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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 488**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 4 OF 2023**

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

Whether, in view of the fact that education is a key catalyst of economic emancipation, and with open and distance education being designed to serve as a tool to make higher education accessible to everyone and everywhere (details furnished), his department has any plans in place to partner with higher education institutions to create open-access online short courses for South Africans, especially the youth, who are unable to afford formal education and do not qualify for funding; if not, why not; if so, what are the details of the plans?

**NW533E**

**REPLY:**

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) has Guides to Good Practice for the Quality Management of Short Courses. Universities and private higher education institutions are engaged in offering short courses that, where appropriate, could lead to part qualifications or qualifications. This is done to enable institutions to meet the rapidly increasing demand to equip both the young and mature members of the public with knowledge and skills.

The University of Cape Town (UCT) offers a suite of free online short courses that are hosted in partnership with Futurelearn, Getsmarter and Coursera. There are no entry requirements, a participant can choose to purchase a certificate upon completion.

The partnership with Coursera was launched in partnership with the Ministry of Communication and Digital Technologies so that free online courses are made available to young people.

The University of Johannesburg offers free fully online courses to members of the public.

The University of the Witwatersrand also] offers free online courses. These courses are on the edX platform. Like UCT the online courses are free, participants may purchase the certificates of completion. The Department of Higher Education and Training (the Department) has also adopted Massive Open Online Courses or offering of free online courses to increase access as per the HE ACT.