

North West raises alarm about bogus institutions

The North West Department of Economy and Enterprise Development has urged parents and students to beware of unregistered higher education institutions.



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“There is an increasing number of unregistered private institutions that are attracting young people through their marketing strategies, especially during the month of December and January,” said the department on Wednesday.

It warned that some private higher education institutions are not accredited with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), despite their claims to the contrary.

“Not all private institutions are legal and operate in good faith. Some are cunning and unscrupulous. They are only interested in making profit, and issue useless certificates and qualifications because they are not duly registered and authorised.”

The department urged parents and prospective students to first check the accreditation of institutions with the DHET before enrolling, and further verify whether the courses they want to enrol are accredited and registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

The provincial department’s Consumer Affairs Office said bogus institutions often use a range of enticing advertising

methods to mislead the public.

The department indicated that it is often difficult to determine at face value whether an institution is registered or not, as fake institutions will display fake certificates with accreditation numbers claiming to be legitimate.

Among the popular courses offered by these institutions are nursing, security and ambulance services.

Meanwhile, the Consumer Affairs Office is currently handling complaints where learners who registered for a particular course were given certificates for unregistered courses.

The department urged those who had fallen victim to these illegal operators to contact the Consumer Affairs Office at +27 (0)18 387 7946/848 or visit the office located at the NWDC Building, Corner University and Provident Drive, Mmabatho.

Consumers can also reach out to the departmental district offices located in Rustenburg, Klerksdorp, Brits and Vryburg.

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