

## **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

### **FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION 32**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03-02-2006  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 1-2006)**

**Dr SM van Dyk to ask the Minister of Education:**

Whether the pass-rate of learners who wrote Grade 12 at the end of 2005 was only 10,8% before the marks in the subjects that they had written were adjusted; if not, what was the pass-rate before it was adjusted; if so, (a) what was the pass-rate for each subject before it was adjusted and (b) with how many marks was each subject adjusted?

**N38E**

### **REPLY:**

Umalusi, the Quality Assurance Council, has responsibility for the quality assurance of the Senior Certificate examination and would be able to provide answers to all the questions asked. In fact, Umalusi has on a number of occasions spelt out the exact adjustments that were made in the case of each subject. These have been widely reported in the press, including the fact that adjustments included both upward and downward movements. I can assure the Honourable Member that the suggestion that the pass rate was 10.8% before adjustment is extremely inaccurate.

The standardization of the Grade 12 results is the responsibility of Umalusi, which convenes meetings attended by the provincial education departments, teacher unions and higher education representatives. The standardization process is not based on pass rates, but rather on norms determined by Umalusi. These norms are based on the performance of learners over the last three to five years, and the marks of the current examination are compared to the same examinations in previous years so as to avoid any advantage or disadvantage to a particular cohort of learners on account of variation in the standard of question papers or marking that may occur from year to year and across examining bodies. Adjustments are made based on sound statistical analysis, recommended by a committee of eminent and independent statisticians. Moreover, standardisation of examination marks is an international practice.

I might also add that representatives from the Kenyan and Ghanaian Examinations Councils observed the 2005 standardisation meetings, and they commented favourably on the objectivity of this process.