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SENATE

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Prepared and submitted by the Committee on Education, Arts and Culture; Labor, Employment and Human Resource Development; and Finance with Senators Villanueva and Escudero as authors

AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (PQF)
AND ESTABLISHING THE PQF-NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Qualifications
2 Framework (PQF) Act of 2017."
3

4 **SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy.** In line with the Constitutional guarantee for the State to
5 promote the right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all levels, the State shall
6 establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education
7 relevant to the needs of the people and society.
8

9 Recognizing the important role of education and training in national development, it is
10 hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the Philippine Qualifications
11 Framework (PQF) to encourage lifelong learning of individuals, provide employees specific
12 training standards and qualifications aligned with industry standards, ensure that training and
13 educational institutions comply with specific standards and are accountable for achieving
14 corresponding learning outcomes, and provide government with a common taxonomy and
15 qualifications typology as bases for recognizing education and training programs as well as the
16 qualifications formally awarded and their equivalents.
17

18 **SEC. 3. Definition of Terms.** For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby
19 defined:
20

- 21 (A.) **Basic Education** refers to the education intended to meet basic learning needs which
22 provides the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses
23 kindergarten, elementary and secondary education as well as alternative learning systems
24 for out-of-school youth and those with special needs.
25
- 26 (B.) **CHED** refers to the Commission on Higher Education.
27
- 28 (C.) **Council** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework National Coordinating Council.
29
- 30 (D.) **DBM** refers to the Department of Budget and Management.
31
- 32 (E.) **DepEd** refers to the Department of Education.
33
- 34 (F.) **DOLE** refers to the Department of Labor and Employment.
35
- 36 (G.) **DOST** refers to the Department of Science and Technology.
37
- 38 (H.) **DTI** refers to the Department of Trade and Industry.

- 1
2 (I.) **Higher Education** refers to post-secondary education offered usually by universities,
3 colleges, academies or professional/technical institutions with programs leading to
4 academic degrees at the baccalaureate level and academic degrees, diplomas or certificates
5 at the post-baccalaureate levels.
6
7 (J.) **NEDA** refers to the National Economic and Development Authority.
8
9 (K.) **PQF** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, a national policy which describes
10 the levels of educational qualifications and set the standards for qualification outcomes. It
11 is a quality assured national system for the development, recognition and award of
12 qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and values acquired in different
13 ways and methods by learners and workers of a certain country.
14
15 (L.) **PRC** refers to the Professional Regulation Commission.
16
17 (M.) **Qualification** refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved
18 learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community
19 requirements. A qualification confers official recognition of value in the labour market and
20 in further education and training.
21
22 (N.) **Secretariat** refers to the permanent technical secretariat that provides support to the PQF-
23 NCC.
24
25 (O.) **Technical Vocational Education and Training** refers to education involving the study of
26 technologies and related sciences, in addition to general education, as well as the
27 acquisition of practical skills relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life and
28 social life, comprises formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and non-
29 formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches.
30
31 (P.) **TESDA** refers to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.
32
33 (Q.) **Trifocalized Education and Training** refers to the shared administration of the education
34 system by three agencies responsible for each education level: The Department of
35 Education for basic education; the Technical Education Skills Development Authority for
36 technical-vocational education and training; and the Commission on Higher Education for
37 higher education.
38

39 **SEC. 4. Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF).** The PQF has the following objectives:

- 40
41 (A.) To adopt national standards and levels of learning outcomes of education;
42
43 (B.) To support the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies that enable
44 access to qualifications and assist individuals to move easily and readily between the
45 different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market;
46 and
47
48 (C.) To align with international qualifications framework (e.g. The ASEAN Qualifications
49 Reference Framework), thereby enhancing recognition of the value and comparability of
50 Philippine qualifications and supporting the mobility of Filipino students and workers.
51

52 **SEC. 5. Philippine Qualifications Framework-National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC).**
53 To harmonize and promote a seamless education and training system, the PQF National
54 Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) is hereby established. It shall be composed of the following:
55

- 56 (1.) **Secretary**, Department of Education (DepEd);
57
58 (2.) **Secretary**, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);

- 1
- 2 (3.) **Chairperson**, Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- 3
- 4 (4.) **Director General**, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA);
- 5
- 6 (5.) **Chairperson**, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC); AND
- 7
- 8 (6.) One representative of the economic sector.
- 9

