

**CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
A DOUBLE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME
BETWEEN
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA, ITALY
AND
MANAGEMENT CENTER INNSBRUCK - MCI
In the field of Health Biotechnologies**

Introduction

Guided by the desire to strengthen the already existing relations and bearing in mind the common objective of contributing to the establishment of an academic framework supporting such a task in the context of the creation of the European Higher Education and Research Area, Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy, hereinafter referred to as UNIPD, with legal address in via VIII Febbraio 1848, 2, 35122 Padova-Italia, represented by its Rector Prof. Daniela Mapelli, and MCI MANAGEMENT CENTER INNSBRUCK | The Entrepreneurial School ® registered as MCI Internationale Hochschule GmbH, hereinafter referred to as MCI with legal address Universitätsstraße 15, 6020 Innsbruck, Austria, represented by its Rector Prof. Andreas Altmann.

AGREE

to implement a two year Double Master's Degree Programme in the field of health biotechnologies.

Article 1. Description of the Programme

The proposed Double Degree Programme will be called **International Biopharma** and will be based on a two years (4 semesters) syllabus: one year spent in the home institution and one year in the host institution, including experimental thesis, according to a study plan jointly defined by the home and host institutions.

The main objective of the programme is to train students in the field of Biopharma. Within pharmaceutical companies, the term "Biopharma" defines those drugs produced by biological methods. Biopharma therefore focusses on research, development, production and analysis of recombinant protein drugs, monoclonal antibodies and biosimilars. Moreover, the programme aims to improve students' capacity to study, work and live in a multicultural environment and to upgrade and diversify their approaches to international relations.

Competences acquired during the programme will be a sound interdisciplinary knowledge in the field of molecular biology, biochemistry, recombinant DNA techniques and diagnostics, a solid background in chemistry, pharmacology and advanced pharmaceutical technology, including the specific technical and regulatory issues dedicated to the research, development and monitoring of innovative drugs and biosimilars in a globalized market.

Upon successful completion of the Double Master's Degree Programme, students shall be awarded a Double Degree by UNIPD and MCI as defined below. Each Degree is recognized in the country in which it has been issued.

Article 2. Legal framework and national qualifications

MCI and UNIPD undertake to run a teaching programme on the subject of Biopharma on a second-level degree course.

The Italian D.M. 47/2013 allows Italian Higher Education Institutions to develop joint study Programmes in cooperation with other Italian and non-Italian institution.

Upon successful completion of the two years Programme, the students shall be awarded the following Degrees:

- In Italy: **Laurea Magistrale (Master's Degree) in Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies, Classe LM-09, D.M. 16/03/2007.** According to the Bologna Process rules and recommendations and the Italian legislation, this degree corresponds to a second cycle degree D.M. 270/2004, Master level (120 ECTS credits), giving access to "Dottorato di ricerca", a third cycle degree equivalent to a PhD level in Europe.
- In Austria: **Master's Degree in Biotechnology, Study program code number 0352.** This degree corresponds to a second cycle degree, Master level (120 ECTS credits) according to the UNESCO ISCED 2011 Code 7, giving access to Doctoral programs in the relevant field at a university and postgraduate studies (FHG §6 (4)).

Article 3. Structure of the programme and student exchange plan

1. Studies leading to the Double Degree shall last two years totalling at least 120 ECTS credits: the students will spend the first year of studies at the home institution and the second year of studies at the partner institution.
2. The language of instruction at both partner University will be English.
3. The study plan for students of both institutions is defined in the **Annex I**. If substantial changes will occur in the study program of the partner universities, the Annex I may be amended before the beginning of each academic year.
4. Students must obtain minimum 60 ECTS credits at the partner institution, including 30 ECTS from Master Thesis according to the study plan defined in the Annex I.
5. Students must prepare, present and defend a final dissertation, according to what specified in the following article 8.
6. The host Institution will appoint a tutor for each student for the duration of the study period.

Article 4. Admission requirements

The following eligibility criteria must be fulfilled by students applying for the programme:

a) For students having UNIPD as their home institution:

1. To have successfully completed the first cycle of studies (equivalent to a First Level Degree/Bachelor Degree).
2. To be regularly enrolled in the Master's Degree Course in "Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies",

having obtained at least 54 ECTS credits at the end of the first year of master studies, according to the scheme reported in the Annex I.

