



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

**RAK Economic Zone Authority, United Arab Emirates**

and

**Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, United Kingdom**

This Memorandum of Understanding (the “Memorandum”) is made between:

**RAK Economic Zone Authority**, with address at RAKEZ Business Zone, Al Nakheel Area, P.O. Box 10055, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, hereafter referred to as “RAKEZ”

and

**Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**, with address at Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester, GL1 1UB hereafter referred to as “QAA”.

### Whereas:

1. Based in the heart of Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates and guided by the vision of His Highness Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, United Arab Emirates Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, RAKEZ was established to oversee and consolidate the specialised zones and clients of both Ras Al Khaimah Free Trade Zone (RAK FTZ) and RAK Investment Authority (RAKIA). RAKEZ is committed to its promise of empowering free zone and non-free zone investors by offering a cost-effective and world-class economic zone with customizable packages and services as well as state-of-the-art facilities. Blessed with a strategic location, RAKEZ connects investors to growing markets of the Middle East, North Africa, Europe as well as South and Central Asia. RAKEZ is the continuation of the story that started with the foundation of RAK FTZ in 2000 and the establishment of RAKIA in 2005. It is the preferred business destination of more than 14,000 multinational companies from over 100 countries representing above 50 sectors.
2. 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.

3. Having similar objectives in the advancement of quality assurance in higher education, and especially in the quality assurance of cross border providers of higher education, both parties wish to continue and deepen further their cooperation upon the terms contained herein.

### **Article 1: Aims**

RAKEZ and QAA agree, through this Memorandum, to cooperate for the benefit of both parties and to work towards enhancing regulation and quality assurance in both jurisdictions and improving the quality of higher education in Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom.

This Memorandum is not intended to create legally binding relations between the parties, and neither party has the authority to act on behalf of or otherwise bind the other party. However, the parties agree to work together to implement this Memorandum in good faith.

### **Article 2: Areas of cooperation and collaboration**

To these ends, QAA and RAKEZ, in accordance with the framework of both Ras Al Khaimah and British laws and regulations, will pursue the following objectives for their mutual benefit and with a commitment to facilitate the quality assurance of UK Transnational Education (TNE) in Ras Al Khaimah free trade zones.

#### **a) Exchange information and expertise**

The parties may exchange information including but not limited to:

- a. Providing non-confidential policy documents and operational information where appropriate and, in particular, where they relate to the provision of higher education by institutions from Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom in partnership with each other
- b. Sharing information about providers operating in both United Kingdom and Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates including proactive notification of any events requiring sanctions
- c. Sharing information on each agency's annual scheduling of regulatory and quality assurance activities
- d. Sharing information on the development of the Higher Education sector.
- e. Providing other information where doing so would assist QAA or RAKEZ to perform their functions.

Parties shall treat any such information as confidential and it shall not disclose any such information except with prior written consent of the other party, or such disclosure is required by law or ordered by competent courts.

Upon expiration or termination of this Memorandum, either party may request the other party the return or destruction of such information.

**b) 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 locations.

**c) 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 (TNE); the identification of fraudulent institutions, awarding bodies or accrediting agencies in the UK and in Ras Al Khaimah; supporting student mobility; and undertaking research on quality assurance related issues.

**d) Mutual 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 subject to mutually agreed quality assurance procedures and policies by both parties.

**e) Staff Development**

Where appropriate and possible, support the development of staff from both parties through activities such as staff exchange, observing each other's review processes, and provision of training, more specifically, at the end of our agreement RAKEZ and QAA aim to have achieved concrete collaboration in the following activities:

- Sharing data, information and quality assurance outcomes, including recommendations, about UK higher education providers operating in Ras Al Khaimah.
- Cooperating in providing information to UK providers about the regulatory requirements in Ras Al Khaimah's free trade zones.
- Cooperating in any reviews of UK TNE in Ras Al Khaimah.

**Article 3: Duration of Memorandum**

This Memorandum will take effect from the date of its signature and shall continue for three (3) years, unless it is terminated by the provision of three (3) months' prior written notice by either party. This Memorandum may be extended on mutual agreement of both parties.

**Article 4: Alteration of Memorandum**

This Memorandum is signed by the parties in a spirit of amicable cooperation. The terms of the Memorandum may be amended or altered in writing with the consent of both parties.

**Article 5: Management and Liaison Arrangements for this Memorandum**

The Director of RAKEZ Academic Zone (at the time of signing, Mr. Taner Topcu) and the Chief Executive Officer of QAA (at the time of signing, Mr. Douglas Blackstock) will have

responsibility for managing the implementation of the terms of this Memorandum as well as evaluating the effectiveness of its terms on a yearly basis.

Day-to-day liaison on the issues referred to in this Memorandum will occur between the Academic Zone Manager of RAKEZ (at the time of signing, Mr Hussain Al Shamaa) and the International Manager of QAA (at the time of signing, Dr Fabrizio Trifiro).

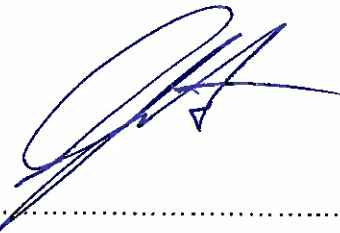
These responsibilities may be delegated to relevant members of either party's staff in relation to particular areas of cooperation. In case of substantive changes are made to the functions or enabling legislation of either party, the parties will meet to discuss the impact of such changes.

#### Article 6: Resources

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

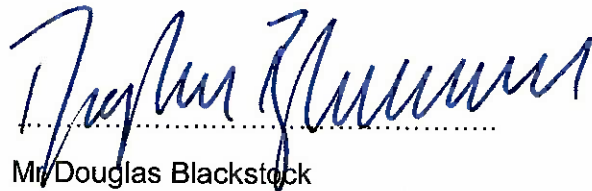
#### Schedule of Projects and Activities

Specific details about any projects or other activities that are entered into under the terms of this Memorandum shall be negotiated and agreed by both parties and will be described in administrative schedules to be annexed to this Memorandum.



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Mr Taner Topcu  
Director of Academic Zone  
RAK Economic Zone Authority  
United Arab Emirates

Date: 25/02/2019.....



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Mr Douglas Blackstock  
Chief Executive  
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education  
United Kingdom

Date: 15/2/2019.....