

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

FUNDAMENTAL DECISIONS

Objectives:

- What are the programme's goals – for the participating universities?
- What are the programme's goals – for the students?

Undergraduate versus Post-graduate:

- Does the programme fit to the Bologna criteria of either 3+2 or 4+1?
- Is the Joint Degree explicitly defined as undergraduate or post-graduate?
- Are all modules clearly allocated to undergraduate or post-graduate level?
 - Do all partners treat 4th year modules as undergraduate?
 - Do all partners treat 4th year modules as post-graduate?
 - Do partners accept 4th year modules as undergraduate and post-graduate simultaneously?

Joint or Double Degrees?

Joint Degree

- Will a joint degree be awarded – with the logos and signatures of all rectors on the diploma?
- Is this joint degree an official degree in all partner universities' countries?
- Is this joint degree an official degree in any country?
- Is this joint degree recognised outside of the partner universities' countries?
- Is there a central register of students following the programme?
- If yes, have potential problems concerning data protection been addressed and solved?
- Which institution is responsible for student guidance and counselling – different in different phases of the programme?
- To which institution does the student appeal against academic decisions and procedural irregularities?

Double Degree

- Are both degrees legally recognised in the partner universities' countries?
- Is there a central register of students following the programme?
- Are ECTS rules for the transfer of credits and marks fully applied?
- Does the Diploma Supplement clearly point out that the degree was earned within a double degree programme?
- Have all participating universities produced a list of requirements students need to fulfil for their degree?
- Have they confirmed that this list is complete?

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“Theoretical” versus “Professional”:

- Is the partner universities' profile “theoretical” & “research orientated” or “professional” & “applied”?
- Is the programme's focus on “theoretical” & “research orientated” or “professional” & “applied” clearly defined?
 - Are internships and/or company projects mandatory?
 - Are research papers and/or a “Master Thesis” mandatory?
- Do the partner universities' profiles and the programme's focus fit?

“Stand-alone” or “Integrated”:

- Are all modules taught to programme participants only (“stand-alone”) or do programme participants share lectures with students from other programmes (“integrated”)?
- Is this the same in all participating universities?
- Is this coherent with the programme's goals?

Organisation and Commitment:

- Is one university the consortium leader and co-ordinating institution?
- Are all institutions fully committed to the programme?
 - Have your colleagues in other universities the full support of the rector's and the dean's office?
 - Is the partner university's administration able to handle the programme (communication in English)?
 - Is the partner institution's commitment stated in a letter of commitment?
 - Is the programme organisation in each partner university shared by a wider group of staff or concentrated on a minority of dedicated staff?
 - Is the programme jeopardised at the partner institution in case of staff absences?
 - Is the programme jeopardised at the partner university if key players within the institution were to change posts?
- Are responsibilities and tasks defined clearly?
- Are regular meetings during the programme dissemination planned and funded?
- Are student residence halls or is other suitable accommodation available at all partner universities? Is the application process for the programme's students arranged for?

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Financial Issues:

- Are Socrates agreements applicable?
 - How is the balance of student flows achieved?
 - Are undergraduate and post-graduate flows treated differently?
- Are tuition swap agreements suitable?
 - How is the balance of students flows achieved?
 - Are there provisions for non-balanced flows?
 - Are undergraduate and post-graduate flows treated differently?
- Otherwise: does the consortium charge tuition fees?
 - Which institution charges how much?
 - Does one institution collect the fees on behalf of all participants or does each university charge students individually?
 - Are the rules for re-distribution of the revenues to the partner universities clearly defined?
 - Are there clear arrangements for the payment of teacher mobility?
 - Are there clear financial arrangements for partner universities' teachers and administrators participating in joint assessments (examinations, supervision of theses)?
 - Are there clear rules about how the costs of joint or co-ordinated marketing and advertising activities are shared?
 - How much does the consortium leader (if there is one) receive for the administrative costs?

Language Diversity:

- Is the programme delivered in one language only?
 - How is the students' ability of speaking this language tested?
 - Are all accepted tests clearly listed?
 - Is an additional introduction into the host university's language offered?
 - Is it mandatory for joint and double degree students?
- Is the programme delivered in different languages?
 - What are the language requirements for enrolment?
 - Are students obliged to demonstrate their proficiency of the host university's teaching language before they move? How?
 - Are these requirements clearly stated in the cooperation agreement?

Academic Calendars:

- Are differences between academic calendars an obstacle to student mobility (in particular examination periods in January/February)?
- Can these differences be used for teacher mobility (for example German colleagues teaching abroad in September and February/March)?

