**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1391**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 26/05/2017**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 18 OF 2017)**

**Mr D America (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

(1) Have any officials in his department been implicated during an investigation by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) into a syndicate that offered acceptances for medical students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in exchange for cash; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) does his department have any oversight mechanisms in place monitoring the fairness of the student application process at universities; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

**NW1533E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Minister is not aware of any official in the Department who has been implicated in the Hawks investigation into a crime syndicate offering acceptances for medical students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
2. Public higher education institutions are governed in terms of the Higher Education Act (Act No 101 of 1997, as amended) and their respective statutes. The Act clearly stipulates that the public higher education institutions established in terms of this Act are juristic persons (section 20(4)); as such, they enjoy a large degree of autonomy. The Act empowers Councils to govern universities, which entails determining the admission policy, entrance requirements in respect of particular higher education programmes, number of students who may be admitted for a particular higher education programme, manner of their selection and minimum requirements for readmission to study at the public higher education institution concerned. As part of their governance role, Councils must exercise effective oversight over the implementation of these policies.

Currently there are no existing mechanisms to monitor the student application process at universities; however, the Department is in the process of developing the Central Applications Service.

COMPILER/CONTACT PERSONS:

EXT:

DIRECTOR – GENERAL

STATUS:

DATE:

QUESTION 1391 APPROVED/NOT APPROVED/AMENDED

Dr BE NZIMANDE, MP

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

STATUS:

DATE: