Università della Svizzera italiana

Faculty of Biomedical Sciences

Sectoral study regulations for the Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging (MOTIA)[1]

Dated 11.06.2026 (as of 11.06.2026)

The Academic Senate having regard to the Cantonal Law (LSU) of October 3, 1995 (Art. 11); the Statute of the Università della Svizzera italiana of March 20, 2020; the General Regulations for Admission and Matriculation at the Università della Svizzera italiana of April 14, 2000,

decrees:

Chapter I – General provisions[2]

Art. 1 Purpose

1 These sectoral regulations govern the additional admission requirements, assessment and grading procedures for the award of the Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging (hereinafter "MOTIA"). The MOTIA programme is organised by the Università della Svizzera italiana, Faculty of Biomedical Sciences (hereinafter the "Faculty"), the institutes affiliated with it and their respective foundations, namely the Institute of Oncology Research (IOR) and the Institute for Research in Biomedicine (IRB), as well as the Institute for Translational Research (IRT).

2 In addition to these sectoral regulations and the payment of the relevant fees, the *General regulations for admission and matriculation of the Università della Svizzera italiana* also apply to the conditions for admission to the MOTIA.

3 For student-athletes who meet the requirements, the special conditions established by the Università della Svizzera italiana's "Elite Sport" programme apply.

Art. 2 Qualifications

1 The Faculty of Biomedical Sciences awards the degree of Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging.

2 All courses attended and examinations passed are recorded separately in official documents (Transcript, Exam Certificate) together with the corresponding grades and number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) points acquired.

[1] This document has been written in Italian. This English translation has been provided for information purposes only and is not legally binding. The Italian version shall prevail over the English translation

[2] The masculine terms used in these Regulations always refer to their feminine counterparts as well.

Art. 3 ECTS

1 The Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging is considered a specialized degree and is based on the ECTS system, calculated based on the Bologna Directive, according to which one credit point corresponds to 25-30 study hours.

2 The MOTIA programme accrues a total of 120 ECTS points.

3 The courses and respective exams are in English.

Art. 4 Bodies

1 The bodies responsible for organizing training and exams are:

a. The MOTIA Programme Director;

b. The Scientific Committee;

c. The Advisory Board.

Art. 5 Duties of the Programme Director

1 The Programme Director is selected from among the full professors and associate professors of the Faculty, and the Group Leaders of the IRT, IRB and IOR who have recognized teaching experience. The Programme Director is appointed by the Faculty Council.

2 The Programme Director performs the following duties:

a. coordinating the organisation of the Master's programme and ensuring its proper delivery;

b. monitoring the quality of teaching;

c. acting as the point of reference for academic matters relating to the programme.

Art. 6 Duties of the Scientific Committee

1 The Scientific Committee is composed of six members selected from among the full professors, associate professors and assistant professors of the Faculty, and the Group Leaders of the IRT, IRB and IOR who have recognized teaching experience. The Scientific Committee is appointed by the Faculty Council.

2 The Scientific Committee is responsible for the management and coordination of the MOTIA programme as a whole.

3 Scientific and educational responsibility for MOTIA is also entrusted to the Scientific Committee.

4 The Scientific Committee performs the following duties:

a. agreeing on and defining the strategy of the MOTIA programme, including its promotion strategy;

b. agreeing on and defining the functioning of the MOTIA programme;

c. agreeing on and defining the courses that make up the MOTIA programme;

d. ensuring compliance with these Regulations.

Art. 7 Composition and duties of the Advisory Board

1 The Advisory Board is composed of the Dean of the Faculty, the MOTIA Programme Director, the Director of the IRB, the Director of the IOR, the Director of the IRT, the Bios+ Administrative Advisor, and the Faculty Manager.

2 The Advisory Board has the following duties:

a. intervening and deciding in the event of disagreement within the Scientific Committee;

b. providing a purely advisory opinion to the Faculty Council on a proposal to replace the Programme Director;

c. ensuring coordination with the affiliated institutes involved.

