

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom

and

the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation and Vocational Qualifications, Hong Kong

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 **Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic Qualifications**, 10 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong, hereafter referred to as HKCAAVQ.

Whereas

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.

HKCAAVQ was established in 2007 as a statutory body under the HKCAAVQ Ordinance (Chapter 1150). It is appointed under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Chapter 592) as the Accreditation Authority and Qualifications Register (QR) Authority under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework. It provides quality assurance and assessment services to education and training institutions, course providers and the general public.

QAA and HKCAAVQ

Having comparable missions and institutional objectives especially in the quality assurance of private and cross border providers of higher education, and having a common interest in the development and promotion of good practices and the interest of international students, both parties wish to continue and deepen further their cooperation upon the terms contained herein.

Aims

QAA and HKCAAVQ agree through this Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate for the benefit of both parties and to work towards developing their strategic alliance to enhance external quality assurance in both jurisdictions and improving the quality of higher education in the United Kingdom (UK) and Hong Kong. This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to create any agency, partnership, joint enterprise or other similar relationship between the parties, and neither party has the authority to act on behalf of, or otherwise bind, the other party. However, QAA and HKCAAVQ agree to work together to implement this Memorandum of Understanding in good faith.

Areas of cooperation and collaboration

To these ends, QAA and HKCAAVQ, in accordance with the framework of British and Hong Kong laws and regulations, will pursue the following objectives for their mutual benefit and with a commitment to reduce unnecessary regulatory duplication on providers operating across borders:

(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 the UK and Hong Kong.

(b) Information exchange

Exchange information and offer professional advice about each other's activities and processes, higher education providers operating in each other's jurisdiction, and about developments in each other's higher education systems, 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 agencies through activities such as staff exchange, observing each other's review processes, and provision of training.

(d) Use of each other's expertise

Where appropriate and possible, taking account of operational constraints, draw on each other's expertise to strengthen the international dimension of institutional reviews and/or accreditations, including reviews of cross-border education and international higher education providers.

(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 assurance of transnational education and international providers, the identification of fraudulent institutions, awarding bodies or accrediting agencies in the UK and in Hong Kong, supporting student mobility, and undertaking research on quality assurance related issues.

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

- sharing data and information about UK higher education providers operating in Hong Kong, and developments in each respective region

- progressing further reciprocal recognition of quality assurance decisions in Hong Kong and the UK, with a view to lessening unnecessary duplication of quality assurance/accreditation activity
- progressing cooperation in quality assurance activity/accreditation in other countries/jurisdictions
- observing each other's quality assurance processes and undertaking quality enhancement activities such as workshops for UK higher education providers operating, or wishing to operate, in Hong Kong.

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 consent of both parties.

Management and liaison arrangements for the Memorandum

The Chief Executive of QAA (at the time of signing, Mr Douglas Blackstock) and the Executive Director of HKCAAVQ (at the time of signing, Mr Albert Chow) will have responsibility for managing the implementation of the terms of the Memorandum. This responsibility may be delegated to relevant members of the agency's staff in relation to particular areas of cooperation.

Resources

Unless alternative arrangements are specifically agreed to meet particular project requirements, each agency 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.

Signed: 

Date: 14 October 2019

Signed: 

Date: 25 October 2019

Mr Douglas Blackstock
Chief Executive, QAA

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB
United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 1452 557050
Fax: +44 1452 557002
Email: www.qaa.ac.uk/contact-us
Website: www.qaa.ac.uk

Mr Albert Chow
Executive Director, HKCAAVQ

Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications
10 Siu Sai Wan Road
Chai Wan
Hong Kong
Telephone: +853 3658 0115
Fax: +853 2845 5951
Email: engagement@hkcaavq.edu.hk
Website: www.hkcaavq.edu.hk