

AGREEMENT ON A DOUBLE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

between

Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Republic of Lithuania),

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

M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan State University (Petropavlovsk, Republic of Kazakhstan),

represented by Professor Omirbayev Serik Maulenovich, Rector
(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. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan State University (hereinafter referred to as "M. Kozybayev NKSU") wish to strengthen their ties further, in accordance with their mutual interests in delivering programmes of academic excellence and cultural diversity. Hence, M. Kozybayev 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 undergraduate level.

This Agreement has been entered into between VMU and M. Kozybayev NKSU to facilitate credit transfer and provide a smooth transition of students from M. Kozybayev NKSU to VMU in order for them to obtain VMU Bachelor's degree in Life Sciences and M. Kozybayev NKSU Bachelor's degree in Biology. The Agreement is in compliance with both, the Law on Higher Education and Research of Republic of the 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 Biology. The programme will provide the opportunity to undergraduate students from M. Kozybayev NKSU to simultaneously pursue the Bachelor's degree in Life Sciences from VMU and the Bachelor's degree in Biology from M. Kozybayev NKSU, by completing 180 ECTS credits at M. Kozybayev NKSU and completing 60 ECTS credits in VMU, fulfilling the requirements necessary to obtain the Bachelor's degree in Biology at M. Kozybayev NKSU and Bachelor's degree in Life Sciences at VMU.

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

M. Kozybayev NKSU

- *Bachelor of Natural Sciences (Program in Biology, program code 5B060700)*

VMU

- *Bachelor in Life Sciences (Program in Biology and Genetics, program code 6121DX011)*

3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Both Parties agree to provide all necessary means and resources to implement and operate the Double Degree Programme in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Agreement.
- 3.2 VMU shall assist the incoming Double Degree 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 Double Degree Programme 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 M. Kozybayev NKSU in accordance with the selection criteria jointly defined and agreed upon by M. Kozybayev NKSU and VMU. The selection of the participants in the DDP will be based on:

- Transcript of student's records with his/her courses and grades;
- Letter of confirmation from the sending institution;
- Language proficiency certificate;
- Other requirements set between the partner institutions;
- For students from M. Kozybayev NKSU as the sending institution, the required English level is A2¹ 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 M. Kozybayev 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 M. Kozybayev NKSU students of Biology 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 M. Kozybayev NKSU and VMU).

- 4.4 Both VMU and M. Kozybayev 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 M. Kozybayev NKSU to select the candidates. Joint selection interviews by the M. Kozybayev NKSU and VMU are encouraged.
- 4.5 The courses shall be taught in English in VMU during the study years.
- 4.6 Within the programme, the degrees of M. Kozybayev 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 Bachelor's programme at VMU or M. Kozybayev NKSU. The separate management of two degrees also enables the student to quit the Double Degree Programme and continue his/ her studies in the M. Kozybayev 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 M. Kozybayev NKSU as soon as they are available and vice versa. At the end of four years, each student shall be subjected to a procedure designed to examine whether he/she

¹ According to CEF, A2 level refers to a way stage or elementary level.

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 Double Degree Programme in both institutions.

- 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 M. Kozybayev 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.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- 5.1 The intended period of study for the DDP shall be four (4) years (eight semesters). In order to meet the requirements for a double degree, the students are required to study for at least two (2) semesters at the receiving institution and must obtain not less than 60 ECTS credits required by the specific course at the partner institution and the remaining semesters and credits at their sending institution.
- 5.2 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 Both Universities shall ensure legal and organizational pre-conditions necessary for students enrolled in the Double Degree Programme to start their final thesis no later than 7th semester of Bachelor's studies.
- 6.3 The final theses written during the Double Degree Programme shall be jointly supervised by both institutions. Consequently, the students shall choose the main and the second supervisor, appointed jointly by both institutions.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.

7. FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 7.1 The 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), books, equipment, consumables, health insurance, a student union fee (if applicable) and other expenses arising out of the exchange.
- 7.2 The students shall cover the tuition fees for six (6) semesters in the sending institution (M. Kozybayev NKSU) and two (2) semesters in the receiving institution (VMU). The tuition fee for one (1) semester at VMU is 1300 EUR.

- 7.3 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. M. Kozybayev NKSU and VMU shall support and work towards the renewal and extension of this Agreement to ascertain the continuation of the Double Degree Programme.
- 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

For and on behalf of

M. Kozybaev North Kazakhstan State University,
Petropavlovsk, Republic of Kazakhstan

Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Republic of
Lithuania



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

Signature:

Candidate of Geographical Sciences
Pashkov Sergey Vladimirovich
Dean of Natural and Agriculture Sciences
Faculty, M. Kozybayev North Kazakhstan State
University



Prof. Juozas Augustis,
Rector Vytautas Magnus University

Signature:

Prof. Saulius Mickevičius,
Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Vytautas
Magnus University