

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

17TH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **5586**



Introduced by REP. EVELINA G. ESCUDERO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Philippines has been in the forefront of international labor market. Our Overseas Filipino Workers excel in the workplace. Because of globalization, international standards are set so that the quality of the workforce will be maintained. National Qualification Frameworks has become the norm in the global market, and we as a country need to establish our very own framework so that we will remain competitive.

Changes in our educational system, especially the enhanced basic education law, have carved new pathways for our students to take. Our graduates must be given the ability to match their skills with the demands of the market, similarly, from the perspective of the employers, they should be able to identify the skill set that they need for the positions they wish to fill up.

The PQF can thus bridge the employee and the employer so that a perfect match can be determined by a simple glance at the qualifications of the person.

With these in mind, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Escudero", written over a horizontal line.

EVELINA G. ESCUDERO

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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:

SECTION 1. Short Title. This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) Act of 2017.”

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, the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.

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

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

- (A.) Basic Education refers to the education intended to meet basic learning needs which provides the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses kindergarten, elementary and secondary education as well as alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth and those with special needs.
- (B.) CHED refers to the Commission on Higher Education.
- (C.) Council refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework National Coordinating Council.

- (D.) DBM refers to the Department of Budget and Management.
- (E.) DepEd refers to the Department of Education.
- (F.) DOLE refers to the Department of Labor and Employment.
- (G.) DOST refers to the Department of Science and Technology.
- (H.) DTI refers to the Department of Trade and Industry.
- (I.) Higher Education refers to Post Secondary education offered usually by Universities, colleges, academies, or professional/technical institutions with programs leading to academic degrees at the baccalaureate levels academic degrees, diplomas or certificates at the post-baccalaureate levels.
- (J.) NEDA refers to the National Economic and Development Authority.
- (K.) PQF refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, a national policy which describes the levels of educational qualifications and set the standards for qualification outcomes. It is a quality assured national system for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and values acquired in different ways and methods by learners and workers of a certain country.
- (L.) PRC refers to the Professional Regulation Commission.
- (M.) Qualification refers to a Formal Certification that a person has successfully achieved learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community requirements. a qualification confers official recognition of value in the labor market and in further education and training.
- (N.) Secretariat refers to the permanent technical secretariat that provides support to the PQF-NCC.
- (O.) Technical Vocational Education and Training refers to education involving the study of technologies and related sciences, in addition to general education, as well as the acquisition of practical skills relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life and social life, comprises formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and non-formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches.
- (P.) TESDA refers to the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.
- (Q.) Trifocalized Education and Training refers to the shared administration of the education system by three agencies responsible for each education level: the department of education for basic education; the technical education skills development authority for technical-vocational education and training; and the commission on higher education for higher education.

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

- (A.) To adopt national standards and levels of learning outcomes of education;
- (B.) To support the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies that enable access to qualifications and assist individuals to move easily and readily between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market; and
- (C.) To align with international qualifications framework (e.g. the Asean qualifications reference framework), thereby enhancing recognition of the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications and supporting the mobility of Filipino students and workers.

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

- (1.) Secretary, Department of Education (DepEd);
- (2.) Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- (3.) Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
- (4.) Director General, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA);
- (5.) Chairperson, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC); AND
- (6.) One representative of the of the economic sector.

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

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

- (1.) Harmonizes qualification levels across basic, technical vocational and higher education;
- (2.) Aligns education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors contained in the PQF;
- (3.) Promotes the PQF and its elements including but not limited to their principles, key features, definitions or terminologies, structure and governance arrangements and provides information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
- (4.) Rationalizes THE quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education;
- (5.) Develops and recognizes pathways and equivalencies;
- (6.) Maintains the national registry of qualifications;
- (7.) Ensures the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks of other countries or regions;

- (8.) Creates technical working groups in support of the development and implementation of the PQF;
- (9.) Represents the country in international fora or negotiations in line with qualifications agreements/arrangements;
- (10.) Reviews and updates the PQF;
- (11.) Provides regular feedback on the progress and accomplishments to the Office of the President, the senate of the Philippines and the House of Representatives with respect to the implementation of the PQF; and
- (12.) Performs such other functions that may be related to the implementation of the PQF.

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

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

SEC. 7. Participation of the Industry Sector. industry sector representatives shall be consulted and tapped in the development and implementation of the pqf to ensure the alignment of educational outcomes with industry requirements and to the value of qualifications with the workplace.

SEC. 8. Framework and Level Descriptors. The PQF shall incorporate the qualifications level descriptors defined in terms of the following: knowledge, skills and values, application, and degree of independence.

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

SEC. 9. Review of Assessment System. The PRC and CHED shall review the system of assessment of learning outcomes and align them with those of the PQF.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEC. 15. 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. 16. 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. 17. 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,