



**IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS  
OF  
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10968:  
AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK  
(PQF), ESTABLISHING THE PQF-NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL (NCC)  
AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR**

Pursuant to Section 14 of Republic Act No. 10968, "An Act Institutionalizing the Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF), Establishing the PQF-National Coordinating Council (NCC) and Appropriating Funds Therefor", hereinafter referred to by its short title "PQF Act", the Department of Education (DepEd), the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), in consultation with relevant stakeholders, hereby issue the following rules and regulations for the effective implementation of PQF Act.

**RULE I: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1. Short Title.** This shall be known and cited as the "*Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the PQF Act*".

**SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** As provided in Section 2 of the PQF Act, pursuant to 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.

In recognition of 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 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.

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### SECTION 3. Definition of Terms. As used in this Rules:

- a. **Assessment** is the process of appraising learning outcomes in terms of the domains of knowledge, skills, values, application, and degree of independence of an individual against predefined criteria or standards;
- b. **Basic Education** refers to that part of the educational system intended to meet basic learning needs and 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;
- c. **Career Progression** in professional life is the process of developing or moving towards a more advanced state in a person's qualifications, job, title, position, or profession; it outlines the route one may follow in order to reach identified career development goals;
- d. **Equivalency** refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent credits to the competencies demonstrated by a learner through assessment, thereby providing entry points to different levels of qualifications, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the learner to continue to learn and to re-enter the educational and training programs at various higher levels without retaking courses on which a learner has already demonstrated competence and knowledge;
- e. **Formal Education** refers to the systematic and deliberate process of hierarchically structured and sequential learning corresponding to elementary, secondary, technical-vocational education and training, and higher education.
- f. **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 level and academic degrees, diplomas or certificates at the post-baccalaureate levels;
- g. **Informal Education** is a lifelong process of learning by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experiences at home, at work, at play and from life itself.
- h. **Learning outcomes** are clear statements of what a learner can be expected to know, understand and/or do as a result of a learning experience;
- i. **Level Descriptor** is a general statement that summarizes the learning outcomes appropriate to a specific level in the PQF grouped in domains of learning. It describes what an individual should be able to know, perform or demonstrate at a particular level.

- j. **Lifelong learning** refers to all learning activities whether formal, non-formal or informal, undertaken throughout life, which results in improving knowledge, know-how, skills, competencies and/or qualifications for personal, social and/or professional reasons;
- k. **Non-Formal Education** is any organized, systematic educational activity carried outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to a segment of the population. This shall also cover learning outcomes derived from professional development in the practice of profession which leads to qualifications.
- l. **Pathways** refers to mechanisms or access ramps which provide access to qualifications and assist people to move easily and readily between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market;
- m. **Qualification** refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved specific 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. **Recognition of prior learning** refers to the acknowledgment of a person's skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit;
- o. **Technical Vocational Education and Training** refers to the education involving the study of technology-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, and which comprise formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and non-formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches;
- p. **Trifocalized Education and Training** refers to the shared administration of the education system by the three (3) agencies responsible for each education level: Department of Education (DepEd) for basic education; the Technical Education and Skills-development Authority (TESDA) for technical-vocational education and training; and Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for higher education;

## **RULE II: PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

**SECTION 4. Philippine Qualifications Framework.** Pursuant to Section 4, Paragraph 1 of the PQF Act, a PQF shall be established which shall describe 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 the country.



**SECTION 5. Objectives.** The PQF shall have the following objectives:

- a. To adopt national standards and levels of learning outcomes of education, which shall cover formal, informal, and non-formal education.
- b. To support the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies that enable access to qualifications and to assist individuals to move easily and readily between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market.
- c. To align domestic qualification standards with the international qualifications framework thereby enhancing recognition of the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications and supporting the mobility of Filipino students, workers and professionals.

**SECTION 6. Framework and Level Descriptors.** Pursuant to Section 8 of the PQF Act, the PQF shall incorporate the qualifications level descriptors defined in terms of knowledge, skills and values, application, and degree of independence.

The PQF National Coordinating Council (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 level descriptors shall also incorporate or take into consideration standards of career progression for professionals, specializations, and multi-disciplinary fields of study.

The PQF-NCC members shall jointly implement national pilot programs to determine the relevance and applicability in all levels of education. The DOLE shall provide the necessary and updated labor market information regarding the demand for specific qualifications and emerging occupations as bases for the prioritization for learning standards development.

**SECTION 7. Review of Present PQF.** Upon convening of the PQF-NCC under the PQF Act, it shall undertake a comprehensive review of the present PQF. Thereafter, the PQF shall be updated as necessary.

**SECTION 8. Review of Assessment System.** Pursuant to Section 9 of the PQF Act, the PRC and the CHED shall periodically review the system of assessment of learning outcomes and align them with those of the PQF. The PRC and CHED shall agree on the coverage and parameters of the review, and shall report the same to the PQF-NCC.

**SECTION 9. Participation of the Industry Sector.** As provided in Section 7 of the PQF Act, 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 add to the value of qualifications within the workplace.

