**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 267**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19/02/2016**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 2 OF 2016)**

**Adv A de W Alberts (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

1. Which educational evaluation system is currently used in (a) training colleges nationally and (b) the Westcol College for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Krugersdorp;
2. whether the Bell Curve grading system is part of the educational evaluation system that is used (a) nationally and (b) in the Westcol College; if not, why not; if so, (aa) how the specified system functions and (bb) what the consequences are for all students affected by the application of the evaluation system?

**NW271E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college system, including individual institutions such as Western TVET College, uses the criterion-referenced system of student performance measurement and evaluation, i.e. Internal Continuous Assessment (ICASS) and Integrated Summative Assessment Tasks (ISATs), which are designed to measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined criteria, learning performance standards and outcomes. This system of student performance measurement and evaluation is critical for the TVET system as it reveals what each student can or cannot to do against a set standard in the classroom, workplace, workshop or trade test centre. It is an appropriate system for determining the levels of individual student competence and provides information about areas where each student can be supported to ultimately be successful in their studies. At the level of the national quality assurance system executed by Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, a norm-referenced system of student performance evaluation is applied. This type of student performance evaluation yields an estimate of the position of the tested individual in a predefined population, with respect to the trait or level of knowledge being measured. To determine the validity of all performance measurement results, a standardisation process is used to mitigate the effect of factors other than students’ knowledge and aptitude on their performance, as well as other sources of student performance variations stemming from the difficulty of question papers, undetected errors, and student interpretation of questions.
2. The Bell Curve grading system is neither applied nationally nor at Western TVET College. Given the apartheid legacy of this country, it is not and would not have been in the best interest of this country’s education system to apply the Bell Curve theory in the measurement and evaluation of student performance in the TVET college system or any other part of our education system.

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DATE:

REPLY TO QUESTION 267 APPROVED/NOT APPROVED/AMENDED

Dr BE NZIMANDE, MP

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

STATUS:

DATE: