



**COUNTRY REPORT:**  
The Republic of the  
Philippines

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## Introduction

This report is part of a series of country reports that QAA, as part of its contractual arrangement with the four national funding bodies, regularly produces to offer higher education providers an insight into the higher education and regulatory landscape of key countries for UK transnational education (TNE). The reports offer high level information and intelligence about regulations, challenges and opportunities, signposting to sources of further information.

In producing these reports QAA seeks to liaise with local regulators and quality assurance agencies, and other UK-sector bodies with relevant expertise. QAA has a number of strategic partnerships with counterpart agencies in key countries for UK TNE. These are a source of intelligence and direct access to up-to-date information about local regulatory developments.

We would like to thank the British Council Philippines for their valuable support in developing this report.



## The Republic of the Philippines



The Republic of the Philippines (the Philippines) is an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia consisting of over 7,500 islands and covering a geographical area of 300,000 square metres. With a population of over 105 million, it is the eighth most populated country in Asia, and the twelfth most populated country in the world.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source World Bank:

[http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report\\_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=PHL](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=PHL) In addition there are estimated to be around 10 million Filipino people living abroad, with the United States home to the largest group of Filipino living overseas (3.5 million).

The country is divided into three main geographical areas from north to south: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The capital city, Manila, is located in Luzon, while the country's most populous city is Quezon City. Both cities, together with other 15 cities and municipalities, form part of Metropolitan Manila (Metro Manila), known as the National Capital Region. Metro Manila is the most densely populated region in the country with 13 million people living in an area of 620 square kilometres. The official languages are Filipino and English, and the major religion is Christianity.

The Philippines is the second most populous nation in ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) after Indonesia. The country's population is forecast to grow to 145 million by 2045, making it the 10th most populous nation in the world. Although rates of population growth, currently at 1.6 per cent per year, are expected to decline in concomitance with growing urbanisation, and the population is slowly ageing, the current fertility rate in the Philippines remains one of the highest in East Asia, and the population aged 60 and older still account for a small fraction (6.2 per cent). Over 30 per cent of the population is below 15 years of age, and the Philippines are projected to have the most significant growth in its university-age population (20-24-year olds) compared to other ASEAN countries (including Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Thailand).

The Philippines's Gross Domestic Product is estimated by the World Bank at 349 billion US Dollars (USD), with an annual growth of 6.9 per cent, and a GDP per capita of 2,951 USD.<sup>2</sup> Services contribute to 60 per cent of GDP, industry 30 per cent, and agriculture 10 per cent. Private consumption, largely driven by remittances from overseas Filipino workers, account for over 60 per cent of current economic growth. Remittances have been estimated to contribute 8.5 per cent to the country's GDP in 2015.<sup>3</sup>

### **Key national policy drivers**

As identified in the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022, growth in GDP is expected to strengthen at 7 to 8 per cent in the medium term, and to be more inclusive, with the overall poverty rate targeted to decline from 21.6 per cent to 14 per cent by 2022. Unemployment rate of total labour force is 5.5 per cent and decreasing, with youth unemployment rate of total labour force aged 15 to 24 having reduced from 16.6 per cent in 2010 to 11.6 per cent in 2016. The PDP sets the target of reducing unemployment rate to 3 to 5 per cent, and youth unemployment rate to 8 per cent by 2022, while also reducing the currently high underemployment rate of over 18 per cent.

With a growing middle-income class and a large young population, coupled with a fast-increasing urbanization and a strong and growing service sector, the Philippines is one of the most dynamic and faster growing economy in Southeast Asia,<sup>4</sup> aiming to become an upper-middle income country by 2022 (PDP 2017-22).<sup>5</sup>

The PDP 2017-22 is the first medium-term plan developed to achieve the 25-year long-term vision - AmBisyon Natin 2040 (AmBisyon) - approved and adopted by the Philippines president in 2016. AmBisyon sets the vision for the Philippines in 2040 to become a prosperous, predominantly middle-class society, where there is equality of opportunities

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<sup>2</sup>[http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report\\_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=PHL](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=PHL)

<sup>3</sup> [www.focus-economics.com/countries/philippines/news/remittances/remittances-growth-picks-up-from-six-year-low-in-february](http://www.focus-economics.com/countries/philippines/news/remittances/remittances-growth-picks-up-from-six-year-low-in-february)

<sup>4</sup> [www.worldbank.org/en/country/philippines/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/philippines/overview)

<sup>5</sup> <http://pdp.neda.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/PDP-2017-2022-07-20-2017.pdf> (PDF 27.2MB)

and poverty has been eradicated, and a major player in the global knowledge economy. The PDP 2017-2022 identifies nine priority sectors with the greatest potential to contribute to realising AmBisyon: housing and urban development; manufacturing (food processing, housing-related goods and services, transport); connectivity (roads, ports, airports, bridges, communication); education services; financial services; health services; tourism-related services; agricultural development; countryside development.

