The MEC for Education in KwaZulu-Natal, Senzo Mchunu and Senior General Manager [Curriculum Management and Delivery], Edward Mosuwe, visited Marking Centres in Uthungulu District on the 05th December 2012. The purpose of this visit by both the MEC and the SGM was to monitor the credibility of the examination process and to check if marking was proceeding without any irregularities.

The first centre visited by the MEC was Kwadlangezwa High School just outside Empangeni. On his arrival, the MEC remarked about the level of security at the gate. The security guards who search everyone entering and exiting the marking centre did not spare the MEC – he was subjected to the same kind of search routine that is accorded to everyone entering the centre. Speaking to the markers at Kwadlangezwa, the MEC thanked them for having sacrificed their family time to execute this very significant task of marking learners’ scripts. “We want to say we don’t take for granted what you are doing here. We also want to request you to ensure that you are alert at all times so that you don’t give learners more or less than they deserve,” said the MEC. From Kwadlangezwa, the MEC proceeded to Esikhawini FET College where he also expressed his contentment about the way things are going. “After a long day of marking our children’s scripts, please make sure that you exercise and stretch your body so that by the time you wake up on the next day, you are more than ready to execute this important task,” quipped the MEC.

The SGM Curriculum Delivery and Management also visited Eshowe High School and Eshowe FET College to monitor the process and administration of marking where he expressed his satisfaction with the manner marking is being administered in these two centres. “We are happy with what we are witnessing – it gives us hope that our learners are going to get exactly what they deserve. This marking process must be able to separate those who qualify from those who don’t,” said Mr Mosuwe.

Marking of external examinations is not a simple process. It is a professional and administrative exercise that requires extensive diligence to ensure that there is fairness, inter-marker and intra-marker consistency. The accuracy and reliability of the marking process is closely related to the ability of markers to make sound professional judgements when interacting with the responses of learners who have been in the system for twelve long years.
The logistics of the marking process in KwaZulu-Natal are huge. A total of 70 papers will be marked all over the province for 132 585 full-time candidates and 24 873 part time candidates. There are 28 marking centres in the province of KwaZulu-Natal where 1 799 028 scripts are going to be marked. For the management of marking centres, there are 70 Chief Markers of whom 5 are Subject Advisors. To support the marking process there are 202 Deputy Chief Markers and 1512 Senior Markers to supervise 7 650 Markers. Marking started on the 2nd of December and will end on the 15th December 2012.

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