Art. 8
Specific duties

1 The Vice-Dean for Education for the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences supervises the application of these Regulations in all matters relating to the organization and conduct of examinations.

Chapter II – Admission to the Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging

Art. 9
Admission requirements

1 Admission to the MOTIA programme is open to applicants who meet the requirements set out in the *General regulations for admission and matriculation at the Università della Svizzera italiana*, as well as, cumulatively, the requirements set out in these Regulations.

2 Admission to the MOTIA requires a Bachelor's degree (at least 180 ECTS) from a Swiss university or other Swiss academic institution, or a Bachelor's degree (or equivalent qualification worth 180 ECTS) from a foreign university or other equivalent foreign academic institution recognized or accredited in the country of origin. The degree must be obtained in a field related to MOTIA. The list of eligible disciplines is available on the MOTIA programme website.

3 In addition to the degree (see Art. 9, para. 2), admission requirements include the evaluation of the following elements:

a. The transcript demonstrating the consistency and adequacy of the candidate's academic profile with respect to the objectives and content of the MOTIA;

b. The grades on the presented Bachelor's degree, which reflect previous academic performance, with particular attention to subjects relevant to the MOTIA.

c. A letter of motivation expressing the candidate's motivation.

d. Adequate knowledge of the language of instruction with reference to the language requirements on the programme’s website.

e. The MOTIA Programme Director reserves the right to request an interview with candidates for further information and assessment.

4 The final admission decision lies with the MOTIA Scientific Committee, which decides on the basis of an overall assessment of the elements listed above. The Scientific Committee also reserves the right to assign a specific weighting to each element for the purpose of establishing a ranking, as may be specified on the MOTIA programme website.

5 Studies in the MOTIA programme may begin only in the autumn semester.

Chapter III – Programme structure

Art. 10
General structure and award of the degree

1 The general structure of the MOTIA includes theoretical courses, practical courses, any additional educational activities, and the completion and writing of a Master’s thesis.

2 The award of the Master's degree in in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging is subject to:

a. making up any shortfall in ECTS credits;

b. passing all examinations related to the courses included in the study plan. In the event of a transfer from another university, the MOTIA Scientific Committee determines the requirements for obtaining the Master of Science in Oncology, Translational Immunology and Aging, provided that

		enrolment at USI for at least two semesters and the acquisition of at least 60 ECTS credits at USI are required; c. passing the First Lab Experience course, of 15 ECTS credits; d. successfully defending a Master's thesis of 60 ECTS credits.
	3	The order in which courses are to be attended is defined by the study plan of the MOTIA.
Art. 11 Course attendance	1	Depending on the teaching methods and the requirements of the MOTIA programme, course descriptions may indicate compulsory attendance. They may also indicate additional study requirements for those who do not attend the course regularly.
	2	Attendance must be at least 80%.
Art. 12 First Lab Experience	1	The First Lab Experience is a practical course in which students learn the fundamental concepts of laboratory work as well as advanced techniques for addressing a scientific question.
	2	The First Lab Experience is completed at the IRB, IOR, IRT or Euler institute (EUL) (for a total of 15 ECTS credits).
	3	The First Lab Experience must be approved by the MOTIA Scientific Committee.
	4	Students who have not obtained at least 22 ECTS credits among those required in the first year of the MOTIA programme, as provided for in Art. 10 para. 1, may not take part in the First Lab Experience.
Art. 13 Master's thesis: nature and purpose	1	The Master's thesis consists of a scientific paper summarising the research work carried out.
	2	The Master's thesis is completed under the supervision of the Thesis Director, who acts as supervisor. This role may be held by a full professor, associate professor or assistant professor of the Faculty, or a Group Leader of IRT, IRB or IOR.
	3	The thesis addresses a topic agreed upon by the student and the Thesis Director and endorsed by the Scientific Committee.
	4	The purpose of the Master's thesis is to present scientific research in a disciplinary field covered by MOTIA and it must demonstrate appropriate scientific rigour and originality.
	5	The Master's thesis is written in accordance with scientific standards (abstract, introduction, results, discussion, materials and methods) and in the official language of the Master's programme, namely English.
Art. 14 Master's thesis: requirements	1	The title of the Master's thesis may be communicated to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences after the student has obtained at least 39 ECTS credits required in the first year of the MOTIA programme.
	2	The title of the Master's thesis must be communicated to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences at least six months before submission of the thesis and may be refined, with the supervisor's consent, up to one month before the defence.
	3	The Master's thesis may be submitted only after any shortfall in ECTS credits has been made up and the study plan has been successfully completed.
	4	The Master's thesis must be submitted no later than by the end of the eighth semester following enrolment in the MOTIA programme.

