

Republic of the Philippine
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 1506



INTRODUCED BY REP. BELLAFLOR J. ANGARA-CASTILLO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It has often been said that "education is the greatest equalizer" as it provides the opportunity for the person to improve his lot and become successful in life. That is why, most parents not only dream of seeing their children earn a college degree, but also strive to put much premium on education and ensure the attainment of their dream for their children.

Higher education institutions in the country produce around 35,000 fresh graduates annually. However, it is a sad reality that most of these graduates experience difficulty in finding a job that suits their field of study. Often, the needs of the industry do not match the qualifications of the college graduate.

On the other hand, high school graduates who cannot afford the cost of college education often end up taking technical-vocational courses that qualify them to earn certificates or diplomas. Surprisingly, these tech-voc graduates are the ones who get sure jobs after the completion of non-degree courses because their training and skills match the available vacancies in the job market. This enables them not only to apply their skills in the workplace, but also to earn enough money to go back to school.

Through ladderized education, tech-voc graduates who wish to pursue higher education after earning enough to send them to school need not start all over again because their tech-voc education will be given appropriate credits in college. In effect, ladderized education will open up the pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of students and workers.

In view of the foregoing reasons, immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.


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AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN
TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER
EDUCATION

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Ladderized Education
Act of 2011.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – In line with the Constitutional guarantee for the
State to promote the right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all
levels and to establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and
integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and
contributory to national development, it is hereby declared the policy of the State
to institutionalize the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education
and training (TVET) and higher education to open the pathways of opportunities
for career and educational progression of students and workers, create a
seamless and borderless education, empower students and workers to exercise
options or to choose when to enter and exit in the educational ladder, and
provide job platforms at every exit as well as the opportunity to earn income.

The State likewise recognizes and supports the promotion and protection of the inherent academic freedom enjoyed by all institutions of higher learning. For this purpose, the government shall uphold the academic standards, equity principles, promptness and consistency of the applications/admissions and equivalency policies of higher education institutions (HEIs).

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

a. Articulation refers to a process which allows students to make the smooth transition from one course, program or educational level to the next without experiencing duplication of learning. The guiding principle of articulation is that no student should repeat the same course content for which credit has already been received, even if elsewhere or from another institution. In general, an articulated program allows a student to move from a technical-vocational (tech-voc) course to a College Degree Program, using the principle of Credit Transfer.

b. Credit refers to the value given to a course.

c. Credit Transfer refers to the recognition and carrying forward of credits that constitute overlapping learning, from TVET to a degree program.

d. Embedded Tech-Voc Qualification in a Ladderized Degree Program refers to the process of determining the TVET competencies/qualifications that lead to job platforms in the relevant higher education or bachelor's degree program. A student of a ladderized degree program can earn full TVET qualification should he/she choose to exit from the program and get a job.

e. Equivalency refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent academic credits to the competencies demonstrated by a student through assessment tests, thereby providing entry points to the next higher level qualification, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the student to continue to learn and/or to re-enter the educational program at a higher level without having to unnecessarily retake courses in which a student already has demonstrated competence and knowledge.

f. Job Platform refers to the gateway in the ladderized curriculum which one reaches upon acquiring enough skills and knowledge to seek and find employment.

g. Ladderized Education refers to the harmonization of all education and training mechanisms that allow students and workers to progress between Tech-Voc and College courses and programs, or vice-versa. It opens opportunities for career and educational advancement to students and workers, creates a seamless and borderless education and training system that will allow transfers in terms of flexibility entry and exit between Tech-Voc and College Degree Programs in the post-secondary school educational system.

h. Qualification refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved specific learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community requirements.

i. Recognition of Prior Learning refers to the acknowledgment of a person's skills and knowledge through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit for acquired competencies.

