

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
Metro Manila
Nineteenth Congress
Third Regular Session

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

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[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 12124]

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE EXPANDED TERTIARY EDUCATION EQUIVALENCY AND ACCREDITATION PROGRAM 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 “Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) Act.”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — It is hereby declared the policy of the State to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels and take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all, and to establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society. To this end, and to encourage non-formal, informal, and indigenous learning systems, as well as self-learning,

independent, and out-of-school study programs particularly those that respond to community needs, the State shall develop and maintain innovative educational and training pathways and equivalencies which facilitate the flexible entry and exchange among formal, non-formal, and informal learning systems, and between these systems and the labor market.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

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

(b) *Center of Excellence/Center of Development* refers to a public or private higher education institution that has attained a certain level of quality or standard in a given field of instruction, research, or extension as identified by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED);

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

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

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

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

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

(h) *Tertiary education* refers to the stage of education following the secondary cycle and covers post-secondary non-degree diplomas, technical-vocational education and training, and higher education programs including graduate education.

SEC. 4. *The Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program.* – The Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program, hereinafter referred to as the ETEEAP, is hereby institutionalized as a comprehensive alternative learning program of the government for tertiary education based on academic equivalency, accreditation, validation, and recognition of prior learning or the knowledge and expertise derived from relevant work experiences and from formal, non-formal, and informal training that harness the student's full potential. As an integral part of the tertiary education system, it shall allow the undergraduate degree for high school graduates, senior high school graduates, post-secondary technical-vocational graduates, and college undergraduates, including working professionals who were unable to finish or advance into college, or have earned a bachelor's degree and wish to obtain a special graduate degree program without going through the traditional schooling methods.

The ETEEAP shall be used to identify, assess, validate, and assign equivalent undergraduate level and special graduate programs of prior learning from formal, non-formal, and informal learning systems, relevant work experiences, and completion of competency enrichment and other program requirements for the grant of appropriate academic degrees to qualified individuals.

A bachelor's degree holder may apply for equivalency and accreditation of prior and work-based learning towards the grant of up to the second degree only: *Provided*, That such sources of learning are related to the second degree being sought under the ETEEAP.

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

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

(b) Completion of a secondary school program as evidenced by a high school diploma, or a result of the Philippine Educational Placement Test or Alternative Learning System Accreditation and Equivalency Assessment and Certification stating that the individual concerned is qualified to enter college; and

(c) At least five (5) years of aggregate work experience in the industry related to the academic degree program or discipline where equivalency of learning is sought: *Provided*, That the applicant may submit documentation of relevant training programs and other proof of formal, non-formal, and informal learning, as may be required by the deputized HEI including National Certificates or Certificates of Competency issued by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

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

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

(a) Deputize HEIs with academic degrees to be opened for the ETEEAP in accordance with the policies, standards, and guidelines (PSGs) set by the CHED and in consultation with technical experts;

(b) Develop, on a continuing basis, and with the assistance of technical panels and other competent authorities, standards for a diversified mode of assessing skills, values, knowledge, and levels of competence including instruments such as written examinations, practical work or laboratory demonstrations, and qualification portfolio assessments;

(c) Grant or revoke for cause the authority of HEIs to implement the ETEEAP, including the conduct of equivalency assessments, development of assessment tools and techniques,

and/or award of degrees within their areas of competence or specialization;

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

(e) Safeguard the continuing integrity and quality measures of the ETEEAP by linking and cooperating with appropriate development and regulatory agencies and institutions;

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

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

(h) Establish and designate at least one (1) ETEEAP Center of Development and Excellence per region in accordance with the PSGs set by the CHED;

(i) Work with the Department of Education, the TESDA, the Department of Labor and Employment, and other relevant government agencies in identifying priority programs that are most in-demand or needed;

(j) Allocate and make available student financial assistance programs to ETEEAP learners pursuant to Republic Act No. 10931, otherwise known as the "Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act", and other laws, rules, and regulations;

