



Republic of the Philippines  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
**COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**CHED MEMORANDUM ORDER (CMO)**  
No. 44  
Series of 2008

**SUBJECT: POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE GRANT OF  
AUTONOMOUS AND DEREGULATED STATUS TO PRIVATE  
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

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In accordance with the pertinent provisions of Republic Act (RA) 7722, otherwise known as the "Higher Education Act of 1994" and by virtue of Commission en banc Resolution No. 417-2008, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) hereby promulgates these policies and guidelines for the grant of autonomous and deregulated status to private higher education institutions (PHEIs) with corresponding benefits. These policies and guidelines shall be adopted in the identification of PHEIs that will be granted autonomous and deregulated status as well as in the evaluation of identified PHEIs for the retention/withdrawal or upgrading/downgrading of their status.

**Article I  
Objectives**

- Section 1. The Commission on Higher Education recognizes the enormous contribution of private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in the growth and prominence of tertiary education in the country and in the Asia-Pacific. The CHED is also cognizant of their consistent committed service through quality education, research and extension work.
- Section 2. At present, there are about 1,710 PHEIs under the supervision of CHED with a total of about 1.6 million students enrolled in some 978 academic programs in the undergraduate and graduate levels. The task of supervising these PHEIs is formidable and demanding, hence, the need to rationalize the supervision of PHEIs.
- Section 3. The grant of autonomous and deregulated status to deserving private colleges and universities is thus aimed at recognizing PHEIs that have consistently shown exemplary performance in the provision of education, research and extension services, at the same time rationalizing supervision of PHEIs through progressive deregulation.

## Article II Definition of Terms

- Section 4. **Academic Program** refers to a set of courses or study the completion of which leads to a degree.
- Section 5. **Courses of study** refer to subjects that constitute an academic program.
- Section 6. **Cluster of Disciplines** – pertains to the clustering identified by CHED as follows:
1. Agriculture Education
  2. Business and Management Education
  3. Criminal Justice Education
  4. Engineering and Architecture Education
  5. Health Profession Education
  6. Humanities Education
  7. Information Technology Education
  8. Legal Education
  9. Maritime Education
  10. Science and Mathematics
  11. Social Sciences Education
  12. Teacher Education
- Section 7. **International or national recognition** refers to verifications, accreditations, categories or ranks and awards given by quality assurance organizations or bodies in cognizance of quality management or academic excellence in higher education such as but not limited to the following examples:
- Sec. 7.1. **Certification** - ISO 9001:2000 or ISO 14001
- Sec. 7.2. **International Accreditation** refers to the recognition given by international accrediting agencies to educational programs or institutions based on acceptable levels of quality and performance as determined by an independent external assessment team.
- Sec. 7.3. **Award** – The Philippine Quality Award (Republic Act No. 9013)
- Sec. 7.4. **Categories or Ranks** – official studies or classifications such as the one made by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) of the Department of Employment, Education and Training of Australia, published in a document titled "Studies in Comparative Education: The Philippines (1990)".
- Section 8. **Level of Accreditation** refers to accreditation level for a particular program granted by recognized accrediting bodies as certified by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) or the National Network of Quality Accrediting Agencies (NNQAA) indicating that the program or institution has attained certain standards of quality over and above the minimum requirements prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education.

Section 9. **Policies, Standard and Guidelines (PSGs)** refers to sets of minimum standards prescribed by CHED in terms of curriculum, processes and input requirements for academic programs which HEIs must comply with to obtain the mandatory government authority (permit and recognition) to offer a degree program at the baccalaureate or graduate level.

Section 10. **Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs)** refers to institutions of higher learning that are recognized under the Corporation Code and governed by special laws and the general provisions of the Code.

### **Article III General Selection Criteria**

Section 11. The selection and identification of PHEIs to be granted autonomous and deregulated status shall be based on the following general criteria:

Sec. 11.1. Long tradition of integrity and untarnished reputation – an attribute ascribed to a higher education institution that has consistently adhered to existing laws, rules and regulations and has no record of confirmed violations of Philippine laws, CHED Memorandum Orders (CMOs), and PSGs; and has established processes for addressing administrative and disciplinary cases.

