SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES First Regular Session

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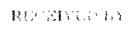


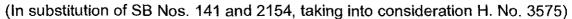
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SENATE

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S. B. No. 2272





Prepared Jointly by the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Finance with Senators Villar, Recto, Angara, and (P.) Cayetano as authors

AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE LADDERIZED INTERFACE BETWEEN TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

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 "Ladderized Education Act of 2014."

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. - In line with the Constitutional guarantee for the State to promote the right of all citizens to quality and accessible education at all levels and to establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and contributory to national development, it is hereby declared the policy of the State to institutionalize the ladderized interface between technical-vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education to open the pathways of opportunities for career and educational progression of students and workers, create a seamless and borderless education, empower students and workers to exercise options or to choose when to enter and exit in the educational ladder, and provide job platforms at every exit as well as the opportunity to earn income.

The State likewise recognizes and supports the promotion and protection of the inherent academic freedom enjoyed by all institutions of higher learning. For this purpose, the government shall uphold the academic standards, equity principles, promptness and consistency of the applications/admissions and equivalency policies of higher education institutions (HEIs).

- **SEC. 3.** *Definition of Terms.* For purposes of this Act, the following terms are hereby defined:
- a. Articulation refers to a process which allows students to make the smooth transition from one course, program or educational level to the next level of qualification, between providers or sectors, without experiencing duplication of learning. The guiding principle of articulation is that no student should repeat the same course content for which credit has already been received. Articulated programs provide multiple entry and exit points and ladders of learning opportunities.
 - b. Credit refers to the value given to a course or subject,
- c. Credit Transfer refers to the recognition and carrying forward of credits that constitute overlapping learning, from TVET to a degree program;
- d. Embedded Tech-Voc Qualification in a Ladderized Degree Program refers to the process of determining the TVET competencies or qualifications that lead to job platforms in the relevant higher education or bachelor's degree program. Full TVET qualification can still be earned even if a student of a ladderized degree program chooses to exit from the program and get a job;
- e. Equivalency refers to a process that involves assigning equivalent academic credits to the competencies demonstrated by a student through assessment tests, thereby providing entry points to the next higher level qualification, the purpose of which is to provide opportunities to the student to continue to learn and to re-enter the educational program at a higher level without having to unnecessarily retake courses which a student has already demonstrated competence and knowledge;

f. Job Platform refers to the gateway in the ladderized curriculum which one reaches upon acquiring enough skills and knowledge to seek and find employment;

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- Ladderized Education refers to the harmonization of all education and training mechanisms that allow students and workers to progress between technical-vocational and college courses and programs, or vice-versa. It opens opportunities for career and educational advancement to students and workers. It creates a seamless and borderless education and training system that will allow mobility in terms of flexible entry and exit between technicalvocational and college degree programs in the post-secondary school educational system;
- h. Qualification refers to a formal certification that a person has successfully achieved specific learning outcomes relevant to the identified academic, industry or community requirements;
- Recognition of Prior Learning refers to the acknowledgment of a person's skills and knowledge through previous training, work or life experience, which may be used to grant status or credit for acquired competencies.
- SEC. 4. Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF). The PQF, established by virtue of Executive Order No. 83, series of 2012, has the following objectives:
- Adoption of national standards and levels for outcomes of a. education; 22
 - Supporting the development and maintenance of pathways and b. equivalencies, 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; and
 - c. Alignment with international qualifications framework to support the national and international mobility of workers through increased recognition of

the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications.

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The PQF National Coordinating Committee (PQF-NCC) is composed of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the Department of Education (DepED) the Department of Labor (DOLE) and the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) and is chaired by DepED.

The following working groups are established to pursue the implementation of the PQF:

- 1. Qualifications Register headed by TESDA;
- Pathways and Equivalencies headed by CHED;
- 3. Quality Standards headed by CHED;
 - 4. Information and Guidelines headed by DepEd; and
 - 5. International Alignment headed by the PRC.

