



## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

**Universities Scotland and the Landeshochschulkonferenz Niedersachsen**

concerning

### **A Renewed Collaboration to Foster the Internationalisation of Higher Education and Academic Exchange Across the North Sea**

#### **Preamble**

Universities Scotland (US), representing 19 Scottish universities and higher education institutions, represented by Claire McPherson and the Landeshochschulkonferenz Niedersachsen (LHK), representing 20 universities and universities of applied sciences, represented by Angela Ittel on behalf of the chair of the LHK, Susanne Menzel-Riedl:

**Renew** their agreement to jointly promote the internationalisation of higher education, academic exchange across the North Sea and information as well as knowledge transfer between the scientific and academic communities of Scotland and Lower Saxony on the basis of a long standing institution-to-institution cooperation.

**Reaffirm** their commitment to work together in order to promote and support cooperation between Scottish and Lower Saxonian universities, higher education institutions and universities of applied sciences, considering the fact that these relationships are established directly by the educational institutions exercising their autonomy.

**Recognize** that the European Centre for Advanced Studies (ECAS), an interdisciplinary research institution jointly run by the University of Glasgow (UofG) and Leuphana University Lüneburg (Leuphana), has tremendously contributed to the success of the exchange between higher education institutions through the development of the two successful formats: the Lower Saxony – Scotland Joint Forum and the Lower Saxony – Scotland Tandem Fellowship Programme as well as additional activities such as the Data Hub on its website and individual support offered to academics and students looking for partners in the other region.

**Affirm** to support ECAS in the exercise of its activities, in particular with regard to the organisation of the Joint Forum and the Tandem Fellowship Programme and in the identification of funding sources and opportunities for the overall collaboration.

**Agree** to updated objectives for the renewed partnership between both scientific regions including the identification of (joint) research topics, extended support for young academics.

**Acknowledge** the differences in the higher education systems of Scotland and Lower Saxony in particular with regard to their funding structures.



## Article 1 – Scope

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) constitutes an understanding between the above associations, namely US and LHK, to renew their agreement to jointly promote the internationalisation of higher education, academic exchange across the North Sea and information as well as knowledge transfer between the scientific and academic communities of Scotland and Lower Saxony. It determines the objectives of this collaboration, the goals to be achieved as well as concrete measures to be taken.

## Article 2 – Objectives

The parties agree to the following objectives:

- (a) to enhance the internationalisation of higher education and academic exchange between Scotland and Lower Saxony.
- (b) to encourage mobility and promote the creation of excellent research through collaborations with a focus on the fields of energy (transformation), life sciences, educational sciences, mobility and its transformation as well as security (policy), which shall ultimately seek third-party funding from renown funders.
- (c) to encourage young academics to establish and build long-term linkages with higher education institutions from Scotland and Lower Saxony.

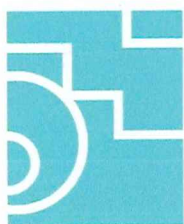
## Article 3 – Cooperative Activities

US and LHK have agreed to the following activities in support of the objectives in Article 2:

### Primary Areas

- (a) to promote the *Lower Saxony – Scotland Joint Forum* as well as the *Lower Saxony – Scotland Tandem Fellowship Programme*.
- (b) to encourage Scottish and Lower Saxonian universities, higher education institutions and universities of applied sciences to provide support to young academics with the goal of building lasting links between higher education institutions of the scientific communities in Scotland and Lower Saxony and assist in the development of mentoring programmes, especially for young academics.
- (c) to invite Scottish and Lower Saxonian universities, higher education institutions and universities of applied sciences to designate a liaison officer that functions as a first-point-of-contact for staff and students in their own institution with regard to the *Lower Saxony – Scotland Tandem Fellowship Programme* and the *Joint Forum*, and to attend regular meetings organised by LHK, US and ECAS to discuss relevant topics, challenges and issues.





- (d) to encourage mobility of academics and students through supporting the development of funding schemes and identifying respective funding sources.
- (e) to encourage staff exchanges for a better understanding of the different higher education systems.
- (f) to support their respective members to develop opportunities for research collaboration by sharing information on research strengths and links.
- (g) to encourage the development of teaching projects (e.g. courses, modules, short-term projects) and joint as well as double degrees, particularly at Masters level, between Scottish and Lower Saxonian universities, higher education institutions and universities of applied sciences.
- (h) to promote enhanced institutional agreements between Scottish and Lower Saxonian universities, higher education institutions and universities of applied sciences in the areas of undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate student and faculty exchange, internships, research collaboration and joint capacity-building projects.

#### **Supplementary Areas**

- (a) to share knowledge about developments in higher education and research affecting their respective communities.
- (b) to spread throughout the higher education institutions in Scotland and Lower Saxony, information about the characteristics of their respective education and research systems.
- (c) to disseminate to their members information about academic cooperation, research collaboration, partnership opportunities and undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate student and faculty exchanges, internships as well as specific requests for collaboration from Scottish and Lower Saxonian higher education institutions.
- (d) to seek support from respective stakeholder organisations in Scotland and Germany for the development of collaborative activities in the context of wider bilateral discussions between the two countries.
- (e) to collaborate on policy dialogue and advocacy in areas of mutual interest affecting their respective communities.
- (f) to serve as a central point of contact for each other and maintain a regular dialogue and exchange, in part through participation, when possible, at annual and/or biannual membership and/or related meetings.
- (g) to exchange publications and materials that facilitate institutional cooperation.
- (h) to notify each other of any events or opportunities for cooperation, which are of mutual interest.



#### Article 4 – Availability of Resources

Cooperative activities under this Memorandum are subject to the availability of personnel, resources and funds. This Memorandum should not be construed to obligate any particular expenditure or commitment of resources or personnel.

#### Article 5 – Review of Activities

The director of US and the chair of the LHK will meet biannually to discuss current priorities as well as developments. They will set an agenda for each academic year to be forwarded as guidelines to higher education institutions in Lower Saxony and Scotland. They may invite ECAS to these meetings as supporting institution.

#### Article 6 – Duration

This renewed Memorandum will take effect from the date of signature by both organisations and will remain in force for a period of five years. Any amendment and/or modification to this agreement will require written approval of both signing parties, and shall be appended hereto or be set out in a new Memorandum of Understanding.

Either party reserves the right to terminate this agreement upon six months written notice to the other. Any individual activities to be continued thereafter will be specifically identified and provided for at the time of termination. After the five year period, this agreement may be renewed by mutual consent.

Edinburgh, 1 May 2024

**Prof. Dr. Angela Ittel**

*Chair of the Permanent Commission for  
Internationalisation, LHK*

Edinburgh, 1 May 2024

**Claire McPherson**