

**AGREEMENT ON A DOUBLE DIPLOMA  
MASTER PROGRAMME IN BIOTECHNOLOGY**

between

**Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania),**  
represented by Professor Juozas Augutis, Rector  
(K. Donelaičio g. 58, LT-44248, Kaunas, Lithuania),  
and

**M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan State University (Petropavlovsk, Republic of Kazakhstan)**  
represented by Professor Omirbayev Serik Maulenovich, Rector  
(A. Pushkin street 86, 150000, Petropavlovsk, Republic of Kazakhstan)

## **1. PREAMBLE**

In the spirit of prolific international relations and academic cooperation, Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as "VMU") and the M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan State University (hereinafter referred to as "NKSU") wish to strengthen their ties further, in accordance with their mutual interests in delivering programmes of academic excellence and cultural diversity. Hence, NKSU and VMU have decided to conclude this Agreement on a Double Diploma Programme (hereinafter the "DDP") that allows students to obtain two degrees at the graduate level.

This Agreement has been entered into between VMU and NKSU to facilitate credit transfer and provide a smooth transition of students from NKSU to VMU in order for them to obtain VMU Master's degree in Biotechnology and NKSU Master's degree in Biotechnology. The Agreement is in compliance with the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania and the Law on Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

## **2. SCOPE OF COOPERATION**

This Agreement delineates the legal and organizational framework for the DDP in Biotechnology. The programme will provide the opportunity to graduate students from NKSU to simultaneously pursue the Master's degree in Biotechnology from VMU and Master's degree in Biotechnology from NKSU, by completing the first year of their academic studies in Biotechnology at NKSU and continuing the next year of their studies in VMU, fulfilling the requirements necessary to obtain the Master's degree in Biotechnology, and in accordance with the transfer chart provided in Appendix 2. The aim is to enable NKSU students of Biotechnology to receive degrees from both Universities.

Upon the successful completion of the DDP, the following degrees shall be awarded by the partner institutions:

NKSU

- *Master in Biotechnology (Programme in 6M070100 Biotechnology)*

VMU

- *Master in Biotechnology (Programme in Applied biotechnology)*

## **3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT**

3.1 Both Parties agree to provide all necessary means and resources to implement and operate the DDP in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Agreement.

3.2 VMU shall assist the incoming DDP students when dealing with academic, administrative, organisational and social-cultural issues.

3.3 Each institution will nominate a programme coordinator who will ensure that the DDP proceeds in accordance with a mutually agreed academic plan, and that this Agreement is executed in full.

3.4 The programme coordinators assigned in both institutions shall be obliged to do the following:

- a) identify the target number of students to study in the DDP each year; the number will be negotiated and determined well in advance prior to the deadline for submitting applications, being regulated on a yearly basis, depending on the availability of places;
- b) guarantee the monitoring of the study program and its compliance with regulations on both the institutional and the national level;
- c) discuss and approve changes in the programme, including the number of credits, teaching load, co-independent work by the student, etc.;
- d) approve the final study plans of the student (Learning Agreement);
- e) monitor, control and implement the quality assurance plan;
- f) manage administrative and academic issues.

#### **4. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS, SELECTION AND STUDY PROGRAMME**

4.1 The candidates to enter the programme shall be selected by NKSU in accordance with the selection criteria jointly defined and agreed upon by NKSU and VMU. The selection of the participants in the DDP will be based on:

- a) Transcript of student's records with his/her courses and grades;
- b) Letter of confirmation from the sending institution;
- c) Language proficiency certificate;
- d) Other requirements set between the partner institutions;
- e) For students from NKSU as the sending institution, the required English level is B1<sup>1</sup> or higher, alternative - 4,5 or higher grade of IELTS exam.

4.2 Selected students will be reviewed by VMU upon completing a formal application to the degree programme within the deadlines imposed by the partner institution.

4.3 VMU has the right to reject candidates proposed by the NKSU for academic rationales or any other substantial reason that has occurred during the joint selection process, but is obliged to motivate this rejection.

This Agreement applies to NKSU students of Biotechnology master study programme who have successfully completed the courses, the volume of which is 60 credits according to European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) (this number may slightly vary each year due to the actual regulations of NKSU and VMU).

4.4 Both VMU and NKSU shall be granted access to all written application documents and protocols of selection procedures for the programme. Both universities reserve the right to send a representative with an advisory capacity to the interviews conducted by NKSU to select the candidates.