	5 Failure to comply with these deadlines results in exclusion from the MOTIA programme and the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.
Art. 15 Master's thesis: assessment	6 The Master's thesis is assessed by a designated committee composed of the Thesis Director, an optional co-supervisor, and a lecturer (excluding doctoral students) or senior assistant (postdoctoral researcher) acting as co-examiner. The co-examiner is proposed by the Thesis Director and confirmed by the MOTIA Programme Director. 7 The committee that does not approve a Master's thesis may request the student to: a. submit a proposal for a different research topic and a different supervisor within one month of the request. In this case, the student has 12 months to submit the new thesis. A request to submit a different topic and supervisor may be made only once; b. revise the Master's thesis taking account of the comments made. In this case, the student has six months to submit the revised thesis. 8 A candidate who fails at the second attempt is excluded from the MOTIA programme and from the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.

Chapter IV – Provisions concerning examinations

Art. 16 Examination requirements and deadlines	9 First-year examinations must be passed no later than by the end of the fourth semester. In addition, second-year examinations and examinations relating to courses that may be attended freely during the first or second year must be passed no later than by the end of the sixth semester. The deadlines run from the date of enrolment. Failure to comply with these deadlines results in exclusion from the MOTIA programme and the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. 10 Without prejudice to personalized study plans in the event of transfer from another university, students must have obtained at least 39 ECTS credits among those required in the first year of the MOTIA programme in order to be eligible to take second-year examinations.
Art. 17 Examinations	1 Examinations cover the subjects included in the MOTIA study plan. 2 Examinations are assessments of candidates' knowledge and skills. 3 The assessment of acquired knowledge and skills is organized by the lecturer responsible for each course through an examination based on the latest edition of the course. Any duly justified exceptions to this principle are subject to the decision of the MOTIA Programme Director. Where it is no longer possible to take an examination relating to previous editions of courses, the MOTIA Programme Director defines the courses to be attended and the corresponding examinations to be taken in order to complete the programme of study. 4 Each lecturer must submit the planned assessment arrangements to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and ensure that they comply with these Regulations. 5 The examiners are the lecturers responsible for the respective courses. If the lecturer responsible for the course is unable to act as examiner, he/she appoints a replacement. For written examinations, the examiner may be replaced by one or more assistants or lecturers from the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. In oral examinations, at least one assistant or another

