



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom

and

**the Commission for Academic Accreditation,
Ministry of Education, United Arab Emirates**

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the **Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**, Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 1UB, hereafter referred to as QAA.

and

The **Commission for Academic Accreditation, Ministry of Education, United Arab Emirates**, P.O. Box 295, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, hereafter referred to as CAA.

Background

QAA was established in 1997 and is the independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education. To this end, QAA carries out reviews of UK higher education providers and develops and maintains the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, the definitive national point of reference for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities.

The CAA was established in 2000 as the UAE Federal Government's Quality Assurance Agency charged with promoting educational excellence across diverse institutions of higher learning in the UAE. Through licensure of post-secondary educational institutions and accreditation of individual programs, the CAA strives to assure high quality education, consistent with international standards. The CAA introduced its first Standards for Licensure and Accreditation (the Standards) in 2001. These Standards have been revised periodically; the most recent edition, the sixth edition, was published in June 2019.

The Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) are referred to collectively as 'both Parties'.

Key Principles: QAA and CAA

Both Parties understand and mutually acknowledge their respective independent regulatory responsibilities as authorised by the separate national governments and/or as membership organisations recognised by national governments.

Both Parties are members of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), with comparable missions and organisational objectives in the assurance of quality in higher education, and now wish to establish a closer professional relationship as equal partners within a collaborative framework.

Both Parties envision benefits to be achieved through dialogue and cooperation, with benefits accruing to both agencies and to the institutions under their purview.

Both Parties understand the critical necessity of maintaining the confidentiality of information related to institutions, as well as to the agencies themselves as developed through accreditation activities;

Therefore, both Parties agree to the following framework for mutually supportive and collaborative engagement.

This Memorandum of Cooperation is not exhaustive and is not intended to be legally binding between QAA and the CAA, except where specifically stated.

Areas of Cooperation

Both Parties mutually agree that by collaborating through sharing information regarding best practices and by expanding the range of expertise and knowledge that may be brought to bear during the accreditation process within both jurisdictions, they may benefit by:

1. sharing information on the development of the higher education sector, and cooperating in the identification of fraudulent awarding bodies or accrediting agencies adversely affecting the reputation of higher education in both the UK and UAE
2. providing other information that would mutually assist both Parties to fulfil their functions within their respective constituencies
3. providing relevant data points that institutions may wish to consider when establishing new higher education programmes or expanding existing ones, for example through branch campuses, in the UK and UAE
4. sharing information on QAA-led International Quality Reviews for higher education institutions within the UAE
5. collaborating in relation to mutually agreed projects and activities for the benefit of both Parties, including around academic misconduct and essay mills.

More specifically, at the end of the agreement both Parties aim to have achieved concrete collaboration in the following activities:

- providing opportunities for CAA staff and reviewers to observe QAA-led International Quality Reviews for higher education institutions within the UAE
- developing and delivering an International Quality Assurance Programme (IQAP) localised to meet the needs of the UAE and the broader region
- collaborating on a report targeted to UK higher education providers on the UAE regulatory context for TNE, including ways in which both Parties cooperating together with other UAE-based bodies can assist in developing transnational education (TNE) arrangements in UAE and securing and enhancing their quality
- QAA inviting one free delegate place annually to a nominated CAA representative to attend its Annual Conference.

Agreement

Both Parties agree to explore all opportunities for collaboration, and each separately to appoint representatives to develop further cooperation between both Parties, subject to approval by the governing authorities of each separate agency.

Both Parties may provide developmental opportunities as appropriate for staff through exchange programmes, participation as observers in quality assurance reviews, and through the conduct of joint research or policy development projects.

Both Parties agree to cooperate in conducting conferences, seminars and workshops in various quality assurance areas as opportunities arise.

Adjustment

The Adjustments of this Memorandum of Understanding may be modified by written approval of both Parties.

Confidentiality

Both Parties agree to ensure that any information of a confidential nature ('confidential information') that is shared between Parties is safeguarded and remains confidential. Both Parties agree not to disclose confidential information received from the other without the written consent of the disclosing Party. Both Parties acknowledge that, in appropriate cases, they may reach a separate written agreement about the handling of particular confidential information or classes of confidential information. Both Parties agree that this paragraph is legally binding.

The settlement

In the event of a dispute between both Parties, it shall be resolved by friendly consultations.

The implementation and Termination

The implementation of Memorandum of Understanding starts on the date of signature below will continue for a period of three years. It will be extended for the same period by the agreement of both Parties, unless one Party informs the other of its desire to terminate it three months prior. It is signed in two original copies in Arabic and English, and all texts are equally authentic.



.....
Douglas Blackstock
Chief Executive Officer,
The Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education
Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB
United Kingdom

16/09/2020



.....
Professor Mohamed Yousif Baniyas
Director,
Commission for Academic Accreditation,
Ministry of Education,
P.O. Box 295, Abu Dhabi,
United Arab Emirates
Phone: +971 2 408 9717

16/09/2020