10 The PQF-NCC shall be chaired by the DepEd Secretary.

11 The following are the powers and functions of the PQF-NCC:

- 12
- 13
- 14 (1.) Harmonizes qualifications levels across basic, technical vocational and higher education;
- 15
- 16 (2.) Aligns education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors contained in
- 17 the PQF;
- 18
- 19 (3.) Promotes the PQF and its elements including but not limited to their principles, key
- 20 features, definitions or terminologies, structure and governance arrangements and provides
- 21 information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
- 22
- 23 (4.) Rationalizes the quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education;
- 24
- 25 (5.) Develops and recognizes pathways and equivalencies;
- 26
- 27 (6.) Maintains the national registry of qualifications;
- 28
- 29 (7.) Ensures the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks of other
- 30 countries or regions;
- 31
- 32 (8.) Creates technical working groups in support of the development and implementation of the
- 33 PQF;
- 34
- 35 (9.) Represents the country in international fora or negotiations in line with Qualifications
- 36 agreements/arrangements;
- 37
- 38 (10.) Reviews and updates the PQF;
- 39
- 40 (11.) Provides regular feedback on the progress and accomplishments to the Office of the
- 41 President, the Senate of the Philippines and the House of Representatives with respect to
- 42 the implementation of the PQF; AND
- 43
- 44 (12.) Performs such other functions that may be related to the implementation of the PQF.
- 45

46 **SEC. 6. Establishment of Philippine Qualifications Framework-National**
47 **Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) Working Groups.** Working groups shall be established to
48 pursue the implementation of the PQF, especially in the areas of qualifications register, quality
49 assurance, pathways and equivalencies, information and guidelines and international alignment.
50

51 Each working group shall be chaired by a member-agency as may be designated by the
52 PQF-NCC.
53

54 **SEC. 7. Participation of the Industry Sector.** Industry sector representatives shall be
55 consulted and tapped in the development and implementation of the PQF to ensure the alignment
56 of educational outcomes with industry requirements and to the value of qualifications with the
57 workplace.
58

1 **SEC. 8. FRAMEWORK AND Level Descriptors.** The PQF shall incorporate the
2 qualifications level descriptors defined in terms of the following: knowledge, skills and values,
3 application, and degree of independence.
4

5 The PQF-NCC shall make detailed descriptors for each qualification level following the
6 principles of lifelong learning and the recognition of prior learning from previous informal
7 experiences while incorporating the learning standards in basic education, competency standards
8 of training regulations, and the policies and standards of higher education academic programs.
9 The PQF-NCC members shall jointly implement national pilot programs to determine its
10 relevance and applicability in all levels of education. The DOLE shall provide the necessary and
11 updated labor market information regarding demand for specific qualifications and emerging
12 occupations as bases for the prioritization of learning standards development.
13

14 **SEC. 9. Review of ASSESSMENT SYSTEM.** The PRC and CHED shall review the
15 system of assessment of learning outcomes and align them with THOSE of the PQF.
16

17 **SEC. 10. Technical Secretariat.** THE PQF-NCC shall organize a permanent Technical
18 Secretariat. The Secretariat may contract the services of technical experts and authorities on
19 relevant areas of concern such as equivalencies, accreditation, curriculum development,
20 educational measurement and testing.
21

22 The PQF-NCC shall determine THE structure, composition, staff qualifications and the
23 location of the permanent Technical Secretariat.
24

25 **SEC. 11. Identification of Priority Sectors.** As a preliminary approach to the
26 implementation of the PQF and to ensure its more focused implementation, CHED, TESDA and
27 DepEd, in consultation with industry, DOLE, PRC, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI),
28 the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and
29 Technology (DOST) and other related agencies, are directed to identify priority sectors and
30 programs for the PQF, taking into account labor market realities.
31

32 **SEC. 12. Support from Other Government AGENCIES.** DOST, NEDA, Department
33 of Budget and Management (DBM), and other related agencies are hereby mandated to extend
34 the necessary support and provide relevant inputs towards the effective implementation of the
35 PQF.
36

37 **SEC. 13. Appropriations.** The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this
38 Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of CHED, TESDA and
39 DepEd. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the
40 ensuing years shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.
41

42 **SEC. 14. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** The DepEd, CHED, TESDA, DOLE
43 and PRC, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall issue within ninety (90) days after the
44 effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.
45

46 **SEC. 15. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act or any part thereof shall be
47 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are separable, shall
48 remain in force and effect.
49

50 **SEC. 16. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts
51 thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or
52 modified accordingly.
53

54 **SEC. 17. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in
55 the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general Circulation.
56

57 *Approved,*