MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom

and

the Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan, Taiwan

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL 1 1UB, United Kingdom (UK), hereafter referred to as QAA, and

the Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan, 7th floor, No.179, Sec. 1, Heping East Road, Da-an District, Taipei City 106, Taiwan, hereafter referred to as HEEACT.

QAA and HEEACT are referred to collectively as 'both Parties'.

Whereas

Established in 1997, QAA is a world-leading quality agency with unmatched experience of providing impartial regulatory and collaborative quality assurance and enhancement. QAA's main purpose is to ensure that students and learners experience the highest possible quality of education.

QAA does this by supporting universities and colleges in working with students, learners, governments, funders, and regulatory bodies to evidence and enhance the excellent quality and high standards of education they provide. QAA works to secure academic standards in UK higher education wherever it is delivered across the globe and takes a leading role in international developments in standards and quality, maintaining close relationships with many international quality assurance agencies, governments and higher education institutions.

HEEACT was established in 2005. Since 2006, HEEACT has conducted higher education accreditations that help universities to contribute to the society through the pursuit of quality education and research. With the aim to improve the quality of Taiwan's higher education, HEEACT is committed to: (i) supporting the government and HEIs in promotion of quality assurance in higher education accreditation and evaluation; (ii) conducting higher education accreditation and quality assurance research in collaboration with national and international HEIs and external quality assurance agencies; (iii) promoting cooperation and exchanges
QAA and HEEACT

Having comparable missions and institutional objectives in the assurance of quality in higher education, both parties wish to continue and deepen further their cooperation upon the terms contained herein.

Key principles: QAA and HEEACT

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 Understanding is not exhaustive and is not intended to be legally binding between QAA and the HEEACT, except where specifically stated.

Areas of cooperation and collaboration

To these ends, QAA and HEEACT, in accordance with the framework of UK and Taiwanese laws and regulations, will pursue the following objectives for their mutual benefit:

(a) Mutual understanding
Work to enhance their understanding of each other's approach to assuring quality in higher education, the respective systems in place for quality assurance and enhancement in higher education, and the critical matters relating to quality and standards in higher education in both territories.

(b) Information exchange
Exchange information, news, updates and offer professional advice about each other's activities and processes, about developments in their respective territory's higher education systems, and about cross-border providers operating in both jurisdictions with named contacts at each organisation, having regard for the confidentiality of the information and relevant Data Protection legislation.
(c) **Staff development**
Where appropriate and possible, support the development of staff from the two Parties through activities such as staff exchange, observing each other's review processes, and provision of training.

(d) **Use of each other's reviewers**
Where appropriate and possible, draw on reviewers or other specialists from each other's system to strengthen the international dimension of each other's review processes.

(e) **Recognition**
Where appropriate and possible, in operations relating to quality assurance of higher education within one party's jurisdiction but originating from the other party's jurisdiction, have due regard to the relevant decisions and judgements of the other party.

(f) **Collaboration**
Where appropriate and possible, collaborate in relation to mutually-agreed projects and activities for the benefit of both parties, including the quality enhancement of transnational education, the identification of fraudulent institutions, awarding bodies or accrediting agencies in the UK and in Taiwan, supporting student mobility and undertaking research on quality assurance related issues.

More specifically, at the end of this agreement, QAA and HEEACT aim to have achieved concrete collaboration in the following activities:

- Sharing experiences regarding the quality assurance and evaluation of higher education in institutions.
- Exploring opportunities for joint working in matters of international accreditation and higher education review activity of provision in Taiwan.
- HEEACT encouraging stakeholders from universities in Taiwan who are seeking international quality assurance services or international partnerships to engage with QAA's international accreditation and membership services.
- HEEACT to contribute to QAA country-based membership resources.
- QAA and HEEACT to hold bilateral meetings as appropriate to monitor progress and discuss key issues in relation to joint efforts to further develop quality assurance and accreditation activity.
- Exploring ways in which QAA and HEEACT can collaborate to support the development of transnational education (TNE) arrangements in Taiwan.
- QAA and HEEACT to offer slots in each other's events, including their annual conference, on the basis of reciprocity. The number of spaces and mode of participation will be agreed annually.

If any additional costs will be incurred as a result of the collaboration, agreement to progress any allocation/reimbursement of costs should be agreed between QAA and HEEACT before any work is undertaken.

**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.

**Retention of information**

Information exchanged under this Memorandum of Understanding will be held and disposed of in accordance with QAA's and HEEACT's retention schedules. For both QAA and HEEACT this will be up to five years.

**Intellectual property rights**

Any reports, notes, records, correspondence, documents, computer and other storage, such as disks or other documents and materials used in this Memorandum of Understanding, which has been generated or is already owned by either organisation, shall be, and shall remain, the property of that organisation.

**The settlement**

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

**Duration of Memorandum**

The Memorandum of Understanding will take effect from the date of its signature and shall continue for three years unless it is terminated by the giving of three months' notice by either Party. It may be extended on mutual agreement of both parties.

**Alteration of Memorandum**

This Memorandum is signed by the parties in a spirit of amicable cooperation. The terms of the Memorandum may be altered with the written approval of both parties.

**Management and liaison arrangements for the Memorandum**

The Chief Executive of QAA (at the time of signing, Vicki Stott) and the Executive Director of HEEACT (at the time of signing, Fu-Hsing Lu) will have responsibility for managing the implementation of the terms of the Memorandum and taking stock of the terms of the Memorandum on an annual basis. This responsibility may be delegated to relevant members of the agencies' staff in relation to particular areas of cooperation.

**Resources**

Unless alternative arrangements are specifically agreed to meet particular project requirements, each Party will normally cover their own costs of implementing the terms of the Memorandum. For particular areas of cooperation, donor funding may be sought from other sources.

The text of the Memorandum is prepared in two original copies in English, with one copy for each Party.
Signatures of the Parties:

Vicki Stott  
Chief Executive  
The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)  

Location:  

Fu-Hsing Lu  
Executive Director  
Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan (HEEACT)  

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