



SENATE

S. No. 2568

PREPARED AND SUBMITTED JOINTLY BY THE COMMITTEES
ON HIGHER, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION;
AND FINANCE WITH SENATORS VILLAR (M.),
ESCUDERO, ANGARA, VILLANUEVA, LAPID, BINAY,
HONTIVEROS, VILLAR (C.), AND CAYETANO (P.)
AS AUTHORS THEREOF

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE EXPANDED
TERTIARY EDUCATION EQUIVALENCY AND
ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (ETEEAP) AND
PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR

*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
2 the “Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and
3 Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) Act”.

4 SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared
5 the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of
6 all citizens to quality education at all levels and take
7 appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all,

1 and to establish, maintain, and support a complete,
2 adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to
3 the needs of the people and society. Towards this end, and
4 to encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous
5 learning systems, as well as self-learning, independent,
6 and out-of-school study programs particularly those that
7 respond to community needs, the State shall develop and
8 maintain innovative educational and training pathways
9 and equivalencies which facilitate the flexible entry and
10 exchange among formal, non-formal, and informal learning
11 systems, and between these systems and the labor market.

12 SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For the purposes of this Act:

13 (a) *Accreditation* refers to the process of identifying,
14 assessing, validating, and recognizing learning obtained by
15 the individual through formal, non-formal, and informal
16 training or experiences;

17 (b) *Center of Excellence / Center of Development*
18 refers to a public or private higher education institution
19 that has attained a certain level of quality or standard in a

1 given field of instruction, research, or extension as identified
2 by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);

3 (c) *Equivalency* refers to the process of assigning
4 academic credits equivalent to the competence
5 demonstrated by an individual by means of assessment
6 tests, demonstrations, or actual work performance;

7 (d) *Formal Learning* refers to the hierarchically
8 structured and chronically graded learning organized and
9 provided by the formal school system and for which
10 certification is required in order for the learner to progress
11 through the grades or move to higher levels;

12 (e) *Higher Education Institution (HEI)* refers to an
13 institution of higher learning which primarily offers
14 degree-granting programs duly recognized by CHED and
15 leading to the conferment of a diploma;

16 (f) *Informal Learning* refers to non-structured and
17 non-directed learning obtained from experiences at home,
18 place of work, community, civil society, religious
19 institutions, mass media, and other incidental sources;

1 (g) *Non-Formal Learning* refers to the intentional
2 learning gained through participation in organized
3 workplace-based training, non-credit courses, and
4 workshops, the completion of which, does not lead to
5 formal credit;

6 (h) *Program* or *ETEEAP* refers to the Expanded
7 Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation
8 Program as institutionalized and defined in Section 4 of
9 this Act; and

10 (i) *Tertiary Education* refers to the stage of
11 education following the secondary cycle and covers
12 post-secondary non-degree diplomas, TVET, and higher
13 education programs including graduate education.

14 SEC. 4. *The Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency*
15 *and Accreditation Program.* – The ETEEAP, adopted under
16 Executive Order No. 330 s. 1996, is hereby
17 institutionalized as a comprehensive program of
18 government to identify, assess, validate, and assign
19 equivalent undergraduate level and special graduate
20 programs of prior learning from formal, non-formal, and

1 informal learning systems, relevant work experiences, and
2 completion of competency enrichment and other program
3 requirements for the grant of appropriate academic
4 degrees to qualified individuals. A bachelor's degree holder
5 may apply for equivalency and accreditation of prior and
6 work-based learning towards the grant of up to the second
7 degree only: *Provided, however,* That such sources of
8 learning are related to the second degree being sought
9 under the ETEEAP.

10 SEC. 5. *Qualifications.* – Filipino citizens, whether
11 residing in the Philippines or abroad, may apply for
12 equivalency and accreditation if they satisfy the following
13 requirements:

14 (a) Not less than twenty-three (23) years of age at
15 the time of application;

16 (b) Completion of a secondary school program as
17 evidenced by a high school diploma, or a result of the
18 Philippine Educational Placement Test or Alternative
19 Learning System Accreditation and Equivalency

1 Assessment and Certification stating that the individual
2 concerned is qualified to enter college; and

3 (c) At least five (5) years of aggregate work
4 experience in the industry related to the academic degree
5 program or discipline where equivalency of learning is
6 sought: *Provided*, That the applicant may submit
7 documentation of relevant training programs and other
8 proof of formal, non-formal, and informal learning, as may
9 be required by the deputized HEI including, but not
10 limited to, National Certificates (NCs) or Certificates of
11 Competency issued by the Technical Education and Skills
12 Development Authority (TESDA).

13 SEC. 6. *Lead Agency.* – The CHED shall serve as the
14 lead agency in the implementation of the Program.

15 SEC. 7. *Powers and Functions of the CHED.* – In
16 addition to its powers and functions under Republic Act
17 No. 7722, otherwise known as the “Higher Education Act of
18 1994”, and other existing laws, the CHED shall exercise
19 the following:

1 (a) Determine and approve the academic degrees to
2 be opened for the Program, as well as identify and develop
3 special graduate programs in consultation with technical
4 experts;

5 (b) Develop, on a continuing basis and with the
6 assistance of technical panels and other competent
7 authorities, standards, creative methodologies, and criteria
8 for a diversified mode of assessing skills, values,
9 knowledge, and levels of competence including, but not
10 limited to, instruments such as written examinations,
11 practical work and/or laboratory demonstrations, and
12 qualification portfolio assessments;

13 (c) Grant, or revoke for cause, the authority of HEIs
14 to implement the Program including the conduct of
15 equivalency assessments, development of assessment tools
16 and techniques, and/or award of degrees within their area
17 of competence or specialization;

18 (d) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the
19 Program by deputized HEIs based on standardized
20 monitoring tools to be developed by CHED;

1 (e) Safeguard the continuing integrity and quality
2 measures of the Program by linking and cooperating
3 with appropriate development and regulatory agencies
4 and institutions.

