



MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION



between the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation and the Australian Universities Quality Agency

The Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) is an independent body established by statute to provide accreditation services to non-self-accrediting publicly funded and private institutions and their programmes at degree, sub-degree and secondary levels. It also performs advisory functions in respect of academic qualifications and educational standards in general.

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) carries out and reports publicly on quality audits of the universities, state and territory accrediting agencies, and other higher education institutions in Australia.

There is a history of interaction and co-operation between HKCAA and AUQA, and between their staff in both current and previous roles. The two agencies participated in the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network in January 2003, and have a common interest in the development of quality assurance in the region.

It will be in the interests of HKCAA and AUQA to formalise a memorandum of co-operation between the two agencies to establish the objectives, parameters and resourcing of future co-operation.

The memorandum of co-operation covers the following areas. The two agencies will:

1. Exchange of Information

Exchange non-confidential policy documents and relevant non-confidential operational information, such as menus and templates, to enable staff from the two agencies to support and learn from each other;

2. Mutual Understanding

Work to enhance their understanding of each other's approach to ensuring quality in higher education and the respective systems in place for quality in higher education;

3. Quality Systems

Aim to achieve a high level of awareness in Hong Kong of the existence of the Australian higher education quality assurance system, its role in ensuring the quality of transnational activities, and the specific role and capabilities of the quality audit system; and aim to ensure Hong Kong's systems for quality assurance are fully understood within Australia, particularly the role of the HKCAA in the recognition of foreign education providers;

4. Emphases

Ensure that AUQA fully understands which quality issues are of the greatest importance to Hong Kong, and advises the Australian higher education sector on this, as appropriate. Conversely, ensure that HKCAA fully understands which quality issues are of the greatest importance to Australia, and advises the Hong Kong higher education sector on this, as appropriate;

5. Staff Development

When appropriate and possible, support staff from the two agencies to:

- spend time in each other's offices,
- participate as observers in institutional audits or program accreditations, and
- be involved in training activities,

so staff are acquainted with systems processes and other relevant matters;

6. Use of Each Other's Reviewers

Where possible and appropriate, draw on each other's Registers of Auditors and Specialists to strengthen the international dimension of institutional audits, program accreditations and special-purpose reviews;

7. Collaboration

Where appropriate and possible, collaborate in relation to the quality of Australian educational activities in Hong Kong; and

8. Mutual Recognition

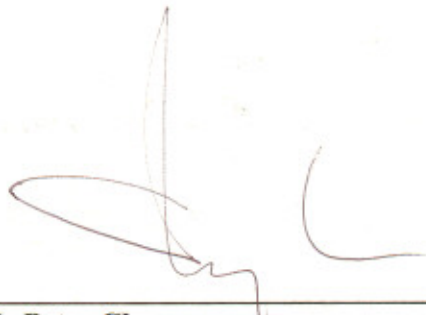
Where appropriate and possible, in operations relating to quality assurance of higher education within one party's jurisdiction but originating from the other party's jurisdiction, have due regard to the relevant decisions and judgments of the other party, while exploring possible pathways for further mutual recognition.

Agency Officers Responsible for Managing the Memorandum of Co-operation

The Executive Directors of HKCAA and AUQA will have responsibility for managing the memorandum of co-operation. This responsibility may be delegated to relevant members of their staff in relation to particular areas of co-operation.

Resources

Unless a specific contract is agreed, the two agencies will normally cover their own costs. When possible, local hospitality will be provided by the host agency, with travel costs borne by the home agency. For particular co-operation areas, donor funding could be sought.



Mr Peter Cheung
Executive Director
Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation



Dr David Woodhouse
Executive Director
Australian Universities Quality Agency

Date: 31 January 2005

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