The Philippines is currently ranked 116 in the Human Development Index, regarded as a country with medium human development, with an adult literacy rate of 96 per cent and a tertiary gross enrolment ratio of 36 per cent.<sup>6</sup> In terms of percentage of national GDP spent in education, the latest available official World Bank data for the Philippines report 2.7 per cent in 2009.<sup>7</sup> Compared to the Gross Domestic Product, spending on education appears to have declined over the years and is regarded as below United Nation's recommended national investment on education.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the PDP sees investment in education as key to strengthen human development outcomes, excel in the global knowledge economy and achieve AmBisyon. Specific priority areas in education include to:

- ensure lifelong learning opportunities for all
- enhance the quality and relevance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) education
- widen access to higher education
- reform higher education programmes and curricula to integrate 21st century competencies
- steer career interest towards science, technology, engineering, agri-fisheries and mathematics
- strengthen quality assurance mechanisms and implement the Philippine Qualifications Framework
- improve the research and innovation potential of colleges and universities
- promote local and global inter-university research collaboration
- expand the collaboration between government, academe and industry.

Internationalisation is also seen as instrumental for improving the quality of education, developing a competitive human resources capital, stimulating innovation and technological advancement, and thus sustaining the country's economic growth. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the government agency with responsibility to regulate and support the development of higher education, has developed an internationalisation strategy for the Philippine higher education directed towards supporting the national developments goals reflected in the PDP.

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<sup>6</sup> Source United Nations Development Programme <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/PHL>

<sup>7</sup> Source United Nations Development Programme  
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/expenditure-education-public-gdp#footnote>

<sup>8</sup> <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/31229/philippine-education-spending-still-below-un-standard#ixzz5A11vjduw>

CHED plays a key role in the development of Philippine higher education sector setting out priorities and strategic plans. The current reform agenda led by CHED covers four key areas:

- expand **access** to quality education and training
- enhance the **capacity** of graduates and faculty
- develop and foster **excellence** in colleges and universities
- enshrine **ethical and innovative governance** in higher education institutions.

The CHED internationalisation strategy,<sup>9</sup> published in 2016, covers policies and guidelines for the development of institutional internationalisation strategies, academic and student mobility, and out-bound and in-bound transnational education (programme and institutional mobility).

Underpinning the strategy is the Philippines's commitment to the Master Plan for ASEAN connectivity 2025, and to the development of a higher education common space in Southeast Asia, both aiming at facilitating academic and labour mobility, through exchange programmes and credit transfers, and qualifications recognition agreements.

Before looking into more detail at the policy and guidelines for in-bound TNE set out in CHED's internationalisation strategy, the next sections give an overview of the Philippine higher education landscape and its operating environment.

## The Philippine higher education landscape

Higher education in the Philippines has experienced a significant expansion over the course of the past 10 years. In 2016 there were 3,590,000 students enrolled in higher education across the public and private sector. This represents a 40 per cent growth from 2006-07, but also a 12 per cent drop from the previous year. This is due to the introduction in 2010 of the K to 12 Basic Education Programme which has extended basic education from 10 years to 12 years by the addition of two senior high school years for all those starting primary school from 2012 onwards. As a consequence, it is expected that higher education enrolment will decrease between 2016-18, as the first cohorts benefit from K to 12 and spend two further years in high school, and after that start to increase again.

The number of higher education institutions has also increased over the same time although less significantly, from 1,710 in 2006 to 1,943 in 2016. The majority (88 per cent or 1,710) are Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs), recruiting approximately 54 per cent of all student population (1,948,000). A total of 233 public institutions recruit the remainder of the higher education student population students (1,642,000).<sup>10</sup> Of these 112 are State Universities and Colleges (SUCs). These are institutions that have been publicly accredited under law, and which are managed and subsidized by the central government. There are over 450 satellite campuses of SUCs throughout the country. In addition, there are 107 Local Colleges and Universities (LCUs) - these are institutions established and subsidised by local