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Combining strengths or uniformity:

- Do all universities teach the same core modules?
 - Is the teacher expertise available in all universities?
 - What control mechanism is installed in order to guarantee that the learning objectives, contents and methodology are the same?
 - What control mechanisms are installed in order to guarantee that the same learning results are expressed with the same marks across the consortium?
- Does each university teach different modules?
 - Is the sequence in which the modules have to be taken given, or subject to the students' decisions?
 - Does this sequence contribute to the learning success?
 - Are the syllabi of the modules co-ordinated and arranged in a set way, so that they build on each other or are they be chosen in a "à la carte" fashion?
 - Are special strengths (specialisations) of universities embodied in the programme?
- Is it ensured that all students have the opportunity to study in at least two different countries?

Recognition: How to Apply ECTS

- Do all universities describe learning outcomes and competences rather than describing teaching contents?
- Is there a consortium-wide procedure about how to deal with structures where modules comprise different ECTS credits (if applicable)?
 - Is it accepted consortium-wide to transfer modules even though the ECTS credits differ – for example to transfer a 4-credits-module into a 5-credits module, probably with an additional workload of 30 hours assigned to the student?
 - Is it acceptable to transfer modules with different ECTS credits as long as the overall workload is transferred correctly – for example to transfer two modules with 7.5 ECTS credits as three modules with 5 ECTS credits each?
- Are ECTS marks applied at each of the partner university? Are they calculated correctly?

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QUALITY ASSURANCE:

Accreditation of the Programme

- Are all partners fully and officially accredited as institution of higher education in their country?
- Are their curricula which deliver parts to the JDD programme officially accredited in the partner's country by a national accreditation agency which applies the ENQA standards and guidelines?
- Are the partners additionally accredited by international accreditation agencies (e.g. AACSB, AMBA, EMFD/EQUIS and EMFD/EPAS)?
- In case of double degree programmes, is the programme accredited in both countries?
- In case of a joint degree, is a cross-border accreditation by one agency possible and recognised by the national authorities? Have the results of the ENQA project TEEP II taken into consideration?
- To which extent have professional, statutory and regulatory bodies been involved (for example: certified accountants)?
- Have potential employers been consulted in the programme development?

Eligibility of Students

- Are access criteria (minimum marks, language requirements, tests, letter of motivation, interviews, professional work experience) clearly defined?
- Are access criteria the same at each partner university or at least comparable?

Assessment Organisation

- Are the procedures on how assessments are arranged at the partner universities clear?
- Have partners come to a coherent policy concerning re-sits (number, point of time, form)?
- Is it possible for the students to re-sit examinations even though they have already moved to the (next) partner university?
- Have provisions been established concerning fraud and plagiarism?
- If the consortium has come to a clear and coherent set of rules, do they conform with each partner institution's national law?
- Are there provisions for "joint" assessments (academics of partner universities as examiners and members of the board of examiners)?
- Are there coherent rules concerning students' breaks due to illness, pregnancy, parental leave, long-term internships and gainful employment?

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Infrastructure for Student Mobility

- Are the standards in class room equipment, computer facilities, libraries, etc. met by each partner institution?
- Is the infrastructure for administering student exchange available?
- Are enough sources for academic guidance and counselling of students available, especially for incoming international students?
- Have students been adequately prepared for their stay abroad – including language training and cross-cultural communication?

Monitoring and Evaluating the Programme

- Are the internal quality assurance systems of the partners comparable?
- Is there a joint monitoring group?
- Are students, lecturers, and administrators regularly asked about programme's outcomes and the implications for the rest of the institutions?
- Is an information system available which covers student progression and success rates, the employability of the students, and students' satisfaction with the programme?
- Is an information system established which allows students to feed their experience in the host institution back to the home university?
- Is there a regular feedback from employers and labour market representatives?
- Are teachers evaluated regularly?
- Does teachers' evaluation include their experience and performance in cross-cultural communication, and teaching a culturally diverse student group?
- Are teachers in the programme given opportunities to develop and extend their international teaching capacity, for example by privileged access to language courses and Socrates Teacher Mobility?
- Are lecturers and programme directors at each partner university prepared to accept international sources published in languages other than their own?
- Have all partner universities the possibility to remove teachers with low performance scores?

Dear user of this check list:

A check list dealing with such a complex topic as the development of joint or double degree (JDD) programmes can never be complete and perfect. To our knowledge, this CIDD list was the first to be published. It aims at helping all colleagues who are in the process of negotiating and developing JDD programmes – or even more general – agreements on international student exchange.

Please feed us back with your comments. Was this check list useful? How can we improve it? Please write or call us – we need your experience to make it better.

Moreover: you wish to exchange your ideas and experience in joint curriculum development, look for more exchange, joint and double degree opportunities?

Consider your institutions' membership in CIDD. Please, do not hesitate and contact us at: