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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 475**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20/03/2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 10 OF 2020**

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

(1) What number of students who were supported by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) in each faculty of each institution of higher learning in the 2018 academic year (a) were enrolled for each (i) degree and/or (ii) other qualification, (b) wrote (i) exams and (ii) supplementary exams in each (aa) degree, (bb) qualification and (cc) subject, (c) passed and (d) failed each exam and/or supplementary exam that they wrote;

(2) what were the marks obtained in each subject in respect of which an exam and/or supplementary exam was written by NSFAS supported students?

**NW656E**

**REPLY:**

The Department and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) will not be able to provide the information in the requested format, as this level of detail is only available at an institutional level, and would take considerable time to collate. There would also be limits to the level of detail that could practically be provided per institution.

In terms of the data exchange between NSFAS and institutions, institutions provide information to NSFAS on whether students meet the criteria for continuation. The level of detail requested in terms of examinations, supplementary examinations, subjects passed and failed, marks, etc. is not provided to NSFAS.

The Department's Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) collects information on enrolments and completion of qualifications. This enables cohort reporting to be done according to a breakdown of qualification types, i.e. 3-year degrees, 3-year diplomas and 4-year degrees. Specific cohort information is also collected on the MBChB programme, engineering programmes, life and physical sciences and teacher education. In addition, data is broken down according to population group and gender. This is in line with the requirement to focus on specific Medium Term Strategic Framework targets. It is possible to provide an overview of the breakdown according to fields of study, i.e. Science, Engineering and Technology; Business and Commerce; Education and the Humanities.

NSFAS recipient data is also brought into the cohort study to show the overall performance of NSFAS recipients, and the study is also able to look at students enrolled for foundation programmes. The attached cohort study was based on data up to the 2017 academic year and provides the throughput and dropout rates of NSFAS funded students.

It is only possible to provide a global picture of throughput rates for particular cohorts. Data provided to HEMIS is at a high level according to qualification registrations and by CESM (Classification of Educational Subject Material), and not by faculty. The names of qualifications reported from different institutions are not consistent, as they are reported according to their accredited names. HEMIS only reflects pass or fail results for the course completion at a full-time equivalent level to determine the overall success rates of the sector or by institution. This data is required at a high level for funding and planning purposes.