4.5 The courses shall be taught in English during the studies in VMU.

4.6 Within the programme, the degrees of NKSU and of VMU shall be managed separately. This means that once selected for the programme, the students shall regularly and separately enrol into the Master's programme at VMU or NKSU. The separate management of two degrees also enables the student to quit the DDP and continue his/ her studies in the NKSU programme only.

4.7 This Agreement provides the selected students with the guarantee that the credit transfer and recognition mechanisms shall be implemented. VMU shall also send the transcripts of records (ECTS model) to NKSU as soon as they are available and vice versa. At the end of two years, each student shall be subjected to a procedure designed to examine whether he/she has fulfilled all the requirements necessary to receive the degree from both institutions. This procedure shall be jointly monitored by the academic coordinators managing the DDP in both institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> According to CEF, B1 level refers to a threshold or intermediate level.

4.8 According to the rules prevailing in each institution, students may receive an honourable mention, if they fulfil the requirements.

4.9 The diploma awarded by NKSU shall be issued in Kazakh, Russian or English language, refer to this Agreement and acknowledge the existence of the other diploma awarded on the basis of this Agreement. The diploma awarded by VMU shall be issued in English. This diploma shall refer to this Agreement and acknowledge the existence of the other diploma awarded in accordance with this Agreement. The Diploma Supplement or other respective documents shall refer to a document comprising the information that is usually presented in the Diploma Supplements of the two universities. The Diploma Supplement will be issued by VMU.

## **5. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

5.1 The structure of the Double Diploma Master's Programme both at NKSU and VMU is provided in Appendix 1 of this Agreement.

5.2 The equivalent courses of the Double Diploma Master's Programme both at NKSU and VMU are provided in Appendix 2 of this Agreement.

5.3 The intended period of study for the DDP shall be two (2) years (four semesters). Semesters from the first to the second shall be taught at NKSU. The third semester shall be taught in VMU. The fourth semester (preparation of master thesis) can be done in VMU or in NKSU. In order to meet the requirements for a double diploma, the students are required to study for at least one (1) semester at the receiving institution and must obtain the credits required by the specific course at the partner institution and the remaining semesters and credits at their sending institution.

5.4 Students enrolled in the programme shall have access to courses and enjoy the same rights and privileges and be subjected to the same rules and regulations as the regular students in both institutions.

## **6. FINAL THESIS**

6.1 As it has been already established in the Agreement, in addition to the term papers at both institutions, the students enrolled in the programme shall be required to write the final thesis.

6.2 The final theses written during the DDP shall be jointly supervised by both institutions. Consequently, the students shall choose the main and the second supervisor, appointed jointly by both institutions.

6.3 The outcome of the final project might take the form of a written academic paper in English (thesis). A thesis must always include a brief summary of at least 1 page as an abstract in English. The thesis should be defended in English and in accordance with the regulations prevailing at partner institution. A copy of the thesis shall be sent to the partner institution and included into the student's file.

6.4 The management process of the final thesis defence should meet all legal and academic constraints of both institutions. However, this process shall be adjusted as much as possible in order to avoid unnecessary inconveniences for the students.

6.5 In addition, after defending final thesis NKSU students must take State Attestation in Kazakhstan. Only after successful attestation DDP students can get NKSU Master of Biotechnology diploma.

## **7. FINANCIAL ISSUES**

7.1 Students shall be responsible for covering their travel costs to the receiving institution and living costs throughout their stay, including accommodation (VMU shall render assistance to the incoming students in finding appropriate accommodation), food expenses, books, equipment, consumables, prerequisite health insurance, a student union fee (if applicable) and other expenses arising out of the exchange.

7.2 Tuition fees, travel costs to the receiving institution, health insurance, visa fees, accommodation in the hostel of the host Party and the payment of scholarships to students studying on the state

educational order is carried out by the sending Party.

7.3 Payment for tuition, travel costs to the receiving institution, health insurance, visa fees, and accommodation in the hostel of the receiving Party for students enrolled on the basis of the paid provision of educational services, carried out by students on their own.

7.4 The tuition fee for one (1) semester at VMU is 1850 EUR.

7.5 Additional agreements regarding the tuition fees at VMU can be negotiated on a yearly basis, taking into consideration a number and/or academic achievements of the candidates and other aspects.