**SECTION 10. Participation of Relevant Stakeholders.** The PQF-NCC shall provide consultation and feedback mechanisms through which relevant stakeholders may articulate and submit comments, concerns, and recommendations with respect to PQF development and implementation. The PQF-NCC shall also exert efforts and provide resources to bring PQF mechanisms and processes to the regional and local levels.

**SECTION 11. Identification of Priority Sectors.** Pursuant to Section 11 of the PQF Act, as a preliminary approach to the implementation of the PQF and to ensure its more focused implementation, the CHED, the TESDA and the DepED, in consultation with the industry and relevant stakeholders, the DOLE, the PRC, and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and 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.

**SECTION 12. Support from Other Government Agencies.** As provided in Section 12 of the PQF Act, the DOST, the NEDA, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and other related agencies shall extend the necessary support and provide relevant inputs towards the effective implementation of the PQF.

### **RULE III: PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK - NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**SECTION 13. The Philippine Qualifications Framework – National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC).** The PQF Act established the PQF-NCC to harmonize and promote a seamless education and training system.

**SECTION 14. Composition.** As provided in Section 5 of the PQF Act, the PQF-NCC shall have seven (7) members, composed of the following:

- a. The Secretary, DepED, as Chairperson;
- b. The Secretary, DOLE, as member;
- c. The Chairperson, CHED, as member;
- d. The Director General, TESDA, as member;
- e. The Chairperson, PRC, as member;
- f. One (1) representative of the economic sector, as member; and
- g. One (1) representative of the industry sector, as member.

**SECTION 15. Selection of Sector Representatives.** The representatives of the economic sector and industry sector as members of the PQF-NCC shall be selected by





the PQF-NCC from nominees submitted by organizations coming from the economic and industry sectors. The following procedure shall be observed in the selection process:

a. The PQF-NCC, through its Secretariat, shall announce the period for the nomination of the economic sector and industry sector representatives. The announcement shall include information on the qualifications and responsibilities of the economic sector and industry sector representatives.

b. Duly recognized organizations from the industry sector and economic sector shall submit their nomination, with express acceptance by the nominee, to the PQF-NCC Secretariat.

c. The PQF-NCC shall deliberate and select the industry sector and economic sector representatives from the submitted nominees based on the following criteria:

1. Expertise, taking into account professional or trade practice, experience and recognitions;
2. In-depth knowledge of education and training, employment, business, or technology; and
3. Track record of nominees and nominating organizations.

The economic sector and industry sector representatives shall have a term of three (3) years. They shall be entitled to actual transportation and accommodations expenses incurred in the discharge of their responsibility as members of the PQF-NCC and to a modest remuneration. They may waive these privileges.

**SECTION 16. Powers and Functions.** The PQF-NCC has the powers and functions to:

- a) Harmonize qualification levels across basic, technical-vocational and higher education;
- b) Align education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors contained in the PQF;
- c) Promote the PQF and its elements, including the principles, key features, definitions or terminologies, structure, and governance arrangements, and provide information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
- d) Rationalize the quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education;
- e) Develop and recognize pathways and equivalencies;
- f) Maintain the national registry of qualifications;



- g) Ensure the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks of other countries or regions;
- h) Create technical working groups in support of the development and implementation of the PQF;
- i) Represent the country in international fora or negotiations in line with qualifications agreements or arrangements;
- j) Review and update the PQF;
- k) Submit to the Office of the President, the Senate of the Philippines, and the House of Representatives an updated report on the progress and accomplishments in relation to the PQF; and
- l) Perform such other functions that may be related to the implementation of the PQF.

**SECTION 17. Review and Evaluation of PQF Implementation.** To ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the PQF Act, the PQF-NCC shall develop a system of monitoring and evaluation of all its policies, programs and activities against the mandates and objectives of the PQF Act.

**SECTION 18. Internal Rules.** The PQF-NCC shall adopt its internal rules covering meetings, voting, quorum, and other rules of procedure necessary for the discharge of its powers and functions.

**SECTION 19. Permanent Secretariat.** The PQF-NCC shall organize a permanent technical Secretariat to be headed by a full-time Executive Director with a rank of Assistant Secretary.

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 appropriate structure, composition, plantilla items needed, and staff qualifications and the location of the permanent secretariat in accordance with existing Civil Service Commission, Career Executive Service Board, and Department of Budget and Management rules, regulations, and guidelines.

The Secretariat shall provide the necessary technical and administrative support to the PQF-NCC in the performance of its powers and functions.

