



Joint and Double Degrees
within the
European Higher Education Area
Towards Further Internationalisation of Business Degrees

by

Ulrich Schüle

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Table of Contents

	Page
List of Boxes	II
1 Introduction	1
2 Definition of Joint and Double Degrees (JDD)	2
3 JDD Programmes in the Pre-Bologna Context	4
3.1 Goals and Principles	4
3.2 Programme Structure	6
3.3 Good Practice and Drawbacks	6
4 JDD Programmes since the Implementation of Bologna Structures	10
4.1 Fundamental decisions	11
4.1.1 Undergraduate versus Postgraduate	11
4.1.2 “Theoretical” versus “Professional”	13
4.1.3 “Stand-alone” or “Integrated“ Programme?	14
4.1.4 Joint or Double Degrees?	15
4.1.5 Language Diversity?	19
4.1.6 Financial Issues	21
4.2 Curriculum Development	23
4.2.1 Combining Strengths or Uniformity?	23
4.2.2 Recognition: How to Apply ECTS?	27
4.2.3 Academic Calendars: An Obstacle to Integration?	30
4.3 Quality Assurance	31
4.3.1 Accreditation of the Programme	32
4.3.2 Eligibility: Which Students?	34
4.3.3 Infrastructure for Student Mobility	35
4.3.4 Programme and Assessment Organisation	35
4.3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation	36
5 Conclusion	38
References	40
Appendix: A Check-list	42

List of Boxes

	Page
1 Pre-Bologna Structure: The Example of FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences	7
2 Examples of JDD Master Consortia in Business	12
3 Double Degree Structure with Two Universities Requiring more than Half of the Credits Earned at Their Institution	17
4 Diploma Supplement (Excerpt) for a Double Degree Programme	18
5 European Master of Corporate Finance – Draft January 2006	25
6 Master of Arts International Business FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences	26
7 Examples of Contents and Learning Outcomes/Competences Export Management Class	29

1 Introduction

Joint and Double Degrees (JDD) have always been discussed as part of the Bologna process towards a harmonised European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Thus, the Prague Communiqué stated in 2001: “In order to further strengthen the important European dimensions of higher education and graduate employability Ministers called upon the higher education sector to increase the development of modules, courses and curricula at all levels with ‘European’ content, orientation or organisation. This concerns particularly modules, courses and degree curricula offered in partnership by institutions from different countries and leading to a recognized joint degree”.¹ The Bergen Communiqué calls “... upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA.”²

The Ministers’ communiqués do not distinguish between joint and double degrees. Most of the European consortia jointly delivering programmes have chosen an approach which leads rather to the award of a double than a joint degree. In this paper we will, therefore, first define the expressions “joint” and “double” degrees (2).

Double degrees were already applied before the Bologna process was initiated.³ Thus, the discussion of JDD will first deal with double degree programmes developed in the pre-Bologna era (3) and then focus on issues of JDD programmes since the implementation of the Bologna structures (4).

In the paper’s conclusion (5), it is pointed out that it is still unclear whether joint degrees will completely replace double degrees or whether both forms will be applied as closely related but nevertheless alternative approaches to international university education. A check-list for JDD programme developers is added in the appendix.

¹ “Towards the European Higher Education Area”. Communiqué of the meeting of European Ministers in charge of higher education in Prague on May 19th, 2001; http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/6818/prag_com_en.doc

² “The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals”. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005; http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf

³ For example, a number of European business schools (Ecole Supérieure du Commerce Extérieur (ESCE), Paris; FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences; Universidad San Pablo CEU, Madrid; University of Brighton) started to compare and adapt their curricula already in 1994; six years later, after having included additional universities in their network, they founded the “Consortium of International Double Degrees (CIDD)” in 2000.

In total, the paper focuses on the application of JDD in practical university life and is based on the author's experience as programme manager. All examples are taken from JDD agreements in business education.⁴

2 Definition of Joint and Double Degrees (JDD)

As the Ministers' communiqués do not differentiate between joint and double degrees, "an agreed definition of a joint degree in Europe is still lacking"⁵. In their 2002 study, Tauch and Rauhvargers⁶ implicitly included double degrees when defining joint degrees. They talked about joint degrees when "after completion of the full programme, the student either obtains the national degrees of each participating institution or a degree (in fact usually an unofficial 'certificate' or 'diploma') awarded jointly by them."⁷

In May 2003, the ENIC (Council of Europe/Unesco) and NARIC (European Commission) networks state in their "Draft Explanatory Memorandum"⁸ that a "more precise definition of joint degree remains to be formulated".⁹ They explain that at the one end of joint degree programmes there are examples of (virtual) universities established in cooperation between two or several countries, such as the Transnational University of Limburg between the Flemish community of Belgium and the Netherlands, the Öresund University between Sweden and Denmark or the Interuniversity Europe Centre established in Bulgaria and Romania. At the other end of the spectrum, they include partnerships which lead to an unofficial joint certificate (Community of European Management Schools – CEMS) or a double degree. As example of the latter kind of joint degree they mention CIDD¹⁰ in business education and TIME (Top Industrial Managers for Europe) in the field of engineering studies.¹¹

⁴ Mainly agreements between CIDD member universities.

⁵ Tauch, Christian and Andrejs Rauhvargers, Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe. European University Association, Brussels 2002, p. 29

⁶ Ibid., p. 29.

⁷ Ibid., p. 29.

⁸ ENIC and NARIC Networks, Draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Draft Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, Vaduz (Liechtenstein), 18-20 May 2003, http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/9847/item7_draft_memorandum.pdf

⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁰ www.cidd.org

¹¹ www.time-association.org

Also in 2003, the Coimbra Group published a draft of definitions about joint degrees,¹² in which for the first time the distinction between “joint degrees” and “double degrees” is made.¹³

The European Commission followed the Coimbra approach and published this definition as one of the requirements universities must meet if they apply for Erasmus Mundus support:

“A double or multiple degree is defined as two or more nationally-recognised diplomas issued officially by two or more institutions involved in an integrated study programme. A joint degree is defined as a single diploma issued by at least two of the institutions offering an integrated study programme.”¹⁴

The expression “diploma” is used as an umbrella for all types of degrees and simultaneously as description of the physical degree certificate. Joint degrees are still rare, as in many countries national law until recently did not allow universities to issue joint degrees. Even though the legal environment has changed in many countries, hurdles are still high. In some member states, e.g. Estonia, Hungary, Norway, and Sweden, joint degrees are still not possible but amendments to the legislation are being prepared.¹⁵

In this paper, we use the following definitions:

- Joint degree: a single diploma issued by two or more institutions offering an integrated study programme. The single diploma (Bachelor, Master, Doctor) is signed by the rectors of all participating universities and recognised as substitute of the national diplomas.
- Double degree: two nationally-recognised diplomas issued separately by the universities involved in the integrated study programme.

¹² <http://www.coimbra-group.be/DOCUMENTS/CG-JointDegrees-Glossary.doc>

¹³ Further distinctions presented in the Coimbra paper, in particular the distinction between “double degree programmes” and “double degrees” remained unclarified.

¹⁴ http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/faq/faq2_en.html

¹⁵ Reichert, Sybille and Christian Tauch, Trends IV: European Universities Implementing Bologna, European University Association, Brussels 2005, p. 17.

3 JDD Programmes in the Pre-Bologna Context

Higher education in Europe used to be fragmented; degrees awarded differed in name and requirements; access to studies, the length of programmes, and dissemination varied from country to country. One-tier systems with no distinction between undergraduate and postgraduate level could not be compared to systems which allowed students to leave university at different levels. National degrees could hardly be compared; the use of different terminology further reduced transparency. On the other hand, students had become mobile and – to a large extent as result of the Erasmus programme – spent a semester or a year abroad. With increasing mobility during studies, their willingness increased to apply for jobs in the countries where they had previously studied. National degrees unknown across borders, however, reduced their chances on other countries' labour markets.

