



UniSR

Università Vita-Salute
San Raffaele

Academic Regulations

Master's Degree in Biotechnology for Innovative Therapeutics

In force for students enrolling in the academic year 2026-2027

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These Regulations use the masculine form in all circumstances, but this form should be understood as referring inclusively to all persons, irrespective of their gender.

General Part

ART. 1 Admission to the Degree Programme

1.1. Knowledge required for admission

To access the Master's Degree Programme in Biotechnology for Innovative Therapeutics, applicants must hold a Bachelor's Degree in class L-2 (Biotechnologies, DM 270), class 1 (Biotechnologies, DM 509), L-13 (Biological Sciences, DM 270) or class 12 (Biology, DM 509), or an equivalent qualification obtained under previous five-year specifications in Biological Sciences or Biotechnologies, or an equivalent qualification awarded abroad and recognised as suitable.

An English language proficiency level corresponding to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) level B2 is required. To demonstrate this proficiency, it is mandatory to submit a B2 language certificate, which must be provided by the enrolled student by the last day of the first semester of the first year of the programme. Failure to submit it will result in the student's academic career being blocked until the above certificate is submitted.

1.2. Admission Procedures

Candidates' personal preparation will be assessed through an admission test, solely in English. This test consists of understanding and analysing a scientific article, with multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions on topics in Chemistry, Mathematics and Biological Sciences. Candidates will also be required to produce a summary of the article within a limited number of characters and propose a title for it.

Further details are provided in the Call for Applications, which sets out the sustainable annual intake planned locally.

ART. 2 Study Plan

Teaching activity is organised in accordance with the Study Plan set out in the following section "**Course Prospectus**".

2.1. Individual Study Plans

Pursuant to Article 11(4-bis) of Italian Ministerial Decree 270/2004 (individual study plans), the qualification may be obtained through an individual Study Plan that also includes educational activities other than those provided for in the Academic Regulations, provided that it is consistent with the Programme Specifications of the degree programme for the academic year of enrolment.

For this purpose, students must submit requests for approval of individual Study Plans to the Degree Programme Council by the start of the academic year. An individual Study Plan proposed by a student will be assessed by a specific committee appointed by the Chair of the Degree Programme Council and, once approved by the Degree Programme Council, it will be forwarded to the relevant University offices, which will store it and monitor the student's compliance with it for the entire duration of the degree programme.

Individual Study Plans may be amended during the degree programme, subject to approval by the Degree Programme Council in accordance with the timelines in the University Academic Regulations.

ART. 3 Mobility

The Master's Degree Programme, on the basis of inter-institutional agreements or within the framework of European and international programmes, offers the possibility of performing part of their studies at foreign Universities, providing support and guidance through its Administrative Offices and Academic Contacts, as provided for by Article 20 of the University Academic Regulations.

ART. 4 Repeating student

The status of "repeating student" is assigned to students who, by the end of the second year of their programme, have not passed all the exams indicated in the Study Plan by the dates set in the academic year calendar for degree award sessions.

ART. 5 Final Examination

The qualification is awarded following a final examination.

To sit the final examination, students must have obtained all the university credits relating to all the other educational activities.

The final examination of the educational programme consists of carrying out experimental activities relating to the dissertation project, described in the written assignment, presented orally and defended before the committee. It represents a central moment in the learning pathway, as it enables the student to bring together their theoretical knowledge, methodological skills and critical abilities developed during their studies.

The experimental activity, carried out under the supervision of the Supervisor and the Assistant Supervisor, aims to develop advanced and specialised skills required to work independently in scientific research and technological development in the field of healthcare biotechnology.

During the internship period, the candidate must demonstrate solid theoretical and methodological foundations, critical analysis skills and an aptitude for solving complex problems, combining the principles of research with the operational requirements of the technical and production context. The dissertation also provides an opportunity to acquire an in-depth, interdisciplinary view of biomedical biotechnologies, promoting a rigorous and innovative approach.

Any use of artificial intelligence tools in drafting the thesis must be declared in a note placed at the end of the page containing the abstract, specifying in detail the purpose for which these tools were used (for example: revision of English style, statistical analysis, etc.).

