

MEMORANDUM OF AFFILIATION

DISTANCE EDUCATION ACCREDITING COMMISSION

AND

**THE COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION
INTERNATIONAL QUALITY GROUP**

Background

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) is the largest institutional higher education membership organization in the United States, with approximately 3,000 degree-granting colleges and universities. A national advocate and institutional voice for promoting academic quality through accreditation, CHEA serves as a major voice for accreditation and quality assurance to the U.S. Congress and U.S. Department of Education, as well as the general public, opinion leaders, students and families.

CHEA also sustains an international division, the CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG), established in 2012, with a focus on international quality assurance. CIQG membership, in addition to CHEA institutional members, includes organizations and individuals from 45 countries. Guided by an Advisory Council made up of individuals from 11 countries that includes leading thinkers in international quality assurance, CIQG serves as a thought leader on international quality assurance issues and policy, a convener of academics and others engaged in international quality assurance and a forum for dialogue and deliberation on vital quality issues.

CIQG International Quality Principles

In 2015, CIQG released its *International Quality Principles*, identifying seven areas that are or ought to be common to all quality assurance, irrespective of country, culture or region. The *Principles* are the work of the CIQG Advisory Council and reflect perspectives from a number of countries. Since their release, the *Principles* have been a topic of discussion at meetings of quality assurance and higher education leaders around the world.

Purpose

The purpose of this *Memorandum of Affiliation (MOA)* is to establish and promote partnerships with quality assurance/accreditation bodies world-wide, with a view to encouraging the use of the *Principles* as a foundation of shared understanding about quality at an international level.

Affiliation Eligibility

Quality assurance/accreditation organizations that are acknowledged as competent authorities and in good standing with their governments and are members of CIQG are eligible to enter into the MOA.

Activities

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation/International Quality Group (CIQG), USA;

Recognizing the urgency of a shared understanding of quality internationally;

Believing that the following 2015 CIQG seven international quality principles (hereafter referred to as *Principles*) can provide a framework for quality to inspire and improve national, regional and international developments:

1. *Quality and higher education providers*: Assuring and achieving quality in higher education is the primary responsibility of higher education providers and their staff.
2. *Quality and students*: The education provided to students must always be of high quality whatever the learning outcomes pursued.
3. *Quality and society*: The quality of higher education provision is judged by how well it meets the needs of society, engenders public confidence and sustains public trust.
4. *Quality and government*: Governments have a role in encouraging and supporting quality higher education.
5. *Quality and accountability*: It is the responsibility of higher education providers and quality assurance and accreditation bodies to sustain a strong commitment to accountability and provide regular evidence of quality.
6. *Quality and the role of quality assurance and accreditation bodies*: Quality assurance and accreditation bodies, working with higher education providers and their leadership, staff and students, are responsible for the implementation of processes, tools, benchmarks and measures of learning outcomes that help to create a shared understanding of quality.
7. *Quality and change*: Quality higher education needs to be flexible, creative and innovative, developing and evolving to meet students' needs, to justify the confidence of society and to maintain diversity.

(See the [CHEA International Quality Group International Quality Principles](#) on the CHEA Website.)

Agree to pursue, through this *Memorandum*, the following commitments:



- Posting and promoting the *Principles* which, at an organization's discretion, will be reflected in its standards, reviews and processes;
- Working with higher education providers and other higher education stakeholders to promote a shared understanding of quality based on the seven *Principles*;

- Sharing information regularly on the promotion and implementation of the *Principles* (e.g., examples of good practice, case studies, newsletters or in other appropriate ways) and
- Engaging, when feasible, in joint activities (workshops, seminars and meetings) with a view to sharing effective policies and practices in areas of common interest, based on the *Principles*.

These commitments are intended solely as a collegial agreement, an informal set of guidelines to serve and bring together academic professionals. They represent the desire of the signatories to promote cooperation and partnerships in the pursuit and strengthening of academic quality in higher education world-wide.

CIQG will make public the signatories of the *Memorandum of Affiliation*.

Signed in duplicate in the English language, all texts being equally authentic:

 Leah Matthews Executive Director Distance Education Accrediting Commission	 Judith Eaton President CHEA/CIQG
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Date: May 31, 2016

Date: 2 June 2016

