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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1586**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 26 OF 2020**

**Prof B Bozzoli (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology:**

(1) On what grounds are the examination of theses and other similar activities by academics at other institutions of higher education and training considered part of the collegial contribution of any academic while the examination of theses and other similar activities by academics not employed by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), particularly by the Business School, are considered to be private work;

(2) what (a) amount does an external academic who examines (i) Masters and (ii) Doctoral theses usually receive in remuneration and (b) form does the specified type of remuneration take;

(3) what (a) number of other institutions of higher education and training consider the external examination of theses and other similar collegial activities to be private work and (b) are the financial implications for external academics who examine theses and perform collegial activities;

(4) whether he has found that the UKZN Business School’s determination that the external examination of theses is private work has discouraged academics from doing their collegial duty; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW1969E**

**REPLY:**

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) has provided the following response to the questions posed:

(1)   In general, the examination of theses by academics is considered as a collegial activity and part of academic citizenship. Some colleagues have declared the external examination of theses as part of the private work declaration as an indication of transparency for additional funds received. It is thus not a requirement, but an optional declaration that promotes transparency.

(2) The amounts paid to external academics who examine (i) Masters and (ii) Doctoral theses vary markedly between institutions, and the remuneration generally takes the form of a cash payment into the academic’s bank account.

(3) (a) Most, if not all, institutions would regard it as academic citizenship, as is the norm at UKZN.

     (b) There are no financial implications for external academics who perform collegial activities. Both internal and external academics such as Honorary Research Fellows are paid for examining theses.

(4) The requirement to declare external thesis examination as private work in UKZN's Graduate School of Business and Leadership, has resulted in contestation by some academics, but has not directly led to academics being discouraged from examining theses, as per academic citizenry. However, the previous instances of excessive external examination have subsided due to the transparency of the process.