

AGREEMENT ON A DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMME

between

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

Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University (Vinnytsia, Ukraine),
represented by Professor Roman Grynyuk, Rector
(21021, 21 60-richchya, Vinnytsia, Ukraine)

1. PREAMBLE

In the spirit of prolific international relations and academic cooperation, Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as “VMU”) and the Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University (hereinafter referred to as “Vasyl' Stus DonNU”) wish to strengthen their ties further, in accordance with their mutual interests in delivering programmes of academic excellence and cultural diversity. Hence, Vasyl' Stus DonNU and VMU have decided to conclude this Agreement on a Double Degree Programme (hereinafter the “DDP”) that allows students to obtain two degrees at the undergraduate level.

This Agreement has been entered into between VMU and Vasyl' Stus DonNU to facilitate credit transfer and provide a smooth transition of students between VMU and Vasyl' Stus DonNU in order for them to obtain VMU Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences and Vasyl' Stus DonNU Bachelor's degree in Ecology. The Agreement is in compliance with both, the Law on Higher Education and Research of Republic of the Lithuania and the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Ukraine.

2. SCOPE OF COOPERATION

This Agreement delineates the legal and organizational framework for the DDP in Environmental science and Ecology. The programme will provide the opportunity to undergraduate students from both institutions to simultaneously pursue the Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from VMU and the Bachelor's degree in Ecology from Vasyl' Stus DonNU, by completing of 180 ECTS credits at Vasyl' Stus DonNU and completing of not less than 60 ECTS of their studies in VMU, fulfilling the requirements necessary to obtain the Bachelor's degree in Ecology, and in accordance with the transfer chart provided in Appendix 2. The aim is to enable Vasyl' Stus DonNU students of Ecology to receive degrees from both Universities.

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

Vasyl' Stus DonNU

- *Bachelor in Ecology (Programme in Ecology)*

VMU

- *Bachelor in Environmental Science (Programme in Environmental Science and Ecology)*

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 Both partner institutions 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 their respective institutions in accordance with the selection criteria jointly defined and agreed upon by Vasyl' Stus DonNU 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;
 - CV;
 - Language proficiency certificate;
 - Other requirements set between the partner institutions;
 - For students from Vasyl' Stus DonNU 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 the partner institution upon completing a formal application to the degree programme within the deadlines imposed by the partner institution.
- 4.3 Each partner has the right to reject candidates proposed by the other institution for academic rationales or any other substantial reason that has occurred during the joint selection process, but is obliged to motivate this rejection.
- 4.4 Both VMU and Vasyl' Stus DonNU 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 Vasyl' Stus DonNU to select the candidates. Joint selection interviews by the Vasyl' Stus DonNU and VMU are encouraged.

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

- 4.5 Within the programme, the degrees of Vasyl' Stus DonNU 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 Vasyl' Stus DonNU. The separate management of two degrees also enables the student to quit the Double Degree Programme and continue his/ her studies in the Vasyl' Stus DonNU or VMU's programme only.
- 4.6 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 Vasyl' Stus DonNU 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 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.
- 4.7 According to the rules prevailing in each institution, students may receive an honourable mention, if they fulfil the requirements.
- 4.8 The diploma awarded by Vasyl' Stus DonNU shall be issued in Ukrainian 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.
- 4.9 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.

5. FINAL THESIS

- 5.1 The structure of the Double Degree Bachelor's Programme both at Vasyl' Stus DonNU and VMU is provided in Appendix 1 of this Agreement.
- 5.2 In addition to the term papers at both institutions, the students enrolled in the programme shall be required to write the final thesis.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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.

6. FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. The students shall cover the tuition fees for study period in the sending institution (Vasyl' Stus DonNU) according to the study costs and regulation of Vasyl' Stus DonNU.
- 6.3. Students shall pay the study fee in VMU for the period studied here.
- 6.4. The tuition fee for one (1) semester at VMU is 1250 EUR.
- 6.5. 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.

7. DURATION, AMENDMENT, REVIEW AND TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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. Vasyl' Stus DonNU and VMU shall support and work towards the renewal and extension of this Agreement to ascertain the continuation of the Double Degree Programme.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 Amendments or changes to this Agreement shall be made in writing and signed by the duly authorised representatives of the institutions.
- 7.5 The Parties agree to solve any dispute arising from the interpretation of this Agreement in a friendly manner.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 This Agreement has been signed in two identical originals in English; each institution shall keep one original.

In witness there of the parties below have offered their signatures:

For and on behalf of

Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University
Vinnytsia, Ukraine

Date: 22.08.2023
Signature:

Prof. Roman Grinyuk,
Rector Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University



For and on behalf of

Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

Date:
Signature:

Prof. Juozas Augutis,
Rector Vytautas Magnus University