Sec. 11.2. Commitment to excellence – the HEI demonstrates academic excellence as evidenced by the designation of its programs as Center of Excellence (COE) or Center of Development (COD); its accreditation status; or the PHEI's attainment of the required Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (IQUAME) category. All forms of existing quality assurance mechanisms applicable to Philippine higher education institutions are considered. Performance in licensure examinations is excluded as a separate criterion since it is already taken into consideration in the identification of COEs/CODs, level of accredited programs and IQUAME classification.

Sec. 11.3. Sustainability and viability of operations.

Section 12. Integrity and untarnished reputation is a prerequisite for the granting of autonomy or deregulated status. Failure to meet this requirement will automatically disqualify a PHEI from the grant of autonomy or deregulated status.

### **Article IV Specific Selection Criteria**

Section 13. To qualify for autonomous status, an institution must obtain a minimum of 70% under Commitment to Excellence and a score of 91-100% of the total.

Section 14. To qualify for deregulated status, an institution must obtain a minimum of 60% under Commitment to Excellence and a score of 81-90% of the total.

Section 15. Indicators and their corresponding weights for Commitment to Excellence are as follows:

Sec. 15.1. HEIs that meet any of the singular criteria for Autonomous Status (70%)

- a. At least 5 programs are currently identified as COEs
- b. At least 4 programs have Level IV accreditation
- c. At least 6 programs have Level III accreditation (and in the case of a comprehensive institution, the points should come from at least three (3) cluster of disciplines)
- d. The HEI has an IQAME category of A(r) (Research University or College)

Sec. 15.2. HEIs that meet any of the singular criteria for Deregulated status (60%)

- a. At least 3 programs are currently identified as COEs
- b. At least 4 programs are currently identified as CODs
- c. At least 3 programs have Level IV accreditation
- d. At least 4 programs have Level III accreditation (and in the case of a comprehensive institution, the points should come from at least two (2) cluster of disciplines)

Sec. 15.3. HEIs that meet a combination of any of the following criteria for Autonomous or Deregulated Status. HEIs obtaining a total of at least 200 points (equivalent to 70%) on the following items will qualify for Autonomous Status while HEIs with a total of least 120 points (equivalent to 60%) will qualify for Deregulated Status:

- a. COE/COD
  - COE (40 points per program)
  - COD (30 points per program)
- b. IQAME Category
  - A(t) (100 points)
- c. Accreditation (and in the case of a comprehensive institution, the points should come from at least three (3) cluster of disciplines)
  - Level IV (50 points per program)
  - Level III (35 points per program)
  - Level II (10 points per program for a maximum of 50 points)
- d. International or National Recognition for academic excellence (10 points per program recognition or 40 points for institutional recognition) for a maximum of 40 points.

Section 16. Indicators and its corresponding weights for Sustainability and Viability of Operations (30%):

Sec. 16.1. Statement of profit and loss reflects the institution's capability to sustain operations (8%)

- Sec. 16.2. Enrolment is relatively stable. Otherwise, if ever decrease is shown, it is within the 5 to 10% acceptable range unless the institution voluntarily opted to scale down its enrolment, (8%)
- Sec. 16.3. Enrolment and admission policies are in line with the institution's Vision, Mission and Goals (8%)
- Sec. 16.4. Top administrators (President, Vice-President, Dean, Director, Librarian and Registrar) meet the educational qualifications specified by CHED (6%).

#### **Article V Selection Procedure**

Section 17. The CHED, through the Technical Working Group for Autonomous and Deregulated HEIs (TWG for A&D) shall evaluate the documentary evidence submitted by the applicant HEI. In case there are issues or documents that need to be clarified or verified, the TWG may create a team to conduct an ocular visit and interview the officials and staff of the PHEI. The team prepares its evaluation report to be presented to the TWG.

Only the Accreditation Level awarded and certified by the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) will be considered for evaluation. The TWG shall rely on the information/documentation to be provided by FAAP for the evaluation and therefore, applicant HEIs do not need to submit copies of their accreditation certificates.