The experimental project, lasting no less than 12 months, may be carried out in the campus laboratories or at universities, research institutes or biotechnology companies, in Italy or abroad.

This experience includes ongoing assessment of the work carried out, encouraging discussion of the results and refinement of analytical and methodological skills.

In the final defence, the candidate must demonstrate autonomy, critical thinking and mastery of the scientific skills acquired, presenting the results with precision, methodological rigour and an adequate command of technical and scientific language.

After identifying their scientific area of interest and checking the possibility of carrying out the thesis internship in a lab, the student contacts a UniSR lecturer in order to obtain an assessment of the scientific validity of the proposed thesis topic and to confirm the lecturer's willingness to act as Supervisor. If they have difficulty identifying a Supervisor, students may ask the second-year Tutors for support, in order to be directed to a UniSR lecturer working in a scientific field related to the student's area of interest.

The Supervisor guarantees the suitability of the proposed research, which is carried out under the supervision of the Assistant Supervisor. The student submits the internship proposal to the Office for Practical Activities and Internships in accordance with the procedures and timelines provided. The proposal must be submitted at least two weeks before the date on which the student plans to start the thesis activity, in order to allow the administrative procedures to be completed. In the case of theses carried out in non-European countries, the Student must also personally take care of the documentation required in order to carry out the planned research activity. The list of institutions with which framework agreements have already been signed for thesis internship activities is available from the Office for Practical Activities and Internships and via the Student Intranet.

The Student may officially start the thesis internship only after receiving a positive opinion from the Chair of the Degree Programme regarding the proposal, through an official communication from the Office for Practical Activities and Internships.

This communication is sent after a review of the student's academic record: the student must not have an educational debt of more than 20 ECTS-credits outstanding from the first year.

The student must notify the Office for Practical Activities and Internships of the start of the activity within the first 48 hours. From this date onwards, a minimum period of 12 months in total must elapse before the thesis work can be presented at a degree-awarding session.

In order to ensure that the experimental thesis internship has the greatest educational value, the student will be supported by the following roles, which provide guidance and verify the research activity carried out.

Supervisor

This person is chosen by the student from among the tenured lecturers and researchers, including those on fixed-term contracts, from the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of Vita-Salute San Raffaele University (UniSR). The proposed lecturer may decide whether or not to accept the role of Supervisor. The reasons for any refusal must be clearly explained to the student.

The Supervisor is entrusted with responsibility for the student during the thesis work. They act as a guarantor of the adequacy and originality of the thesis project, of the scientific competence of the assistant supervisor and of the regular conduct of the thesis activity.

They check, together with the student and the Assistant Supervisor, the progress of the experimental project and any adjustments to the overall set-up of the thesis, including the expected timeline.

If they identify a serious delay in the development of the thesis programme, they must promptly inform the second-year Tutors, who will jointly initiate appropriate support actions. Using the quarterly assessment form, the student also notifies the Chair of the Degree Programme and the Office for Practical Activities of any delay.

Assistant Supervisor

This person is proposed by the Supervisor to the Chair of the Degree Programme Council on the basis of their expertise and recognition in their scientific field.

They may be a UniSR lecturer or researcher (postdoc or equivalent), or affiliated with an institution with which UniSR has entered into an agreement.

They are responsible for the research activity of only one student per year during the thesis internship, verifying the learning process of scientific and methodological skills, as well as the development and structure of the experimental project.

If the Assistant Supervisor identifies a serious delay in the development of the thesis programme, they must promptly inform the Supervisor, as well as the Chair of the Degree Programme and the Office for Practical Activities.

They support the student during the drafting phase of the written assignment that is the subject of the thesis.

They make themselves available to meet the Supervisor and the Co-examiner to provide an update on the development of the thesis project.

Co-examiner

This person is chosen by the second-year tutors of the Master's Degree Programme on the basis of their scientific expertise in the field of interest of the thesis and act as the principal cross-examiner during the degree-awarding session.