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

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

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

(a) Develop clear policies, procedures, and processes for the implementation of the ETEEAP in accordance with the PSGs set by the CHED, including application, assessment and equivalency, completion and awarding of an appropriate degree to a learner;

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

(c) Develop, on a continuing basis, modes of assessing skills, values, knowledge, and levels of competence including instruments such as written examinations, practical work or laboratory demonstrations, and qualification portfolio assessments in accordance with the PSGs set by the CHED;

(d) Provide a schedule of reasonable and applicable tuition and other fees and charges pursuant to Republic Act No. 10931;

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

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

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

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

(i) Set the requirements for the completion of the ETEEAP and award the appropriate academic degree to learners who have completed the ETEEAP;

(j) Create, develop, and adopt flexible learning modalities in accordance with the PSGs set by the CHED; and

(k) Submit to the CHED the necessary reports, including enrollment and graduation statistics, tracer studies of graduates, and other relevant information.

SEC. 9. Role of the Philippine Qualifications Framework – National Coordinating Council (PQF-NCC). – The PQF-NCC shall monitor and support the alignment of the ETEEAP with the objectives under Republic Act No. 10968, otherwise known as the “PQF Act”. For this purpose, the PQF-NCC may establish an appropriate working group and consult with industry sector representatives.

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

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

(b) In the case of state universities and colleges, that the institution is at least at a Level II category, while for local universities and colleges, it is granted with equivalent recognition, and that the appropriate program to be offered through the ETEEAP shall be awarded a Certificate of Program Compliance by the CHED; or

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

For HEIs using other modalities, such as Open Distance Learning and E-Learning, in accordance with Republic Act No. 10650, or the “Open Distance Learning Act”, and Transnational Higher Education, in accordance with Republic Act No. 11448, or the “Transnational Higher Education Act”, a separate authority must be obtained from the CHED for this purpose.

The CHED may deputize capable HEIs or designate ETEEAP Centers in regions where no or few HEIs are offering ETEEAP. For this purpose, the CHED may take into

consideration the institution's international recognition or accreditation, performance in licensure examinations, research productivity, faculty recognition, and other similar factors.

SEC. 11. *Technical Secretariat.* – To ensure the effective implementation of the ETEEAP, the existing Office of Programs and Standards Development (OPSD) under the CHED shall be strengthened and shall serve as the permanent technical secretariat to carry out its powers and functions under this Act.

For this purpose, the CHED shall determine the organizational and staffing pattern of the OPSD, in accordance with civil service laws, rules, and regulations, and subject to the review and approval by the Department of Budget and Management.

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

SEC. 13. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary for the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriation of the CHED. Thereafter, such amount shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 14. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act, the CHED shall, in consultation with relevant government agencies and private stakeholders, promulgate the rules and regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 15. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision or part hereof is held invalid or unconstitutional, the provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

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

SEC. 17. *Non-diminution.* – Nothing in this Act shall result in the diminution of the benefits or assistance given to overseas Filipinos and migrant workers as provided in other laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and issuances.

SEC. 18. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,



FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ
*Speaker of the House
of Representatives*

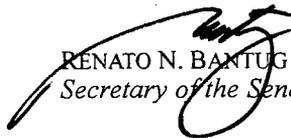


FRANCIS "CHIZ" G. ESCUDERO
President of the Senate

This Act, which is a consolidation of Senate Bill No. 2568 and House Bill No. 9015, was passed by the Senate of the Philippines and the House of Representatives on December 17, 2024 and December 18, 2024, respectively.

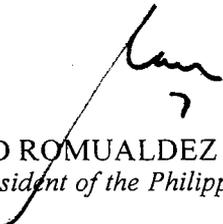


REGINALD S. VELASCO
*Secretary General
House of Representatives*



RENATO N. BANTUG JR.
Secretary of the Senate

Approved: **MAR 03 2025**



FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.
President of the Philippines



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES



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