1. Introduction: Status with the 1983 Convention

The Republic of the Philippines appreciates the value of academic mobility leading to recognition of higher education qualifications. Its national policy support for academic mobility and movement of academics and professionals is reflected in the medium-term development and investment plan (MTDP 2011-2016), which mandates the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to:

*Devise a transnational education (TNE) strategy in programs and services for both inbound and outbound students and workers including mutual recognition/accreditation of skills and professional development of Filipino workers vis-a-vis neighboring countries (p.270).*

In accordance with the current Philippine Medium Term Development Plan, the Commission on Higher Education, is likewise mandated in charting the direction of Philippine Higher Education to ensure

*“Global comparability and competitiveness of Philippine higher education [as] enhanced through current and expanded initiatives such as negotiation and execution of Mutual Recognition Agreements with foreign economies, inclusion of maritime institutions in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) white list and regular membership in the Washington Accord” is a key medium-term target of the Commission (Section 6.2).*

Since the creation of CHED in 1994, it has promulgated policies, standards and guidelines on academic linkages and twinning programs, and recently policies, standards and guidelines on transnational education and distance education, among others. It has also been active in promoting bilateral and multilateral agreements that support academic mobility. For instance, CHED spearheaded the following initiatives:

- The 1983 UNESCO Regional Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates. Such Treaty was ratified through CHED’s efforts in 2003; CHED is currently lobbying for the
ratification of the 2011 Tokyo Convention in the 16th Congress both at the executive level through the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Philippine Senate.

- Active participation in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Human Resource Development (APEC-HRD) and academic exchange organizations such as the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific. Under the UMAP, CHED has successfully pilot tested the transfer of academic credits in a student exchange program between Philippine and Japanese Universities, demonstrating the feasibility of mutual credit recognition between academic institutions of countries with different higher education systems.

The name of national bodies in charge of recognition matters in your country as defined by Article 9, paragraph 1 of the 1983 Convention

Under UNESCO, the CHED is the focal agency for the recognition of foreign qualifications. It works closely with other government agencies for specific procedures as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Government Agencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry and Stay of Foreign Students</td>
<td>CHED with the Bureau of Immigration (BI) and Office of the President</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition of Professional License</td>
<td>Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Bilateral Agreements for Students, Staff and Professional Exchanges</td>
<td>Department of Foreign Affairs</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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As focal agency, CHED is the country’s clearing house both for queries regarding formal qualification of foreign citizens for employment or study in the Philippines and for inquiries on the qualifications of Filipinos working or studying abroad.

Since CHED’s active participation in the UNESCO Regional Convention in 1995, the Commission has worked with foreign education qualifications assessors/reviewers, providing requested information and validating requirement of studies, diplomas and degrees obtained in the Philippines.
2. **Recognition of Secondary School Leaving Certificates and other Diplomas for the Purpose of Further Studies**

*Number of international student undertaking undergraduate study program in your country over the past 5 years*

As of SY 2012-2013, there are Eight thousand seven hundred three (8,703) foreign students enrolled in PHEIs.

**Recognition of Higher Education Studies, Diplomas, Degrees and Qualifications for the Purpose of Further Studies**

*(How are foreign higher education studies, diplomas, degrees and qualifications recognized in the post graduate admission process?)*

For incoming foreign higher education studies, diplomas and credential holders, CHED maintains references of authorized and recognized foreign higher education institutions from Ministries of Education (MOEs) and UNESCO’s World List of Universities.

For purposes of taking professional licensure examinations, the degree obtained by a graduate from a foreign HEI is evaluated for equivalence by technical panels (TPs) of experts of the respective disciplines. The recommendation of the TP is endorsed by the Commission en Banc to the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) for the approval of the concerned professional board.

The recognition of foreign HE studies, diplomas, degrees and qualifications for purposes of further studies at present is done at the level of the higher education institution i.e. following the HEI’s admission policy in recognition of the HEI’s institutional academic freedom as enshrined in the Philippine Constitution.

**Recognition of Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees for the Purpose of Practicing Professions**

*(How are foreign certificates, diplomas and degrees recognized and validated for the purpose of employment in various professions)*

The criteria and procedures for the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications are institutionalized for specific programs that are covered by regional agreements like engineering and architecture. An example of criteria or procedure for the recognition of foreign qualifications is the submission of the following credentials/certificates:
1. Detailed Curriculum vitae with employment history, responsibilities and achievement
2. Verified engineering Practice Report
3. Details of Continuing Professional Development completed in accordance with set standards
4. Copies of Assessment Letters from Accredited Professional Association
5. Valid Certificate of Professional Recognition and/or Profession

For other programs, CHED’s acting National Information Center, the CHED International Affairs Staff (IAS) verifies information through other National Information Centers abroad using APARNET, Ministries of Education, and recognized accrediting bodies. Some documentary requirements include:

1. Transcript of Records
2. Letter from the University Registrar
3. Original Copies of the Diploma
4. Government License (if any)

(Are there designated agencies in your country that are authorized to provide recognition services and advice to employers on recruitment of new staff?)

