PHILIPPINES

COUNTRY REPORT

Commission on Higher Education

11th Session of the Regional Committee on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas, and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific

Seoul, South Korea
23-24 May 2012
Background

Recognition of foreign qualifications in higher education is reflected in the **Philippine Development Plan (PDP 2011-2016):**

“Devise a *transnational education (TNE) strategy* in programs and services for both inbound and outbound students and workers” (p. 270)

- In accordance to PDP 2011-2016, the **Commission on Higher Education (CHED)** pursues the following:

  “Global comparability and competitiveness of Philippine higher education enhanced through current and expanded initiatives i.e., execution of *Mutual Recognition Agreements*; inclusion of maritime institutions in the *International Maritime Organization (IMO) white list,* and *regular membership in the Washington Accord*” (Section 6.2)
Background

The Philippines promotes multilateral and bilateral agreements supporting academic mobility:


- APEC-HRD Academic Exchange Projects (i.e., Universal Mobility in Asia-Pacific) and Mutual Equivalency Framework

- Asia-Pacific Region Mutual Recognition Program (Architecture and Engineering)

- ASEAN Mutual Recognition Agreements (Engineering; Nursing; Medical and Dental Practice; and Accountancy Services)

- Bilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements (China, Japan, India, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Croatia)
1. How does your country recognize foreign qualifications?

CHED is the focal agency for recognizing foreign qualifications in the Philippines. It works with other government agencies to implement the following procedures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCEDURES</th>
<th>CHED's GOV'T AGENCY PARTNERS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Entry and Stay of Foreign Students</td>
<td>Bureau of Immigration (BI) and Office of the President (OP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition of Professional License</td>
<td>Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)</td>
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<td>Implementation of Bilateral Agreements for Students, Staff and Professional Exchanges</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of Multilateral Agreements</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs, National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)</td>
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CHED is the clearing house for queries on formal qualifications of foreign citizens for employment or study, as well as inquiries on qualifications of Filipinos overseas

- **International Affairs Services (IAS)** attends to information needs and review of foreign qualifications in coordination with the **Office of Programs and Standards (OPS)**

- CHED IAS linked to the **Asia Pacific Recognition Network (APARNET)** to obtain information on qualifications of potential foreign employees or students

- CHED maintains references of authorized and recognized foreign HEIs from **MOEs and UNESCO’s World List of Universities** for incoming foreign higher education studies, diplomas and credential holders
2. Do you have criteria and procedures for the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications?

- Criteria and procedures are institutionalized for specific programs, as follows:

<table>
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<th>For specific programs covered by regional recognition agreements:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Detailed Curriculum vitae with employment history, responsibilities, and achievements</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Verified Engineering Practice Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Details of Continuing Professional Development completed in accordance with set standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Copies of Assessment Letters from Accredited Professional Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Valid Certificate of Professional Recognition and/or Professional ID</td>
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<th>For other programs:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Transcript of Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Letter from the University Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Original copies of the diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Government License (if any)</td>
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</table>
3. What are the issues and challenges with regard to recognition of foreign qualifications?

Access to information on degrees
- APARNET covers only registered and available information

Connectivity Issues
- Access to APARNET is occasionally affected by internet server problems, resulting in a much longer verification of foreign qualifications

Absence of a formal National Information Center (NIC) with a dedicated staff
- Formal constitution of CHED-IAS as the country’s NIC is required to justify recruitment of an able staff and provision of plantilla items
Lack of a codified manual on higher education systems and institutions per country that identifies higher education institutions (HEIs) and provides relevant information on academic requirements and qualification recognition procedures

Legal and institutional constraints

- Constitutional constraint to the operation of foreign HEIs which keeps the Philippines from binding itself 100% to the trade of higher education services

- Separate licensing laws for professional degrees and wide variation in institutional policies of HEIs (e.g. admission requirements)
4. What progress has been made in ratifying the revised Asia-Pacific Regional Convention?

The Philippines is currently working on the instrument of accession to commence the legislative process in the Senate.

It is hoped that the legislative process will take less than the 5 years it took to ratify the original 1983 Convention.
5. What is your government’s view on the feasibility of a Global Convention?

The Philippines is a significant supplier of workers, professionals and students for different parts of the world.

- In the Asia-Pacific region, a fifth of those seeking recognition of foreign qualifications are Filipinos.

It is in the interest of the Philippines—especially now that it is addressing its substantial difference from international standards insofar as the length of basic education is concerned—to eventually move beyond limits of specific conventions (i.e., Bologna Accord or Washington Accord) towards a global convention.

This view is consistent with the Philippine position on this issue in previous years.