3.1 Goals and Principles

The prime goal of the first double degree schemes was, therefore, to increase the employability of internationally mobile students. Graduates of international business programmes who had spent a year abroad and were willing to look for a job abroad, should be enabled to apply with university diplomas known to the potential employers in the host country.

With the increased Erasmus mobility of students, a second motivation was added. As Erasmus changed its face from an elite-type exchange in its beginnings to a “mass” movement which included also average students, participants in integrated programmes needed to present evidence that they had not spent their Erasmus stay as “educational vacation” but had acquired a deep knowledge of the host country's culture and business practices. For these graduates, earning a double degree made a difference.

Moreover, institutions of higher education used integrated study programmes with double degree opportunities as selling point. In particular non-traditional universities – such as the Fachhochschule in Germany, the Hogeschool in the Netherlands or the Institut Supérieur de Commerce in France – actively promoted the idea of double degrees in order to improve their competitiveness.

The basic principles universities applied in their agreements varied significantly. A common denominator is that the mutual evaluation of the programmes is based more on the learning outcomes than on the individual modules. For example: Exchange rate risks and instruments to hedge these risks may be taught in modules on International Business, Export Marketing, International Economics or International Finance. Thus, individual modules may be recognised even though the contents of the individual module are not completely identical.

However, there were so many obstacles to be overcome that many universities chose a case-to-case approach in lieu of principles. The overall experience was that solutions which worked in the co-operation with a university in one country might have made an agreement with a university in another country impossible. Some examples:

- In some countries, universities were (and still are) not allowed to award their degree unless the student spends the last academic year at this university. Two universities both confronted with this requirement are unable to award double degrees.
- Students from institutions of “applied” sciences or “professional” studies are usually obliged to integrate an internship into their study programme. In some countries, there is no such requirement.
- In some countries, students finish their studies with a final course work (Mémoire du fin d’études; undergraduate or Master dissertation, Diplomarbeit) which counts as up to a whole semester’s work load. In Spain, the “licenciatura” could traditionally be awarded without such a requirement.
- Some national programmes are organised in academic years rather than in semesters; a student may either pass at the end of the year or fail. The degree is finally awarded on the basis of the final year’s marks. In other cases, the final diploma lists all modules taken in the last two years, five semesters (for example the German “Hauptstudium”) or even all modules of the whole study period.
- A variety of the pre-Bologna programmes included not clearly defined modules which could be taken in one semester or one year but were only

assessed in a final examination covering the subject's contents of the last three or four semesters. Spanish universities, for example, used to teach management modules as whole-year courses to be assessed at the end of the academic year. In Germany, many programmes even included longer teaching periods with one examination after three or four semesters.

3.2 Programme Structure

As a result, nearly all existing double degree programmes are based on the global recognition of the first two or even three years of studies as equivalent to the own institution's requirements. Only those parts needed for calculation of the final marks are transferred under ECTS rules concerning credits and marks. Students usually spend their last year of studies at the host university taking classes and writing their thesis in the host university's teaching language or in English. Supervisors might be professors from the home or the host institution; a joint supervision is possible but rarely happens.

In those cases where home and host countries' regulations on the final course work differ, this leads to additional work load for the double degree students. In exceptional cases, students even travel back to their home institution in order to sit examinations. French students, for instance, may spend their last year abroad but are obliged to come back to France after this year in order to take final examinations at their home institution.

In cases where necessary, programme directors and examiners set individual examinations for incoming double degree students – additional work for administrators and teachers.

3.3 Good Practice and Drawbacks

The introduction of double degree programmes helped the participating universities to internationalise their own curriculum. Moreover, the systematic comparison of their own curricula with those of the partner universities certainly broadened the knowledge of deans, programme directors and others involved in curriculum development. Thus, previously unquestioned national traditions were discussed and first moves made to adapt curricula to those of the partners.

Box 1: Pre-Bologna Programme Structure:
The Example of FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences

The “Diplom” in International Business was designed as double degree programme. German students are required to have undertaken a minimum of three-months internship before they enrol at the university and to demonstrate a working knowledge of English and a second foreign language (French or Spanish).

Basic studies (“Grundstudium”) are taught in German and comprise three semesters in which students take the same modules as other business students. As additional workload, they have mandatory classes in Business English and their second foreign language. Basic studies have to be completed before students are allowed to enter into the advanced studies period.

Advanced studies (“Hauptstudium”) consist of three semesters in Mainz and two semesters abroad. Courses are mainly taught in English, working groups are composed of German and international students so that German students experience internationalisation already at home. Their last year is spent in one of the many partner universities. Students with outstanding results in the basic studies may replace their sixth semester in Mainz with a semester at a third university (as “normal” exchange student).

Degree requirements: All modules of the advanced studies (five semesters) are listed in the degree certificate – including ECTS credits and national marks. As the German system allocates 30 ECTS credits to the final thesis (Diplomarbeit), which is written at the partner institution abroad, German students would need another 30 credits taken as class modules during their stay abroad. However, as most foreign partner universities count the final thesis with 15 or even less ECTS credits, students need to earn at least 45 ECTS credits in addition to the final thesis during their stay abroad in order to earn the host university’s degree as well.

Incoming double degree students: As all modules of the advanced studies (five semesters) are listed in the degree certificate, the programme director browses through the modules the students had taken in their second and third year in order to identify equivalents to the Mainz modules. In ideal cases, the students must earn exactly 60 credits in Mainz in order to earn the German degree. In reality, however, they often need around 45 credits earned in class plus the 30 credits awarded for the final thesis.

The Diploma Supplement explicitly states how many semesters the student studied at which university, in which subject areas (groups of modules) parts of the assessment took place abroad, and to which university the final thesis was submitted. The thesis title is listed in the original language in which it was written.

This is in particular true for those universities which imbedded the double degree into a tailored study programme, such as the International Business programmes at the University of Brighton and the FH Mainz. In Mainz, for example, the curriculum of the “advanced studies” part (Hauptstudium) of the International Business programme reflects more the need for integration into the international partnerships than the curriculum of the “national” programmes. Teaching language is English, contents are consistently European, and assessment is based on a mixture of essays, presentations, quizzes and

examinations throughout the semester rather than applying the traditional German approach of one final examination at the end of the module. Incoming double degree students are integrated into the programme's third year and make up to 50 percent of that year's student body. In order to provide them with options which are taught in German language, modules of the "national" programmes are opened for them and the marks transferred into the International Business programme. Any changes in the curriculum are first checked for possible impacts on credit transfer. As a result, International Business students may transfer credits to and from the partner university more easily than to national programmes within the same university.

This is at the same time the largest disadvantage of such an approach. The international double degree programme forms an isolated elite-type programme with few spill-over effects for the "national" study programmes. Programme director, course board and examiners are striving for further internationalisation of the programme – for example to meet degree requirements of US partner universities – whereas other programmes may not be suitable for international students. At FH Mainz, for example, all incoming Erasmus students are enrolled in the International Business programme. The broader the range of options for incoming double degree students should be, the more co-ordination between the International Business and the "national" programme directors is necessary.

In the long-term, however, activities originating in the International Business programme may also increase the openness of the "national" programmes. Both student and teacher mobility grow as the international contacts of the double degree programme opens up opportunities for normal Erasmus exchange.

As an alternative, double degree arrangements may include the entire business programme. Thus, all students are eligible, the decision to participate in the double degree programme takes place during the first years of studies, all the above-described drawbacks do not occur. On the other hand, this approach may lead to the effect that only few students can be motivated to participate in the double degree exchange programmes, because those deeply interested in studying international business choose tailored programmes at other

universities.¹⁶ Moreover, course boards, boards of examiners and other boards responsible for further curriculum development, may not consider the needs of incoming double degree students who form less than one percent of “their” student body.