## 8. DURATION, AMENDMENT, REVIEW AND TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

8.1 This Agreement shall come into effect on the day of signature by both institutions and shall be valid for five years. Both institutions may terminate this Agreement, provided that the written notice of the intent is issued at least six months prior to termination. Commitments already in progress shall be fulfilled.

8.2 Evaluation of this Agreement will be initiated by both institutions at least six months prior to its expiration. The Agreement is based on long-term strategic cooperation interests of both institutions. NKSU and VMU shall support and work towards the renewal and extension of this Agreement to ascertain the continuation of the DDP.

8.3 Violation of both Universities' rules and other institutional regulations regarding academic and ethical behaviour and the non-observance of the study requirements may result in the immediate withdrawal of the Programme.

8.4 Amendments or changes to this Agreement shall be made in writing and signed by the duly authorised representatives of the institutions.

8.5 The Parties agree to solve any dispute arising from the interpretation of this Agreement in a friendly manner.

8.6 In case the dispute cannot be resolved, the claim shall be submitted for arbitration; each Party shall appoint a member of the arbitration panel and one member shall be chosen by mutual consent.

8.7 This Agreement has been signed in two identical originals in English; each institution shall keep one original.

In witness thereof, the parties below have offered their signatures:

For and on behalf of  
M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan  
State University, Petropavlovsk,  
Republic of Kazakhstan

For and on behalf of  
Vytautas Magnus University,  
Kaunas, Lithuania

Date: 03.07.2017  
Signature:

Prof. Omirbayev Serik Maulenovich,  
Rector M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan  
State University

Locus sigilli

Date:  
Signature:

Prof. Juozas Augutis,  
Rector Vytautas Magnus University

Locus sigilli

Signature:

Prof. Saulius Mickevičius,  
Dean Faculty of Natural Science, VMU

## APPENDIX 1

### 1. Courses followed at NKSU and VMU.

All courses amounting to least 60 ECTS credits from two selected specialization areas must be pursued. The remaining courses required to reach the total of 120 ECTS credits shall be selected at VMU.

Courses at NKSU and VMU are enlisted in the following tables.

<b>Courses in NKSU</b>			
№	Study subject	Study subject code	Credits (ECTS)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>			
<b>Mandatory courses</b>			
1.	Organization of Modern Cereal Seed Production	OMCSP 5206	3
2.	History and Philosophy of Science	HPS 5201	3
3.	Foreign Language (professional)	FL(P)5202	3
4.	Psychology	Psy 5204	3
5.	Modern Methods in Biotechnology	MMB 5301	3
6.	Scientific Research Work		4
<b>Elective courses</b>			
8.	Business Kazakh Language	BKL5208	3
7.	The technique of writing a thesis and research organization	TWTR 5205	4
9.	Biotechnological Equipment	BE 5209	4
<b>Total per semester</b>			<b>30</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>			
<b>Mandatory courses</b>			
1.	Scientific Research Work		4
2.	Pedagogy	Ped 5203	3
<b>Elective courses</b>			
3.	Seed breeding	SB 5303	5
4.	Promising crops of Kazakhstan	PCK 5304	5
5.	Information technology in agriculture	ITSH 5207	4
6.	Perspective technologies for improving natural forage land, deposits and fallow- land	PTIN 5309	5
7.	Confirmation of conformity of plant breeding products	CCPB 5210	4
<b>Total per semester</b>			<b>30</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Semester</b>			
<b>Mandatory courses</b>			
1.	Scientific Research Work		4
2.	Teaching practice		3
3.	Research practice		5
<b>Elective courses</b>			
3.	Agrolandscape farming system or Reproduction technology of livestock products	AFS /RTL6302	5
4.	Conveyor system of feed production or Animal Biotechnology	CSFP/AB6305	3
5.	Biological Control in Plant Protection or Modern issues of biological security in food and industrial production	BCPP/MIBS306	4
6.	Modern technology in plant protection or Biotechnology in Production of bioactive substances	MTPP/BPB6307	3
7.	Estimation of the quality of crop production or Methods of marking and testing in biotechnological products	EQCP/MMTB6308	3