The TWG has access to data on Centers of Excellence, Centers of Development and IQuAME results. The PHEIs are not required to submit evidence of their award as COE/COD or their IQuAME category.

- Section 18. The TWG deliberates on the evaluation report and submits its recommendation to the CEB.
- Section 19. To protect the integrity of the process, no TWG member shall be allowed to visit a PHEI within his/her region.
- Section 20. The Commission en banc shall approve the PHEIs to be granted autonomous or deregulated status
- Section 21. Official announcement of the status granted to qualified PHEIs shall be done through the issuance of a CHED Memorandum Order.
- Section 22. The Commission shall evaluate and grant autonomous and deregulated status to qualified PHEIs once in a year.

## Article VI

### Benefits, Privileges and Responsibilities of Autonomous Status

The following are the benefits to be enjoyed and the conditions to be complied with by the PHEIs granted autonomy:

- Section 23. Exemption from the issuance of Special Order (S.O.) for their graduates.
- Section 24. Free from regular monitoring and evaluation by CHED. However, the CHED may conduct verification, monitoring or investigation activities in cases when there are complaints filed against the PHEIs, there are reported violations by the PHEIs of existing laws, rules and regulations, or there are controversial issues/problems raised about the operation of the PHEIs.
- Section 25. Priority in the granting of subsidies and other financial incentives/ assistance from the CHED whenever funds are available.
- Section 26. Privilege to determine and prescribe their curricular programs to achieve global competence. In case of curricular revisions, the PHEIs should furnish the CHED Central Office for record purposes, relevant documents indicating compliance with the minimum requirement at least one semester prior to the start of the intended academic year in which the revised curriculum shall be implemented. The revised curriculum shall be applicable only to the entering students of the specified academic year.
- Section 27. Privilege to offer new course(s)/ program(s) in undergraduate level and, at the graduate level, in their areas of expertise as indicated by their accreditation status, without securing permit/authority from CHED except in disciplines that are under moratorium.
- Section 28. The PHEIs can offer a maximum of two (2) new programs in a given academic year and should ensure that the CHED minimum requirements as embodied in the existing policies, standards and guidelines (PSGs) for a particular program are fully complied with.
- Section 29. If the PHEI wishes to offer more than two programs in a given Academic Year (AY), it has to secure a permit from CHED for each additional program.
- Section 30. If the PHEI wishes to offer a new program without an existing CHED-issued PSG, it shall seek authority from CHED to offer such a program.
- Section 31. The PHEI should furnish the appropriate CHED Office relevant documents on the new program six (6) months before the start of the academic year in which the new program(s) will be offered.
- Section 32. Privilege to establish branch(es) or satellite campus(es) without securing authority from CHED. The PHEI should ensure that the new branch/ campus complies with the CHED minimum requirements with regard to the establishment of a new HEI and the existing CHED PSGs for the program(s) to be offered.

- The PHEI should furnish the CHED Central Office relevant documents at least six months prior to the start of the intended academic year in which the new branch/campus shall begin to operate.
- Section 33. Privilege to offer extension classes to expand access to higher education. The PHEI should ensure that the existing CHED PSGs for the offering of extension classes are fully complied with. The PHEI should furnish the appropriate CHED Office relevant documents six months before the start of the academic year in which the extension classes will be offered.
- Section 34. Privilege to establish linkages with recognized foreign higher education institutions. The PHEI should ensure that the existing CHED PSGs for twinning, networking and linkages are fully complied with. The PHEI should furnish the CHED Central Office relevant documents six (6) months before the start of the academic year in which such networking/linkage arrangements will be established.
- Section 35. If the PHEI wishes to offer program(s) via the alternative mode (i.e. distance education, ETEEAP, or transnational education (as defined in CMO No. 02, series of 2008), it shall secure a permit from CHED.
- Section 36. Authority to grant an honorary degree to deserving individuals, per provisions of the existing CHED issuance on conferment of honorary degrees. The PHEI shall inform CHED of the conferment.
- Section 37. A PHEI granted autonomous status is required to submit to the concerned CHED Regional Office their enrolment list per semester, graduation list of the current school year, and other institutional data/information needed for inclusion in the Higher Education-Management Information System.
- Section 38. All other benefits and privileges of PHEIs as provided for under CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series of 2005 entitled "Revised Policies and Guidelines on Voluntary Accreditation in Aid of Quality and Excellence in Higher Education."