In this case, it is crucial to include these administrators into the negotiations of double degree arrangements. Otherwise, it may happen that even smaller changes in degree requirements jeopardise the agreement.¹⁷

In rare occasions, the entire business programme is shaped so that all the students are able to earn the double degree. The Paris-based Ecole Supérieure du Commerce Extérieur (ESCE) may serve as an example for this as well as the German university of applied sciences in Reutlingen, which offers a variety of international programmes with a similar effect.

The common problem of all these double degree programmes ironically emerges from the Bologna process. As they had been designed within the pre-Bologna national structures, they will all come to an end by 2009 at the latest. Where Bologna aims had already been realised, the universities had to suspend their existing agreements and re-negotiate the programmes within the new framework. Questions to be discussed:

- Are JDD programme still necessary in the new Bologna environment?
- What are the fundamental decisions to be made concerning programme profile, type of degrees, financial issues, and language diversity?
- Which principles should be applied to curriculum development and the mutual recognition of modules?
- To which extent does quality assurance have to be modified?

¹⁶ Within CIDD, for example, only universities with tailored programmes have more than 20 outgoing double degree students per year.

¹⁷ This happens in particular if the examiners’ board has to approve the credit transfer in each individual case.

4 JDD Programmes since the Implementation of Bologna Structures

The Bologna process will lead to a similar, if not common, structure of business studies in Europe. The first cycle will take a minimum of three and a maximum of four years, the second cycle a minimum of one and a maximum of two years so that students can earn a Master degree after five years of study.¹⁸ The third cycle comprises doctoral studies. Whether this would enforce the creation of structured doctoral studies replacing the individual supervision predominant in Europe, still needs to be discussed.¹⁹

Are JDD programme still necessary in this harmonised EHEA? From a logical point of view, the answer might rather be “no” than “yes”. The major motivation for introducing JDD programmes in pre-Bologna times was namely to increase the transparency in a Europe with fragmented university systems and hardly comparable degrees. This has become obsolete. After completion of the Bologna process, degrees might still not be equal but highly comparable.

Nevertheless, the idea of JDD programmes is playing an increasing role in the Bologna process. The communiqués of Prague, Berlin and Bergen call for JDD opportunities.²⁰ The European Commission finally requires either joint or double degrees (explicitly listing the double degree arrangement as a minimum requirement) as a sine-qua-non-condition for acceptance in the Erasmus Mundus programme.²¹ The final goal of this policy might be a single European degree.

¹⁸ English programmes have not yet been adapted to the Bologna declaration. There, one-year Master programmes can still be added to three-years Bachelor programmes. In Sweden, legislation allows the universities to award a “national” Magister upon completion of four years and a “Bologna-conform” Master degree after five years of study. Ministry of Education, Research and Culture (Sweden), Press release 14 June 2005; <http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/5032/a/46425;jsessionid=a5k2JbUHIBDb>

¹⁹ Dyczkowska, Joanna and Tomasz Dyczkowski (2005), Master of Corporate Finance Project in Relation to the Bologna Process, in: Tomasz Dyczkowski and Andrzej Kardasz (Ed.), European Maser of Corporate Finance Project in the European Area of Higher Education, Wroclaw, p. 18.

²⁰ “Towards the European Higher Education Area. Communiqué of the meeting of European Ministers in charge of higher education in Prague on May 19th, 2001; http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/medienpool/6818/prag_com_en.doc; “Realising the European Higher Education Area”, Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003; <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Communique1.pdf>; “The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals”. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005;

²¹ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/mundus/faq/faq2_en.html

4.1 Fundamental Decisions

One of the universities' first decisions is the question of whether to set the new JDD arrangements at the undergraduate or the post-graduate level.

4.1.1 Undergraduate versus Postgraduate Programmes

Undergraduate (Bachelor) programmes offer the opportunity of a longer preparation period for the stay abroad. In four-year programmes, students may spend up to three years in their home university and one year abroad. All double degree arrangements of Dutch universities of professional education (Hogeschool) fit into this category. Also many British Bachelor in International Business programmes are arranged as four-years "sandwich courses" and offer a double degree with partners in continental Europe.

Most business programmes, however, only last three years, and so the preparation period is shorter. Examples for three-year JDD programmes are "NordBiz", a consortium of Herring Institute of Business Administration and Technology (Denmark) as co-ordinating institution, Mälardalens Högskola (Sweden), Lahti Polytechnics (Finland), Technical College Iceland, and the Høgskolen in Telemark (Norway), as well as bilateral agreements. In some cases, the study period of three years is extended to four in order to facilitate the double degree.

However, nowadays JDD agreements are more commonly being found on postgraduate (Master) programmes. The Erasmus Mundus requirements alone may explain this trend, even though the first projects approved in 2004 and 2005 are all non-business consortia.²² Examples of JDD programmes at Master level in business education are listed in Box 2.

As the Bologna declaration still gives room for national deviations, double degree programmes may even allow students to earn degrees at different levels. Thus, it might be possible to combine the last year of a four-year Bachelor programme with the first year of a two-years Master programme. For example, agreements with a Dutch Hogeschool might include the Dutch degree awarded after four years of study and the Master degree after the student added a fifth year abroad. British programmes which often allow the Master

²² By January 2006, only one project in Business education (Master of Strategic Project Management) was listed as approved.

degree to be completed within one year, 15 months or three semesters after a three-years Bachelor programme, might be combined with a Bologna-type Master in Continental Europe. Swedish one-year and two-years Masters might both be combined with degrees in other countries. Similar approaches might be developed at the undergraduate level where students may earn the Bachelor after three years of studies in one country and four years in the other.

Box 2: Examples of JDD Master Consortia in Business

Name of the Consortium	Participating Universities	Degrees Awarded Length of Programme
Masters in Strategic Project Management (European)	Heriot-Watt University Politecnico di Milano Umeå University	MSc in Strategic Project Management (European) Master Univ. di I livello in Strategic Project Mgmt Magister in Management 16-months-programme
NIBES Eurocampus	ESCEM Tours/Poitiers ISCTE Lisbon Univ. of Ljubljana FH Pforzheim – Univ. of Applied Sciences	MSc European Management Master in International Management International MSc in Business Administration MBA International Management 18-months-programme
Double Degree Agreement for Management Education in Europe (DAFME)	ESADE – Univ. Ramon Llull HEC Paris RSM Erasmus Univ. Univ. Comm. Luigi Bocconi University of St.Gallen	Each of the participating universities offers a variety of Master programmes. Students may choose different programmes – classical double degree arrangement 24-30 months
EMBS: European Management and Business Science	Univ. Bamberg Univ. Regensburg Univ. Stuttgart Univ. Odense Univ. Alcalá Univ. Córdoba ESC Brest ESC Clermont ESC Le Havre ESC Montpellier IAE Univ. Lyon III Univ. of Swansea Univ. degli Studi Padova Cracow Univ. of Economics	EMBS is a consortium facilitating double degree programmes at Master level. Its roots go back to the pre-Bologna era in which student exchange was carried out within five-years programmes and national degrees were awarded. The consortium serves as platform for bilateral agreements between its members. New agreements have already or will be signed.
French-German University	HTW Dresden ESC Lille	Master of International Business Master of Science in Management The French-German University serves as platform for bi-national studies in all academic fields. The co-operation between HTW Dresden and ESC Lille is just one example of several bi-national agreements. 24 months
IPBS: International Partnership of Business Schools	Lancaster University Reims Management School Dublin City University Northeastern Univ., Boston Univ. de las Américas, Puebla (Mexico) Univ. Piacenza (Italy) FH Reutlingen European School of Business	MSc in International Management The consortium has been cooperating in four-years undergraduate JDD programmes for a long time. This Master programme, however, leads to the German or Irish Master degree plus a joint certificate issued by IPBS – thus, it is not a real JDD programme. 15 months

Even though many varieties are possible, most of the future JDD programmes will be focused on the Master level. In contrast to double degrees, most joint degrees will be based on a joint curriculum development and per definition exclude different levels.

4.1.2 “Theoretical” versus “Professional”

Study programmes may differ in their orientation towards being more “theoretical” or more “professional”.²³ Programmes with a more theoretical orientation are, in general, broader in their approach and do not lead to a narrowly defined professional career. In most cases, these programmes lay more stress on mathematical skills, the development and use of econometric models, and generally do not require internships in companies. In contrast, study programmes with a professional or applied orientation focus more on the application of models and instruments in companies. They usually include internships and applied projects in the curriculum and focus on the case study methodology. Moreover, professors and lecturers tend to have more personal management experience than their colleagues in theoretical programmes. The inclusion of practitioners into the teaching staff is welcomed and often seen as a quality criterion.

In countries as Austria, Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands, the distinction between theoretical and professional is being institutionalised where the traditional university tends to offer the theoretical programmes whereas the Fachhochschule, Hogeschool or Polytechnical University offer applied programmes.

JDD agreements regularly relate to programmes with the same or a similar orientation. Thus, they typically include either theoretical or professional programmes – a logical result as programme objectives and degree requirements must be analogue if not congruent. In particular, requirements concerning internships and the final thesis often differ so much that a combination of theoretically and professionally orientated study programmes is almost impossible.

²³ Tauch and Rauhvargers call the difference “academic” versus “professional” (Tauch, Christian and Andrejs Rauhvargers (2002), Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe. European University Association, p. 19). As this wording implies that studies in universities of applied sciences are “non-academic”, we use the expression “theoretical”.

Nevertheless, some JDD programmes, in particular at the undergraduate level, consist of such a combination. Often enough, the rationale of the agreements has more to be seen in status related issues than in programme contents. As long as traditional universities define themselves as “scientific” and look at a Fachhochschule, Polytechnics, Hogeschool, Högskolan and comparable institutions as inferior, and as long as national law does not allow these institutions to award degrees at the Master level, they try to “up-grade” themselves with such JDD agreements. Many of the double degree contracts as well as franchise agreements between Continental European institutions and British universities imply this motivation.

4.1.3 “Stand-alone” or “Integrated” Programme?

JDD programmes may be developed in a “stand-alone” or as “integrated” form. “Stand-alone” means that the programme is not imbedded in the universities’ standard studies but based on an independent curriculum. Students apply for enrolment into this programme, participate in tailored-made lectures and seminars, study in English in a non-English speaking environment and form an international island in the university. “Stand-alone” programmes are usually Master level degree programmes especially designed for JDD purposes. The curriculum was developed jointly by the consortium’s partners or by the consortium’s core partners. With the exception of some electives, all students take the same modules. They either all start in one university and move to a second and/or third university as a common group or they start their studies in different universities and move to one university later (as in many of the current British franchise Master degree programmes).

“Integrated”, in this context, stands for those programmes in which a major part of the courses are also taught to local students and JDD students share the learning environment with them. “Integrated” may furthermore mean that the JDD curriculum forms a specific part of the national programme, with lectures not being separate from the latter.

Whereas in the first approach one group of students jointly moves from university to university, the second approach resembles more the idea of a student exchange. The “stand-alone” programme may, thus, suit more as model

for joint degrees, whereas the “integrated” approach may serve better for double degree exchanges.

Both methods offer specific advantages. The “stand-alone” Master enables universities to develop a JDD programme with a small number of dedicated internationally minded professors and a small number of interested students. These types of programmes remain “niche products” in the range of a faculty’s study programmes, however, and may not necessarily lead to further internationalisation of the university. The “integrated” JDD programme’s potential to enlarge the university’s international profile is larger, however more difficult to manage, as the discussion in paragraph 3.3 already showed.

4.1.4 Joint or Double Degrees?

As could be shown above, one of the central decisions concerns the issue whether the programme should lead to a joint or to double degrees. The major determinant is the legal environment.

The legal environment has until very recently made joint degrees impossible in nearly all EU member states. The studies on the European University Association (EUA) project revealed “various kinds of difficulties as soon as a joint degree was not awarded as a single national qualification.”²⁴ Thus, nearly all “joint” degrees awarded in the early years of the decade consisted of national degrees – sometimes supplemented by a non-official joint certificate. Even though significant progress has been made in the last two years,²⁵ universities aiming at a joint degree still face difficulties. These include, among others:

- There is still “no guarantee that the resulting joint degree will itself be recognized outside of the consortium and especially in a wider international context”²⁶ as the Lisbon Recognition Convention has not yet covered joint degrees.

²⁴ Rauhvargers, Andreijs, Sjur Bergan and Jindra Divis, How to Improve the Recognition of Joint Degrees, 2003, www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/Recognition/exp_text/jd_artic.pdf

²⁵ The Bergen communiqué states that progress on awarding and recognition of joint degrees will be one of the matters to be reviewed at the next Ministerial Conference in London 2007. “The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals”. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005.

²⁶ Rauhvargers, Andreijs, Sjur Bergan and Jindra Divis, How to Improve the Recognition of Joint Degrees, 2003, p. 3-4, http://www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/Recognition/exp_text/jd_artic.pdf

- It “is not uncommon for higher education institutions to have rules requiring that at least one half of the credits toward any given degree be taken at the institution in question for the degree to be issued by this institution”.²⁷
- “An absence of legal provision positively recognizing the concept of joint degrees may in itself constitute an impediment to the recognition of such qualifications”.²⁸

But even though joint degrees may be positively recognised in the national laws, other legal impediments may arise. In its 2005 “Guidance on Joint Awards”, the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) points out that the “unofficial view of lawyers at the DfES [The UK government’s Department for Education and Skills; US] is that there are legal problems with joint degrees which stems from the view that an institution cannot award a degree unless it has been specifically granted the power to do so.”²⁹ The paper also mentions potential problems concerning the data protection regime as “a joint degree collaboration will almost inevitably involve the exchange of personal data on staff and students between the UK institution and the overseas partner.”³⁰

Double degrees, therefore, constitute the alternative where legal problems prohibit the application of a joint degree. Recognition may then be imbedded in “normal” ECTS rules and the modules taken at the partner institution(s) transferred in the same way as in non-degree exchanges. Even the rule that a university does not award the degree as long as the student has not taken more than half of the modules in this university may be bypassed. In this case, one additional module is introduced which is only counted as part of the programme in the respective university as shown in a fictive example of a joint Master programme with 120 ECTS credits:

²⁷ Ibid., p. 7; some US universities even prohibit the recognition of more than 25% of credits earned at another institution.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 7

²⁹ Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA); Guidance on Joint Awards, Appendix Q, p.1, 2005, <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c4/63/70/appendixQ0506.pdf>

³⁰ Ibid., p. 2

Box 3: Double Degree Structure with Two Universities Requiring more than Half of the Credits Earned at Their Institution


Common Curriculum	116 ECTS	Students earn 58 ECTS credits each at the home and the partner university
Extra Module in University A	4 ECTS	Students take both extra modules so that, in total, they earn 124 ECTS credits.
Extra Module in University B	4 ECTS	

University A does not consider the extra module of university B as part of the programme so that the degree requirement of university A is fulfilled: The student completes the 120 ECTS credits required by university A whereof 62 have been earned at university A. Vice versa, university B does not consider the extra module of university A as part of the programme so that the student also meets the requirements of university B: 120 ECTS composed of 116 earned in the common curriculum, thereof 58 abroad, and 4 in the extra module of university B. As with 62 out of 120 more than half of the counted credits are earned at university B, this university also awards it degree. Thus, with an additional work load of 4 ECTS credits, the student earns both degrees.