The Philippine Regulatory Commission provides information on the licensure examination results of examinees for fields that require a license to practice and the higher education institutions from which they graduated.

3. Bilateral and Multilateral Recognition Agreements
   How many bilateral and multilateral recognition agreements has your country reached with other parties. Please provide a list of these agreements, if possible

The CHED, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, seeks to advance cooperation with other countries through academic cooperation agreements. After a series of negotiations between the Philippines and its foreign counterparts, forty-one (41) agreements on academic cooperation in higher education were signed with (29) foreign counterparts. These agreements generally involve cooperation in the following areas: faculty and student exchanges, collaborative research, and scholarships. (Please see attached list)

4. National Information Centre

Is your country ready to establish a national information centre for the purpose of academic recognition? Is your country ready to join recognition related regional information sharing mechanisms, such as UNESCO’s higher Education Portal and APARNET?
CHED’s International Affairs Staff is mandated to attend to the information needs and the review of foreign qualifications in coordination with the CHED’s Office of Programs and Standards Development and Office of Planning Resource and Knowledge Management pursuant to CHED Special Order (CSO) 47 series of 2013, entitled Composition of the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the Establishment/Institutionalization of National Information Center under the Asia Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education

The CHED has prepared a proposed template for the country's own information center. The template for the PHL National Center for Academic Information and Mobility (NCAIM) and proposed process flow for the NCAIM are attached.

5. National Qualification Framework

*Does your country have a national qualifications framework (or is it preparing to develop one)*

The Philippine Qualifications Framework (PQF) was institutionalized through the issuance of Executive Order No. 83 on October 2012 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) was published on December 28, 2012. It is currently being prepared for legislation.

The PQF aims to set the levels and standards of educational qualifications and functions to build a quality-assured national system for the development, recognition, and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skills and values. A framework for credit transfer based on pathways and equivalencies system anchored on outcomes-based competencies are likewise being developed.

Specifically, the PQF was established to achieve the following objectives:

- To adopt national standards and levels for outcomes of education;
- To support the development and maintenance of pathways and 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
- To align the PQF with international qualifications framework to support the national and international mobility of workers through the increased recognition of the value and comparability of Philippine qualifications.
Elements of the PHL Qualifications Framework

**Inputs**
- Industry needs
- Need for global recognition of Competencies
- Current qualifications issues at all levels
- Qualifications issues in recognition of prior learning
- Research and policy papers on NQF
- NQFs of other countries

**Outputs**
- Qualification levels
- Descriptors
- Registers
- Working groups
- Pathways and equivalencies
- Quality assurance
- Information and guidelines
- International alignment

The Department of Education (DepEd), Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and CHED were tasked to develop detailed descriptors of each qualification level based on learning standards in basic education, competency standards or training regulations, and policies and standards for higher education academic programs. TESDA has completed the descriptors of the learning standards for the Qualification Types for National Certificate I, II, III, IV, and V (Diploma Level). The common and basic competencies, course description and course content, including training duration of several technical and technological courses have also been developed.

The CHED has proposed that the descriptors in the knowledge and skills domain be stated as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Knowledge and Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI Baccalaureate</td>
<td>Demonstrated broad and coherent knowledge and skills in fields of study for professional/creative work, innovation and lifelong learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Post Baccalaureate</td>
<td>Demonstrated advanced knowledge and skills in specialized or multi-disciplinary field of study for professional practice, creative work, self-directed research and/or lifelong learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Doctoral/Post Doctoral</td>
<td>Demonstrated highly advanced systematic knowledge and skills in highly specialized and/or multidisciplinary field of learning for complex research, creative work and/or professional practice and leadership for the advancement of learning and development of innovations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHED is currently substantiating Levels VI to VIII through revised Policies, Standards and Guidelines that are aligned with learning competency based standards and learner outcomes-based assessments and evaluations.
Together with DepEd and TESDA, it is also in the process of instituting a pathways and equivalencies system for the three levels of education towards seamless credit transfer that is aligned with PQF, other NQFs, and eventually the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework.

6. **Ratification of the 2011 Revised Convention**

The Philippines is working on the approval by the Office of the President of the UNESCO Regional Convention’s instrument of Accession to commence the ratification of the new UNESCO treaty on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the Senate.