	lecturer of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences must be present in addition to the examiner.
Art. 18 Examination sessions	1 There are two exam sessions for each course: a. an ordinary or intermediate session. b. a supplementary (or recovery) session. 2 An ordinary session is held at the end of each semester (winter session and summer session). A retake session is held before the beginning of the autumn semester (autumn session). The ordinary session may be replaced by an intermediate session. 3 The regular and intermediate sessions comprise the examinations for courses taught during the current semester. The retake session comprises all examinations for which candidates are registered.
Art. 19 Exam registration	1 A student may register for examinations if they are duly enrolled in the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, have paid the fees in accordance with the General regulations for admission and matriculation at USI, have completed the course “Academic and personal integrity: principles and values of USI”, and meet the requirements set out in these Regulations. 2 The registration request must be submitted to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences within the deadlines and in the form specified by the Student Administration. 3 The Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences is responsible for verifying the validity of the request and notifying the student of any impediments. Responsibility for complying with the deadlines set out in both the applicable study plan and these Regulations rests with the student. 4 If a candidate has registered for, been admitted to, or taken an examination without being entitled to do so, the examination is declared void by the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences when the grade is recorded. 5 Registration for examinations is subject to completion of the Academic Integrity test aimed at preventing misconduct within the meaning of these Regulations, in accordance with the procedures communicated by the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.
Art. 20 Withdrawal from examinations	1 A student is entitled to withdraw from an examination up to 5 days (including holidays) before the date scheduled for that examination. The notification must be made in writing (via online, email or post) and addressed to the Student Administration of the relevant faculty. If notification is by post, the date is that of the postmark, otherwise the date of the electronic transmission. In this case, the enrolment is cancelled and treated as if it had never been made. 2 Should any examinations have been taken before the notification of withdrawal, the grades obtained in that session count, regardless of the result (positive or negative). 3 A student who fails to attend an examination or leaves the hall while the examination is in progress without a valid reason, is considered to have failed that examination. This examination is counted towards the maximum number of attempts permitted for passing the exam, as described in the present Regulations. 4 Any justification may be considered only if submitted by the student in writing to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences within ten

	days (including public holidays) of the examination and based on serious, documented grounds for absence (in particular, serious health problems, a serious impediment, or the illness or death of a close relative). The Vice-Dean for Education of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences may request further verification of the justification or the production of a medical certificate.
Art. 21 Format of examinations and language	1 Examinations may be in written and/or oral format. 2 It is the responsibility of the responsible lecturer of each course to define the format of their examination and notify both the students and the Student Administration of the Faculty. 3 The duration of an examination must be congruent with the specific course load. 4 Exams are held in English.
Art. 22 Accreditation (recognition of examinations)	1 Lecturers may assess students' skills and preparation during the course through individual or group interim assessments, which may contribute a specified percentage to the final grade. 2 At the beginning of the course, lecturers must specify to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and to the students the elements that make up the overall assessment. 3 Where an examination consists of the submission of one or more written papers, the lecturer and/or the MOTIA Programme Director communicates the official submission date or dates to the Student Administration of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and to the students.
Art. 23 Grading system	1 Assessment is either binary (pass/fail) or numerical. Under the numerical system, grades are awarded on a scale from 1 to 10 in increments of 0.5; grades below 6 are considered insufficient. Insufficient grades may be repeated or validated in accordance with these Regulations. 2 Assessments for course examinations are numerical. Assessment of the First Lab Experience course is binary. 3 An examination or written assignment that is not accepted or is graded below 6 must be repeated. When examinations or written assignments are repeated, the most recent assessment counts. 4 The ECTS credits of a course are acquired when the examination is passed with a sufficient or validated grade. With the binary system, a pass is required.
Art. 24 Final grade	1 The final grade assigned to a degree that the faculty awards at the end of the MOTIA programme is calculated as the weighted average of all the grades obtained for examinations of courses and of the Master's thesis final grade. The average is weighted according to ECTS points and rounded up to the first decimal digit. 2 The transcript for the MOTIA states the following: a. summa cum laude for a final average mark higher than 9. b. magna cum laude for a final average mark of between 8 and 9 (8 and 9 included). c. cum laude for a final average mark of between 7 and 8 (7 and 8 excluded). d. legitim for a final average mark of between 6 and 7 (6 and 7 included).

