

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF THE REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 5366**



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Introduced by Representative Sherwin N. Tugna

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

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

Among the priorities of different countries around the world include raising skills levels, reforming education and training curriculum, and improving qualifications. One main concern is strengthening the relationship between education and training systems and labor markets. National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) are eyed as useful policy to achieve this goal. In accordance 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, which established 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 establishment of 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 Qualification 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

In view of the foregoing, immediate passage of the bill is earnestly sought.



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*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1 **SECTION 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “Philippine Qualifications  
2 Framework (PQF) Act of 2016.”  
3

4 **SECTION 2. Declaration of Policy.** – In line with the Constitutional guarantee for  
5 the State to promote the right of all citizens to qualify and accessible education at all  
6 levels, the State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and  
7 integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society.  
8

9 Recognizing the important role of education and training in national development, it  
10 is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the Philippine  
11 Qualifications Framework (PQF) to encourage lifelong learning of individuals, provide  
12 employers specific training standards and qualifications that are aligned to industry  
13 standards, ensure the training and educational institutions adhere to specific  
14 standards and are accountable for achieving the same, and provide the government  
15 with common taxonomy and typology of qualifications as bases for granting  
16 approvals to stakeholders.  
17

18 **SECTION 3. Definition of Terms.** – For purposes of this Act, the following terms are  
19 hereby defined:  
20

21 **(A) Council** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework National  
22 Coordinating Council;  
23

24 **(B) Secretariat** refers to the permanent technical secretariat organized from  
25 the present staff complements of DepEd, TESDA, PRC, DOLE and CHED;  
26

27 **(C) DepEd** refers to the Department of Education;  
28

- 1 (D) **TESDA** refers to the Technical Education and Skills Development  
2 Authority;
- 3
- 4 (E) **CHED** refers to the Department of Higher Education;
- 5
- 6 (F) **DOLE** refers to the Department of Labor and Employment;
- 7
- 8 (G) **PRC** refers to the Professional Regulation Commission;
- 9
- 10 (H) **DBM** refers to the Department of Budget and Management;
- 11
- 12 (I) **DTI** refers to the Department of Trade and Industry;
- 13
- 14 (J) **DOST** refers to the Department of Science and Technology;
- 15
- 16 (K) **NEDA** refers to the National Economic and Development Authority;
- 17
- 18 (L) **PQF** refers to the Philippine Qualifications Framework, a national policy  
19 which describes the levels of educational qualifications and sets the  
20 standards for qualification outcomes. It is a quality assured national  
21 system for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based  
22 on standards of knowledge, skills and values acquired in different ways  
23 and methods by learners and workers of a certain country;
- 24
- 25 (M) **Basic Education** refers to the education intended to meet basic learning  
26 needs which lays the foundation on which subsequent learning can be  
27 based. It encompasses early childhood, elementary and high school  
28 education as well as alternative learning systems for out-of-school youth  
29 and adult learners and includes education for those with special needs.  
30 (RA No. 9155 S. 2011).
- 31
- 32 (N) **Technical Vocational Education and Training** refers to the education  
33 process where it involves, in addition to general education, the study of  
34 technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills  
35 relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life and social life,  
36 comprises formal (organized programs as part of the school system) and  
37 non-formal (organized classes outside the school system) approaches  
38 (UNESCO)
- 39
- 40 (O) **Higher Education** refers to the stage of formal education requiring  
41 secondary and post-secondary education covering the programs on: (a) all  
42 courses of study leading to bachelor's degree; and (b) all degree courses  
43 of study beyond bachelor's degree level.
- 44
- 45 (P) **Qualification** refers to a package of competencies describing a particular  
46 function or job role existing in an economic sector, covering the work  
47 activities required to undertake a particular job role.
- 48

1           **(Q)Trifocalized Education and Training** refers to the three levels of  
2           Philippine Education System: basic education, technical-vocational  
3           education and training, and higher education.  
4

5           **SECTION 4. Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF).** – The PQF has the  
6           following objectives:  
7

- 8           (A) Adoption of national standards and levels for outcomes of education;  
9
- 10          (B) Supporting the development and maintenance of pathways and  
11          equivalencies, which provide access to qualifications and assist people to  
12          move easily and readily between the different education and training  
13          sectors and between these sectors and the labor market; and  
14
- 15          (C) Alignment with international qualifications framework to support the  
16          national and international mobility of workers through increased  
17          recognition of the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications.  
18

19           **SECTION 5. Philippine Qualifications Framework-National Coordinating**  
20           **Council (PQF-NCC).** – In order to harmonize and promote seamless education and  
21           training despite the trifocalized management of the Philippine education system, the  
22           PQF National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) is hereby established. It shall be  
23           composed of the following:  
24

- 25          **(1) Secretary,** Department of Education (DepEd);
- 26
- 27          **(2) Secretary,** Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);  
28
- 29          **(3) Chairperson,** Commission on Higher Education (CHED);  
30
- 31          **(4) Director General,** Technical Education and Skills Development Authority  
32          (TESDA); and  
33
- 34          **(5) Chairperson,** Professional Regulation Commission (PRC).  
35

36           The following are the powers and functions of the PQF-NCC:  
37

- 38          (1) Creates technical working groups in support of the detailing and  
39          implementation of the PQF;  
40
- 41          (2) Harmonizes the levels of qualifications with all levels of education;  
42
- 43          (3) Aligns education standards and learning outcomes to the level descriptors  
44          contain herein;  
45
- 46          (3) Develops and recognizes pathways and equivalencies;  
47
- 48          (4) Discuss and agree on the elements of the PQF including but not limited to  
49          their principles, key features, definitions or terminologies, structure and  
50          governance arrangements;