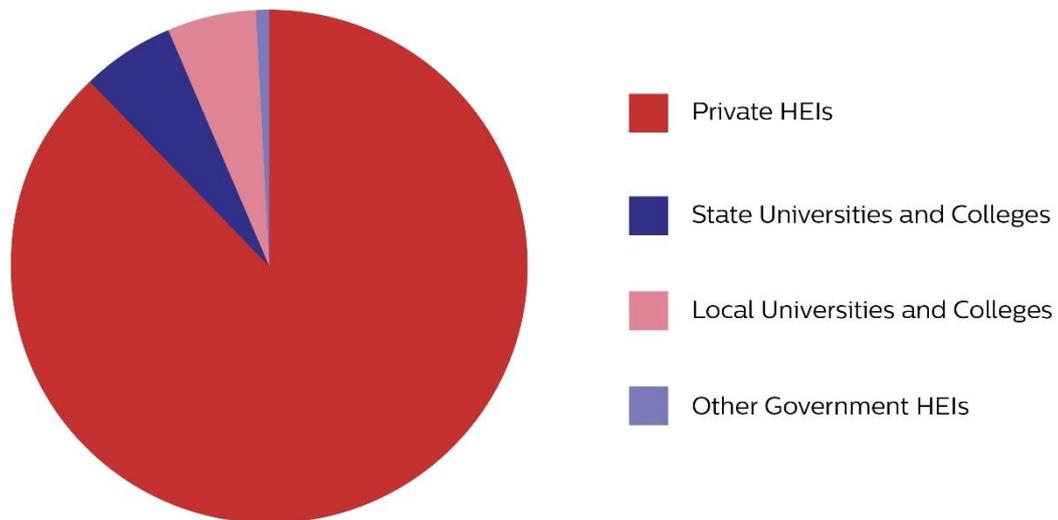
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<sup>9</sup> <https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CMO-55-s.-2016.pdf> (PDF 4.60MB)

<sup>10</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/01-HE-Indicators.pdf> (PDF 678KB)

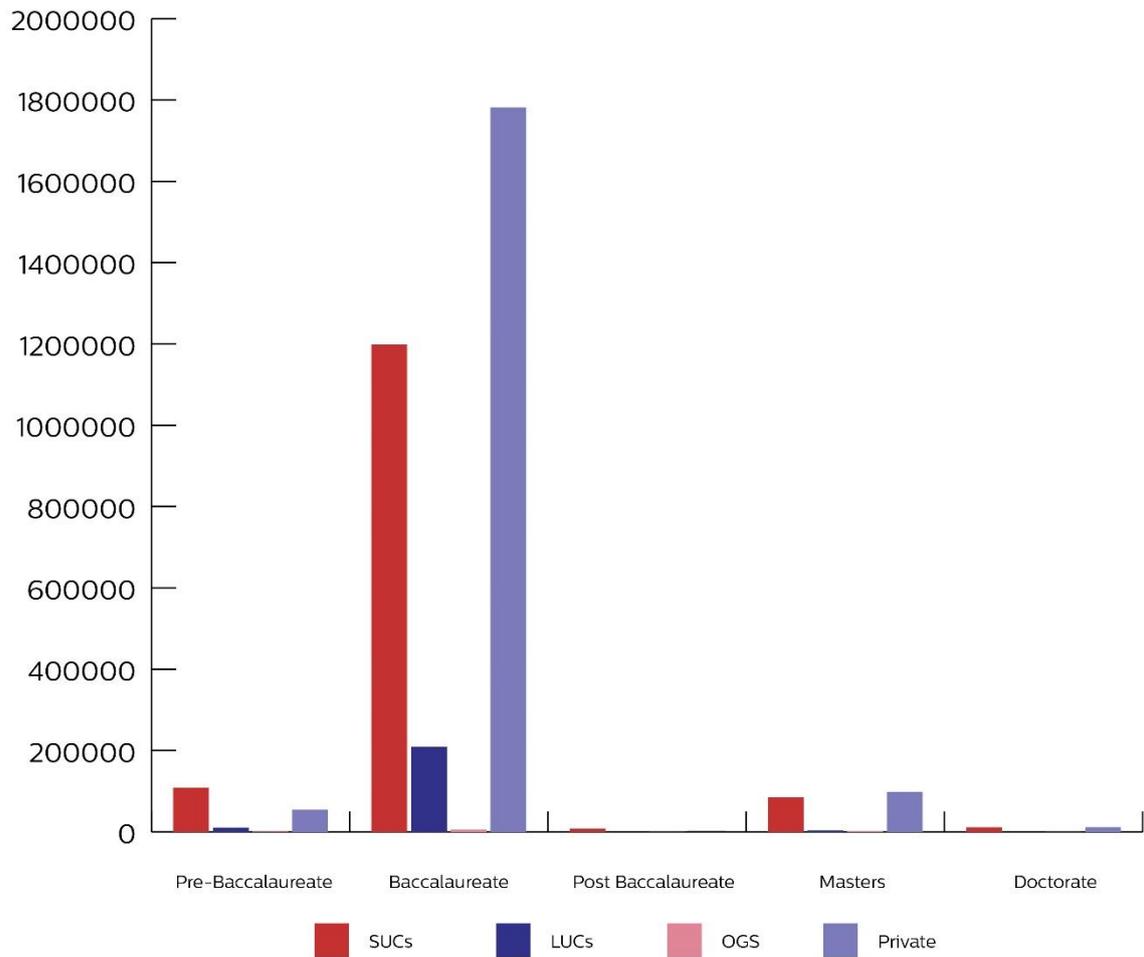
government; and 14 other publicly funded higher education institutions (OGS), including vocational education institutions which are directly affiliated to government agencies and other specialist institutions supervised directly by CHED (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Distribution of HEIs by type**