Art. 25 Repeating examinations and validating grades	1	A student who fails an examination may retake it a maximum of two times. If the student fails the third attempt, he or she will be excluded from the MOTIA programme and from the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.
	2	Candidates cannot retake an examination or an intermediate assessment, if the overall grade awarded is sufficient or the final grade of the course has been ratified.
	3	It is the responsibility of the lecturer responsible for the course to establish the assessment procedures for the examination. Thus, the responsible lecturer determines whether passing a course requires obtaining a sufficient grade in all partial assessments of the course, in specific assessments only, or if it counts the average.
	4	Where the assessment consists of several elements and the lecturer has not specified otherwise, the course is considered passed if the student obtains an overall sufficient grade calculated as the weighted average of the partial assessments.
	5	If a candidate is required to obtain a sufficient grade in all elements making up the final course grade but receives an insufficient grade in one or more of them, the candidate must repeat all assessments making up the grade, unless the lecturer specifies otherwise.
	6	Individual or group mid-term assessments are valid for a single academic year, unless otherwise specified by the lecturer.
	7	The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article are not applicable to ECTS shortfalls.
Art. 26 Access to written exam papers		The Faculty ensures that students may inspect the documentation related to their examinations for up to 30 days after notification of the grade.
Art. 27 Misconduct		If, during an examination, there is evidence that a candidate has used unauthorized means, the examiners and/or examination assistants must submit a written report to the Vice-Dean for Education of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, who may initiate an investigation.
Art. 28 Disciplinary measures	1	The faculty to which the student belongs may apply sanctions, through the disciplinary measures set out below in paragraph 2, on the following instances of student misconduct: a. insubordination and breaches of the University's internal order. This is without prejudice to the competence of the USI Executive Board to adopt disciplinary measures and actions in case of violation of the Code of Ethics, in accordance with the procedures set out in I implementing Regulation the Code of Ethics; b. cheating and the use of unauthorised means during an examination; c. plagiarism in the process of preparing of a written paper (term paper, internship or project report, final paper, Master's thesis, etc.); in particular, a student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she submits a written work containing one or more portions copied or closely paraphrased from an unidentified original, without acknowledging the source or formally quoting or when he or she passes of and/or claims research findings obtained or published by third parties as their own.
	2	In all the cases covered under the first paragraph (1) of this article, the Dean, once an investigation by the Vice-Dean for Education for the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, and the Dean has been completed and in full respect of

	the student's right to be heard, may deliver the following sanctions (also cumulatively), taking into account the degree of responsibility of the student and the gravity of the offence: a. the student is admonished (written reprimand). b. the offending examination or term paper is declared void; in this case the examination or term paper is registered with a '1' grade, the lowest fail result. If the paper is an integral part of an examination, the entire exam will be declared void. c. the student is suspended for one or more examination sessions; class attendance being nonetheless permitted. d. the student is denied the right to acquire any ECTS credits based on term papers for the duration of one or more semester(s); e. the student is suspended for one or more semester(s) and consequently prevented from sitting any examinations relating to the courses held during that period. f. all the examinations taken by the student during the session in which they were caught cheating are annulled; therefore, all such examinations are assigned the minimum grade ('1') and recorded as failed. 3 This does not, as indicated in the USI Statute, rule out the exercise of authority by other official university bodies, who may decide to expel the student or to inform other authorities of the events. 4 The student has the right to appeal against the Dean's decision by submitting his/her grievance to the Faculty's Complaints Commission.
Art. 29 Ex-matriculation request	The student must inform the Student Administration of the Faculty to withdraw from their studies in writing. The notification can be submitted within the time limits established in the General regulations for admission and matriculation of the Università della Svizzera italiana.

Chapter V – Special provisions

Art. 30 Recognition of previous academic studies	1 Only the examinations passed during previous academic studies taken no longer than ten years prior to the start of the new study semester are recognized. 2 If the student had been assigned a definitive fail in any faculty of USI, or in another Swiss or foreign university or institute of higher education, all the results previously achieved in the study programme in which the student has been assigned a definitive fail, including those that the student passed, are not taken into consideration for the curriculum of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. 3 The student may enrol during one of the two years of the Master's program, depending on the number of ECTS credits to be acquired to complete the study program. The student follows the study plan for the year in which he or she was admitted.
Art. 31 Application for equivalence	1 Students may apply for equivalence for the examinations passed at another university or institute of higher education prior or after matriculation, but at the latest within one semester from the start of the MOTIA program. The application must include the following documents: a. exam certificate (including the name of the course(s) passed, the grades achieved, ECTS credits awarded and the date that the exam(s) was/were passed).

b. course descriptions.

c. ex-matriculation certificate (in the case of transfer from another university).