In the development of ladderized education, CHED, TESDA, and DepED are hereby mandated to closely coordinate and effectively implement a unified PQF that establishes equivalency pathways and access ramps allowing for easier transitions and progressions between TVET and higher education. The framework shall include qualifications and articulation mechanisms, such as, the following: credit transfer, embedded TVET necessarily limited to qualification in ladderized degree programs, post-TVET bridging programs, enhanced equivalency, adoption of ladderized curricula/programs, and accreditation and/or recognition of prior learning.

For this purpose, CHED, TESDA and DepED shall design harmonized guidelines and equivalency competency courses to enhance the delivery of high-quality technical-vocational and higher education courses, synchronize standards and upgrade curriculum design per discipline and adopt a strategic implementation scheme, including a massive consultation and information dissemination scheme. In so doing, CHED, TESDA and DepED shall continue

exploring and developing other mechanisms and systems that will allow the interface between TVET and higher education with the end in view of creating a seamless and borderless education system.

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SEC. 5. Priority Disciplines. As a preliminary approach the implementation of the ladderized program and to ensure its more focused implementation, CHED, TESDA and DepED, in consultation with the industry, DOLE, PRC, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the Department of Science Technology (DOST) and other related agencies, are directed to identify priority disciplines and programs for ladderization, taking into account labor market realities. The CHED, TESDA and DepED shall implement the ladderization of other disciplines, other than those presently being implemented, should these be found necessary and beneficial, based on a comprehensive study of their viability.

SEC. 6. Enhancement of the Ladderized Education Program (LEP). - CHED, TESDA and DepED, in consultation with the PRC, are directed to jointly devise systems, procedures, and mechanisms, as well as to issue, amend and update existing implementing guidelines, as necessary, for the efficient and effective implementation of LEP and to ensure that the objectives of the program are met. Incentives may be given to HEIs and technical-vocational institutions to further encourage wider participation in the LEP.

The CHED, TESDA and DepED shall ensure that there are designated personnel at the regional and provincial levels responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of LEP nationwide.

SEC. 7. Support from Other Government Agencies. PRC, DOLE, DOST, DTI, NEDA, 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 ladderized system of education.

SEC. 8. Scholarships, Grants and Loans. CHED, TESDA and DepED shall include in their respective budgets the provision of scholarships, grants and loans to deserving students and workers availing themselves of the ladderized system of education, in addition to the present scholarship programs being implemented by CHED and TESDA.

SEC. 9. Enabling Clause for HEIs. To encourage the widest enjoyment of the benefit of ladderized education, HEIs whose curricula have been recognized by the CHED may avail of the ladderization program: *Provided*, That, the minimum curricular requirements under the relevant guidelines of CHED, TESDA and DepED are complied with and duly certified by these agencies prior to the formal offering of the program;

For this purpose, the HEI shall be required to submit to the CHED Regional Office a copy of the curriculum for the proposed ladderized program for monitoring, compliance and for potential objective inputs from their technical experts. Failure to submit this requirement shall be subject to administrative sanctions to be imposed by CHED.

SEC. 10. Academic Freedom. Nothing in this bill shall be construed as restricting the HEI in the exercise of its academic freedom. The HEI shall retain the right to assess the level and standard of previously completed TVET programs by an applicant-student in a manner that is transparent and objective, incorporating therein its own admission requirements. The applicant-student must gain admission to the HEI's undergraduate program by meeting the prescribed criteria and program requisites and such other requirements by the HEI.

SEC. 11. Appropriations. The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be sourced from the current budgets and development funds of CHED, TESDA and DepED. Thereafter, the funds necessary for the continuous implementation of this Act in the ensuing years shall be included in the respective annual appropriations of CHED, TESDA and DepED

- in the General Appropriations Act.
- SEC. 12. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The CHED, TESDA
- and DepED, in consultation with relevant stakeholders in higher and technical-
- 4 vocational education shall issue within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this
- Act, the rules and regulations for the effective implementation of this Act.
- 6 SEC. 13. Separability Clause. If any provision of this Act or any part thereof
- shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are
- separable, shall remain in force and effect.
- 9 SEC. 14. Repealing Clause. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations
- or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
- repealed, amended or modified accordingly.
- •12 SEC. 15. Effectivity. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
- publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general
- 14 circulation

Approved,