It might be questioned whether it is fair and true that with one programme students earn two degrees. The Coimbra group states in its glossary of relevant definitions: "Some institutions oppose this system as unfair ('you cannot catch two fishes with one hook', not ethical)."³¹ Actually, students who use the two degrees without further explanations are not far from wilful or even fraudulent misrepresentation. Thus, it is indispensable that the diploma and/or the diploma supplement clearly state that the degree has been awarded within a double degree programme. Box 4 exhibits such an example.

³¹ <http://www.coimbra-group.be/DOCUMENTS/CG-JointDegrees-Glossary.doc>

Box 4: Diploma Supplement (Excerpt) for a Double Degree Programme

<h2>Diploma Supplement</h2>	
	 <p>Fachhochschule Mainz University of Applied Sciences</p>
Family Name:	Musterfrau
Given Name:	Monika
Date and Place of Birth:	Mainz, 4 November 1980
Qualification / Title conferred:	Diplom-Betriebswirtin (FH) awarded 25/01/2006
Main Field of Studies:	International Business
Awarding Institution:	Fachhochschule Mainz - University of Applied Sciences
Language of Instruction / Examination:	German and English plus Spanish
Level of Qualification:	First university degree
Official Length of Programme:	Four years (240 ECTS credits)
Access Requirements:	<p>General: Completed Upper Secondary School or Equivalent plus 12 weeks business placement</p> <p>Specific: Good level of English plus basic level of French or Spanish Admission restricted</p>
Mode of Study:	Full-time Double Degree Programme
Programme Requirements:	<p>The programme includes a minimum of two semesters and a maximum of six semesters at selected partner universities in Estonia, France, Lithuania, Spain, Sweden, UK, USA. If students pass all last year's examinations of the host university, they earn the home university's degree as well as the host university's degree.</p> <p>90 ECTS credits in basic studies, 120 ECTS credits in advanced studies, dissertation usually in the host university's language (30 ECTS credits).</p> <p>Internships during the semester breaks are usual and strongly recommended, however not mandatory.</p>
Programme Details:	<p>Ms. Musterfrau earned credits during</p> <p>6 semesters at the Fachhochschule Mainz - University of Applied Sciences and</p> <p>2 semesters at the University of Brighton (UK)</p> <p>Advanced studies are partly taught in German, partly in English. In addition, students are obliged to pass exams in French or Spanish.</p>

4.1.5 Language Diversity?

In principle, JDD programmes may follow two different approaches concerning the language of instruction. The first approach understands the plurality of cultures and languages as Europe's richness. The second takes into account that English has become the lingua franca in the academic and business world.

Multi-lingual programmes require that students are proficient in the languages of their home and their host university. Students are supposed to earn their credits in the host country's language which in today's reality requires them to speak three languages fluently unless one part of their studies takes place in an English speaking country. French students, for example, may speak French and German and easily participate in joint French-German programmes. In today's business world, they will not survive, however, without being proficient in English, too. Staying abreast with this development, nearly all European governments introduced English as first foreign language in primary or secondary education.³² Universities offering programmes in their own language, in particular in the case of small countries, have found it more and more difficult to attract international students. Thus, they developed degree programmes completely taught in English: "In the Nordic countries and in The Netherlands, the widespread offer of English-medium programmes is a reaction to a linguistic competitive disadvantage. In these countries, the share of international students (of the entire student body) was comparatively low, which was attributed to the fact that Dutch, but even more Finnish or Icelandic, are very rarely spoken languages on a European and global scale."³³

Programmes in English are concentrated in the post-graduate sector of higher education. Only at those higher education institutions where second-cycle degrees were not allowed in the past, were English-taught programmes offered at the undergraduate level.³⁴ By offering programmes in English, universities are not only able to attract international students but also to prepare their national students for a labour market which demands "business English

³² Consequently, the UK reduced foreign language education to a minimum.

³³ Cf. Wächter, Bernd, Will European higher education go English? In: Michael Woolf (ed.), I gotta use words when I talk to you: English and international education. EAIE occasional paper 17. European Association for International Education 2005, p. 20

³⁴ Ibid, p. 19.

competency” from practically all applicants. Of course, English as lingua franca facilitates the exchange of students as well as lecturers. But there are also concerns.³⁵

- Studying and teaching in a foreign language reduces the complexity and precision of expression and thought as teachers never reach the clarity and plurality of expression as in their native language; and students who are not really able to understand, speak and write English are a burden for the rest of the class.
- As English is the only common denominator in class, course material and literature in other languages cannot be used. This might not be a problem in global management classes, however difficult in classes on national accounting law or the political economy of a particular state.³⁶
- Students form an English speaking island. This is particular true when the set of English programmes remains limited to a few modules or Master programmes.³⁷
- Language transports culture and tends to shape our world views. The use of English as the only verbal means of communication might then lead to different views, behaviour, and even values. Usunier uses the example of the expression “deadline” which transports an idea of urgency unknown in many other cultures.³⁸ Phillipson even speaks of “linguistic imperialism”,³⁹ a notion many non-native English speaking Europeans might have got when being forced to listen to native English speaking students or colleagues who use their language in other countries without respecting the fact that their audience’s native language is different.

Whatever the consortium of universities decides to be the language policy in its JDD programmes, it should not reduce language education to English only.

³⁵ Cf. Christian Timm, Why just English? Ten short sections on thin lines, unavoidability and reconciliation, in: Michael Woolf (ed.), I gotta use words when I talk to you: English and international education. EAIE occasional paper 17. European Association for International Education 2005, pp. 27 – 34.

³⁶ The author’s own experience in a course on “The Political Economy of Germany” taught in classes where more than half of the students are not able to read a German text shows that the missing background information leads to lower learning outcomes.

³⁷ In many European universities, this has already become the Erasmus normality: As it is so difficult to communicate in the host country’s language (as for most of the Erasmus students it is their second or third foreign language) they use English.

³⁸ Usunier, Jean-Claude, Marketing Across Cultures, Pearson Education, 3rd edition 2000, p.427.

³⁹ Phillipson, Robert, Linguistic Imperialism, Oxford University Press, 1992

Students should at least be given opportunities⁴⁰ to learn the host university's local language or even be obliged to. It is not necessary that they achieve proficiency – however, studying in a foreign country without achieving at least general communicative competency in this country's language comes close to cultural arrogance if not imperialism.

4.1.6 Financial Issues

There is no wide-spread historical tradition of charging tuition fees in Europe. Neither have many of the universities applied an accounting system which would allow them to calculate individual programmes as cost units.

JDD programmes, however, differ from other programmes in several aspects:

- They include a large number of students from other parts of the world.
- They entail more expenses for administration, student counselling, and travelling.
- They are delivered jointly with partner universities. The contributions of the member universities may differ and the composition of income and expenditure may fluctuate significantly.
- They might include institutions with a different legal status, from private business schools to public universities, partly or completely financed by the government.

It is, therefore, crucial to include financial provisions into the co-operation agreements. This is in particular true for JDD programmes orchestrated by institutions with a different legal environment. Whereas private institutions have always relied on cost-covering fees, many EU states introduced tuition fees only recently, and many of them keep them at a low, far from cost-covering level. Some countries, for example Sweden and some of the German states, still offer higher education tuition-free.