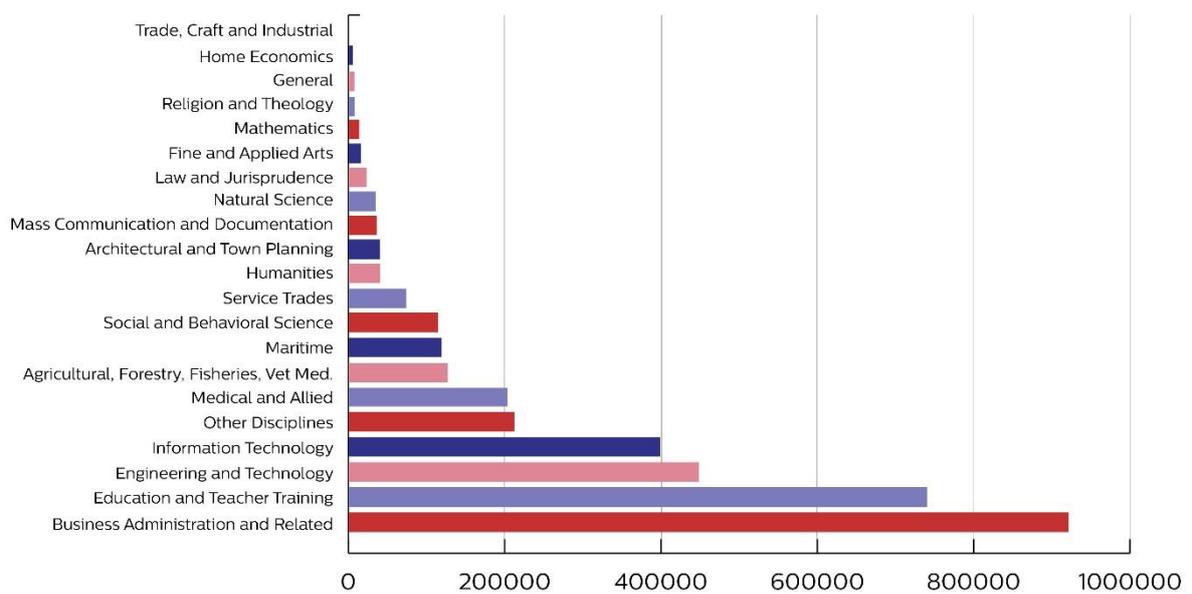


Most higher education enrolments are at bachelor's level with 1,782,000 enrolments in PHEIs and 1,199,000 in SUCs, as illustrated in Figure 2. Figure 3 shows instead the number of students for their main subject areas.

**Figure 2: Higher education institutions by level of study and type of HEI**



**Figure 3: HE enrolment by subject area**



The most popular areas of study are Business Administration and related subjects (25.7 per cent), Education and Teacher Training (20.6 per cent), followed by Engineering and Technology (12.5 per cent), and Information Technology (11.1 per cent). The priority disciplines identified by CHED for Philippine higher education are Education and Teacher Training, Engineering and Technology, Information Technology, as well as Medical and allied subjects (currently with a share of 5.7 per cent enrolments), Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, and Veterinary Medicine (3.5 per cent), Maritime Studies (3.3 per cent), Architecture and Town Planning (1.1 per cent), Natural Science (1 per cent), and Mathematics (0.4 per cent).

## **The Philippine higher education regulatory framework**

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED)<sup>11</sup> was created by the Higher Education Act of 1994, as the government body responsible for overseeing the higher education sector, alongside the Department of Education responsible for basic education, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority with responsibility for technical-vocational education. CHED operates under the Office of the President, with a mandate to formulate and recommend development plans, policies, priorities and programmes to support the development of higher education, with a view to promoting relevant and quality higher education, broadening access to higher education, and ensuring advancement of learning and research. CHED's remit covers both the public and private sector.

CHED's statutory functions, as per the 1994 Higher Education Act, include setting minimum standards for programmes and institutions of higher education, and monitoring and evaluating HEI's compliance; rationalising the higher education landscape, including through the merger of existing institutions and the creation of new ones; and supporting the development of potential centres of excellence in priority subject to areas, and purposive research by HEIs. Responsibility for quality assurance, governance and the coordination of higher education institutions rests with CHED's Office of Institutional Quality Assurance and Governance (OIQAG). OIQAG specific functions include to:

- formulate and support the implementation of institutional policies and guidelines on quality assurance and governance
- promote and support continuing quality improvement and transparent responsible institutional governance
- coordinate with and support HEIs in their plans to establish consortia, twinning, partnerships, linkages between and among themselves and with foreign HEIs
- promote the strengthening of HEI's productivity capabilities, and support HEI's innovation.

