nqf.org.za</p>
<p>Sol Platatje House</p> <p>222 Struben Street</p> <p>Pretoria</p>	<p>123 Francis Baard Street, Pretoria</p>	<p>SAQA House</p> <p>1067 Arcardia Street, Hatfield, Pretoria</p>

Private Bag X895, Pretoria, 0001	Private Bag x174, Pretoria, 0001	Private Bag X06 Waterkloof, 0145 Postnet Suite 248
<i>Education Hotline: 080 020 2933</i>	<i>Call Centre: 08000 872 222</i> <i>Tel: +27 12 312 5911</i>	
SKILLS EDUCATION TRAINING AUTHORITIES (SETA) @ www.servicesseta.org.za	www.dhet.gov.za	

Issued by the Office of the Consumer Protector in the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

For more Information Contact;

Mr Timothy Radikeledi on 051 - 400 9611 or 082 773 9949; or Mr. Thabo Mohono on 051 – 400 4852 or 071 108 0579