3. Good academic records.
4. Proficiency in English.

b) For students having MCI as their home institution:

1. To have successfully completed the first cycle of studies (equivalent to a First Level Degree/Bachelor Degree).
2. To be regularly enrolled in the Master's Degree Course in "Biotechnology", having obtained at least 54 ECTS credits at the end of the first year of master studies, according to the scheme reported in the Annex I.
3. Good academic records
4. Proficiency in English.

The admission of students, whose academic profile partially does not meet such fixed requirements, will be subject to an additional assessment by the Academic Board at the host institution, which will make the final decision and will propose a suitable study plan.

Article 5. Student selection process

The parties may recruit up to three (3) students per institution per academic year. Although a one-to-one exchange is desirable, a deviation from this will not be considered an impediment.

The selection of exchange students is based on shared responsibility between both parties, as follows:

1. The home institution makes preliminary selection of candidates, followed by an interview.
2. The final decision about the acceptance of the exchange students is taken by the host institution. The process will be done in agreement between the two parties.
3. The criteria for selection will be based on academic records and motivation. Knowledge of the language of the country of the host Institution may be considered an advantage.
4. Care will be taken by both Academic Boards to select only those students who shall presumably complete their Double Degree studies.

Article 6. Languages policy

UNIPD undertakes to offer **International Biopharma** double degree students the opportunity to attend an Italian language course as part of the teaching offered as host institution. MCI undertakes to offer Italian double degree students the opportunity to attend a German language course as part of the teaching offered as host institution.

Article 7. Academic progress and examination of students

Examinations are performed at the same University where the Course Units have been attended, and follow local regulations and methods of assessment. Whenever possible, ECTS grading scale will be adopted.

The ECTS credits for a Course Unit are gained if the student passes the exam, according to the local rules on pass/fail.

In the event that a student decides to drop out of the double degree program s/he may still graduate exclusively from the home institution as long as s/he complies with all necessary academic requirements established by the home institution.

Both parties fully and automatically recognize courses and related ECTS credits, which are developed for the master programme, as well as examinations passed at the partner institution.

At UNIPD conversion of examinations' grades will be based on the ECTS scale related to the Laurea Magistrale in Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies (according to the annual statistical analysis).

At partner institution conversion of examinations' grades will be based on the agreed conversion table in Annex II.

Article 8. Master Thesis

With the purpose of strengthening the scientific cooperation between both institutions, the Master Thesis will address, whenever possible, problems in areas of common interest to the two institutions and they will be organized as follows:

1. Whenever possible, the Master Thesis will be supervised by a professor or researcher both in the home and in the host institution. Theses in biopharmaceutical companies are encouraged when possible.
2. Taking into account the mobility scheme of the programme, the thesis defence will take place at the end of the second year of studies at the institutions where the mobility is taking place. If due to force majeure the defence cannot be in organised in presence, virtual-on line discussions are possible. The defence will be in the form of a final exam consisting of thesis defence including verification of candidate's knowledge of subjects pertinent to the study program. Rules of evaluation of final exam by double degree students are agreed between the two institutions. The results of final exam will be fully and automatically recognised by the partner institution.
3. In case of students preparing their thesis in companies, a confidentiality agreement might be requested by said companies. If this is the case, the confidentiality agreement is verified and approved by the Rector at MCI, and by the Department director and the double degree programme coordinator at UNIPD. If said companies also request a thesis embargo, the thesis in question will not be published on the universities' archives for a period of 5 (five) years, instead of which an abstract, in English, will be provided and, if needed, checked by the company.
4. The thesis committee shall include members from both institutions.
5. The thesis shall be written and discussed in English.

Article 9. Extension of the mobility period

Should not a student complete the expected study plan within his/her mobility year, the Academic Boards of both Institutions will jointly decide whether to grant an extension or not.

Article 10. Enrolment, tuition fees, insurance and services to students

1. The students are responsible to have the necessary valid insurance policies before their departure.
2. Students are responsible for all their travel, accommodation and living expenses.
3. Students participating in the Double Degree Programme shall only pay tuition fees to their home institution. Only supplementary fees (e.g. revenue stamp, regional fees for accommodation, additional compulsory insurance) shall be paid to the host institution.
4. The host institution undertakes to facilitate the arrival of the students and to put at their disposal all the existing services and study grants, if available.

Article 11. Recognition Mechanism and Final Degree

Both parties fully and automatically recognize courses, which are developed for the master course, as well as examinations passed at the partner institution, according to Art. 7 of the present agreement.

Upon successful completion of the double degree study programme as defined in the present agreement and validation by the Academic Board, students will be awarded a Double Degree, according to what specified in art. 2.