CHED promulgates the minimum standards and guidelines on the establishment of a higher education institution and the operation of its programmes in terms of curriculum, qualified management and faculty, laboratory facilities and equipment, library facilities and other support services. To be legally entitled to offer degree programmes HEIs need to secure from CHED government authorisation for initial operation of a degree programme, and a government recognition of the final award in the last curriculum year. Government authorisation and recognition are granted on the basis of an assessment of full compliance with CHED minimum standards and requirements.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/ched/>

HEIs that have complied with the minimum standards set by CHED and that have been recognised are encouraged to seek voluntary accreditation, at either programme or institutional level. Voluntary accreditation is an enhancement mechanism aimed at demonstrating compliance with standards of quality over and above the minimum required by government. It is carried out by non-governmental accreditation agencies authorised by CHED. There are different accrediting agencies in the country catering to the various HEIs, all subject to the policies and directions of CHED. The main distinction is between accrediting agencies for the private sector and for government-supported institutions.

Three are private sector accrediting agencies: the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU), established in 1957 mainly for private Catholic institutions; the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA), established in 1973 to oversee private non-sectarian institutions; and the Association of Christian Schools, Colleges and Universities Accrediting Association Inc. (ACSCU-AAI), established in 1976 for Protestant institutions. They all operate under the umbrella of the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP). Two are the accrediting agencies for government-supported institutions: the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACUP), established in 1987, and the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCUCOA), established in 2003. Together they have formed the National Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (NNQAA).

FAAP and NNQAA act as certifying agencies for CHED, that is they certify that programmes or institutions have been accredited by their member accrediting agencies in accordance to their standards. They also serve the function to ensure comparability of standards amongst accrediting agencies and contribute to the enhancement of the accreditation movement. Federations or networks of accrediting agencies must be recognized by CHED in their certification function. Each accreditation agency has developed its own standards and processes, which must be approved by their certifying federation and CHED. Despite their differences, all accreditation processes share two key features: a self-evaluation prepared by the institution and an on-site evaluation conducted by peers. Accreditation decisions are made by the governing board of the accrediting agency and is periodical.

Under CHED's Revised Policies and Guidelines on Voluntary Accreditation in Aid of Quality and Excellence and Higher Education,<sup>12</sup> there are four levels of programme accreditation associated to different levels of benefits to HEIs:

Level I accreditation: for programmes which have been granted initial accreditation after a formal visit by their accrediting agency, and duly certified by the accreditation federation/network, for a period of three years.

Level II accreditation: for programmes which have been re-accredited after a formal visit by their accrediting agency, and duly certified by the accreditation federation/network, for a period of three or five years.

Level III accreditation: for programmes which have been re-accredited and have met the additional criteria/guidelines set by the federation/network of their accrediting agency for this level. Level III accredited undergraduate programmes must show 'a reasonably high standard of instruction' and 'a highly visibly extension programme', while Level III graduate programmes must also demonstrate 'a highly visible research tradition'. Two of the following criteria must also be satisfied: a strong faculty development tradition; a highly credible

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<sup>12</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/cmo-1-s-2005/>

performance of its graduates in licensure examinations; existence of working consortia or linkages with other schools and/or agencies; and extensive and functional library and other learning resource facilities

Level IV accreditation: for accredited programmes which are highly respected as very high- quality academic programmes in the Philippines and with prestige and authority comparable to similar programmes in excellent foreign universities. The following criteria must be satisfied: excellent outcomes in research, teaching and learning, community service, evidence of international links, and well-developed planning process with support quality assurance mechanisms.

Benefits for Level I and II accreditation include:

- full administrative deregulation
- financial deregulation in terms of setting of tuition and other fees
- authority to revise the curriculum without CHED approval, provided that the revised curriculum is submitted to CHED
- authority to graduate students from accredited programmes without prior CHED approval
- priority in the awards of grants and funding assistance from CHED's Higher Education Development Fund for scholarships and faculty development, facilities improvement and other development programmes.
- right to use on its publications or advertisements the word 'accredited'
- limited inspection by CHED.

Benefits of Level III accreditation include all the benefits of Levels I and II, as well as:

- authority to offer new courses allied to Level III accredited programmes without need for prior approval, provided that CHED is informed
- privilege to apply for authority to offer new graduate programmes, open learning/distance education, widening access courses, and to participate in transnational education.

Benefits of Level IV accreditation include all the above listed benefits as well as:

- full autonomy for the programme for the duration of its Level IV accredited status
- authority to offer new graduate programmes allied to existing Level IV accredited programmes, including open learning/distance education, and extension classes without need for prior approval, provided that CHED is informed.