- 1
- 2 (5) Reviews and updates the PQF;
- 3
- 4 (6) Provides information and guidelines in the implementation of the PQF;
- 5
- 6 (7) Establishes a quality assurance mechanism;
- 7
- 8 (8) Maintains the national registry of qualifications;
- 9
- 10 (9) Ensures the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification
- 11 framework of other countries;
- 12
- 13 (10) Represents the country in international fora or negotiations on
- 14 Qualification agreements/arrangements;
- 15
- 16 (11) Provides regular feedback on the progress and accomplishments to the
- 17 Office of the president with the respect to the implementation of the PQF;
- 18 and
- 19
- 20 (12) Performs such other functions that may be related to the
- 21 implementation of the PQF.
- 22

23 **SECTION 6. *Establishment of Philippine Qualifications Framework-National***  
24 ***Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC) Working Groups.*** – The following working  
25 groups are hereby established to pursue the implementation of the PQF through the  
26 performance of the following functions:

27

28 **(1) Qualification Register**

29

- 30 (A) Establish, maintain/update the database of technical vocational education
- 31 and training (TVET) and professional qualifications aligned with the
- 32 descriptors of the PQF in coordination with the pertinent offices of CHED,
- 33 DOLE, PRC and Deped;
- 34
- 35 (B) Provide regular, timely data/information to the PQF Secretariat and to the
- 36 employers, trainers, trainees and other stakeholders;
- 37
- 38 (C) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;
- 39

40 **(2) Quality Assurance**

41

- 42 (A) Develop PQF quality procedures manuals;
- 43
- 44 (B) Facilitate the conduct of evaluation and compliance audits/reviews vis-à-
- 45 vis set standards;
- 46
- 47 (C) Provide recommendations to the PQF-NCC based on the results of the
- 48 evaluation;
- 49
- 50 (D) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;

1  
2 **(3) Pathways and Equivalencies**  
3

4 (A) Establish equivalency pathways and equivalency system for seamless  
5 education transfer and/or progression between education levels  
6 corresponding to the PQF levels;  
7

8 (B) Develop a National system of Credit Transfer;  
9

10 (C) Facilitate the enhancement and adoption of the Ladderized education  
11 program consistent with the PQF;  
12

13 (D) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;  
14

15 **(4) Information and Guidelines**  
16

17 (A) Formulate guidelines, circulars and policy issuances for approval by the  
18 PQF-NCC;  
19

20 (B) Develop information, education and communication (IEC) materials to  
21 promote and advocate the PQF;  
22

23 (C) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;  
24

25 **(5) International Alignment**  
26

27 (A) Conduct researches/studies for comparability/benchmarking of Philippine  
28 qualifications with other countries and regional/international groupings;  
29

30 (B) Coordinate with professional organizations in the pursuit of mutual  
31 recognition arrangements/agreements;  
32

33 (C) Perform other functions as may assigned by the PQF-NCC;  
34

35 The PQF-NCC may create additional and/or modify existing working groups  
36 and review their functions as deemed necessary. Each working group shall be  
37 chaired by a member-agency as maybe designated by the PQF-NCC.  
38

39 **SECTION 7. *Participation of the Industry Sector.*** – Industry sector representatives  
40 shall be consulted and tapped in the detailing and application of the PQF to ensure  
41 alignment of educational outcomes to job requirements.  
42

43 **SECTION 8. *Level Descriptors.*** – The PQF shall incorporate the Qualifications  
44 Level Descriptors defined in terms of the following: knowledge, skills and values,  
45 applications, and degree of independence to be determined by the PQF-NCC.  
46

47 **SECTION 9. *Learning Standards.*** – DepEd, TESDA, and CHED shall make  
48 detailed descriptors for each qualification level based on learning standards in basic  
49 education, competency standards of training regulations, and the policies and  
50 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  
3 especially on the highly in-demand and emerging occupations as bases for the  
4 prioritization of learning standards development.

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

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

16  
17 The PQF-NCC shall determine the structure, composition, staff qualifications and the  
18 location of the permanent Technical Secretariat.

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

27  
28 **SECTION 13. *Support from Other Government.*** – PRC, DOLE, DOST, NEDA,  
29 Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and other related Agencies are  
30 hereby mandated to extend the necessary support and provide relevant inputs  
31 towards the effective implementation of the PQF.

32  
33 **SECTION 14. *Appropriations.*** – The amount necessary for the initial  
34 implementation of this act shall be sourced from the current budgets and  
35 development funds of CHED, TESDA and DepEd. Thereafter, the funds necessary  
36 for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included  
37 in the respective annual appropriations of CHED, TESDA and DepEd in the General  
38 Appropriations Act.

39  
40 **SECTION 15. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – The DepEd, CHED,  
41 TESDA, DOLE and PRC, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in basis, higher  
42 and technical-vocational education and training shall issue within sixty (60) days  
43 after the effectivity of this Act, the rules and regulations for the effective  
44 implementation of this Act.

45  
46 **SECTION 16. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision of this Act or any part thereof  
47 shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are  
48 separable, shall remain in force and effect.

1 **SECTION 17. *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations  
2 or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby  
3 repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

4  
5 **SECTION 18. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its  
6 publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general  
7 circulation.

8  
9  
10 **Approved.**