

H. No. 6572

S. No. 1456

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila
Seventeenth Congress
Second Regular Session

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-fourth day of July, two thousand seventeen.

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10968]

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE PHILIPPINE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (PQF), ESTABLISHING THE PQF-NATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL (NCC) AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

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 “PQF Act”.

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – 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 (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.* – As used in this Act:

(a) *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;

(b) *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;

(c) *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;

(d) *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

comprises formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and non-formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches; and

(e) *Trifocalized Education and Training* refers to the shared administration of the education system by the three (3) agencies responsible for each education level: the Department of Education (DepED) for basic education; the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for technical-vocational education and training; and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for higher education.

SEC. 4. *Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF).* – A PQF shall be established which shall describe the levels of educational qualifications and sets 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.

The PQF shall have 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 to 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 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 and workers.

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

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

The PQF-NCC shall be chaired by the DepED Secretary and shall have the following powers and functions:

- (1) To harmonize qualification levels across basic, technical-vocational and higher education;
- (2) To align education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors contained in the PQF;
- (3) To 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;

- (4) To rationalize the quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education;
- (5) To develop and recognize pathways and equivalencies;
- (6) To maintain the national registry of qualifications;
- (7) To ensure the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks of other countries or regions;
- (8) To create technical working groups in support of the development and implementation of the PQF;
- (9) To represent the country in international fora or negotiations in line with qualifications agreements or arrangements;
- (10) To review and update the PQF;
- (11) To 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
- (12) To perform such other functions that may be related to the implementation of the PQF.

SEC. 6. *Establishment of the 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 add to the value of qualifications within the workplace.

SEC. 8. *Framework and Level Descriptors.* – The PQF shall incorporate the qualifications level descriptors defined in terms of 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 their 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 of learning standards development.

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

SEC. 10. *Permanent 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 secretariat.

SEC. 11. *Identification of Priority Sectors.* – 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, the DOLE, the PRC, 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.

SEC. 12. *Support from Other Government Agencies.* – The DOST, the NEDA, the 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 the CHED, TESDA and DepED. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days after the effectivity of this Act, the DepED, CHED, TESDA, DOLE and PRC, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, shall issue the necessary 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, the other parts or provisions hereof that are not affected, 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 the provisions of 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 a national newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,


AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III
President of the Senate


PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ
*Speaker of the House
of Representatives*

This Act was passed by the House of Representatives as House Bill No. 6572 on November 21, 2017 and adopted by the Senate as an amendment to Senate Bill No. 1456 on December 13, 2017.


LUTGARDO B. BARBO
Secretary of the Senate


CESAR STRAIT PAREJA
*Secretary General
House of Representatives*

Approved: JAN 16 2018


RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
President of the Philippines