Socrates agreements may serve as the easiest instrument. This may lead to the effect that students' financial contribution to the programme depends on the country in which they enter the programme. On undergraduate programmes,

⁴⁰ cf. Sticchi Damiani, Maria, International Education and Languages, in: Michael Woolf (ed.), I gotta use words when I talk to you: English and international education. EAIE occasional paper 17. European Association for International Education 2005, pp. 41-42

this might not influence students' choices of universities significantly. At the post-graduate level, however, it can be assumed that students will try to enter the programme at the university with the lowest tuition – in particular when admission to the programme does not require proficiency in the local language. Furthermore, the Socrates-inherent principle of balanced student flows may create further problems as even the simplest double degree programme may lead to imbalanced flows, so that one of the institutions bears a higher burden of the programme than others. The more institutions participate in the consortium the less likely will bilaterally balanced student flows occur.⁴¹

Some universities do apply the Socrates exchange at the undergraduate level only and generally charge Master students whether they are enrolled as degree-taking or as non-degree exchange students (most or even all English universities seem to follow this rule). Other universities seem to accept the Erasmus principles also for the student exchange at Master level, but only for non-degree students.

Tuition swap agreements apply the same principle of balanced student flows. Each institution charges tuition fees according to their own regulations. Outgoing students are charged as if they were studying at home. The revenue is used for the expenditure caused by incoming students. In contrast to Socrates, incoming students exceeding the number of own outgoing students are charged tuition. These types of agreements are wide-spread in student exchanges with US universities; recent examples show that universities in the UK apply this type of agreements also within Europe.

Bilateral and unilateral agreements within the consortium are necessary as soon as balanced student flows are improbable or even not feasible. Subject to national law, universities may even arrange that one of the consortium member universities levies the fees and re-distributes the revenues to the partner universities in countries where tuition fees cannot be charged or where the tuition is limited to a certain ceiling. Even Erasmus Mundus allows such a tuition policy.

⁴¹ While most of the CIDD members have applied Socrates agreements and generously allowed imbalanced flows, universities with significant excess student inflows seek to either reduce the inflow of students or even to change to another method of payment.

In addition, the exchange of lecturers and even researchers should be included in the financial provisions of the co-operation contracts. Often enough, individual universities are not able to cover the whole range of the programme's modules – or at least not to deliver all the modules in English – and rely on the “import” of expert lecturers from other consortium members. Based on their experience with Tempus and other EU support, universities in the new member states of the EU seem to be more open to this type of co-operation than their counterparts in the West.

4.2 Curriculum Development

Questions concerning the JDD curriculum include the issues to which extent the contents should be the same (4.2.1), how the partners might deal with different ECTS credit structures (4.2.2) and the academic calendars (4.2.3).

4.2.1 Combining strengths or uniformity?

When universities decide to establish a completely new JDD programme, they benefit from the possibility to jointly develop the curriculum. They determine which modules the students take in which semester, and how many ECTS credits are assigned to these modules. The variations range from a student group which jointly travels from university to university (model 1) to models in which students take the same modules at different universities (model 2) or even take different modules in different universities with an only partial overlapping of the degree requirements (model 3).⁴²

Model 1: All students start the programme at one university and form a class which jointly transfers from the first to the second and potentially even third university. The curriculum is clearly structured and consists mainly of mandatory units; only a few options (usually taken from the national programmes of the host university) are allowed at the different locations.

The European Master Programme in Higher Education (HEEM), offered by the universities of Oslo, Tampere, and Aveiro and supported by the Erasmus Mundus programme, may serve as an example for this.⁴³ Around 20 students

⁴² In reality, JDD programmes vary further and may combine features of all the described models.

⁴³ To the author's knowledge, there is no such programme in Business education.

from all over the world start their studies in Oslo and switch to Tampere after the first half of the second semester. During the third semester, the whole student cohort moves to Portugal. The fourth semester consists of field work and may be supervised by professors from each of the three participating institutions.

The advantage of such a programme is obvious: Its administration is easy, there are no student exchange flows and their balance to be managed, each institution teaches different subjects so that there is no need to co-ordinate the teaching staff or to sign learning agreements before the student moves. Marking does not provide problems either as each subject is taught and assessed by one lecturer so that deviations between different lecturers cannot occur within one subject, and probable quality differences between the schools do not distort the marks within a subject.

Model 2: Students start the programme at different universities. The contents of the programme are the same at each university. Students then move to a second and probably even a third university. The programme at the host university might also be mandatory or include options. Box 4 describes the draft of a European Master in Corporate Finance, a joint curriculum project initiated by universities in Wroclaw, Marseille, Thessaloniki, and Valencia, and funded by the European Union.

As individual modules are simultaneously taught at different universities by different lecturers who all refer to the same syllabus, a continuous co-ordination between the lecturers is crucial. Possible deviations from the joint syllabus have to be discussed, the question of a joint assessment to be answered. Quality control, in particular the quality of teaching, comes to the fore – a difficult question in case of universities with different histories and teaching cultures.

Moreover, the marking systems have to be coordinated. According to the current law in the universities' states, the national diplomas must be awarded based on national marks; issuing a joint degree exclusively based on ECTS marks seems not to be possible.

Box 5: European Master of Corporate Finance – Draft January 2006

Entry Requirement: Bachelor Level			
(1st Year)	Core Subjects	Finance	1. Banking and Insurance Business in Europe 2. Corporate Finance 3. European Financial Markets and Instruments
		Accounting	4. Group Accounting 5. International Accounting 6. Strategic Managerial Accounting
		General Subjects	7. Economics of European Monetary Union 8. International Taxation 9. Quantitative Methods in Finance 10. Research for Business
(2nd Year)	Specialization Subjects	1. Ethics and Cultures in Finance 2. International Finance 3. Valuation and Risk Management	
	Electives	4. Auditing 5. Behavioral Finance 6. Corporate Financial Restructuring 7. Financial Modeling 8. Instruments of Strategic and Operational Controlling 9. Law and Taxation 10. Non-Profit Organizations Accounting and Finance 11. Project Management 12. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Finance 13. University-specific Elective I 14. University-specific Elective II	
	Thesis	Master Thesis	

Source: Akademia Ekonomiczna im. Oskara Langego we Wroclawiu (Wroclaw University of Economics)

Model 3: The third alternative embodies a more liberal approach and may therefore be feasible in double degree programmes only. Students study at their home and at one or even two host universities. The participating universities' curricula are similar but not equal. Students are allowed to transfer core courses – usually via Erasmus learning agreements – and add options to this core curriculum. The validation of the partner universities' modules focuses on learning outcomes and contents. The initial input of the programme leaders and boards of examiners is high, as each module must be analysed in order to identify the similarities. Afterwards, the administrative load corresponds to that of a normal Erasmus exchange.

**Box 6: Master of Arts International Business
FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences**

Semester IV	Master Thesis (includ. Master Seminar)					
ECTS: 30	ECTS: 30					
Semester III	Applied Project (Practical Experience)	Option 1 (abroad)	Option 2 (abroad)	Option 3 (abroad)	Option 4 (abroad)	Option 5 (abroad)
ECTS: 30	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5
Semester II	Applied Project (Practical Experience)	Business Policy	International Finance	International Marketing and Export Managmt	International Business Law	Foreign Language
ECTS: 30	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5
Semester I	Leadership & Organisation	Quantitative Analytical Methods	Qualitative Analytical Methods	International Accounting	International Business Environment	Foreign Language
ECTS: 30	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5	ECTS: 5
ECTS Total: 120						

The applied projects are carried out in companies or consist of case studies assigned by the programme board.

The Master of Arts in International Business at FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences may serve as an example. The study programme has already been accredited by the national authorities and consists of 9 compulsory class modules (55 ECTS credits), five business and two language options (35 credits), two applied projects (10 credits) and the Master thesis (30 credits). Students who start their studies in Mainz will have completed their compulsory modules before they go abroad after the first year so that the classes they take abroad and the Master thesis can be transferred back to Mainz easily. As the compulsory class modules comprise units as “International Marketing”, “International Business Environment”, “Business Policy”, and “Research Methods”, which are also mandatory in the partner universities’ programmes, students may easily transfer into the programme abroad. In some circumstances, they take the host university’s mandatory units during the stay abroad, and are then able to be awarded both degrees. As some partner universities require different core modules to Mainz, the double degree students’ work load may increase to around 130 or even 140 ECTS credits.

