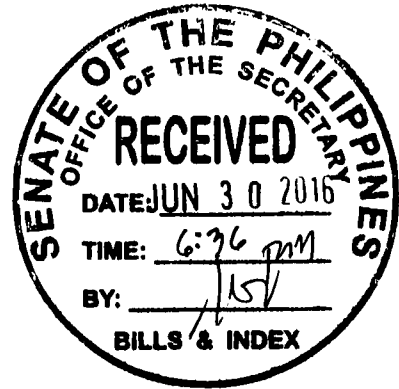


3
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



SENATE

S. B. No. 211

Introduced by SENATOR JOEL "TESDAMAN" VILLANUEVA

**AN ACT
INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS
FRAMEWORK (PQF) AND ESTABLISHING THE NATIONAL
COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Throughout the world, raising skills levels, reforming education and training curriculum and improving qualifications are among the priorities. One key concern is strengthening the relationship between education and training systems on one hand, and the labor markets, on the other. National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) are eyed as useful policy to achieve this goal. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the development of NQFs has been a major international trend in reforming national education and training systems since the late 1990s.

In 2012, President Benigno Simeon Aquino III issued Executive Order No. 83, establishing the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) to harmonize basic education, technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and tertiary education into a nationwide schedule of skills and competencies.

With the PQF, students can gain a clearer picture of the competencies they need for their job interests while employers are able to easily identify the basic work-skills their employees must possess. Hence, the PQF can significantly reduce job-skills mismatch in the Philippines. It can also boost the international confidence among Filipino workers by making them more competitive and employable. Furthermore, it can promote lifelong learning.

Through adequate involvement of stakeholders, especially Congress, there can be greater trust and credibility on the PQF. The ILO indicated that achieving the objectives of a National Qualifications Framework required a range of other actions, including appropriate laws and policies, appropriate institutions, budgetary allocations, infrastructure development, among others.

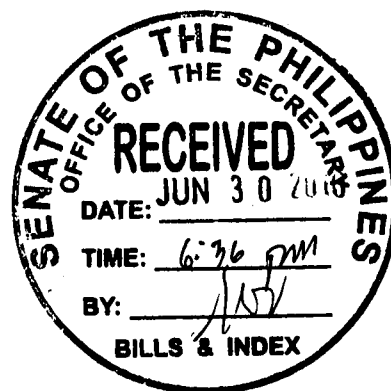
The gargantuan tasks are ahead in reforming the education system to rise to the challenges of the 21st century. While the K to 12 system has transformed the country's basic education curriculum, the PQF will harmonize and weave together basic education, TVET, and higher education into a unified and quality-assured system.

The passage of a Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) Law is earnestly sought to ensure that the qualifications needed to meet the country's economic and social needs are of good quality, provide flexibility and progression for learners, and enjoy international recognition.

Respectfully submitted.


SENATOR JOEL "TESDAMAN" VILLANUEVA

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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 the "Philippine
2 Qualifications Framework (PQF) Act of 2016."

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

8 Recognizing the important role of education and training in national
9 development, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the
10 Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) to encourage lifelong learning of
11 individuals, provide employers specific training standards and qualifications
12 that are aligned to industry standards, ensure the training and educational
13 institutions adhere to specific standards and are accountable for achieving the
14 same, and provide the government with common taxonomy and typology of
15 qualifications as bases for granting approvals to stakeholders.

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

3 **(A.) Council** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework National
4 Coordinating Council.

5 **(B.) Secretariat** refers to the permanent technical secretariat organized from
6 the present staff complements of DepEd, TESDA, PRC, DOLE, and CHED.

7 **(C.) DepEd** refers to the Department of Education.

8 **(D.) TESDA** refers to the Technical Education and Skills Development
9 Authority.

10 **(E.) CHED** refers to the Commission on Higher Education.

11 **(F.) DOLE** refers to the Department of Labor and Employment.

12 **(G.) PRC** refers to the Professional Regulation Commission.

13 **(H.) DBM** refers to the Department of Budget and Management.

14 **(I.) DTI** refers to the Department of Trade and Industry.

