MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

Between

Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences (H-BRS)
Department of Natural Sciences
Grantham-Allee 20
53757 Sankt Augustin
Germany

And

University of Palermo (UP)
Piazza Marina, 61
90133 Palermo
Italy

in respect of

MSc in Biomedical Sciences (H-BRS) * and Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute (curriculum Biologia della Salute) (UP)*

PREAMBLE

1. **The parties to the Agreement and its object**

Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences (H-BRS) and the University of Palermo (UP) agree to maintain their collaboration in the provision of a programme of study leading to the awarding of two Master's Degrees upon successful completion of the programme. Students from the two universities will be awarded both a MSc in Biomedical Sciences from the Department of Natural Sciences at H-BRS and a Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute from the CISB at UP.

H-BRS agrees to give credit transfer for successful completion of the first year of the MSc at UP for entry to the final year of its MSc. programme. Conversely, UP agrees to give credit transfer towards their Laurea Magistrale to students successfully completing the first year of the H-BRS MSc programme. Students of both universities who initially enrol in either of the two programmes may thus gain both awards within a two year period of study.

2. **The purpose of this Memorandum**

This Memorandum of Cooperation sets out the agreement reached between the parties in respect of their programmes. In particular, it sets out details of the agreement which concern the maintenance of the academic standard and quality of the programmes and summarizes the matters for which the parties are responsible.

*** Terminology**

In this agreement:

"H-BRS" means Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences, Department of Natural Sciences, von-Liebig-Straße 20, D-53359, Rheinbach, Germany
"UP" means University of Palermo, Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute (CLM BMS), curriculum Biologia della Salute, Palermo, Italy

"MSc" means the MSc Programme of the Department of Natural Sciences of H-BRS

3. The separate responsibilities of the parties

3.1 The parties recognise that under their separate regional and/or national laws, regulations and administrative controls each is separately responsible for:

a) overseeing and maintaining the academic standards of the programme in respect of its own award;
b) satisfying the separate regional and/or national authorities in respect of approval, administration, operation, monitoring, reporting upon and review of the programme and any changes required in consequence
c) all contracting parties agree to ensure that the storage and use of personal data exchanged in the context of the agreement shall be processed in accordance with the principles of Article 5 of the European General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679. This means in particular that only for the purpose of this agreement relevant personal data will be exchanged and processed. Each institution takes appropriate care that personal data are treated with confidentiality, are stored securely and only for the required period of time.

3.2 To promote the ease of operation of the programme, the parties have further agreed that each is separately responsible for:

a) providing the resources necessary for the successful operation of the programme within the country in which the party normally operates;

b) informing the partner institution of any significant changes in the programme or in available resources;

c) all matters affecting the welfare of students during the period of their study in that party's institution.

4. The joint responsibilities of the parties

The parties recognise that they must jointly contribute to the academic direction, development and quality of the programme of study. The partners agree to assist each other in meeting the requirements of their separate authorities, and in maintaining the compatibility of content, teaching and assessment approaches of their programmes in order to ensure mutual recognition of credit to facilitate students' progress to the two awards.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

5. The approval, monitoring and review of the programme leading to the MSc

To earn the MSc in Biomedical Sciences from H-BRS and the Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute (curriculum Biologia della Salute) from UP all the modules listed in Annex B must be successfully completed. During the second year, the students must also complete a 5-month master project.

Students may select modules different from those listed in Annex B upon written approval by the Examination Board/Program Board of both institutions; however, the overall workload of all the modules attended each year must comply with the requirements reported in annex B (i.e. 60 ECTS/year).

5.1 Examination papers and coursework assignments for all the modules that are attended at H-BRS will be approved by an Examination Board appointed by the Department of Natural Sciences of H-BRS.

As H-BRS does not offer practical training in its own laboratories, the students are responsible for finding a research institute or company to perform the experimental work for their thesis project; however, H-BRS will assist students from UP in finding an appropriate laboratory and project. Both the institution and the project must be approved by the supervising professor and also the examination board at H-BRS.

During their master project, students from UP are supervised by a professor/lecturer from H-BRS; they are also assigned a co-supervisor from UP, who will ensure that the project and the written thesis comply with the requirement of their home university.

To obtain the MSc title from H-BRS, thesis projects will be evaluated by an Examination Board appointed by the Department of Natural Sciences and all decisions pertaining the conferment of the Master's Degree in Biomedical Sciences will be made by the appropriate authorities at H-BRS.

Details on the MSc program in Biomedical Sciences can be found in the "Master of Sciences in Biomedical Sciences Examination Regulations", available online on the H-BRS website.

5.2 Examination papers and coursework assignments for all the modules that are attended at UP will be approved by the relevant Examination Board of the CLM BMS.

UP can offer the students practical training in its own laboratories; thus, H-BRS students can choose to work on their master project in one of the in-house laboratories or to find an outside research institute or company, with or without the assistance of UP. Both the institution and the project must be approved by the Program Board.

