



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

**The Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA)**

and

**The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)**

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the **Polish Accreditation Committee (PKA)**, Zurawia 32/34 str., 00-515 Warsaw, Poland, hereafter referred to as **PKA**,

and

**The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS)**, Mărăști Boulevard, no. 59, district 1, Bucharest, Romania.

**PKA** and **ARACIS** are referred to collectively as 'both Parties'.

Whereas:

The **Polish Accreditation Committee** is an independent institution dedicated to quality assurance and enhancing the quality of education. The basic objectives of the Committee's activities are: ensuring compliance with quality standards adopted for higher education, referring to the best models in force in the European and global educational space, and supporting public and private universities in the process of improving the quality of education and building a culture of quality. These activities are aimed at ensuring that graduates of Polish universities have a high position on the national and international labour market, as well as at increasing the competitiveness of Polish universities as European institutions.

**PKA** performs programme assessment and gives opinions on applications for the establishment of new higher education institutions, the extension of permits for the establishment of non-public institutions, and the authorisation for higher education institutions to establish new degree programmes.

**The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education** was created in 2005 and took over the attributions, personnel, and assets of the National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation (CNEAA), which was founded in 1993.

**ARACIS** is an autonomous public institution established at the national level, with legal personality and self-financed, with the primary purpose of externally evaluating the quality of higher education in Romania. **ARACIS** performs programme, domain and institutional level evaluations, providing authorisation, accreditation or renewal of accreditation. **ARACIS'** mission is also to contribute, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and other relevant institutions, and together with the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), to a continuous enhancement of higher education quality at the national level, as well as within the European Higher Education Area.

### **PKA and ARACIS**

Having comparable missions and institutional objectives in ensuring quality in higher education, both parties wish to continue and deepen their cooperation under the terms contained herein.

Are members of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), with comparable missions and organisational objectives in the assurance of quality in higher education, and now wish to establish a closer professional relationship as equal partners within a collaborative framework.

### **Key principles**

Both Parties understand and mutually acknowledge their respective independent regulatory responsibilities as authorised by the separate national governments.

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 accreditation activities.

**Therefore, both Parties agree to the following framework for mutually supportive and collaborative engagement.**

This **Memorandum of Understanding** is not exhaustive nor intended to be legally binding between **PKA** and **ARACIS**, except where expressly stated.

### **Areas of cooperation and collaboration**

To these ends, **PKA** and **ARACIS**, following the framework of Polish and Romanian 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, news, and updates and offer professional advice about each other's activities and processes, developments in their respective countries' higher education and quality assurance systems, and cross-border providers operating in both jurisdictions with named contacts at each organisation, having regard for the confidentiality of the information and relevant Data Protection legislation.

**(c) Staff development**

Where appropriate and possible, support the professional development of staff from the two agencies through activities such as staff exchange, observing each other's review processes, and providing 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) 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, pursuant to relevant national law.

**(f) Collaboration**

Where appropriate and possible, collaborate on mutually agreed-upon 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 Poland and Romania, supporting recognition of qualifications, and undertaking research on quality assurance-related issues.

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

- Promoting a culture of quality assurance in higher education institutions and systems;
- Build staff capacity necessary for ensuring reliability, consistency and complementarity in quality assurance, qualifications frameworks, and in the recognition of qualifications;
- Provide opportunities to observe each other's review activity where appropriate;
- Reference each other's accreditation services to higher education institutions as and where appropriate;
- Work together to advise on quality assurance and enhancement practices that affect transnational education and research collaboration;
- Share information and resources related to the latest developments, challenges, approaches, and best practices in higher education and quality assurance;
- Explore opportunities for joint working in matters of international accreditation and higher education review activity;

- Offer slots in each other's events as appropriate, on the basis of reciprocity. The number of spaces and mode of participation will be agreed upon annually;
- Hold bilateral meetings as appropriate to monitor progress and discuss key issues in relation to joint efforts to develop quality assurance and accreditation activity further.

If any costs are incurred as a result of the collaboration beyond regular operational costs, agreement to progress any allocation/reimbursement of costs should be reached between **PKA** and **ARACIS** before any work is undertaken.

### **Confidentiality**

Both Parties agree to ensure that any information of a confidential nature ('confidential information') 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 handling 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 **PKA's** and **ARACIS's** retention schedules, which are up to five years for both.

### **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 **five years** unless it is terminated by either Party with three months' notice. It may be extended by 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 President of **PKA** (Janusz URIASZ) and the General Director of **ARACIS** (Daniela-Cristina GHIȚULICĂ) will be responsible for managing the implementation of the terms of the Memorandum and taking stock of the terms of the Memorandum on an annual basis. Relevant members of the agencies' staff may be delegated this responsibility in relation to particular areas of cooperation.

## Resources

Unless alternative arrangements are expressly agreed to meet particular project requirements, each Party will typically cover their own costs of implementing the terms of the Memorandum. For specific areas of cooperation, donor funding may be sought from other sources.

The text of the Memorandum is prepared in two original copies in English, with one copy for each Party.

Date: 20.09.2024

## Signatures of the Parties:

Dr hab. inż. Janusz JRIASZ  
President



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Committee (PKA)

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