5 (f) Convene broad-based and inter-agency
6 consultation meetings including concerned representatives
7 of national government agencies, associations of HEIs,
8 chambers of commerce and industries, and ETEEAP
9 learners organizations for policy implementation,
10 coordination, and evaluation;

11 (g) Set standard fees and other administrative
12 charges for accreditation that will contribute to and be part
13 of the Special Account of the ETEEAP under the Higher
14 Education Development Fund;

15 (h) Establish and designate at least one (1)
16 ETEEAP Center of Development and Excellence per
17 region;

18 (i) Work with the Department of Education
19 (DepEd), the TESDA, the Department of Labor and
20 Employment (DOLE), and other relevant government

1 agencies in identifying priority programs that are most
2 in-demand or needed;

3 (j) Allocate and make available student financial
4 assistance programs to ETEEAP learners;

5 (k) Ensure wide access to information and broad
6 awareness of ETEEAP, support, and deputized HEIs; and

7 (l) Exercise such other powers and functions
8 consistent with the provisions of this Act.

9 SEC. 8. *Powers and Functions of Deputized HEIs.* –
10 HEIs that have been deputized by the CHED in accordance
11 with this Act shall exercise the following powers and
12 functions:

13 (a) Develop clear policies, procedures, and processes
14 for the implementation of the ETEEAP, including
15 application, assessment and equivalency, completion and
16 awarding of an appropriate degree to a learner;

17 (b) Establish or designate a unit or office that shall
18 oversee, administer, and evaluate the implementation of
19 the Program in the HEI;

1 (c) Provide a schedule of reasonable and applicable
2 tuition and other fees and charges;

3 (d) Develop and regularly review assessment tools
4 and methods for the evaluation and determination of
5 appropriate credits for the competencies of an applicant;

6 (e) Constitute a panel of internal and external
7 assessors, which shall determine the appropriate
8 equivalency credits of an applicant;

9 (f) Assess and assign appropriate equivalency
10 credits to the pertinent work experiences and knowledge
11 acquired by individuals from formal, non-formal, and
12 informal learning;

13 (g) Determine the deficiencies of an
14 applicant/awardee that would need competency
15 enrichment, remedial studies, or academic
16 supplementation through formal coursework, as may be
17 applicable;

18 (h) Set the requirements for the completion of the
19 Program and award the appropriate academic degree to
20 learners who have completed the Program;

1 (i) Create, develop, and adapt flexible learning
2 modalities; and

3 (j) Submit to the CHED the necessary reports,
4 including, but not limited to, enrollment and graduation
5 statistics, tracer studies of graduates, and other relevant
6 information.

7 SEC. 9. *Role of the Philippine Qualifications*
8 *Framework – National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC).* –

9 The PQF-NCC shall monitor and support the alignment of
10 the ETEEAP with the objectives under Republic Act
11 No. 10968, or the “PQF Act”. For this purpose, the
12 PQF-NCC may establish an appropriate working group
13 and consult with industry sector representatives.

14 SEC. 10. *Deputization of HEIs.* – The CHED may, in the
15 implementation of the ETEEAP, deputize public and
16 private HEIs that satisfy the following conditions:

17 (a) That the HEI concerned is a Center of
18 Excellence or Center of Development in the program or
19 discipline to be offered through ETEEAP; or

1 (b) In the case of state universities and colleges
2 (SUCs), that the institution is at least at a SUC Level II
3 category, while for local universities and colleges (LUCs), it
4 is granted with equivalent recognition, and that the
5 appropriate program to be offered through the ETEEAP
6 must be awarded a Certificate of Program Compliance
7 (COPC) by the CHED; or

8 (c) In the case of private HEIs, the institution is
9 granted autonomous or deregulated status.

10 For HEIs using other modalities, such as Open,
11 Distance, and E-Learning (ODEL) and Transnational
12 Higher Education (TNHE), a separate authority must be
13 obtained from CHED for this purpose.

14 The CHED may deputize capable HEIs or designate
15 ETEEAP Centers in regions where no or few HEIs are
16 offering ETEEAP. For this purpose, the CHED may take
17 into consideration the institution's international
18 recognition or accreditation, performance in licensure
19 examinations, research productivity, faculty recognition,
20 and other similar factors.

1 SEC. 11. *CHED – Office of Programs and Standards*
2 *Development (OPSD)*. – The existing OPSD under the
3 CHED shall be strengthened to carry out its powers and
4 functions under this Act.

5 For this purpose, the CHED shall determine the
6 organizational and staffing pattern of the OPSD, in
7 accordance with civil service laws, rules, and regulations,
8 and subject to the review and approval by the Department
9 of Budget and Management (DBM).

10 SEC. 12. *Report to Congress*. – The CHED shall
11 submit to the President and to Congress its report on the
12 status of the Program, as well as its recommendation for
13 the promotion of innovative educational and training
14 pathways and equivalencies and the realization of other
15 objectives of this Act.

16 SEC. 13. *Appropriations*. – The amount necessary for
17 the implementation of this Act shall be included in the
18 annual General Appropriations Act.

19 SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations*. –
20 Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the

1 CHED shall, in consultation with the DBM, promulgate
2 the rules and regulations to effectively implement the
3 provisions of this Act.

4 SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or
5 part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the
6 remainder of this Act or any provision not affected thereby
7 shall remain in full force and effect.

8 SEC. 16. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, presidential
9 decrees, executive orders, rules, and regulations, or parts
10 thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this
11 Act are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

12 SEC. 17. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect
13 immediately following its publication in the *Official*
14 *Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,