## **RULE IV: PQF-NCC WORKING GROUPS**

**SECTION 20. Establishment of PQF-NCC Working Groups.** To pursue the implementation of the PQF, the following working groups are hereby established:

a. **Qualifications Register Working Group.** The Qualifications Register (QR) Working Group shall establish and maintain the Qualifications Register, which is the national database of quality assured qualifications authorized under the PQF. It shall perform related functions, including the following:

- (1) Maintain and update the database of professional, skilled and other recognized qualifications;
- (2) Coordinate with relevant agencies or institutions for the inclusion of their respective qualifications in the register;
- (3) Provide information to employers, trainers and trainees, and other stakeholders, on education and training opportunities, assessment and certification, and/or licensure, in professional, skilled and other recognized qualifications;
- (4) Maintain quality assurance of the Registry; and
- (5) Perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

b. **Quality Assurance Working Group.** The Quality Assurance (QA) Working Group shall:

- (1) Provide information on the quality assurance systems of the various subsectors of Philippine education and training system;
- (2) Initiate studies and submit recommendations to the PQF-NCC on current quality assurance systems on the four key processes of:
  - (a) the registration of education and training providers
  - (b) supervision of assessment systems that leads to the award of qualifications
  - (c) accreditation of qualifications
  - (d) regulation of the issuance of certificates;
- (3) Initiate studies and submit recommendations to the PQF-NCC on the alignment of the quality assurance standards of Philippine education and training system to international QA standards;
- (4) Perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

c. **Pathways and Equivalencies Working Group.** The Pathways and Equivalencies (PE) Working Group shall support and assist the PQF-NCC in facilitating the development and implementation of pathways and equivalency systems. It shall perform related functions, including:

- (1) Recommend to the PQF-NCC pathways and equivalency system and access ramps for seamless education transfer and/or career progression between education levels corresponding to the PQF levels;
- (2) Develop a national system of credit transfer;
- (3) Recommend facilitative actions for the enhancement and adoption of the Ladderized Education Program consistent with the PQF; and
- (4) Perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.



**d. Information and Guidelines Working Group.** The Information and Guidelines (IG) Working Group shall ensure access to information on PQF implementation. It shall perform related functions, including:

- (1) Develop a communication plan for implementation of information activities geared towards promoting, advocating, and the effective socialization of the PQF;
- (2) Develop information, education and communication (IEC) materials to promote and advocate PQF;
- (3) Disseminate important guidelines, circulars, and policy issuance on the PQF to stakeholders and the general public; and
- (4) Perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

**e. International Alignment Working Group.** The International Alignment (IA) Working Group shall initiate comparability and benchmarking activities of the PQF with other countries and regional/international groupings; and perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

**f. Government-Industry-Education Sector Working Group.** The Government-Industry-Education Sector (GIE) Working Group shall be responsible for facilitating coordination and linkages among government, industry, and the education sector and academic/research community on cross-cutting issues towards making PQF responsive and relevant to the broader economy and society. It shall perform related functions, including:

- (1) Recommend strategy and direction, map priorities and gaps;
- (2) Initiate studies, provide platforms for consultations, formulate recommendations;
- (3) Promote GIE initiatives that will enhance the impact of the PQF on employment, upgrading of the economic sectors, and enhancement of the knowledge and productivity of workers; and
- (4) Perform other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

**g. The Lifelong Learning Working Group.** The Lifelong Learning (LL) Working Group shall have the following functions:

- (1) Initiate research and consultation on lifelong learning;
- (2) Compile and disseminate information on lifelong learning through database, conferences, symposia;
- (3) Initiate studies and pilot programs for the recognition of lifelong learning within the PQF; and
- (4) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC.

**SECTION 21. Composition of Working Groups.** The Working Groups shall be composed of designated representatives of the respective members of the PQF-NCC and other relevant stakeholders and experts, as identified by the PQF-NCC. Each Working Group shall be chaired by a member-agency as designated by the PQF-NCC.

**SECTION 22. Administration and Reporting.** The Working Groups shall develop their respective workplans and targets aligned to their mandates, and prepare the corresponding budget for approval and inclusion in the overall budget for PQF implementation. Working Groups may adopt internal rules, procedures and administrative systems for the efficient and effective exercise of their mandate and functions, subject to applicable laws, rules and regulations. The Working Groups shall provide the PQF-NCC a semestral report of the progress of their work.

**SECTION 23. Creation or Dissolution of Working Groups.** The PQF-NCC may create additional working groups, or dissolve existing working groups, as may be necessary.

## **RULE V. TRANSITORY PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 24. Interim Secretariat.** Pending the organization of the Permanent Secretariat, the existing Secretariat shall perform its ongoing functions and tasks, and such other tasks as may be assigned by the PQF-NCC. The Secretariat shall develop and design, for the consideration and approval of the PQF-NCC, the appropriate structure and composition of the Permanent Secretariat, and the staff qualifications in accordance with existing Civil Service Commission, Career Executive Service Board, and Department of Budget and Management, and consistent with the provision of the Salary Standardization Law.

The Permanent Secretariat shall be organized within one year from the promulgation of this Rules.

## **RULE VI. FINAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 25. Appropriations.** As provided in Section 13 of the PQF Act, the amount necessary for the initial implementation of the PQF Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of the CHED, TESDA and DepEd. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**SECTION 26. Authority to Amend the IRR.** The PQF-NCC is authorized, whenever necessary, to promulgate supplemental rules or amend this Rules.

**SECTION 27. Separability Clause.** If any provision of this IRR is declared unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

**SECTION 28. Effectivity.** This IRR shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation. It shall be

registered with the Office of the National Administrative Register at the University of the Philippines Law Center, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

APPROVED, January 15, 2019.



**LEONOR MAGTOLIS BRIONES**

Chairperson, PQF-NCC

Secretary

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