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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2717**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 13/11/2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 47 OF 2020**

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

(1) With reference to the 20 000 students who were affected by the hand of god during the 2019 application process for assistance by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, what is the total (a) number of students who have not been paid due to technical reasons in 2020, (b) amount that the errors amounted to and (c) number of students who dropped out of tertiary institutions because of the technical malfunction;

(2) whether any measures have been put in place to assist the specified students; if not, why not, if so, what are the relevant details?

**NW3486E**

**REPLY:**

(1) This matter relates to 28 552 records that were withdrawn by the errant code in question. These applications were linked to 11 572 applicants during the 2020 application cycle, as the system allowed the applicant to submit more than one application.

(a) Not applicable.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Currently of these 11 572 applicants, 10 461 applicants have a funded status and 1 111 applicants have not been funded due to the application not having met requirements during filtering, validation or evaluation.

It should be noted that the errant piece of code had no impact on the disbursement processing of these records. Once the issue had been identified by NSFAS and corrective action had been taken, processing of these records commenced as per normal. Furthermore, it should be noted that the issue was detected as early as November 2019 and the correction of all records impacted by the issue had been corrected byMarch 2020.

(2)  Given that NSFAS identified the issue in November 2019 and corrected these records in a proactive manner, no further assistance was provided to these students.