

STRATEGIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT
between
the National Quality Assurance Agency for Education
under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
and
Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità
e le Equivalenze Accademiche

Preamble

The **National Quality Assurance Agency for Education under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan** (hereinafter referred to as the “NQAAE”), a national authority responsible for the development and implementation of external quality assurance (QA) arrangements in education, including the establishment of quality standards and criteria, the organization of evaluation and accreditation processes, the maintenance of relevant registers and information systems, and the promotion of transparency and a culture of quality, and

The **Centro di Informazione sulla Mobilità e le Equivalenze Accademiche** (hereinafter referred to as the “CIMEA”), is the official Italian body that facilitates academic recognition, credential evaluation, and mobility in Italy, providing comparability and verification to help recognize foreign qualifications, assisting students, professionals, and institutions in understanding the Italian higher education system,

hereinafter individually referred to as a “Party” and jointly as the “Parties”,

Recognizing the growing importance of reliable quality assurance systems, transparent qualification frameworks,

Acknowledging the need to align national quality assurance and recognition practices with international standard, and European Higher Education Area (EHEA) principles,

Affirming shared interest in strengthening institutional capacities, enhancing transparency of qualifications, supporting cross-border

recognition, and promoting evidence-based decision-making in quality assurance;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1. General provisions

This Strategic Cooperation Agreement (hereinafter referred to as the “Agreement”) is a framework, non-financial document establishing the basis for institutional cooperation between the Parties.

This Agreement does not constitute an international treaty and does not create rights or obligations under international law.

Cooperation under this Agreement shall be conducted in accordance with the legislation of the respective States of the Parties.

The cooperation shall be guided by the principles of mutual respect, institutional independence, transparency, reciprocity, professionalism, and voluntary participation.

Article 2. Aims and objectives

This Agreement aims to promote institutional collaboration activities between CIMEA and NQAAE, regulating their relations to jointly develop and strengthen opportunities and initiatives for cooperation.

The objectives of this Agreement are to:

establish a structured and long-term institutional partnership between the Parties;

strengthen cooperation in the fields of academic recognition, credential evaluation, and quality assurance;

promote transparency and comparability of qualifications between Uzbekistan, Italy, and the broader European and international education areas;

enhance institutional capacities in recognition, verification, and quality assurance procedures.

The Parties will collaborate through reciprocal cooperation and work towards a Strategic Alliance to facilitate collaboration in higher education, internationalisation strategies, preventing and countering education fraud, and enhancing the quality of higher education in Italy, Uzbekistan, Central Asia and within the international higher education community.

Article 3. Areas of cooperation

The Parties agree to cooperate in the following areas:

Exchange of information (key policy documents, relevant operational information in national education-related policies or systems, databases and technologically innovative tools in the field of recognition of qualifications) and expertise within the limits established by the legislation of the states of the Parties.

Collaborate on enhancing the capacity of staff by organizing joint seminars, workshops, training, study visits and secondments;

Collaborate on research, including the publication of scientific papers and similar documents concerning updates in the higher education field in sectoral journals covering specific topics of interest;

Collaborate on joint or international activities, in particular in cooperating in academic qualification recognition activities and defining internationalization strategies;

Collaborate with the Centre for Preventing and Countering Education Fraud, hosted by CIMEA;

Establish joint initiatives to develop actions related to the policies of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), the European Education Area (EEA), the European Research Area (ERA), and the Central Asian Higher Education Area (CAHEA);

Support in establishing international partnerships, considering the extensive experience of both Parties in European and non-European programs;

Establish joint research centers/institutes on common relevant topics;

Facilitate contacts and relations with institutions operating at national (Italy and Uzbekistan) and regional (Europe and Asia) level;

Collaborate in the creation of digital and innovative solutions including the development of databases and digital platforms, the application of artificial intelligence and innovative tools in education, and the development of blockchain-based solutions in education.

Article 4. Coordination and implementation

This Agreement serves as a framework for the activation of subsequent implementation measures between the Parties and does not entail any financial obligation for either Party.

The implementation modalities of the aforementioned initiatives will be governed by specific agreements to be signed by the participating entities, which will also specify any financial coverage. These agreements will define the criteria and procedures regulating the mutual commitments of the participants, the breakdown of activities, and subsequent monitoring and evaluation methods.

The Director General of CIMEA and the Director of NQAAE represent the interests of the Parties under this Agreement.

The Director of CIMEA Central Asia will be responsible for developing and implementing activities relating to Central Asia in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

From NQAAE side, Head of Strategic Development and International Cooperation Group will be responsible for the implementation of this Agreement.

Within the scope of this Agreement, the CIMEA Central Asia Regional Office, in close collaboration with the NQAAE Strategic Development and International Cooperation Group, will act as a facilitator for activities between the Parties and it shall act as:

- A facilitator of cooperation between European and Central Asian institutions;

- A platform for policy dialogue, joint research, and international project development;

- A technical and methodological partner in matters related to higher education policies, strategies, quality assurance and recognition standards and international best practices;

- A technical and organisational centre to support public and private institutions operating in the field of higher education;

- A facilitator for collaborating in the field of digital and innovative solutions and to create a digital transformation strategy.

The Parties will jointly prepare an annual summary report on the activities carried out.

Article 5. Confidentiality and use of information

The Parties mutually commit to maintaining absolute confidentiality regarding information received during the execution of this Agreement.

The Parties also agree to provide their consent for the processing of personal data provided, in compliance with national and international legislative frameworks.

This Agreement does not authorize the commercial use of the name, logo, or official documents of the other Party without prior written approval. The Regional Offices and other CIMEA structures are not to be considered third parties for the purposes of this agreement.

Article 6. Costs and expenses

This Agreement does not involve the transfer of funds between the Parties.

Each Party shall bear its own costs arising from activities under this Agreement, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Article 7. Dispute resolution

Any disagreements concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through consultations and negotiations between the Parties.

Article 8. Final provisions

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature by both Parties.

The Agreement shall remain valid for a period of five (5) years and may be extended by mutual written consent.

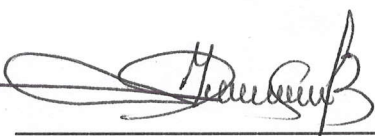
Amendments and additions may be made by mutual written agreement and shall form an integral part of this Agreement.

Either Party may terminate this Agreement by providing written notice three (3) months in advance.

Signed in two originals, in English language, all texts being equally authentic.

**For the National Quality
Assurance Agency for Education
under the Administration of the
President of the Republic of
Uzbekistan**

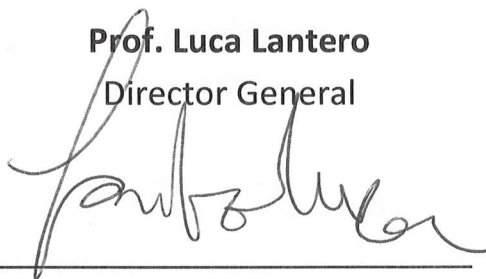
Bakhtiyor Yuldashev
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bakhtiyor Yuldashev', is written over a horizontal line.

Date: February 20, 2026

**For Centro di Informazione sulla
Mobilità e le Equivalenze
Accademiche (CIMEA)**

Prof. Luca Lantero
Director General

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luca Lantero', is written over a horizontal line.

Date: February 20, 2026