5.1. Calculation of the degree mark

The following parameters contribute to determining the final mark, expressed out of one hundred and ten:

- the weighted average of the marks obtained in the examinations set out in the Study Plan, where each honours is included in the average by assigning a value of 30.33 to marks of 30 with honours;

- a maximum total of 7 points awarded during the exam session by the Degree Examination Committee on the basis of the quality of the written assignment, its oral presentation and the defence of the dissertation.
- a maximum total of 3 additional points may be awarded for exceptional merits of the candidate, justified as follows:

CATEGORY	DETAILS	ADDITIONAL POINTS
Candidate's particular contribution to the thesis project and international mobility or public engagement events	They have made a substantial contribution to the strategic definition and experimental design of the thesis project and/or are among the authors of a publication resulting from the same work. A period spent in research laboratories abroad for at least six months dedicated to the development of the thesis project is considered an assessment element. Active participation in the organisation of institutional science communication events, including as a speaker, is also viewed favourably.	From 0 to 3 points

By unanimous decision in favour, the Examination Committee may award honours to candidates who obtain a final score of 113 or higher.

By unanimous decision in favour, the Examination Committee may award an "honourable mention" to candidates who obtain a final score of 116 or higher.

5.2. Final Examination Committee

The degree examination Committees are appointed by the Degree Programme Council or by the Chair of the Degree Programme Council.

Pursuant to Article 30 of the University Academic Regulations, the Final Examination Committee is composed of at least 7 members, of whom at least 5 must be tenured lecturers and/or fixed-term researchers. The Supervisor, the Co-examiner and the Assistant Supervisor are members of the Committee.

After the candidate's oral presentation of the thesis, members of the Committee, and in particular the Co-examiner may ask questions and express comments and assessments regarding the contents of the Thesis and its presentation. At the end of the discussion, in a closed session

restricted to its members, the Chair of the Committee asks the Supervisor to express a score, having heard the opinion of the Assistant Supervisor. The proposal is commented on primarily by the Co-examiner and by the Committee itself. The Committee determines the degree mark on the basis of the candidate's *curriculum studiorum* and the assessment of the degree examination.

ART. 6 Recognition of credits

6.1. University and course transfers

The recognition of credits deriving from university or course transfers is the responsibility of the Degree Programme Council, which, in the case of university transfers, uses a specifically appointed Committee that conducts an assessment on the basis of criteria (established annually) and in accordance with the relevant Call for Applications.

Applications to transfer to the Degree Programme are subject to approval from the Degree Programme Council, having heard the opinion of the Committee, which:

- a) assesses the possibility of full or partial recognition of the study career followed up to that point, with validation of some or all of the examinations taken and any credits obtained;
- b) then recognises the ECTS-credits acquired up to the same number of credits for the same Academic Discipline(s) envisaged in the Academic Regulations of the Degree Programme. In all cases where the student transfers between Master's Degree Programmes belonging to the same class, the number of ECTS-credits relating to the same Academic Discipline that has been directly recognised for the student may not be lower than the limit laid down by the applicable legislation.
- c) recognises the credits by assessing the specific case on the basis of educational and cultural affinities.
- d) indicates the year of the degree programme in which the student is to be enrolled;
- e) determines any educational debt to be fulfilled.

6.2. Extracurricular activities

Recognition is approved by the Degree Programme Council according to criteria of strict consistency with the educational objectives and expected learning outcomes of the Degree Programme and in line with the provisions of Italian Ministerial Decree no. 931 of 4 July 2024.

The maximum limit of recognisable credits is 24 ECTS-credits.

6.3. International Mobility

The ECTS-credits acquired following educational activities carried out abroad at partner universities, research institutes or partner biotechnology companies are recognised subject to a thorough assessment of the activities performed.

The recognition procedure takes into account the following elements:

- the nature of the activity, distinguishing between activities with a predominantly educational value and activities with a predominantly experiential value;

- the achievement mark obtained, where envisaged and certified by the host organisation;
- the assessments and certificates issued by the local Lead of the facility where the activity was carried out, including a description of the activities, the number of hours and the methods used to assess achievement.

The final recognition of ECTS-credits is approved by the competent bodies of the degree programme, on the basis of the documentation produced and the consistency of the activities with the educational objectives of the curriculum, in accordance with the procedures laid down in Article 20 of the University Academic Regulations.

6.4. *National Mobility*

ECTS-credits may be earned at other Italian universities on the basis of agreements between the institutions concerned, in accordance with the applicable regulations governing their recognition.