SEC. 4. National Qualifications Framework. – The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) are hereby mandated to closely coordinate and effectively implement a unified national qualifications framework that establishes equivalency pathways and access ramps in ladderized education, allowing for easier transitions and progressions between TVET and higher education. The framework shall include qualifications and articulation mechanisms, such as, but not necessarily limited to the following: credit transfer, embedded TVET qualification in ladderized degree programs, post-TVET bridging programs, enhanced equivalency, adoption of ladderized curricula/programs, and accreditation and/or recognition of prior learning.

For this purpose, CHED and TESDA shall design harmonized guidelines and equivalency competency courses to enhance the delivery of high-quality tech-voc and higher education courses, synchronize standards and upgrade

curriculum design per discipline and adopt a strategic implementation scheme, including a massive consultation and information dissemination scheme. In so doing, CHED and TESDA shall continue exploring and developing other mechanisms and systems that will allow the interface between TVET and higher education with the end in view of creating a seamless and borderless education system.

SEC. 5. *Priority Disciplines.* As a preliminary approach to the implementation of the ladderized program and to ensure its more focused implementation, CHED and TESDA, in consultation with the industry, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and other related agencies, are directed to identify priority disciplines and programs for ladderization, taking into account labor market realities. CHED and TESDA shall implement the ladderization of other disciplines, other than those presently being implemented, should these be found necessary and beneficial, based on a comprehensive study on their viability.

SEC. 6. *Enhancement of the Ladderized Education Program (LEP).* – CHED and TESDA, in consultation with the PRC, are directed to jointly devise systems, procedures, and mechanisms as well as to issue, amend and update existing implementing guidelines, as necessary, for the efficient and effective implementation of LEP and to ensure that the objectives of the program are met. Incentives may be given to HEIs and Technical-Vocational Institutions to further encourage wider participation in the LEP.

For this purpose, a permanent LEP National Coordinating Technical Committee, composed of CHED and TESDA personnel, is hereby established.

The CHED and TESDA shall ensure that there are designated personnel at the regional and provincial levels responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of LEP nationwide.

SEC. 7. *Support from Other Government Agencies.* – The PRC, DOLE, Department of Education (DepED), DOST, DTI, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the NEDA are hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant inputs towards the effective implementation of the ladderized system of education.

SEC. 8. *Scholarships, Grants and Loans.* – To ensure the effective implementation and greater nationwide impact of the program and its accessibility to the students and workers, CHED and TESDA shall endeavor to include in their respective budgets the provision of scholarships, grants and loans to deserving students and workers availing themselves of the ladderized system of education, in addition to the present scholarship programs being implemented by CHED and TESDA.

SEC. 9. *Enabling Clause for HEIs.* – To encourage the widest enjoyment of the benefit of ladderized education, HEIs whose curricula have been recognized by the CHED may avail of the ladderization program without need for permit either from CHED or TESDA: *Provided, That*, the proposed ladderized program is within the purview of the curricular matter and that the minimum curricular requirements under the relevant guidelines of CHED and TESDA are complied with.

For this purpose, however, the HEI shall be required to submit to the LEP National Technical Committee the copy of the curriculum for the proposed ladderized program for monitoring and for potential objective inputs from the technical experts in the said LEP National Technical Committee.

SEC. 10. *Academic Freedom.* – Nothing in this bill shall be construed to restrict the HEI in the exercise of its academic freedom. The HEI shall retain the right to assess the level and standard of previously completed TVET programs by an applicant-student in a manner that is transparent and objective, incorporating therein its own admission requirements. The applicant-student must gain

admission to the HEI's undergraduate program by meeting all the usual criteria and program requisites and such other requirements by the HEI.

SEC. 11. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of CHED and TESDA. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the respective annual appropriations of CHED and TESDA in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 12. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – The CHED and TESDA, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in higher and tech-voc education, shall issue within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 13. *Separability Clause.* - If any provision of this Act or any part thereof shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are separable, shall remain in force and effect.

SEC. 14. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

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

Approved,