

**MINISTRY**

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**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1775 [NW2083E]**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.: No. 27 of 2016**

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**DATE OF REPLY: 26 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**1775. Ms D Kohler (DA) asked the Minister of Public Works:**

With regard to the 2014-15 annual report of the Council for the Built Environment (CBE), which noted that 51 of 170 applications to the Engineering Council of South Africa for Recognition of Prior Learning were not accepted in the specified financial year, (a) what were the reasons for each of the specified applications not being accepted and (b) how does the CBE plan to reduce the high proportion of unaccepted applications? **NW2083E**

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**REPLY:**

**The Minister of Public Works**

(a) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) considers practicing individuals in the professions who do not have a formal qualification in their field of work. RPL enables the affected individuals to be recognised as either professionals or candidate professionals under the statutory-determined professional designations. Their recognition is based on a demonstration of competence against learning outcomes required for a National Qualification Framework (NQF) aligned qualification.

The reasons for rejection of applications were as follows:

* Inadequate exposure for candidates in other areas within the workplace where they are required to be competent.
* Difficulty in securing professionally registered mentors (lack of access to competent mentors also contributes to the barriers and this is linked to the lack of structured in-service training programmes).
* Incomplete reporting by the person applying for RPL and lack of supporting portfolio of evidence (this is one of the major reasons faced by applicants). This can be attributed to the applicants’ lack of clarity on the knowledge areas to be covered to assist with their progression in line with their Built Environment Professional Councils (BEPCs) required competency outcomes. Some of applicants have reported that they find the process of compilation of the Portfolio of Evidence to be onerous and highly demanding involved process, thus applicants fail to submit all required information.

(b) The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) and the six BEPCs are implementing the following interventions:

* Review of the RPL frameworks of the six BEPCs to ensure a fair and equitable process.
* Recording of interviews to monitor and promote transparency and consistent application of policy.
* Introduction of an on-line self-testing portal. This is done by the individual prior to submission of the application. The individual tests whether he/she is ready to start the application process.
* Identify programmes or courses to support applicants where they fall short.
* Assist candidates, who are struggling to complete the candidacy programme, by introducing structured candidacy programmes.
* Mentorship programme (assisting applicants in finding registered mentors to monitor the quality of the reports).
* Provide timeous feedback, in order to ensure applicants submit complete applications.