Levels of accreditation are used by CHED as a major criterion for the identification of Centres of Excellence (COEs) and Centres of Developments (CODs). In accordance to the Higher Education Act 1994, CHED shall 'identify, support and develop potential centers of excellence in program areas needed for the development of world-class scholarship, nation building and national development'. COEs refer to departments within a higher education institution, which continuously demonstrate excellent performance in the areas of instruction, research and publication, extension and linkages and institutional qualifications. CODs refer to departments within a higher education institution, which demonstrate the potential to become a COE in the future. COEs and CODs benefit from financial support from CHED for flagship project and programmes aimed at enhancing their teaching, research and service programmes.

Levels of accreditation are also a major criterion by CHED in the selection of private HEIs to be granted autonomous or deregulated status. Given the significant number of private HEIs

(currently over 1,700), CHED is committed to rationalise and increase the efficiency of their supervision through progressive deregulation. To this aim, CHED has issued policies and guidelines for the grant of autonomous and deregulated status to selected private HEIs that have consistently shown exemplary performance in the provision of education, research and widening access services.<sup>13</sup> In granting private HEIs autonomy and deregulated status, CHED takes into account two main criteria: commitment to excellence, evidenced for example by the presence of CEOs and CODs, and having achieved accredited status (Level IV and III) for a set number of programmes; and institutional sustainability and enhancement, as evidence by institutional accreditation from the accrediting agencies or CHED's own Institutional Quality Assessment (ISA)<sup>14</sup> (see box below).

#### **Institutional Quality Assessment (ISA)**

ISA is a quality assurance process managed by CHED that assesses the institutional sustainability of an HEI in five key result areas:

- governance and management
- quality of teaching and learning
- quality of professional exposure, research and creative work/innovation
- support for students
- relations with the community.

To qualify for autonomous status, institutions must obtain a minimum of 70 per cent under Commitment to Excellence and a total percentage score of 91-100 per cent. To qualify for deregulated status, they must obtain a minimum of 60 per cent under Commitment to Excellence and a total percentage of 81-90 per cent.

HEIs which are granted autonomous status are entitled to launch new programmes at either undergraduate or graduate levels, including doctoral programmes in areas of expertise, without securing a permit/authority but informing CHED of the programmes to be offered. They also enjoy autonomy in setting tuition fees and are free from CHED's monitoring and evaluation activities, while complying with the submission of requested data for CHED's data gathering. In addition, they enjoy priority in the grant of subsidies and other financial incentives and assistance from the CHED, as well as the privilege to offer extension classes to expand access to higher education, and to establish links with recognised foreign higher education institutions, provided that the existing CHED policies and guidelines for international partnerships are fully complied with. HEIs with deregulated status enjoy the same privilege as autonomous HEIs, but they must still secure permits for new programmes and satellite campuses.<sup>15</sup>

Public sector HEIs (SUCs and LCUs) are regarded as autonomous by legislation. They are created by national legislation or local ordinance and their charter already gives them much of the benefits associated with the different accreditation levels. However, accreditation levels are still used to decide funding allocation for public sector HEIs.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CMO-No.52-s2006.pdf> (PDF 1.07MB)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.pacu.org.ph/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CHED-ISA-Presentation\\_AttyCarmelitaYadao-Sison.pdf](http://www.pacu.org.ph/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CHED-ISA-Presentation_AttyCarmelitaYadao-Sison.pdf) (PDF 525KB)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.usl.edu.ph/public/downloads/CMO-19-series-of-2016-Benefits-and-Responsibilities-of-Autonomous-and-Deregulated-Private-Higher-Education-Institutions.pdf> (PDF 1.05MB)

CHED publishes a list of all autonomous and deregulated institutions. The latest published list, dated April 2016, include 59 autonomous HEIs<sup>16</sup> and 16 deregulated HEIs.<sup>17</sup> CHED also publishes a list of all COEs and CODs. As of January 2017, there were 30 SUCs with COEs and 47 SUCs with CODs, and 42 private HEIs with COEs and 63 with CODs.<sup>18</sup>

## The Philippine regulatory framework for transnational education

Over the past twenty years, CHED has responded to the country's need to develop the human resources base to support a knowledge economy responsive to the challenges of globalisation and the 21st century, by developing a number of policies and guidelines on international partnerships and transnational education. The latest versions of these include the *Policy Framework and Strategies on the Internationalization of Philippine Higher Education*,<sup>19</sup> and the *Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Transnational Education Programs* (PSGs for TNE).<sup>20</sup>

The former CHED document sets out the key policy drivers for the internationalisation of Philippine higher education, which are firmly placed against the backdrop of the ASEAN Economic Community and the country's national plans. It also sets out principles and directives to guide Philippine HEIs in their internationalisation efforts, in both a developmental and regulatory spirit. It covers a broad range of aspects of internationalisation, including inbound and outbound student and academic mobility, and inbound and outbound programme and institutional mobility. The latter are the specific focus of the CHED's policies, standards and guidelines for TNE programmes.