2 Study achievements for which equivalence is recognized are validated in ECTS credits, together with any corresponding grades.

3 The studies and employment undertaken that have already contributed to the awarding of a diploma cannot be acknowledged for the purposes of the awarding of a new diploma.

4 The MOTIA Programme Director may request the submission of further original documents at any time.

Art. 32
Re-admission

1 A student that withdraws from his or her studies may submit a new enrolment application to the same faculty according to the methods established in the General regulations for admission and matriculation of the Università della Svizzera italiana. Depending on the circumstances, the Director of the MOTIA will assess which exams previously passed can be accredited.

2 The student may enrol during one of the two years of the MOTIA program, depending on the number of ECTS credits to be acquired to complete the study program. The student follows the study plan for the year in which they have been readmitted.

Art. 33
Leave of absence

1 A student may be granted a leave of absence on grounds of maternity, military or civil service, serious illness or other circumstances that, in the opinion of the Dean of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences, create significant difficulties for the regular continuation of studies. A leave of absence may not exceed two semesters. Any exceptions are subject to the authorisation of the Dean of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.

2 Students on leave remain enrolled at the University by paying a reduced administrative fee, in accordance with the General regulations for admission and matriculation of the Università della Svizzera italiana, and retain the benefits connected with student status though excluded from attending classes or any other degree-related activity.

3 A student who is on a leave of absence has no right to take examinations or hand in the Master's thesis. Any exceptions are subject to the authorisation of the Dean of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.

4 A student who is on leave during the autumn semester may not enrol for the winter examination session. A student who is on leave during the spring semester may not enrol for the summer examination session. Renewal of enrolment for the following autumn semester entitles the student to sit examinations in the autumn session for the courses attended prior to the leave of absence.

5 Students absent on grounds of maternity, military or civil service, or for grave and medically justified illness, are nonetheless allowed to sit examinations on course units that they have previously attended.

Art. 34
Grievances and appeals

1 Any decision that affects a student's rights and expectations, including examination results, must be notified in writing.

2 The student may lodge a complaint against such decisions with the Complaints Committee of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences. The complaint has suspensive effect

3 Members of the Complaints Committee must recuse themselves, in particular where they have previously been involved in the proceedings or have a personal interest or bias in the matter.

	4	The student may appeal against the decision of the Complaints Commission by lodging a formal complaint to the Cantonal Administrative Court, Via Pretorio 16, 6901 Lugano, pursuant to the Statute of the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI). The decisions of the Complaints Commission are enforceable immediately.
	5	Formal complaints and appeals must be filed within 30 days of receipt of the notification and must be clearly substantiated in writing. The procedure is analogous to the administrative procedure of the Canton of Ticino (LPAmm). For internal appeals in front of the Complaints Commission, judicial recess periods provided for under the LPAmm do not apply.
Art. 35 Exceptions	1	In exceptional cases, upon written and reasoned request by the student, the Dean may derogate from these Regulations, but only in the student's favour.
	2	This is without prejudice to the provisions of these Regulations which, by their nature, cannot be waived (in particular, regarding the maximum number of attempts to pass an exam).
Art. 36 Amendments	1	The present Regulations or single provisions thereof may be amended by the relevant Faculty Councils by the absolute majority of its members. Each amendment proposal must then be approved by the Academic Senate of the Università della Svizzera italiana.
	2	Each amendment proposal must be put on the agenda in advance and communicated to the members at least 10 days before the meeting of the Faculty Council.
Art. 38 Validity	1	The present Regulations come into force on 11.06.2026. They apply in their entirety to all students enrolled from the 2027/2028 academic year onwards.