15 **(J.) DOST** refers to the Department of Science and Technology.

16 **(K.) NEDA** refers to the National Economic and Development Authority.

17 **(L.) PQF** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, a national policy
18 which describes the levels of educational qualifications and sets the standards
19 for qualification outcomes. It is a quality assured national system for the
20 development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of
21 knowledge, skills and values acquired in different ways and methods by
22 learners and workers of a certain country.

23 **(M.) Basic Education** refers to the education intended to meet basic learning
24 needs which lays the foundation on which subsequent learning can be based.
25 It encompasses early childhood, elementary and high school education as
26 well as alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth and adult learners
27 and includes education for those with special needs. (RA No. 9155 S. 2011)

1 **(N.) Technical Vocational Education and Training** refers to the education
2 process where it involves, in addition to general education, the study of
3 technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills
4 relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life and social life,
5 comprises formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and non-
6 formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches (UNESCO)

7 **(O.) Higher Education** refers to the stage of formal education requiring
8 secondary and post-secondary education covering the programs on: (a) all
9 courses of study leading to bachelor's degree; and (b) all degree courses of
10 study beyond bachelor's degree level.

11 **(P.) Qualification** refers to a package of competencies describing a particular
12 function or job role existing in an economic sector, covering the work activities
13 required to undertake a particular job role.

14 **(Q.) Trifocalized Education and Training** refers to the three levels of
15 Philippine education system: basic education, technical-vocational education
16 and training, and higher education.

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

19 (A.) Adoption of national standards and levels for outcomes of education;

20 (B.) Supporting the development and maintenance of pathways and
21 equivalencies, which provide access to qualifications and assist people to
22 move easily and readily between the different education and training sectors
23 and between these sectors and the labor market; and

24 (C.) Alignment with international qualifications framework to support the
25 national and international mobility of workers through increased recognition of
26 the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications.

27 **SEC. 5. Philippine Qualifications Framework-National Coordinating**
28 **Council (PQF-NCC).** In order to harmonize and promote seamless education
29 and training despite the trifocalized management of the Philippine education
30 system, the PQF National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) is hereby
31 established. It shall be composed of the following:

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

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

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

- 9 (1.) Creates technical working groups in support of the detailing and
- 10 implementation of the PQF;
- 11 (2.) Harmonizes the levels of qualifications with all levels of education;
- 12 (3.) Aligns education standards and learning outcomes to the level descriptors
- 13 contained herein;
- 14 (4.) Develops and recognizes pathways and equivalencies;
- 15 (5.) Discuss and agree on the elements of the PQF including but not limited to
- 16 their principles, key features, definitions or terminologies, structure and
- 17 governance arrangements;
- 18 (6.) Reviews and updates the PQF;
- 19 (7.) Provides information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
- 20 (8.) Establishes a quality assurance mechanism;
- 21 (9.) Maintains the national registry of qualifications;
- 22 (10.) Ensures the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification
- 23 frameworks of other countries;
- 24 (11.) Represents the country in international fora or negotiations on
- 25 Qualification agreements/arrangements;
- 26 (12.) Provides regular feedback on the progress and accomplishments to the

- 1 Office of the President with respect to the implementation of the PQF; and
2 (13.) Performs such other functions that may be related to the implementation
3 of the PQF.

4 **SEC. 6. Establishment of Philippine Qualifications Framework-National**
5 **Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) Working Groups.** The following working
6 groups are hereby established to pursue the implementation of the PQF
7 through the performance of the following functions:

8 **(1.) Qualifications Register**

9 (A.) Establish, maintain/update the database of technical vocational education
10 and training (TVET) and professional qualifications aligned with the
11 descriptors of the PQF in coordination with the pertinent offices of CHED,
12 DOLE, PRC and DepEd;

13 (B.) Provide regular, timely data/information to the PQF Secretariat and to the
14 employers, trainers, trainees and other stakeholders;

15 (C.) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

16 **(2.) Quality Assurance**

17 (A.) Develop PQF quality procedures manuals;

18 (B.) Facilitate the conduct of evaluation and compliance audits/reviews vis-à-vis set
19 standards;