Each institution will issue its national Diploma and a Diploma Supplement describing the double degree programme followed.

Article 12. Cooperation aspects and monitoring

Both parties undertake to facilitate a constant exchange of information and transparent administrative procedures. The parties undertake to send the required documentation of students taking part in the programme leading to the awarding of the Double Master's Degree. In particular, the parties will produce the Transcripts of Records of the exchange students reporting the marks according to the ECTS scale.

Each partner should appoint a *local academic coordinator* who will be responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the home Universities are met.

Both parties shall make all the possible efforts, namely before national and European/International institutions and companies, to obtain the maximum financial support for the programme.

In addition, the *local academic coordinator* in each institution will meet on a regular basis in order to:

- Assess the pertinence of the teaching programmes in both institutions.
- Report on the cooperation and the academic results of the students.
- Propose new initiatives.

Article 13. Quality assurance

The Partner Universities are part of the national university system of their respective countries, as a consequence their activity is evaluated on a regular basis by external certified bodies.

As far as the Double Degree Programme is concerned, an Internal Quality Assurance Protocol will also be operating, managed jointly by both Partners.

Evaluations by students will be organised jointly.

Based on the information gathered the Academic Board will ensure permanent revising updating and improvement of the programme.

Article 14. Promotion of the programme

The promotion of the programme is the responsibility of both parties.

Each member institution agrees to the use of its name and logo for the purposes of promotional material, programme literature and other documentation of the programme.

Article 15. Financial obligations

No financial obligations shall arise out of this agreement for either party.

Article 16. Conflict Resolution

The parties shall resolve any controversy arising from the interpretation of these terms and conditions by mutual agreement.

Article 17. Intellectual Property

Each of the parties acknowledges and agrees that any and all of the Intellectual Property Rights or other proprietary rights in respect of any literature, materials, research or teaching methods, procedures, processes and/or the learning experience in relation to or in connection with the Programme and any parts thereof, are and shall remain the sole property of its owner and, save as expressly set out herein, nothing in this Agreement is intended to transfer ownership or create any licensed rights under any such Intellectual Property Rights or other proprietary rights.

The learning materials and any other literature, materials, research methods, procedures, processes or programmes in which a party has Intellectual Property Rights relating to or in connection with the Programme and which are disclosed to the other party pursuant to this Agreement may be used by the other party solely for the purposes of performing its obligations under, and during the period of, this Agreement and for no other purpose.

Article 18. Data Protection

All Partner Institutions commit themselves to comply with the provisions and requirements on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data according to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 ("GDPR").

Each Partner, as "Controllers" of personal data must put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to implement the data protection principles. In case of joint control of data

processing, the parties involved shall in a transparent manner determine their respective responsibilities for compliance with the obligations under the GDPR regulation.

Article 19. General Provisions

The present agreement will take effect after the signature by the legal representative of both contracting parties and will be valid for three years, i.e. until Academic Year 2026/2027 included. This agreement may be amended by mutual consent following the same procedure that has been followed for the first signature.

Either party may terminate the present agreement by six months written advance notice. In the event of the agreement being terminated, any activities in progress shall be run to completion and both parties must ensure that admitted or enrolled students can complete the Double Degree Programme.

Article 20. Signatures

Two originals of the present agreement shall be signed, one for each of the signatories of the contract. Each original shall have equal validity.