Whereas the models 1 and 3 allow the students to benefit from the individual university's strengths by taking modules which are not even offered at home, model 2 tends to more uniformity. However, the universities may also offer their students specialities and specialists by using the Socrates teacher mobility programme. Currently, the consortium around Wroclaw University of Economics discusses the question how they can use teacher mobility in order to compensate for differences in expertise concerning some of the subjects. This will definitely improve the co-operation between the schools and also help them to internationalise their other programmes by encouraging visiting lecturers to give classes to non-JDD students, too. In the long-term, however, it has to be considered that teacher mobility is more difficult to finance and that individual experts might not be that interested in travelling to several universities each year. The collaboration may, therefore, develop more into structures comparable with model 1 or 3 which allows a consortium to naturally combine their strengths.

4.2.2 Recognition: How to Apply ECTS?

The question of ECTS application is not exclusively related to JDD programmes; but within them, the proper application plays a crucial role for the programme's success. This is particularly true for double degree programmes based on student exchange (model 3). Two questions have to be discussed:

- the orientation towards learning outcomes and competences versus lecture contents,
- differing work loads.

Traditionally, boards of examiners and Socrates coordinators used to compare the contents of modules in order to decide which of the units taken abroad is being recognised as equivalent to the own module. A more modern, although more difficult, approach compares the learning outcomes. This allows not only the identification of similarities and differences in contents but also a comparison of the level and depth of different programmes.⁴⁴ Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do

⁴⁴ Cf. Adam, Stephen, Using Learning Outcomes. United Kingdom Bologna Seminar July 2004, Edinburgh; pp. 23-24.
http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/BoI_sem/Seminars/040701-02Edinburgh/040620LEARNING_OUTCOMES-Adams.pdf

as a result of a learning activity.⁴⁵ Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills, or attitudes. In contrast to the description of lectures' contents, learning outcomes describe the competences students have acquired in the learning process. They are more learning and student orientated and less focused on the teachers' inputs. The use of learning outcomes and competences, thus, allows to differentiate between the focus on theoretical knowledge of tools and their application. Box 7 gives an example for a class on export management.

Differing work loads may become a major obstacle to international mobility unless the participating universities show a flexibility originally not built into the ECTS system. For example, Swedish universities use to teach four modules per semester so that one module corresponds to 7.5 ECTS credits whereas universities in more Southern parts of Europe tend to split the semester's work load into smaller units. Thus, a university in Spain may offer six modules of 5 ECTS credits each. A Swedish double degree student may wish to transfer all 30 ECTS credits of a semester into the Spanish programme; however, how can the Spanish university recognise the 30 ECTS credits and at the same time use them for their own degree with six different marks? Here, boards of examiners need to be extremely creative. They have to analyse the Swedish courses and split the learning outcomes in six Spanish modules.

The less rigid their own requirements are and the more options a study programme allows, the easier such a split may be. London South Bank University and FH Mainz – University of Applied Sciences, for example, agreed to transfer two English units (7.5 credits each) as three German options (5 credits each). The labelling of the options depends on the learning outcomes of the English units and has to be specified before the programme starts so that any uncertainty for students (and boards of examiners) is excluded.

⁴⁵ In a very general form, the Dublin descriptors describe learning outcomes;
<http://www.jointquality.org/>

Box 7: Example of Contents and Learning Outcomes/Competences:
Export Management Class

<p>Description of Contents</p> <p>Definition of Exports and Imports The Role of Exports/Imports for the Company The Export Contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict of Laws - Contract Provisions - Incoterms <p>Export Risks and Hedging Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payment Conditions: L/C and others - Bank Guarantees - Export Credit Insurance - Hedging Exchange Rate Risk <p>Export Finance Arbitration</p>	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students <u>know</u> the definitions of exports and imports. - They <u>understand</u> the role of exports and imports for the strategic positioning of a company. - They <u>understand</u> the specific risks a company faces in cross-border trade. - They <u>understand how</u> the selection of applicable law and major import provisions, including Incoterms, are used to manage the specific risks of export/import businesses. - They <u>know how to apply</u> hedging tools related to cross-border-trade. - They <u>know</u> the major export finance instruments and <u>are able to calculate</u> typical export finance models in the capital goods industry. - They <u>know about</u> arbitration procedures.
<p>Comments</p> <p>The Socrates coordinators at the receiving institutions do not know whether students had just to learn the different definitions and hedging instruments by heart, whether they are able to describe them, whether they are able to apply them to business cases, or whether they had critically analysed their application in different business environments, for example their different roles in the USA (dollar-environment) and in Europe.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <p>The Socrates coordinators at the receiving institutions are able to judge whether the knowledge of the students is more descriptive or whether they are able to apply their knowledge to cases. They even know that the students are able to calculate the typical (complicated) export finance model in the capital goods industry. They also know that the critical analysis of how these models and instruments are used in different environments was not learned and that arbitration procedures have not been applied to real world cases.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Recognition</p> <p>Often enough, curricula differ to this extent that contents and learning objectives are not covered in the same type of lectures. Thus, for example, parts of the above described student competences may have been acquired in lectures on “International Business Law”, “Export Marketing”, “International Business Environment” or even “International Finance”. An incoming student who might have taken such courses at the home university and covered the described topics within these different modules, may nevertheless be entitled to the credits of the receiving institution even though s/he had never taken the subject “Export Management”.</p>	

The opposite problem may occur when students take modules abroad which cover the same contents but, in the national context of the partner university, count for less credits. Thus, for example, a module “Negotiation interculturelle”

in France may count for 4 ECTS credits whereas “Intercultural Communication” counts for 6 credits in the Dutch partner university. Despite the different labels, the learning outcomes may be similar so that the four credit points earned in France may be easily transferred into the Dutch 6-credits module. The Dutch coordinator may decide that the student has to submit an additional piece of work – for example, a case study on Intercultural Communication – with a work load of 60 hours (2 ECTS credits). In this case, the assignment may cover aspects which have not be covered in France as intensively as they would have at the Dutch partner institution. Alternatively, the Dutch coordinator may also transfer another French module which counts for more credits than the similar module in the Netherlands so that the total transfer of ECTS credits is balanced.

To a large extent, this flexibility depends on the boards of examiners at the participating universities. It is, therefore, crucial for the success of JDD programmes that the board of examiners is included in negotiating the exchange agreements.

4.2.3 Academic Calendars: An obstacle to Integration?

Unfortunately, academic calendars differ dramatically from country to country. Academic years may start as early as in August (in Sweden and in the USA, for example) or as late as in October (in Spain and Germany, for example). In some countries, there are only short breaks between the first and the second semester so that the second semester starts in January (USA) or in early February (for example, Sweden, Baltic countries, some French *écoles supérieures*) whereas in Germany the second semester at universities of applied sciences does not start before March and even in mid April at traditional universities. Thus, German students usually start their second semester shortly before it ends in the United States, Scandinavia and the Baltics.

These differences in academic years form a significant barrier to student mobility. Some examples:

- German and Spanish students are still studying in their winter semester or sitting in the semester’s final examinations when the spring semester at some partner universities has already started. For these students, a one-semester stay in Scandinavia, the Baltics, and the United States is only possible during the fall/winter semester.

