

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The programme

1. What is the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme?

The Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme is a multi-year programme to promote teaching as a profession. Bursaries are available to enable selected students to complete a teaching qualification in identified areas of priority. Recipients of these bursaries will be required to teach at a public school for the same number of years that they received the bursary.

Roles and responsibilities

2. How are roles and responsibilities for the Funza Lushaka programme divided?

This is a national programme which is run locally at each higher education institution (HEI). It is funded by National Treasury and executed by the Department of Basic Education (DBE).

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) administers the programme on behalf of DBE through the Student Financial Aid office at each HEI.

Selected students must meet the admission criteria of the academic programme at the HEI to which they apply, and must meet the national selection criteria for the Funza Lushaka bursary. Selection of bursars is undertaken at each HEI in accordance with the selection criteria and the funds allocated to each HEI. Selection of bursars is undertaken at each HEI in accordance with the selection criteria and the funds allocated to each HEI.

Once qualified, bursary recipients are placed by a provincial education department.

Applications and eligibility

3. Who is eligible to apply?

Any academically gifted, young –

- learners, currently in Grade 12;
- graduates who want to complete a teaching qualification (enrol for a PGCE);
- people who want to make a career change and become teachers; and
- unemployed people who want to become teachers.

Prospective bursars must first gain admission at a higher education institution (HEI). The Financial Aid Office and/or the Faculty/School of Education at the HEI will have information on how to apply for the bursary.

4. How does a student apply?

Prospective bursars must first gain admission at a higher education institution (HEI). Applications may be submitted online at www.funzalushaka.doe.gov.za.

5. Where can prospective students find out more about the bursary programme?

Information on the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme can be accessed from www.funzalushaka.doe.gov.za.

Student Financial Aid offices will give details of financial matters, service obligations, etc. Staff in the Faculty or School of Education will provide information on teaching as a profession, academic programmes and an individual's eligibility for admission.

6. How does an institution determine whether a student's academic programme complies with the priority areas selection criterion?

The bursary programme is designed to boost recruitment into teaching, especially in priority subject areas. In most cases, Faculty or School of Education staff will be able to assist students with the Funza Lushaka priority subjects to determine a student's teaching priority subjects.

The staff will also have to be guided by the Funza Lushaka Policy to determine the fit between a student's programme and the teaching priorities.

7. What are the national priority subject areas?

Foundation Phase (i.e. Grades R-3): Foundation Phase (with preference for African Languages) Neurodevelopment Needs, Braille, SASL.

Intermediate and Senior Phase (i.e. Grades 4-9): Preference will be given for a teaching major in **TWO** of the following: Languages, Mathematics, and Natural Science & Technology

FET phase (i.e. Grades 10-12): Preference will be given for a teaching major in **TWO** of the following: Accounting; Agricultural Sciences; Agricultural Technology; Civil Technology; Computer Applications Technology; Economics; Electrical Technology; Engineering Graphics and Design; Geography; Information Technology; Life Sciences; Mathematics; Mechanical Technology; Physical Sciences, Languages, Technical Mathematics and Technical Science.

8. What programmes will be funded?

Bachelor of Education (BEd);
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE);

9. Are there official quotas for the distribution of bursaries by programme, year of study or priority area ?

Yes, the distribution by programme will be determined by the Department of Basic Education depending on identified priorities subject areas.

10. Are first-year students eligible?

Yes, first-year students in the appropriate programmes are eligible for the bursary.

11. Are Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) students eligible?

No. Bursaries are available only to unqualified, initial teacher education students.

12. Are distance education and part-time students eligible for a bursary?

Yes, provided they are eligible in all other respects.

13. Are recipients of other bursaries eligible to apply for a Funza Lushaka bursary?

Yes, but a student who has been offered both a Funza Lushaka Bursary and another bursary must choose to decline the other bursary.

Selection matters

14. Who should sit on a bursary selection committee?

The composition of the committee will depend on the institution, but must include academic members of the Faculty or School of Education, an experienced professional representative of the relevant provincial education department (PED), a representative of the financial aid office and an official/officials representing the DBE.

15. What selection criteria should be applied?

The criteria applied by an institution's selection committee must be clear, empirically-based, transparent, publishable and must include the following:

1. The bursary is only awarded to South African citizens with a valid South African ID number.
2. Allocation of Funza Lushaka bursaries to Higher Education Institution employees, their spouse and their dependents/children is not permissible.
3. Bursary applicants must already have been accepted into a either BEd or PGCE qualification at an at an accredited public University.
The applicant must also meet the national selection criteria for the Funza Lushaka bursary.
4. The bursary will only be awarded if **two** of the priority area subjects are included as a specialisation in the teaching qualification.
5. The applicant should demonstrate good academic ability.
6. The applicant must show commitment to a teaching career, which includes: interest in working with young people; enthusiasm for a professional career in teaching; readiness to face and surmount difficult challenges and personal integrity.