The PSGs for TNE articulate procedures for approval, monitoring and evaluation of TNE programmes for both Philippine HEIs developing TNE overseas and foreign HEIs developing TNE provision in the Philippines. Focusing on the requirements for foreign HEIs, the CHED's document states that they must have:

- accreditation or certification by the respective higher education ministry/commission or appropriate regulatory body for higher education
- legal standing in its country of origin and/or other countries in which it conducts business as well as the recognition of its qualifications including those delivered through TNE
- academic reputation in academic communities
- qualifications and/or experience of academic staff with regard to teaching and research, when tutoring/academic support is provided by the offshore partner
- quality and accessibility of student learning support services such as ICT infrastructure and facilities, library, computing services, bandwidth availability, meeting rooms, virtual learning environment and learning management system
- quality teaching and learning resources such as open education resources
- institutional and national quality assurance procedures for TNE including published standards and reports

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<sup>16</sup> <https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/List-of-Autonomous-Higher-Education-Institutions.pdf> (PDF 599KB)

<sup>17</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/List-of-Deregulated-Higher-Education-Institutions.pdf> (PDF 569KB)

<sup>18</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/List-of-Centers-of-Excellence-and-Development.pdf> (PDF 1.02MB)

<sup>19</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/cmo-55-s-2016-2/> (PDF 5.50MB)

<sup>20</sup> <http://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CMO-62-s.-2016.pdf> (PDF 4.60MB)

- appropriate student support services including, when international students are to spend a period of time in the Philippines as part of course or programme requirements, information on legal requirements and accommodation arrangements, subject to the Bureau of Immigration requirement for international students.

These are similar requirements to those set for Philippine HEIs wishing to offer outbound TNE, which must also have Level III accreditation or COE's or COD's statute for the programmes intended to be delivered overseas. Both inbound and outbound TNE HEIs must obtain authorisation from CHED before starting to operate. For foreign HEIs, they must file in an application together with their local partner through the appropriate CHED regional office. The PSGs provide a list of the required documentation which includes, in addition to a description of the nature of the TNE provision to be provided, a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement entered into by the partners. Authority to operate is granted for an initial period of two years for undergraduate programmes and one year for graduate programmes, at the end of which CHED will carry out an assessment followed by a final assessment during the third year of implementation for undergraduate provision and second year for graduate provision to validate the authority to operate.

Although CHED has published PSGs on TNE, there is no legislative framework for the operation and administration of TNE in the Philippines. In 2016, a Bill was submitted to Congress seeking to provide such legal framework with a view to facilitating the operation of TNE institutions and the enrolment of foreign students in the country.<sup>21</sup> The proposed Bill sees TNE partnerships with reputable universities as a way to attract international faculty and students, and develop greater teaching and research capacity in areas critical for the country's economic and social development. TNE is also seen as a way to widen access to HE, stem brain-drain and outflow of currency, and create more jobs for academic and support staff within the Philippines.

The proposed regulatory framework sets out requirements for both branch campus and partnership provision, building on what is already contained in CHED's PSGs. Of particular note is that, in accordance with the proposed Bill, education institutions must be owned by Filipino citizens, or by association at least sixty per cent of which is owned by Filipino citizens, and that no education institutions shall be established exclusively for non-Filipino citizens, and in no case should non-Filipino citizens comprise more than one-third of total enrolment, except for foreign temporary residents. Foreign temporary residents are those living in the Philippines for a specific period under public or private contract, or foreign students who are in the Philippines specifically to pursue higher education. Foreign HEIs for temporary foreign residents can be owned solely by foreign citizens, and can comprise of wholly foreign faculty and students, which must make up at least 50 per cent of the student population and 25 per cent of faculty members. The Bill proposes that zones or hubs for TNE may be established in special economic zones.

The Bill also proposes that foreign HEIs within the top 400 best universities of reputable international rankings should be exempt from having their curricular approved by CHED, and those within the top 500 from CHED's quality assurance monitoring. It also proposes that a dedicated TNE division should be created under CHED.

Whilst the Bill is debated in congress, CHED continues to support the internationalisation of Philippine HEIs and their capacity to respond to local, national and global priorities through a

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<sup>21</sup> [www.congress.gov.ph/legisdocs/basic\\_17/HB04565.pdf](http://www.congress.gov.ph/legisdocs/basic_17/HB04565.pdf) (PDF 2.44 MB)

number of initiatives. These include the CHED-British Council Joint Development of Niche Programmes through Philippines and-United Kingdom Linkages Project.<sup>22</sup>

### Joint Development of Niche Programmes through Philippine-UK Linkages

The project (also referred to as UK-PH NOW), jointly funded by CHED and the British Council and running from 2016 to 2020, has aimed to provide capacity and funding support for Philippine HEIs to develop and implement niche postgraduate programmes leading to double degrees in conjunction with UK universities in subject specialisms that are not offered in the Philippines and are key to national and regional development.<sup>23</sup>

The following niche areas were identified for support:

- transportation studies
- climate change
- education (professional education and training/education neuroscience/education planning, economics and international development/lifelong learning)
- tropical medicine/public health
- energy security/renewable energy
- maritime engineering
- social science
- oceanography
- economics
- agriculture/food security
- digital innovation and creativity.

