

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 1313.

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1313. Dr S S Thembekwayo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

What measures of intervention has she put in place to ensure that Grade 12 markers of examinations do not repeat the same mistake of incorrectly recording learners' marks, as was the case with Marveke Shibambu, who had to repeat the specified grade and could not pursue studies in medicine?

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Response

The error that affected Marveke Shibambu in the November 2022 examination, is regretted; and is certainly the exception to the highly rigorous processes and control measures in place in the national examination system.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has developed over the years a rigorous and robust National Marking system that targets zero defect at every step. Answer scripts from every examination centre, are subjected to four levels of moderation and a range of checks and control measures, and this avoids errors. The DBE on an annual basis conducts a review of all its processes with the individual Provincial Education Departments, post the examination; and the error that occurred will be thoroughly discussed, and additional measures will be put in place to mitigate errors of this nature.

The Provincial Education Department (PED) has completed a full enquiry on this error and has established that this is an administrative error relating to mark transfer from one document to another. There are tracking mechanisms in place on candidate scripts and control sheets with responsibility codes attached to Markers and Administrators, that would have gone through this script. The implicated individual has been identified and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

It also needs to be noted that the DBE has an appeal process in place to allow candidates who think they may have been disadvantaged to request for a remark or a recheck and also to view their scripts. This is part of the principle of fairness and justice in the examination process.

The DBE will continue to reinforce its oversight and control of marking and moderation processes and PEDs will be instructed and supported to improve their control measures based on the review that will be conducted with each province. The DBE will also embark on standardising the roles and responsibilities of Examination Assistants and Quality Checkers to ensure greater accountability across the value-chain of the marking process. In standardising the roles and responsibilities, one of the examples to be used is the error that affected Marveke Shibambu especially its negative impact on a learner's life career.