**Article VII**  
**Benefits and Conditions of Deregulated Status**

The following are the benefits to be enjoyed by the PHEIs granted deregulated status:

- Section 38. Exemption from the issuance of Special Order for their graduates.
- Section 39. Free from regular monitoring and evaluation by CHED. However, in cases when there are complaints filed against the PHEIs, or there are reported violations by the PHEIs of existing laws, rules and regulations, or there are controversial issues/problems raised about the operation of the PHEIs, the CHED may conduct verification, monitoring or investigation activities.
- Section 40. Priority in the granting of subsidies and other financial incentives/assistance from the CHED whenever funds are available.

- Section 41. Privilege to determine and prescribe their curricular programs to achieve global competence. In case of curricular revisions, the PHEIs should furnish the CHED Central Office for record purposes, relevant documents indicating compliance with the minimum requirement at least one semester prior to the start of the intended academic year in which the revised curriculum shall be implemented. The revised curriculum shall be applicable only to the entering students in the specified academic year
- Section 42. Authority to grant an honorary degree to deserving individuals, per provisions of the existing CHED issuance on conferment of honorary degrees. The PHEI shall inform CHED of the conferment
- Section 43. A PHEI granted deregulated status has to secure a CHED permit or authority to offer a new program, establish branch/satellite campus, offer extension classes, offer programs via distance education, provide transnational education programs or establish a twinning/networking/linkage programs with foreign institutions.
- Section 44. A PHEI granted deregulated status is required to submit to the concerned CHED Regional Office their enrolment list per semester, graduation list of the current school year, and other institutional data/information needed for inclusion in the Higher Education-Management Information System (HEMIS).
- Section 45. All pertinent benefits and privileges of PHEIs as provided for under CHED Memorandum Order No. 1, series of 2005 entitled "Revised Policies and Guidelines on Voluntary Accreditation in Aid of Quality and Excellence in Higher Education."

#### **Article VIII Conditions of the Grant**

- Section 46. Six (6) months before the expiration of the grant, the CHED shall evaluate the PHEIs granted autonomous or deregulated status to determine retention/withdrawal or upgrading/downgrading of the status.
- Section 47. The autonomous and deregulated status to be granted to qualified PHEIs shall be in force and in effect for five (5) years from the date the status was granted, unless, during this time, the PHEI's qualification has been eroded to less than the minimum required for the status as specified in this CMO. In which case, the PHEI shall lose its autonomous or deregulated status after the TWG for A&D shall have verified and made appropriate recommendation to the Commission.
- Section 48. In cases where an autonomous or deregulated HEI does not qualify for renewal of status, it shall be allowed to graduate and issue a Special Order to graduating students at the time of revocation of the status. Thereafter, the PHEI shall undergo the usual process of applying for Special Order with the appropriate CHED Office.



However, if an autonomous PHEI wishes to continue offering the new program(s), branch(es), satellite campus(es), extension classes which were initiated during their autonomy, it must seek permission/recognition from CHED.

**Article IX  
Separability Clause**

Section 49. If any part or provision of this CMO shall be held invalid, other provisions hereof which are not affected shall continue to be in force and effect.


**Article X  
Repealing Clause**

Section 50. Any and all CHED issuances, which are contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions herein, are hereby deemed repealed or modified accordingly. This CMO also supersedes the CHED Memorandum Order No. 52, s. 2006, entitled "New Policies and Guidelines for the Grant of Autonomous and Deregulated Status to Selected Private Higher Education Institutions with Benefits Accruing Thereto" and CMO No. 22, series of 2007 "Supplemental Guidelines."

**Article XI  
Approval and Effectivity**

Section 51. This CMO shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Commission and 15 days after its publication in the official gazette or in newspaper of general circulation.

Signed this 26th day of August 2008 in Pasig City, Philippines.

  
**NONA S. RICAFORT**  
Officer-in-Charge  
Office of the Chairman