National Student Financial Aid Scheme

Job Specification & Recruiting Profile of Vacancy

30 October 2026

The following vacancy exists at NSFAS in Cape Town

Position	Core Business Executive	**Type & Grade**	5 Year Fixed Term Contract
Vacancy No	14 of 2026/27	**Department & Unit**	Core Business Operations

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Core Business Executive is accountable for the operational service delivery and will lead the design, integration and execution of student applications, eligibility decisions, funding allocations, disbursements, ongoing student support, institutional servicing, query resolution and value-added services. The role coordinates people, processes, technology, data and institutional interfaces to achieve approved service standards, funding-cycle milestones and organisational performance targets within the Core Business Department.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- Translate the NSFAS strategy, Annual Performance Plan and approved funding policies into an integrated operations strategy, annual operational plan and measurable service-delivery targets.
- Lead and continuously improve end-to-end core operations across applications, funding decisions, payments, student support, institutional servicing and query resolution.
- Drive operational performance through clear measures for turnaround times, processing accuracy, service availability, backlogs, payment timeliness and query resolution.

- Ensure operational readiness and business continuity during critical funding-cycle periods, supported by tested capacity, contingency, incident escalation and recovery arrangements.
- Sponsor digitisation, automation and process optimisation in partnership with technology, finance, risk and other enabling functions.
- Maintain an effective operational control environment, including compliance monitoring, fraud-risk mitigation, issue escalation and implementation of audit and risk actions.
- Lead the development and implementation of student funding guidelines and core operational policies.
- Build productive service arrangements with universities, TVET colleges, government stakeholders, service providers and internal business units.
- Provide accurate, timely and decision-focused reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Committee, relevant Board committees and the Board.
- Lead a high-performing operations function, including organisational design, workforce capacity, performance management, capability development, budget management and procurement oversight.
- Fulfil delegated financial management responsibilities in accordance with the PFMA, Treasury Regulations, the NSFAS delegation of authority framework and other applicable prescripts.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Lead and optimise end-to-end core business operations to deliver NSFAS products and services in accordance with approved policy, service standards, internal controls and organisational performance commitments.

- Create a fit-for-purpose departmental structure.
- Oversee the overall organisational policy development.
- Document, communicate and manage related policies.
- Assess, audit and improve risk, compliance and governance practices.
- Identify key controls and establish risk mitigation procedures.
- Improve forensic practices.
- Improve organisational governance, risk and compliance awareness and provide value-adding

services

- Identify, assess and prioritize risk.
- Report on risks
- Remain current and stay abreast of risk, compliance, and governance requirements.
- Monitor and lead the implementation of the organisational audit plan.

Translate the NSFAS strategy, Annual Performance Plan and approved funding policies into an integrated operations strategy, annual operational plan, implementation roadmap and measurable service-delivery targets across the student funding value chain

- Contribute to the development of the organizational strategic plan and annual performance plan
- Develop plans to realize the organizational strategy and set specific medium- and long-term objectives.
- Support the planning, development, and execution of “strategic initiatives”.
- Develop departmental key performance indicators (KPIs) and departmental operational plan (DOPs)
- Monitor the achievement of departmental KPIs and DOPs and maintain the related supporting evidence
- Provide strategic guidance and recommendations to the Executive Officer, EXCO and Board

Policy development

- Annually lead the development of student funding policy (funding guidelines)
- Lead the development of core business operational policies
- Contribute to the development of all organizational policies
- Actively participate in the pursuit of policy recommendations and improvement projects.
- Ensure NSFAS strategies and policies are executed in the best long-term interest of the organisation.

Lead, integrate and continuously improve the Core Business Operations function to ensure coordinated execution across applications, funding decisions, disbursements, ongoing student support, institutional servicing and query resolution.

- Provide strategic direction to the core business department

- Prepare and monitor departmental budget
- Monitor and report to the Management Committee and Board on Operations progress against both NSFAS Strategic Plan, NSFAS APP and Operations APP outputs.
- Continuously review and monitor the departmental structure
- Contribute to the development and review of the organizational structure
- Ensure the unit is adequately capacitated within budgetary constraints
- Facilitate individual performance contracts of staff within the unit and ensure every member within the unit has a performance contract
- Ensure that the unit meets all the operational and statutory reporting requirements
- Ensure regular departmental meetings
- Coach and mentor subordinates
- Lead and facilitate innovative solutions to effectively and efficiently deliver the mandate of the department
- Ensure there is continuous professional development and training in the department
- Lead the procurement requirements of the department
- Liaise with other support departments or business units within the organization
- Develop a sound internal control environment of the department
- Prepare and lead the implementation of audit action plans
- Lead the human resources management aspects of the department
- Ensure there is collaborate work environment within and between departments that is inclusive of all stakeholders (internal and external to NSFAS

Maintain an effective operational control environment across the student funding value chain, including control ownership, compliance monitoring, fraud-risk mitigation, issue escalation and timely implementation of agreed audit and risk actions, in collaboration with the relevant assurance functions.

- Work with the Governance, Risk and Compliance Executive to develop and implement the department compliance calendar and risk register.