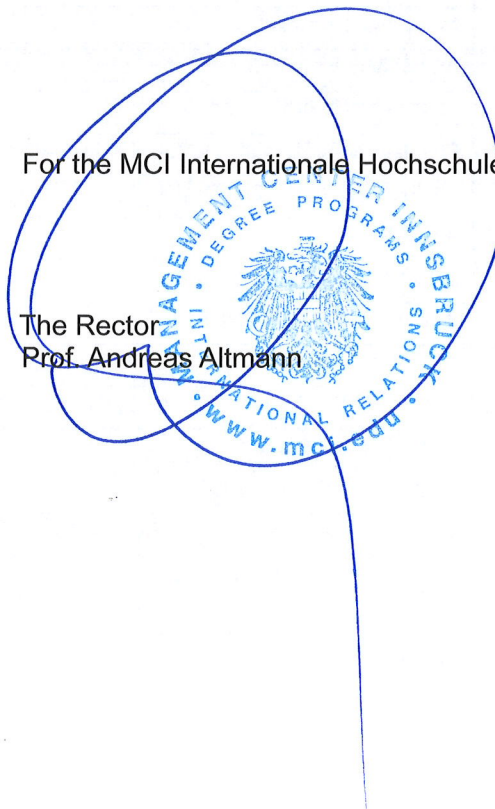
Date 01/07/24

For the Università degli Studi di Padova,

For the MCI Internationale Hochschule GmbH

The Rector
Prof. Daniela Mapelli

The Rector
Prof. Andreas Altmann

The block contains a handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Daniela Mapelli'. To the right of the signature is a circular official seal of the University of Padua. The seal features a central emblem with a lion and a figure, surrounded by the text 'UNIVERSITAS STUDII PADUENSIS' and 'MDCCCXXXIII'.The block contains a large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink that loops around a circular official seal. The seal is for the MCI Management Center Innsbruck and contains the text 'MCI MANAGEMENT CENTER INNSBRUCK', 'INTERNATIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS', 'INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS', and 'www.mci.edu'. The seal also features a central emblem.

ANNEX I

Double Degree *International Biopharma* (120 ECTS) between

- Master of Science in Biotechnology (MA MCI – A) &
- Laurea Magistrale Pharmaceutical Biotechnologies (Università degli Studi di Padova – IT)

**a. Overview of Double Degree INTERNATIONAL BIOPHARMA
(First year in Italy, Second year in Austria)**

YEAR 1	UNIPD COURSE NAME	ECTS
	ADVANCED MOLECULAR BIOLOGY	6
	ADVANCED REACTIVITY AND MODELLING	7
	DRUG DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT	7
	MOLECULAR AND EXPERIMENTAL PHARMACOLOGY	10
	PROTEIN ENGINEERING	6
	PROTEOMICS AND BIOCHEMICAL METHODOLOGIES	6
	STRUCTURAL BIOCHEMISTRY	6
	ELECTIVE COURSE	8
	OTHER ACTIVITIES	4
YEAR 2	MCI COURSE NAME	ECTS
	ACADEMIC WRITING	1
	BIOINFORMATICS	3
	BIOPHARMACEUTICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION	2
	BIOPHARMACEUTICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION SEMINAR	1
	BIOSAFETY	1
	CLINICAL DIAGNOSTIC	2
	INDUSTRIAL BIOTECHNOLOGY	3
	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS IN BIOTECHNOLOGY	1
	MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR ENGINEERS	4
	OMICS TECHNOLOGIES	3
	PROJECT BIOTECHNOLOGY 3	4
	QUALIFICATION AND VALIDATION IN BIOTECHNOLOGICAL INDUSTRY	1
	RESEARCH SEMINAR 3	1
	TECHNICAL BIOCATALYSIS	3
	THESIS	30

**b. Overview of Double Degree INTERNATIONAL BIOPHARMA
(First year in Austria, Second year in Italy)**

YEAR 1	MCI COURSE NAME	ECTS
	BIOANALYTICS	4
	BIODATA SCIENCE & SCIENTIFIC METHODS	6
	BIOPROCESS ENGINEERING & CELL CULTURE TECHNOLOGY	6
	BIOSTATISTICS & SCIENTIFIC METHODS	4
	DOWNSTREAM PROCESSING	4
	GENERAL MANAGEMENT 1&2	8
	MOLECULAR BIOLOGY & PHYSIOLOGY	8
	PHARMACEUTICAL TECHNOLOGIES & UPSTREAM PROCESSING	8
	PLANT & FOOD BIOTECHNOLOGY	4
	PROJECT BIOTECHNOLOGY 1&2	8
YEAR 2	UNIPD COURSE NAME	ECTS
	MOLECULAR AND EXPERIMENTAL PHARMACOLOGY	10
	PROTEIN ENGINEERING	6
	PROTEOMICS AND BIOCHEMICAL METHODOLOGIES	6
	STRUCTURAL BIOCHEMISTRY	6
	OTHER ACTIVITIES	2
	THESIS	30

ANNEX II

Translation of national marks

In order to simplify the recognition procedures of the training activities carried out at the partner institution and to enhance transparency and mutual trust, the partners agree on the following table of conversion of national grades.

ECTS grade	Definition	UNIPD Italy	MCI Austria
A	EXCELLENT outstanding performance with no errors	30	1
B	VERY GOOD above the average standard but with some minor errors	29	
C	GOOD above the average standard but with a number of notable errors	27 – 28	2
D	SATISFACTORY fair but with significant shortcomings	26 – 24	3
E	SUFFICIENT-PASSING performance meets the minimum criteria	23 – 18	4
F	FAILED	≤17	5