Ten Philippine HEIs were pre-selected by the British Council and CHED as recipients of the project support based on their capacity and readiness for international partnerships. They are all either autonomous or deregulated institutions and recognised either as COE or COD. The selected Philippine HEIs then selected their UK HEI partners on the basis of a call of expression of interest issued by the British Council. The British Council further supported the development of the partnerships organising group and one-to-one meetings. Nine UK universities have been selected and a total of 13 partnerships have been developed (Figure 4).<sup>24</sup>

**Figure 4: PH-UK NOW joint programmes**

Philippine HEI	UK HEI	Programme
Ateneo De Manila University	Queen Mary University of London	MSc Innovation through Media Arts Technology and MSc Data Science
Bicol University	University of Liverpool	MSc Sustainable Food Systems
Central Luzon State University	University of Liverpool	PhD Sustainable Food System

<sup>22</sup> [www.britishcouncil.ph/sites/default/files/cmo\\_7\\_s\\_2017\\_-\\_guidelines\\_for\\_idnp.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.ph/sites/default/files/cmo_7_s_2017_-_guidelines_for_idnp.pdf) (PDF 2.67MB)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.britishcouncil.ph/tne/about/the-project>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.britishcouncil.ph/tne/programmes>

De La Salle University	Liverpool Hope University	MSc in Computer Science, Data Science/Data Engineering, Robotics Engineering, Sports and Exercise Nutrition
Miriam College	Goldsmiths, University of London	PGCert and MA Designing Education
Saint Louis University	Coventry University	MSc Disaster Risk Reduction and Management
Silliman University	Newcastle University	MRes Tropical Biological Oceanography
University of San Carlos	Coventry University	PhD Engineering
University of San Carlos	Cardiff Metropolitan University	MA Arts and Design
University of the Philippines Diliman	University of Reading	PhD Meteorology
University of the Philippines Los Banos	University of Reading	PhD by Research (Agriculture)
University of Santo Tomas	University of Reading	PhD Built Environment/Architecture
University of Santo Tomas	University of Leeds	Master Public Health (International) with Postgraduate Certificate

The jointly developed TNE programmes are due to start in 2018/19 and 2019/20 with enrolments in these years funded by CHED. It is expected that these partnerships will be self-sustainable in the future and that they will trigger further collaborations between the UK-Philippine partners.

### **The UK TNE landscape in the Philippines**

Currently the extent of UK TNE in the Philippines is very limited. According to the latest Aggregate Offshore Record published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency for the academic year 2016-17, the number of students studying for a UK award in the Philippines was just 282, with numbers having been roughly stable over the past years. If we exclude distance learning, which accounts for 192 students, 6 UK degree-awarding bodies are currently offering their degrees in the country. Of the remaining 90 students, 34 are reported by Oxford Brookes, presumably studying on the BSc in Applied Accountancy offered in collaboration with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and 37 students by the University of Bradford. The remaining students are reported by the University of Leeds (1), the University of Northampton (13), Roehampton University (2) and the University of Salford (3).

## Conclusions

Despite UK TNE in the Philippines, and inbound TNE in general, being very limited, the country has significant potential for expansion. Not only it is the 10<sup>th</sup> most populous nation in the world, but with over 30 per cent of the population below 15 years of age, it is projected to have the most significant growth in its university-aged population compared to other ASEAN countries. Demand for higher education is steadily growing, and supported by national policy, with a 40 per cent growth in higher education enrolments over the past 10 years. English proficiency is generally high among Filipinos, English being the official language of instruction at the tertiary level of education. Indeed, amongst ASEAN member states, the Philippines is the only country, alongside Singapore, where English is one of the official languages, which puts the Philippines in a good strategic position.

Furthermore, the Philippines has become an English Language teaching destination, especially for students from Asia who prefer its proximity to home; but the country is also attracting increasing numbers of students from around the world seeking to improve their English. It offers low costs in tuition and living and is therefore providing a competitive alternative to traditional destinations such as the US, Australia and the UK.

With CHED proactively encouraging and supporting the internationalisation of Philippine higher education, including through TNE, and a TNE Bill being discussed in Congress aimed at facilitating the growth of foreign provision in the country, the Philippines represents a key strategic country for UK providers considering growing their TNE footprint in East Asia.

QAA2230 - Aug 18

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