AT PAR WITH THE WORLD:
THE STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF PQF

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Educational endeavor, in any form, is always a national concern.

In recognition of the important role of education and training in national development, the national government institutionalized the Philippine Qualification Framework (PQF) to encourage the lifelong learning of individuals; provide employees with specific training standards and qualifications aligned with industry standards; ensure that training and educational institutions comply with specific standards and are accountable for achieving learning outcomes; and providing the 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.

The declared policy of the national government is unambiguous and involvement is key.

The government has involved main agencies to ensure that the levels of qualifications and the standards of qualification outcomes will be met. They will also raise the bar in harmonizing and promoting a seamless education and training system in the country. The Department of Education (DepEd) bannered the Philippine Qualification Framework – National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC), with its secretary as the Chairperson. Alongside the education agency are the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), and representatives from the economic and industrial sectors.

The PQF, a quality-assured national system, is a practical move for the government in its recognition of the importance of adopting national standards and the level of learning outcomes in education. It also supports the development and maintenance of pathways and equivalencies that enable access to qualifications and assist individuals to move easily and

readily between the different education and training sectors and between these sectors and the labor market. More importantly, it aligns 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. It is just fitting for a country like the Philippines which is promoting the integration of its national undertakings to regional and global standards, to recognize and award qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills, and values.

The pronouncement to the DepEd to lead the PQF is a heavy load to carry. Tasked to harmonize qualification levels across basic, technical-vocational, and higher education; align education standards and learning outcomes with the level descriptors contained in the PQF; rationalize the quality assurance mechanisms in Philippine education; and ensure the international alignment of the PQF with the qualification frameworks of other countries or regions, sure, is a serious matter.

Another concern to consider is the employability of the graduates who will be produced by the department. The responsibilities of the labor and employment department to enhance the employability of Filipino workers by ensuring that the qualifications of the Filipino workers are relevant to perceive social and economic needs will become even more difficult if graduates will not be skilled for their chosen jobs.

The country is not only looking for local opportunities. Penetrating the regional and global education and global market will be a long-term goal, and providing quality education to Filipino learners is one of the easiest routes to undertake.

By now, the government already realized that a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education must not only be relevant to the needs of the country but to what the world demands.

Reference:

Philippine Qualification Framework from *www.officialgazette.gov.ph*