During their master project, students from H-BRS are supervised by a professor/lecturer from UP; however, they are also assigned a co-supervisor from H-BRS, who will ensure that the project and the written thesis comply with the requirement of their home University.

To obtain the Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute from UP, master projects will be evaluated by an Examination of the CLM BMS of UP, and all decisions pertaining the conferment of the Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute will be made by the appropriate authorities at UP.

MANAGEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

7. Arrangements to support the partnership

Both parties will appoint at least one member of Examination/Program Board to act as liaison between the partner institutions (see Annex A). Normally, an annual visit/Skype conference involving the program contact persons from both partners (indicated in Annex A) will be scheduled to monitor the Program operation, unless special circumstances arise requiring more frequent contacts.

8. Student Admission

H-BRS requires that students (from both H-BRS and UP) enrolling in the double degree program have a GPA in their Bachelor studies that meets the admission requirements of H-BRS as stated in the Examination Rules of the Master's programme in Biomedical Sciences in the most recent version. Any changes in the admission requirements will be promptly shared with the partner university.

To be admitted to the second year of the program at H-BRS, UP students must have successfully completed all the modules in the first year at UP. In addition, UP students have to demonstrate evidence of English language proficiency at the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Standardized exams that are recognized as proof of this level are listed in Annex C and include TOEFL IBT, standard Cambridge exams, IELTS, and the Pearson Test of Academic English. Such English language certificates are valid for two years from their date of issue.

UP requires that students (from both UP and H-BRS) enrolling in the double degree program have obtained a GPA in their Bachelor studies that meets the admission requirements specified every year in the course regulations.

To be admitted to the second year of the program at UP, H-BRS students must have successfully completed all the modules in the first year at H-BRS. In addition, they must provide evidence of adequate proficiency in the Italian language, as demonstrated by submitting a valid official certification corresponding to B2 level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages within two years of its date of issue.

Students from each university meeting the criteria mentioned above will normally be granted admission to the partner university, and the ECTS acquired at the home university will be transferred to the receiving university. However, the final decision about admission lies with the Examination/Program Board of the receiving university.

There is a guaranteed number of two places each in the Department of Natural Sciences at H-BRS and the CLM BMS at UP per academic year. In any session, if there are more eligible students than guaranteed places, H-BRS and UP reserve the right to determine those students to be admitted on the basis of academic performance.

9. **Student Enrolment**

UP students enrolled in the H-BRS MSc double degree programme will enjoy the same status as H-BRS students enrolled in the same programme, for a maximum of two additional semesters beyond the duration of their programme at H-BRS (2 semesters). The total amount of semesters they can be enrolled at H-BRS within the double degree programme therefore is 4 semesters. If by that time the students have not completed the programme, they will have to quit the programme; in case they still wish to pursue the German Master's Degree, they have the option to enrol at H-BRS as regular students. UP double degree students will have the same rights and status as all other students enrolled at UP.

H-BRS students enrolled in the Laurea Magistrale programme will enjoy the same status as UP students enrolled in the same programme, for a maximum of one additional academic year beyond the legal duration of the programme. If by that time the students have not completed the programme, they will have to quit the programme; in case they still wish to pursue the Italian Master's Degree, they have the option to enrol at UP as regular students.

H-BRS double degree students will have the same rights and status as all other students enrolled at H-BRS.

10. **Student Disciplinary and Appeal Procedures**

Students will be subject to the disciplinary and appeals procedures of the awarding institution with which they are enrolled but will also be required to abide by the regulations of the other party during their period of study there.

11. **Course Marketing**

Each party will promote its own programme. For promotional purposes, the following wording may be used by either party in combination, if required, with the official name and logos of the parties:

"Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences, Department of Natural Sciences and the University of Palermo, CLM BMS, have agreed to collaborate in the provision of a programme of study leading to the award of both the MSc from Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences and of the Laurea Magistrale of the University of Palermo. Subject to the terms of this agreement, students will be granted credit transfer for study at the partner institutions in pursuit of these awards."

Any variation on this wording or other use of the name or logo of the partner in promotional material must be agreed by the partner institution.

12. **Tuition Fees**

Students are subject to the tuition fee regulations both of H-BRS and UP. Details of this agreement are given in Annex D. Neither institution has any liability or responsibility to provide any financial support for its students participating in this programme.

RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES

13. Any matters which cannot be resolved by the Responsible Persons (see Annex A) or the Heads of the Department or School in the partner institutions will be referred to the Rector at UP and the President of the H-BRS.

TERMINATION AND REVISION OF THIS MEMORANDUM

14. Any of the signatories to this Memorandum may terminate the collaboration without reason, giving at least one year's notice in writing. Immediately following the decision to terminate, recruitment to the joint programme will cease.