Please note that you are responsible for paying your registration fee, awaiting the outcome of the bursary application

16. Will late applications be considered?

No, late applications for a bursary will not be considered.

Money matters

17. Are HEIs being allocated a specific number of bursaries or a specific allocation of funds for bursaries?

Institutions receive funds, not bursaries. Each institution will pay out bursary funds for the programme in accordance with its own cost structure.

18. Are more funds available than those initially allocated to an institution for a particular academic year?

If some institutions are unable to use all the funds allocated to them, the balance will be redistributed to other institutions where the demand is greater. This will be done after the situation has been monitored at the end of the normal registration period.

19. How much is a Funza Lushaka bursary worth?

Institutions have different cost structures, so the total value of a bursary differs from institution to institution.

Funza Lushaka bursaries cover the recipient's essential expenses.

20. What does the bursary cover?

Expenses covered may include tuition fees, accommodation including meals, books and learning materials, and if possible a small allowance for monthly living expenses. The allocation to any individual student is capped at a specific value. Where the HEI charges more than the capped value the bursary will have to top up from own funds.

21. May a student accept a bursary for fewer than the number of years required to complete a programme?

Yes. However, the student would have to avail himself/herself for placement immediately after qualifying.

22. Can a student accept less per annum than the total amount on offer?

Yes. However, the recipient's service obligations remain a full year of service for every year for which he/she has received a bursary.

23. Can a student who has another bursary receive a Funza Lushaka bursary?

The student may consider forfeiting the other bursary in order to receive a full-cost Funza Lushaka bursary. Alternatively if the terms and conditions of the other bursary permit, the student could retain that bursary, provided the conditions for placement on completion of studies as per Funza Lushaka bursary takes priority.

24. Can a student receive a bursary for an extra year of study?

The bursary period might be extended to cover one additional year in a degree programme or the time required for completion of one additional course in the PGCE programme. Only one such extension will be granted. Funding for an additional year of study (i.e. 5th year) is not automatic and will be considered on a case by case basis. In cases where support is provided for an additional year, the service obligation for the student is extended by a year. Any additional time required will be at the recipient's own cost.

25. Who pays for costs incurred over and above the allocated bursary amount?

The student.

26. Is the bursary renewable?

Yes, the bursary is awarded for one academic year at a time; and upon proof of academic success the bursary may be renewed each year until the recipient of the bursary has qualified as a teacher. In essence, the recipient is required to apply for the renewal of the bursary every year.

27. How will a student's accommodation and living expenditure be paid?

In accordance with the institution's normal practice with NSFAS awards.

Service agreement

28. Must the recipient of a bursary receive a copy of the service agreement?

Yes. The agreement must be explained to the before he/she signs it, and a signed copy must then be given to the recipient. www.funzalushaka.doe.gov.za

29. For how many years will the recipient of a bursary be required to teach?

Recipients of bursaries will be required to teach one year for every year for which they have received a bursary. Each year of service shall repay one full-time year of bursary-assisted studies.

30. If a student migrates from an NSFAS loan to a Funza Lushaka bursary, will the years pertaining to the NSFAS loan become part of the service contract?

No. The NSFAS loan and the bursary have different conditions.

31. Must the bursary be repaid?

The bursary must be repaid only if the recipient fails to qualify; registers for a course of study that is not in a designated priority area; fails to apply for a teaching post with a PED at a public school, following the stipulated processes; fails to take up a teaching post with a PED at a public school; leaves a teaching post with a PED before the end of the contracted service period; or otherwise fails to meet a requirement of the bursary agreement.

32. How much must be repaid?

The recipient will be required to repay the full amount of the bursary received in terms of the programme, with accrued interest.

33. Will interest have to be paid on the amount owing?

Yes. Interest shall be compounded monthly at the rate of interest determined by NSFAS from time to time.

34. Who determines the placement of newly qualified teachers in terms of the programme?

Qualified recipients of bursaries will be placed by the PEDs to teach in a public school. Offers of employment will be made, subject to the Employment of Educators Act, 1998, and the South African Schools Act, 1996, as amended as well as the SACE Act.

35. Are Funza Lushaka bursary recipients eligible for school governing body (SGB) posts at public schools?

No. A bursar may only accept a school governing body (SGB) post after the bursar has fulfilled his/her contractual obligations to a PED.

36. Are Funza Lushaka bursary recipients able to take a "gap year" or proceed to complete further studies immediately after qualifying?

No. Students are required to accept a teaching post immediately after qualifying – an extension will not be granted to a qualifying student even for further studies.

37. Are foreign students eligible for a Funza Lushaka bursary?

No, NSFAS will not enter into a contract with a foreign student or a student that holds a temporary resident permit.