



International Education Association of South Africa

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RE: Recommended Medical Aid Schemes; Visa Compliance; Mandatory Reporting to DHA and DHA Compliance Audits

Dear Colleagues,

18 January 2019

A very prosperous and productive 2019 to you all, as we look forward to a great year in internationalisation for all IEASA members.

I would like to bring the following urgent matter to your attention. As you know, one of the study visa compliance requirements, as listed in the Immigration Act, is that all International Students must have a South African Medical aid for the duration of their studies. DHA has very recently again clarified that a student must have medical aid for the 12 months of every year of their registration. The cover is costed and linked to visa compliance, rather than the physical presence of the individual student in the country. Please refer to the Immigration Handbook developed by IEASA and the DHA in this regard.

As it is now compulsory for all institutions to report to the DHA on this matter, a reporting template was developed by the DHA and provides all the details required. If you don't have a copy of this template, please contact Jade in the IEASA Office and she will gladly provide it to you. It is important that the data, as required in the report, is captured during the registration period. If this is not done diligently, the reports will be incomplete and will require cumbersome and time-consuming correction, at a later stage.

If you and your institution have difficulty in constructing your data base to capture the data, please contact Jade in IEASA; IEASA is willing to assist institutions with the necessary interventions and to support HEIs in meeting these legal obligations to DHA.

I would also like to bring it to your attention that IEASA continues to recommend two Medical Aid products, because they have been specifically tailored to cater for the international student market. This is known as the IEASA Medical Aid project.

These recommendation are based on thorough and consistent research, by independent Medical Aid Consultants in SANLAM. All the eligible registered Medical Aid providers in South Africa, as listed here <https://www.savisas.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/South-African-Medical-Aid-Schemes.pdf>, are assessed with a specific reference to the set of benefits offered to international students.

Both of the recommended products provide the minimum and essential benefits to each international student and safeguard Universities against any possible liability in the case of a medical condition, experienced by students. You are urged to acquaint yourselves with these products and their benefits.

Students can, however, purchase any other South African Medical Aid products if they meet minimum requirements (e.g are a registered scheme, have confirmed medical practitioners in the area, who will work with the scheme; no six month waiting period; a financially solvent company etc.).

It was reported to IEASA that a group is marketing their product to students, which does not provide the minimum benefits to students and which it is not recommended by IEASA. Universities have the right to insist that students utilise products that comply with the minimum requirements, as prescribed by IEASA. Years of experience of universities being left footing the bill for students in difficulty have informed these minimum requirements.

Please note that DHA has already alerted IEASA that they are planning to do random compliance audits of international students across HEIs from April to June 2019.

Please don't hesitate to forward any further enquiries to the IEASA Office. The Medical Aid Task team will respond and assist where possible. Sincere thanks for your time and attention.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Orla Quinlan', written in a cursive style.

Ms Orla Quinlan
President
International Education Association of South Africa