MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom

and

Agence Nationale d'Evaluation et d'Assurance Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique (National Agency for Assessment and Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Scientific Research)

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 1UB, United Kingdom (UK), hereafter referred to as QAA, and Agence Nationale d'Evaluation et d'Assurance Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique, 35 Street Ibn Sina, Agdal, Rabat, Morocco, hereafter referred to as ANEAQ

QAA and ANEAQ are referred to collectively as ‘both Parties’.

Whereas

QAA was established in 1997. QAA’s purpose is to maintain academic standards and enhance the quality and global reputation of UK higher education. QAA does this by working with higher education providers, regulatory bodies and students, with the shared objective of supporting students to achieve positive educational outcomes. As a membership organisation, QAA represents and supports its university and college members, working in partnership with them to enhance the quality of their provision.

QAA works to secure academic standards in UK higher education wherever it is delivered across the globe and take a leading role in international developments in standards and quality, maintaining close relationships with many international quality assurance agencies, governments and higher education institutions.

In virtue of Law N° 01.00 on the organization of Higher Education, the principal of continuous assessment of Higher Education System has been approved. This principle of improvement of the internal and external performance of the system, through integrating all the pedagogical, administrative as well as scientific research aspects.

In furtherance of the enforcement of the provisions of the constitution aiming at entrenching the governance and accountability principals, and to set out requirements of article 79 of Law N° 01.00 above indicated, the National Agency of Assessment and Quality Assurance in
Higher Education and Scientific Research (ANEAO), headquartered in Rabat, was created in 2014 in accordance with Law No. 80.12, which provides for the functions, terms of reference, operating methods, management, rules of procedure and financial regulation of the Agency.

**QAA and ANEAQ**

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 ANEAQ**

Both Parties understand and mutually acknowledge their respective independent regulatory responsibilities.

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 evaluation 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 ANEAQ, except where specifically stated.

**Areas of cooperation and collaboration**

To these ends, QAA and ANEAQ, in accordance with the framework of British and Moroccan 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 countries.

(b) **Information exchange**
Exchange information and offer professional advice about each other’s activities and processes, about developments in their respective country’s higher education systems, and about cross-border providers operating in both jurisdictions, 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 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) **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 Morocco, supporting student mobility and undertaking research on quality assurance related issues.

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

- QAA to provide advice and guidance to ANEAQ regarding approaches to quality and standards in higher education and, in particular, contribute to proposals to jointly seek funding to undertake shared activity to review and enhance quality assurance practice in Morocco;
- Consulting on the improvement of standards and criteria of institutional accreditation in Morocco;
- QAA to be invited to observe ANEAQ’s virtual and in-person review activity within Morocco;
- Observing each other’s quality assurance processes and undertaking quality enhancement activities such as a workshop for UK higher education providers operating or wishing to operate in Morocco;
- Exchanging and training of quality experts
- Sharing experience and projects relating to matters of academic integrity
- ANEAQ to provide input to QAA’s Country Report on higher education in Morocco through, for instance, sharing of information, commenting on drafts;
- Mutually agreed projects related to quality assurance of cross-border education / TNE including international accreditation bodies;

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 ANEAQ 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 ANEAQ’s retention schedules. For both QAA and ANEAQ, 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 Officer of QAA (at the time of signing, Ms Vicki Stott) and the Director of ANEAQ (at the time of signing, M. ELMoukhtar Bakkour) 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.

This MoU has been drawn up in English and Arabic languages, the two texts are equally authoritative.

Signed in London and Rabat on 28 March 2022.

Signatures of the Parties:

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

M. ELMoukhtar Bakkour
Director
Agence Nationale d’Evaluation et d’Assurance Qualité de l’Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique

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