20 (C.) Provide recommendations to the PQF-NCC based on the results of the
21 evaluation;

22 (D.) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

23 **(3.) Pathways and Equivalencies**

24 (A.) Establish equivalency pathways and equivalency system for seamless education
25 transfer and/or progression between education levels corresponding to the PQF
26 levels;

27 (B.) Develop a National System of Credit Transfer;

1 (C.) Facilitate the enhancement and adoption of the Ladderized Education Program
2 consistent with the PQF;

3 (D.) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

4 **(4.) Information and Guidelines**

5 (A.) Formulate guidelines, circulars and policy issuances for approval by the PQF-
6 NCC;

7 (B.) Develop information, education and communication (IEC) materials to promote
8 and advocate the PQF;

9 (C.) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

10 **(5.) International Alignment**

11 (A.) Conduct researches/studies for comparability/benchmarking of Philippine
12 qualifications with other countries and regional/international groupings;

13 (B.) Coordinate with professional organizations in the pursuit of mutual recognition
14 arrangements/agreements;

15 (C.) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

16 The PQF-NCC may create additional and/or modify existing working groups and
17 review their functions as deemed necessary. Each working group shall be chaired by
18 a member-agency as maybe designated by the PQF-NCC.

19 **SEC. 7. Participation of the Industry Sector.** Industry sector representatives shall
20 be consulted and tapped in the detailing and application of the PQF to ensure
21 alignment of educational outcomes to job requirements.

22 **SEC. 8. Level Descriptors.** The PQF shall incorporate the Qualifications Level
23 Descriptors defined in terms of the following: knowledge, skills and values,
24 application, and degree of independence to be determined by the PQF-NCC.

25 **SEC. 9. Learning Standards.** DepEd, TESDA and CHED shall make detailed
26 descriptors for each qualification level based on learning standards in basic
27 education, competency standards of training regulations, and the policies and
28 standards of higher education academic programs. They shall jointly implement

1 national pilot programs to determine its relevance and applicability in all levels of
2 education. The DOLE shall provide the necessary labor market information especially
3 on the highly in-demand and emerging occupations as bases for the prioritization of
4 learning standards development.

5 **SEC. 10. Review of Licensure Examinations.** The PRC and CHED shall review the
6 framework and contents of the licensure examinations of each of the professions and
7 align them with that of the PQF.

8 **SEC. 11. Technical Secretariat.** To ensure efficient and effective implementation,
9 DepEd, TESDA and CHED shall organize from their present staff complements a
10 permanent Technical Secretariat. The Secretariat may contract the services of
11 technical experts and authorities on relevant areas of concern such as equivalencies,
12 accreditation, curriculum development, educational measurement and testing.

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

15 **SEC. 12. Identification of Priority Sectors.** As a preliminary approach to the
16 implementation of the PQF and to ensure its more focused implementation, CHED,
17 TESDA and DepED, in consultation with the industry, DOLE, PRC, the Department of
18 Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development Authority
19 (NEDA), the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) and other related
20 agencies, are directed to identify priority sectors and programs for the PQF, taking
21 into account labor market realities.

22 **SEC. 14. Support from Other Government - PRC, DOLE, DOST, NEDA,**
23 **Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and other related Agencies are**
24 **hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant inputs**
25 **towards the effective implementation of the PQF.**

26 **SEC. 18. Appropriations.** The amount necessary for the initial implementation of
27 this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of CHED,
28 TESDA and DepEd. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous
29 implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the respective
30 annual appropriations of CHED, TESDA and DepEd in the General Appropriations
31 Act.

1 **SEC. 19. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** The DepEd, CHED, TESDA,
2 DOLE and PRC, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in basic, higher and
3 technical-vocational education and training shall issue within sixty (60) days after the
4 effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this
5 Act.

6 **SEC. 20. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Act or any part thereof shall
7 be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are
8 separable, shall remain in force and effect.

9 **SEC. 21. Repealing Clause.** All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations or
10 parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
11 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

12 **SEC. 22. Effectivity.** This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication
13 in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general Circulation.

Approved.