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**M.8490 - BLACKSTONE / CPPIB / ASCEND LEARNING**

**SECTION 1.2**

**Description of the concentration**

The Commission has received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 (the “EUMR”). On 18 May 2017, The Blackstone Group L.P. (“Blackstone”) and Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (“CPPIB”) notified their intention to acquire indirect joint control of Ascend Learning holdings, LLC (“Ascend Learning”) within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the EUMR.

The areas of activities of the undertakings concerned by the notified concentration are as follows:

- (i) Blackstone – Global alternative asset manager headquartered in the United States.
- (ii) CPPIB – Institutional investor which invests in public and private equities, real estate, infrastructure and fixed income investments headquartered in Canada.
- (iii) Ascend Learning – Provider of educational content and software tools for students, educational institutions and employers, including admissions testing, educational content, test preparation, professional certifications and continuing education, with a particular focus on healthcare and other licensed professions such as certified personal trainers, financial advisers, skilled trades professionals and insurance brokers. Ascend Learning is headquartered in the United States.