- Lead the identification of departmental risks and risk mitigation plans
- Contribute to the identification of organizational risks and mitigation plans
- Ensure the department meets governance and compliance requirements.
- Provide updates and reports to the Executive Committee, Board and relevant sub-committees in accordance with the organizational risk and compliance framework and its requirements.
- Interpret applicable Legislation, Regulations and Codes to achieve required compliance.
- Actively drive fraud management within the department.
- Ensure compliance with operational controls across the value chain
- Establish and monitor end-to-end operational performance measures, including turnaround times, processing accuracy, service availability, backlog levels, payment timeliness, query-resolution times and student and institution service outcomes. Implement corrective action where performance deviates from approved standards or funding-cycle milestones

Student and Institutions query resolution

- Establish, monitor and manage student and query institutional resolution mechanism
- Monitor trends on queries and implement mitigating system and processes to address recurring issues
- Build data and insight capabilities that enables better understanding of the students, our environment and institutions
- Lead operational readiness and business continuity for critical funding-cycle periods, including applications, registration, funding decisions and payments. Ensure that capacity, contingency arrangements, incident escalation, recovery plans and stakeholder communication protocols are tested and maintained

Knowledge management

- Ensure that the department has a robust document retention and management mechanism
- Contribute in the organizational knowledge management repository
- Sponsor the digitisation, automation and continuous improvement of core operational processes in partnership with information and communication technology, finance, risk and other enabling functions. Ensure that system changes are governed by clear business requirements, process

ownership, data controls, user acceptance criteria and measurable service benefits

Fulfil delegated financial management responsibilities in accordance with the PFMA, Treasury Regulations, the NSFAS delegation of authority framework and other applicable prescripts

- Perform all responsibilities as per the Public Finance Management Act, no. 1 of 1999 (as per Annexure A).

Manage Stakeholder relations

- Identify key external stakeholders for the department and points of interface with stakeholders
- Develop departmental stakeholder plan in collaboration with the Stakeholder Management Unit
- Engage key stakeholders in collaboration with the stakeholder unit
- Contribute to the development of the organizational stakeholder strategy
- Jointly and collaboratively manage NSFAS reputation and brand value
- Engage critical stakeholders proactively, and in response to unforeseen challenges
- Proactively engage institutions on approved NSFAS plans and implications for them.
- Identify and maintain key partnerships and collaborations with private entities and intergovernmental entities and departments

Manage and provide guidance on operations finances

- Develop departmental budget
- Contribute to the development of organizational budget
- Develop departmental procurement plan
- Monitor spending against the budget
- Monitor the implementation of the departmental procurement plan

- Implement cost containment measures for the department
- Avoid and document fruitless and wasteful expenditure
- Avoid and document instances of irregular expenditure
- Institute consequence management where these expenditures have been incurred
- Provide effective financial control within the department,

Board Committee reporting

- Provide accurate, timely and decision-focused reports to the Chief Executive Officer, relevant Board committees and the Board on operational performance, service-delivery risks, funding-cycle readiness, material incidents, control effectiveness, audit actions and required executive or governance interventions.
- Submit policies for review and adoption
- Report on audit and risk issues identified in Operations and controls put in place.

DESIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Minimum requirements:

- NQF Level 8 in Business Administration, Operations Management, Engineering, Commerce, Public Management, Finance or a related field relevant to large-scale service-delivery operations.
- A recognised SAQA aligned executive or professional qualification in operations management, programme management, service management, process improvement, risk management or business continuity.
- Experience in a public institution, funding organisation or banking institution.

- 10 years of experience within Operations a large-scale entity.
- 5 years as an Operations Executive or equivalent in a large, complex or regulated organisation.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the legislative, regulatory, governance and accountability requirements applicable to Schedule 3A public entities, including the PFMA, Treasury Regulations and relevant public-sector governance prescripts.
- Demonstrated executive capability in operating-model design, service management, process optimisation, digital transformation, data-led decision-making, large-scale change leadership, business continuity, crisis management, contract and supplier performance management, and complex transaction and payment environments.
- Understanding of higher education policy imperatives and development requirements, together with working knowledge of strategic planning and budgeting.
- Knowledge of the Financial Intelligence Centre Act, channel management and complex payment functions.

Preferred

- NQF Level 9 in Business Administration, Operations Management, Engineering, Commerce, Public Management, Finance or a related field relevant to large-scale service-delivery operations.
- 15 years of experience within Operations a large-scale entity year's progressively
- 10 years as an Operations Executive or equivalent in a large, complex or regulated organisation.

Leadership Competencies

- Strategic and visionary leadership
- Operational excellence and business acumen
- Sound judgement, decision-making and problem-solving

- People leadership and performance management
- Financial and resource management
- Stakeholder engagement, influence and negotiation
- Data-driven analysis and performance oversight
- Innovation, adaptability and change leadership
- Emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal effectiveness

REMUNERATION & BENEFITS

Total Cost to Company per annum inclusive of all benefits and company contributions.

PLEASE NOTE:

Closing date: 13 November 2026

Interested applicants must complete and submit an Employment Application Form available on the NSFAS website. The form must be supported by a detailed Curriculum Vitae which includes amongst other things the vacancy name/position title you are responding to, copies of academic qualifications, Identity Document, and names of three contactable referees. Application must be sent via email address: **jobs@nsfas.org.za.**

The NSFAS does not consider late applications. The NSFAS talent acquisition team only corresponds with Shortlisted Candidates. Should you not hear from the NSFAS talent acquisition team within 2 months from the closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful. Appointments will be made in line with the NSFAS Employment Equity goals and targets.