

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. **5600**



Introduced by the Honorable Ann K. Hofer

EXPLANATORY NOTE

On October 1, 2012, Executive Order (EO) No. 83 Series of 2012 entitled "*Institutionalization of the Philippine Qualifications Framework*" has been issued. The Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) is a national policy that describes the levels of educational qualifications and sets the standards for qualifications outcome.

It is a quality-assured system based on standards of knowledge, skills, and values acquired in different ways and methods by learners and workers. It is a competency-based, labor-market driven and assessment-based qualification recognition which has the following objectives:

- a) adopt national standards and levels of outcomes of education;
- b) support the development of pathways and equivalences; and
- c) align with international qualifications frameworks to support the mobility of workers.

Although a law is yet to be enacted to institutionalize the PQF, Section 4 of Republic Act 10647 or the Ladderized Education Act of 2014 already recognized the significance of the PQF and establishment of the PQF-NCC as the main vehicle for the development of a ladderized education program.

This bill, therefore, seeks to institutionalize the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) to encourage lifelong learning of individuals, provide employers specific training standards and qualifications that are aligned to industry standards, ensure the training and educational institutions adhere to specific standards and are accountable for achieving the same, and provide the government with common taxonomy and typology of qualifications as bases for granting approvals to stakeholders.

This bill shall likewise establish the National Coordinating Council for Education that will coordinate and harmonize education and training policies at all levels of education in the country.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ann K. Hofer', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

ANN K. HOFER
Second District, Zamboanga Sibugay

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HOUSE BILL NO. 5600

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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 House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

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

4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* Pursuant to 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 In recognition of the important role of education and training in national development,
10 it is 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.* As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:
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- 20 (a) *Basic Education* refers to the education intended to meet basic learning needs which
21 provides the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based. It encompasses
22 kindergarten, elementary and secondary education as well as alternative learning
23 systems for out-of-school youth and those with special needs;

- 24
25
26
27 (b) *Higher Education* refers to post-secondary education offered usually by
28 universities, colleges, academies, or professional/technical institutions with
29 programs leading to academic degrees at the baccalaureate level and academic
30 degrees, diplomas or certificates at the post-baccalaureate levels;
31
32 (c) *PQF* refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, a national policy which
33 describes the levels of educational qualifications and set the standards for
34 qualification outcomes. It is a quality assured national system for the development,
35 recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and
36 values acquired in different ways and methods by learners and workers of a certain
37 country;
38
39 (d) *Qualification* refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved
40 learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community
41 requirements. A qualification confers official recognition of value in the labor
42 market and in further education and training;
43
44 (e) *Secretariat* refers to the permanent technical secretariat that provides support to the
45 PQF-NCC;
46
47 (f) *Technical Vocational Education and Training* refers to education involving the
48 study of technologies and related sciences, in addition to general education, as well
49 as the acquisition of practical skills relating to occupations in various sectors of
50 economic life and social life, comprises formal (organized programs as part of the
51 school system) and non-formal (organized classes outside the school system)
52 approaches; and
53
54 (g) *Trifocalized Education and Training* refers to the shared administration of the
55 education system by three agencies responsible for each education level: the
56 department of education for basic education; the technical education skills
57 development authority for technical-vocational education and training; and the
58 commission on higher education for higher education.
59

60 SEC. 4. *Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF)*. The PQF has the following
61 objectives:
62

- 63 (a) To adopt national standards and levels of learning outcomes of education;
64
65 (b) To support the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies that
66 enable access to qualifications and assist individuals to move easily and readily
67 between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and
68 the labor market; and
69
70 (c) To align with international qualifications framework (e.g., the ASEAN
71 Qualifications Reference Framework), thereby enhancing recognition of the value
72 and comparability of Philippine qualifications and supporting the mobility of
73 Filipino students and workers.

74
75 SEC. 5. *Philippine Qualifications Framework-National Coordinating Council (PQF-*
76 *NCC)*. To harmonize and promote a seamless education and training system, the PQF National
77 Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) is hereby established. It shall be composed of the following:
78

- 79 (a) Secretary, Department of Education (DepEd);
80
81 (b) Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
82
83 (c) Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education (CHED);
84
85 (d) Director General, Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
86 (TESDA);
87
88 (e) Chairperson, Professional Regulation Commission (PRC); and
89
90 (f) One representative of the Economic Sector.

91
92 The PQF-NCC shall be chaired by the DepEd Secretary.
93

94 The following are the powers and functions of the PQF-NCC:
95

- 96 (a) Harmonizes qualification levels across basic, technical vocational and higher
97 education;
98
99 (b) Aligns education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors
100 contained in the PQF;
101
102 (c) Promotes the PQF and its elements including but not limited to their principles, key
103 features, definitions or terminologies, structure and governance arrangements and
104 provides information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
105
106 (d) Rationalizes the quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education;
107
108 (e) Develops and recognizes pathways and equivalencies;
109
110 (f) Maintains the national registry of qualifications;
111
112 (g) Ensures the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks
113 of other countries or regions;
114
115 (h) Creates Technical Working Group in support of the development and
116 implementation of the PQF;
117
118 (i) Represents the country in international fora or negotiations in line with
119 qualifications agreements/arrangements;
120
121 (j) Reviews and updates the PQF;
122

(k) Submits to the Office of the President, Senate of the Philippines and House of Representatives report on the progress, updates and accomplishments in the realization of the PQF; and

(l) 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.* To pursue the implementation of the PQF, working groups shall be established, 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.* The 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 part or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, other provisions, which are not affected thereby, shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, rules, regulations, proclamations, executive orders or parts thereof inconsistent with this Act are hereby modified or amended 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) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,