	<b>Total per semester</b>		<b>30</b>
	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Semester</b>		
1.	Issuance and Defence of Master's Thesis		11
2.	Research practice		7
3.	Scientific Research Work		12
4.	Complex Examination		4
	<b>Total per semester</b>		<b>34</b>
	<b>Total for the Programme:</b>		<b>124</b>

<b>Courses in VMU</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Study subject</b>	<b>Study subject code</b>	<b>Credits (ECTS)</b>
	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>		
1.	Molecular Biology	BIO 5001	6
2.	Separation Methods in Biotechnology	BBK 6008	6
3.	Molecular Methods in Microbiology	BBK 6001	6
4.	Research Work	BTC 5004	6
5.	Biotechnology for Medicine	BIO 6007	6
	<b>Total per semester</b>		<b>30</b>
	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>		
1.	Industrial Plant and Process Design	BTC 5006	6
2.	Molecular Biotechnology	BIO 5005	6
3.	Cell and Tissue Culture Techniques	BTC 5007	6
4.	Research Project	BTC 5008	6
5.	Special Course	BTC 5005	6
	<b>Total per semester</b>		<b>30</b>
	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Semester</b>		
1.	Scientific Professional Practice	BTC 6001	6
2.	Molecular Biology of Medicinal Plants	BIO 5010	6
3.	Forest Biotechnology	BTC 6021	6
4.	Agricultural Biotechnology	BTC 6022	6
5.	Horticulture Biotechnology	BTC 6023	6
	<b>Total per semester</b>		<b>30</b>
	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Semester</b>		
1.	Master Thesis		<b>30</b>
<b>Total for the Programme:</b>			<b>120</b>

After the completion of both NKSU and VMU programmes, students must have earned no less than 120 ECTS credits.

**APPENDIX 2**

**Curriculum of the Double Diploma Programme and credit transfer mechanism between NKSU and VMU**

<b>Courses taken in NKSU and recognized as equivalent in VMU.</b>			
<b>Course at NKSU</b>		<b>Course at VMU</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>ECTS</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
<b>Mandatory courses</b>			
Foreign Language (professional)	3	Molecular Biology	6
Psychology	3	Separation Methods in	6
Pedagogy	3	Biotechnology	6
Scientific Research Work	4	Molecular Methods in	6
History and Philosophy of Science	3	Microbiology	6
Scientific Research Work	4	Research Work	6
Modern Methods in Biotechnology	3	Biotechnology for Medicine	6
Organization of Modern Cereal Seed	3	Industrial Plant and Process Design	6
		Molecular Biotechnology	6
		Cell and Tissue Culture Techniques	6
		Research Project	
		Special Course	
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>		
<b>Elective courses</b>			
	<b>ECTS</b>		
Business Kazakh Language	3		
The technique of writing a thesis and research organization	4		
Production			
Biotechnological Equipment	4		
Seed breeding	5		
Promising crops of Kazakhstan	5		
Perspective technologies for improving natural forage land, deposits and fallow- land	5		
Confirmation of conformity of plant breeding products	4		
Information technology in agriculture	4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>60</b>
<b>Total in institution</b>	<b>60</b>		<b>60</b>
<b>Courses taken in VMU and recognized as equivalent in NKSU</b>			
<b>Course at VMU</b>		<b>Course at NKSU</b>	
<b>Title</b>	<b>ECTS</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
Scientific Professional Practice	6	<b>Mandatory courses</b>	
Molecular Biology of Medicinal Plants	6	Scientific Research Work	4
Forest Biotechnology	6	Teaching practice	3
Agricultural Biotechnology	6	Research practice	5
Horticulture Biotechnology	6	<b>Total</b>	12

		Agrolandscape farming system or Reproduction technology of livestock products	5
		Conveyor system of feed production or Animal Biotechnology	3
		Biological Control in Plant Protection or Modern issues of biological security in food and industrial production	4
		Modern technology in plant protection or Biotechnology in Production of bioactive substances	3
		Estimation of the quality of crop production or Methods of marking and testing in biotechnological products	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total per semester</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Total per semester</b>	<b>30</b>
Master thesis equivalence			
<b>VMU</b>	<b>ECTS</b>	<b>NKSU</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
Master Thesis	30	Issuance and Defence of Master's Thesis	11
		Scientific Research Work	12
		Complex Examination	4
		Research practice	7
<b>Total per semester</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Total per semester</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Total per Programme</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Total per Programme</b>	<b>64</b>