

For immediate release:

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Establishment of a panel to investigate the error in Mathematics Paper 2

Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, has established a 3-member independent panel to investigate the reasons that led to the inclusion of the “problematic” Question 5.1 in the final Mathematics Paper 2 question paper of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) that was written on 7 November 2022. Specifically, the panel is tasked to investigate how the error crept in and why it was not detected between the examiners, internal and external moderators up to the printing stage. In other words, the focus is on the entire value chain: all the processes that the question paper was subjected to during the stages of its development, quality assurance and printing.

The 3-member panel is chaired by Ms Penelope (Penny) Vinjevold and the other members are Prof. Sudan Hansraj and Prof. Nic Heideman. The brief profiles of the panelists are as follows:

Penny Vinjevold: She taught in schools for 16 years and spent approximately 20 years in the public service where she was Chief Director, Deputy Director-General and Head of Provincial Education Department before her formal retirement in March 2020.

Sudan Hansraj: He is a Full Professor of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics in the Astrophysics Research Centre of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's School of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science. Prof Hansraj is a member of the South African Tertiary Mathematics Olympiad (SATMO) and a life member of the International Society for General Relativity and Gravitation (ISGRG).

Nic Heideman: He is a contract Lecturer in the University of Cape Town's Mathematics Department. Additionally, he is an Emeritus Associate Professor of Mathematics at Rhodes University. He has taught Mathematics and Elementary Statistics at undergraduate and postgraduate levels at university.

The panel has the mandate to fully investigate the matter and submit its final report to Umalusi. The report will be shared publicly on 16 January 2023 during the media briefing on the approval of the release of the 2022 examination results of the different assessment bodies.

The CEO of Umalusi, Dr Mafu Rakometsi, says: "Umalusi wishes to restate two points. The first is that the investigation will in no way delay the release of the NSC results. As per the approved schedule, the results will be approved on 16 January 2023 by the Executive Committee (EXCO) of Umalusi Council and the Minister of Basic Education will release the results to the public on 19 January 2023. Secondly, Umalusi wants to reassure the public that it will do everything humanly possible to ensure that no candidate is disadvantaged by the error in Question 5.1."

In order to allow the due process to unfold unhindered and to protect the independence of the work of the panel, Umalusi will answer questions on this matter when the report is released to the public on 16 January 2023.

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