Any of the signatories to this Memorandum may propose revisions to it at any time. Revisions must be agreed in writing by both parties.

PROTECTION OF STUDENTS' INTERESTS

15. The parties agree, so far as is within their separate powers, to maintain the programme of study as approved. The parties will inform each other about any intake of students. Alterations to this programme which become necessary at short notice must be notified to the partner institution, and to any students affected.

CAPACITY

16. Each party declares for itself that it has full capacity to enter into this agreement and each signatory that he/she is an appropriately empowered officer of the institution with authority to act for the party he/she represents.

Signed for and on behalf of UP:

Signed: [redacted]

Name: Prof. Fabrizio Micari

Position: Rector of UP

Place & Date: PALERMO 30/10/2020

Signed for and on behalf of UBRS:

Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
Prof. Dr. Hartmut Ihne
Präsident
Grantham-Allee 20
53757 Sankt Augustin
Postanschrift:
53754 Sankt Augustin

Signed: [redacted]

Name: Prof. Dr. Hartmut Ihne

Position: President of H-BRS

Place & Date: 23.9.20

ANNEX A

Responsible Persons

The actual designated contact persons, responsible for ensuring that the agreement is kept current and report annually to either institution on the cooperation are

for H-BRS:

NAME	POSITION	CONTACT DETAILS
Prof. Dr. Dieter Reinscheid	Member of the Department	+49 2241 865 588 *dieter.reinscheid@h-brs.de*
Susanne Farha	Member of the International Office	+49 2241 865 9763 *susanne.farha@h-brs.de*

for UP

NAME	POSITION	CONTACT DETAILS
Prof. Dr. Claudio Luparello	International Programme Delegate for the CLM BMS	+39 09123897405 *claudio.luparello@unipa.it*
Dr. Valeria Floriano	Member of International programmes office	*+39 09123893832* *valeria.floriano@unipa.it* *programmi.internazionali@unipa.it*

ANNEX B

Special requirements for MSc students wishing to enter the double degree programme of BRS U or UP.

B1. Students wishing to enter the UP Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute (curriculum Biologia della Salute) programme must have successfully completed all courses of year one of the MSc in Biomedical Sciences programme at BRS U. In their final year at UP, the following courses must be completed, which equals a credit transfer of 60 ECTS:

Metodologie Biomolecolari e Bioinformatiche (6 ECTS)
Genetica Umana e Citogenetica Umana (9 ECTS)
C.I. Fisiologia della Nutrizione e Comportamento Alimentare (9 ECTS)
Materia a scelta (6 ECTS)

Tesi sperimentale e prova finale (30 ECTS)

B.2. Students wishing to enter the BRS U MSc in Biomedical Sciences programme must have successfully completed all courses of year one of the Laurea Magistrale in Biologia Molecolare e della Salute (curriculum Biologia della Salute) programme at UP. In their final year at BRS U, the following courses must be completed, which equals a credit transfer of 60 ECTS:

Monitoring of Clinical Trials (8 ECTS)
Structural Biology (credits will be transferred to the module Medical Proteomics) (8 ECTS)
Advanced and Clinical Immunology (8 ECTS)
Elective Course 5 + 6 (6 ECTS)

Master thesis, including colloquium (30 ECTS)

B.3. Full particulars of the units/modules listed in B1 and B2 are given in the Module Handbook maintained by BRS U and UP.

ANNEX C
English language certificates accepted by H-BRS and UP

Degree programmes Analytical Chemistry and Quality Assurance (MSc), Applied Biology (BSc), Biomedical Sciences (MSc), Controlling & Management (MSc), CSR & NGO Management (MBA), Forensic Sciences (BSc), Innovation and Information Management (MSc), International Business (BSc), Marketing (MSc), Materials Science and Sustainability Methods (MSc) and Sustainable Social Policy (BA)

Required CEFR level: B2

- Cambridge English Qualifications: B2 First
- BEC Business English Certificates**: B2 Business Vantage
- IELTS Academic / IELTS Online: ≥ 5.5
- TOEFL iBT / TOEFL iBT Home Edition*: ≥ 72
- PTE Academic / PTE Academic Online: ≥ 59
- Oxford Test of English (OTE): ≥ 111

ANNEX D

Fees arrangements for exchange students *:

C1 **Students entering the Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences programme from the University of Palermo**

C1.1 At the time of this agreement no tuition fees are chargeable at H-BRS for study for one academic year (plus 2 additional semesters if required) at H-BRS.

C.1.2 Students admitted to H-BRS are required to pay a contribution to the social welfare and the students association. The contribution entitles the student to travel for free on the local public transport systems in the Cologne-Bonn-Rhein-Sieg area. Information about the most recent semester contribution fees can be found at: https://www.h-brs.de/en/fees

C2 **Students entering the University of Palermo programme from Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences**

C2.1 At the time of this agreement, no tuition fees are chargeable for study for one academic year at UP.

* This may be subject to change.