ART. 7 Attendance

The Student is required to attend the teaching activities, that are lecture-based and otherwise, professional training and/or laboratory activities, as envisaged by the Study Plan of the Master's Degree Programme.

Attendance is recorded through online systems and spot checks may be carried out to confirm the student's presence in the lecture room.

The attendance certificate, issued by the Course Lead, is required for the Student to be able to access the course assessment test. Students who have attended at least 50% of the hours envisaged for each core or student-option course automatically obtains the recording of attendance in their student record.

ART. 8 Tutoring model

Pursuant to Article 19 of the University Academic Regulations, the University establishes and ensures a guidance and tutoring service designed to welcome and support students at all stages of their education process.

In particular, the Master's Degree Programme provides two different types of tutoring:

- Information and guidance tutoring: a service for incoming students and those already enrolled. Counselling services, assistance for students with disabilities and SLDs and support for international students are provided to accompany them throughout their educational path and facilitate their academic integration.
- Academic Tutoring: a service aimed at supporting students in overcoming learning-related difficulties encountered during their course of study and in promoting effective participation in courses.

Tutoring activities include at least one meeting per semester for each year of the course with their designated tutor, aimed at gathering student feedback on the progress of teaching activities. In

addition, individual students may contact the year tutor to report any critical issues and receive support. These initiatives of the teaching tutoring service are aimed at ensuring compliance with

The above tutoring roles are appointed annually by resolution of the Faculty Council, following a proposal by the Degree Programme Council.

Special Part

ART. 9 Description of the Educational Programme and of the educational activities

To obtain the qualification, a total of 120 ECTS-credits must be acquired.

The Degree Programme is delivered in blended mode; therefore, more than one third, but no more than two thirds, of the educational activities are delivered online, according to the details indicated in the course schedules for each educational activity.

Each ECTS-credit corresponds to 25 hours of teaching activity, including the individual study required to complete the educational activity. For each type of educational activity, details are provided below of the ratio between hours of teaching activity and ECTS-credits:

- Core educational activities: each ECTS-credit corresponds to 8 hours of lecture-based and interactive teaching activity;
- Similar and supplementary educational activities: each ECTS-credit corresponds to 8 hours of lecture-based and interactive teaching activity;
- Student-option educational activities: each ECTS-credit corresponds to 9.5 hours of lecture-based and interactive teaching activity;
- Other educational activities: each ECTS-credit corresponds to 8 hours of lecture-based teaching activity;
- Final examination: the final examination envisages 25 hours of individual study.

The portion dedicated to individual study is provided in order to complete the 25 hours allocated to each credit.

As provided for by the Faculty Regulations, educational activities are delivered as follows:

Lecture-based teaching

Lecture

A lecture is a traditional teaching method in which the lecturer presents topics and content, guiding students' learning through explanations, examples and further insights. Lectures are mainly used to convey theoretical knowledge in a clear and organised way, making it possible to introduce new topics and provide students with a shared foundation.

Seminar

A seminar is a teaching activity delivered by one or more speakers, invited by the person responsible for the educational activity on the basis of specific expertise, which makes it possible to explore in greater depth aspects consistent with what is set out in the educational curriculum.

Interactive teaching

Practical session

Practical sessions are aimed at applying, analysing in greater depth and operationally verifying the theoretical contents covered in the teaching activities, using case analyses, problem-solving, guided activities or methodological discussions with the active involvement of students.

Thesis internship

The thesis internship is an educational activity carried out under the guidance of a supervisor and aimed at preparing for the final assessment through study, research or experimentation activities at University facilities or partner institutions.

Internship/Placement

Periods of training at companies, private bodies or public bodies are also permitted among the student's extra-curricular activities. No curricular university credits will be awarded for these activities.

ART. 10 Specific provisions relating to academic planning

Pursuant to Article 21 of the University Academic Regulations, in each academic year, three sessions are organised for sitting the final examinations. The degree programme calendar, approved annually by the Degree Programme Council, defines the three graduation sessions and is shared at the start of the academic year with degree programme students via the Student Intranet and Student Noticeboard. Graduating students must check and comply with all deadlines and administrative requirements in order to obtain the qualification in the session available to them.

The Italian version of this Regulations is the only legal means of communication of the relative contents and in case of dispute, the Italian version shall prevail.