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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 4319**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 49 OF 2022**

 **Mr S S Zondo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

Whether, with reference to the recommendations made to the University of Stellenbosch in the Khampepe Report into allegations of racism at the specified university, his department has any plans in place to convert some of the specified recommendations into best practice guidelines for all universities; if not, why not; if so, how will the first-year welcoming programmes at universities be tailored to incorporate the considerations included in the specified report? **NW5435E**

**REPLY:**

The Department is studying the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of Racism at Stellenbosch University (Khampepe Report) and its findings.   The report will have a significant impact on Stellenbosch University and may well offer significant lessons to other South African universities. However, the Department does not prescribe specific strategies to the universities. Universities in South Africa are autonomous but accountable to the Department of Higher Education and Training. In this regard, each university should study the Commission’s report, its findings and recommendations and consider lessons to learn for effective changes.

The circumstances and environments of our institutions of higher learning are unique to each individual institution. Their individual histories; cultures and circumstances are not the same. Therefore, there is no one solution to a problem that could be applied across the sector in this regard. Each university is encouraged to interpret the recommendations and make them relevant to its campuses where necessary. This also applies to ‘first-year welcoming programmes’ which are designed according to the various circumstances at each campus and, also, taking into consideration the specific needs of the university and its students. Therefore, there can be no single prescription made to all the universities.

The Department has its own programmes in place which seek to monitor the transformation of the system, working together with the Council on Higher Education. Reports from the monitoring unit provide an opportunity to reflect on transformation issues in the system and how transformation can better be monitored in the public university system.

Moreover, the Department is implementing the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP), which is focused on advancing the transformation agenda in university education system in three critical areas: student development/success, staff development and programme/curriculum development. All universities are allocated an annual grant (the University Capacity Development Grant) and are required to use the grant to implement approved three-year project plans (2021–2023) which address the transformation imperatives of the UCDP in its three focus areas as identified above. Each university develops and implements projects and activities that are specific and unique to the University to address transformation needs. This is a resource that can be utilised by universities to support students holistically, through a range of student support initiatives that include academic support, psychosocial support and life skills. Universities will develop new UCDP plans to be implemented from 2024, the guidelines for the implementation of the UCDP (that come in the form of the Ministerial Statement on the Implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme) will endeavour to emphasise the guidelines.