- Vice versa, students whose home university's spring semester starts in January or early February, face difficulties to spend the fall/winter semester in countries where the first semester does not terminate before the end of January or even in February as they have to return before the examination period ended.
- As a consortium, CIDDD tried to establish a two-weeks intensive programme on cross-cultural management for students of all member universities. The attempt failed mainly because no two-weeks period of time could be found which would have allowed the participation of students from at least 50 percent of the consortium's member universities.⁴⁶

On the other hand, the asynchronous calendars may be used to facilitate the teacher exchange. Fachhochschule Mainz – University of Applied Sciences and Coastal Carolina University included this opportunity into their exchange programme: German professors have taught in South Carolina in September and American colleagues have taught in Germany during May and June.

The question to be discussed between the partner universities is to which extent the differences in their academic calendars are an impediment to mobility and joint management of the programme. In case of “stand-alone” (see 4.1.3) programmes with small student numbers, it might even be recommendable to run the programmes simultaneously and to use schedules which differ from the local academic calendar. In case of “integrated” (see 4.1.3) programmes, this would be impossible so that other provisions have to be made. Such an arrangement could be that students from one country take their semester's final examinations at the same time as their fellows at home but physically sitting them at the host university.

4.3 Quality Assurance

The question to which extent JDD programmes affect quality assurance matters has not yet been thoroughly discussed. On the one hand, the European

⁴⁶ Although the EC Commission proposed the co-ordination of academic calendars, no harmonisation has been achieved so far; cf. Proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, young volunteers, teachers and trainers, COM (1999) 708 final, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/1999/com1999_0708en01.pdf, p.10.

University Association (EUA) published ten “Golden Rules” for new Joint Master Programmes in 2004 which are extremely helpful but do not address the question of formal accreditation.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the “Europeanisation” of quality assurance and accreditation is still at the beginning of a long process with ENQA, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, facilitating the harmonisation process. In 2005, ENQA published the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”.⁴⁸ ENQA distinguishes between internal and external quality assurance. The first deals with the universities’ internal procedures to monitor and evaluate the quality of its programmes whereas the latter focuses on accreditation rules.

The standards and guidelines do not include provisions for the accreditation of JDD programmes, however. The following discussion, therefore, does not follow the ENQA’s distinction into internal and external quality assurance but focuses on issues directly related to the implementation of JDD programmes. These issues concern the accreditation of the programme (4.3.1), the selection of students (4.3.2), the institutions’ infrastructure for student mobility (4.3.3), programme and assessment organisation (4.3.4) and the question of joint criteria for monitoring and evaluating the programme (4.3.5).

4.3.1 Accreditation of the Programme

As a minimum requirement, the JDD consortium should ensure that all participating universities and their programmes are officially accredited in their home country. Within Europe, the agencies should be officially recognised and follow the ENQA standards. The JDD partners may even stipulate that the accreditation agencies must be ENQA members.

In addition, they might wish for international accreditation agencies such as AACSB, AMBA, EMFD (EQUIS/EPAS) to certify the schools and/or programmes. International accreditation might be given a higher priority by private business schools than by public universities. The reasons may be that many of them are newcomers in the market and their quality is largely unknown

⁴⁷ EUA, Developing Joint Master Programmes for Europe, Results of the EUA Joint Masters Project (March 2002 – Jan 2004), Brussels 2004, pp. 23-24.

⁴⁸ ENQA, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Helsinki 2005, <http://www.enqa.net>

to the public. The fact that some of the private business schools are competing in an environment where public institutions offer similar high quality programmes but with restrictive admission policies and low or no tuition fees leads to the question of why students choose private institutions at all. Due to market pressures and their relative organisational freedom some of them tend to a more cost-related than quality-driven staff policy. Thus, quality-orientated institutions use the accreditation as a quality criterion and competitive advantage.

On the other hand, public institutions are obliged to follow clearly defined academic recruitment criteria but sometimes lack motivated administrators and teaching staff; professors might be more interested in research than in students' learning progress. As long as public institutions face more applicants than they can take, the pressure to become more market orientated is not given. It can be expected, however, that their interest in additional accreditation certificates will increase as soon as they have to compete for students.

Whatever the individual university's motivation might be, it is crucial to clarify the accreditation requirements each of the participating universities expects the partners to fulfil before starting the negotiations on JDD programmes.

In case of double degree programmes, the accreditation rules are that the programme has to be accredited in each university's home country. The accreditation agency evaluates the programme to the extent it leads to the national diploma but does not evaluate whether the offered programme fulfils the requirements of the partner university's degree. Thus, a double degree programme has to be accredited in both partner universities' countries.

In case of a joint degree programme, the legal situation is still unclear. As only one degree is awarded by two partners in two countries, a trans-national accreditation is needed.⁴⁹ As some of the national agencies have already begun with cross-border activities, such a trans-national accreditation seems feasible. The unsolved issues are more related to the legal recognition of the accreditation. As long as these uncertainties prevail, at least one of the partners

⁴⁹ Up to now, those parts of the programmes that are studied abroad are often not covered by the quality check of the national accreditation, cf. Joint Quality Initiative, Amsterdam Workshop „Quality Assurance and Joint Degrees“ (No 5), September 2004, http://www.jointquality.org/content/nederland/workshop_5_draft_15_september.doc

should therefore award a national degree: “In order to safeguard the student's legal protection, a joint degree should be arranged so that the degree obtained by the student belongs to at least one country's official degree system.”⁵⁰ Thus, joint degree projects risk degenerating to pure franchise projects in which the degree awarding institution is the senior partner imposing its quality assurance criteria and its philosophy upon the junior partners.

ENQA's current “Transnational European Evaluation Project” which aims at identifying means and common elements for quality assurance in Erasmus Mundus funded Joint Master Programmes (TEEP II) and will publish its results later this year, might serve as a catalyst for further improvement.⁵¹

4.3.2 Eligibility: Which students?

Universities are not completely free in their decisions about how to recruit and select students. Their rights to select students differ dramatically between countries and also between private and public institutions. Some may base their student intake on interviews, others select according to marks (or SAT⁵²) only, and others may have to take all applicants as long as they fulfil the minimum requirements. As this may create significant differences in the average academic aptitude and performance between the partner universities students' groups, the admission to JDD programmes must be addressed in the programme design.

In particular, programmes at Master level should clearly define the eligibility. Is only one institution responsible for student admission or are there parallel admissions in different countries? Which type of first degree is needed for admission? Is the degree itself sufficient or is admission to the Master programme limited to students with outstanding or above-average results? Is a score test, for example GMAT, required? Are additional language skills required? Is the applicant's motivation tested in interviews? Is professional work experience required and if so, how many years? If there are parallel intakes in

⁵⁰ Ministry of Education (Finland), Development of International Joint Degrees and Double Degrees: Recommendations of the Ministry of Education, 11 May 2004, http://www.minedu.fi/opm/koulutus/yliopistokoulutus/bologna/JointDegrees_recommendations.pdf

⁵¹ The results will most likely be published on ENQA's project side on www.enqa.net.

⁵² Scholastic Assessment Test – used by US universities and colleges for ranking applicants.

different countries: Are the requirements the same in all countries or do the partner institutions allow deviations?

The criteria to be agreed upon must fit the programme's goals. Master studies in quantitative finance will most likely define a minimum of mathematics, statistics and econometrics as prerequisites for admission while International Business programmes may require proficiency in more than one language.

4.3.3 Infrastructure for Student Mobility

Within national accreditation, a university's infrastructure is seen as one of the evaluation criteria. This includes among others – such as class room equipment, computer facilities and libraries – provisions for administering student exchange and the counselling of internationally mobile students. These provisions play a dominant role in JDD programmes, of course. All members of such a consortium should, therefore, make sure that the information and counselling of the JDD students takes place in a well-organised way. In particular “integrated” (see 4.1.3) and double degree programmes which allow students to opt for different pathways abroad require a counselling process which gives sufficient space to the students' decision making. Academic, social and administrative aspects of the counselling might be handled by separate institutions within the university or concentrated in the faculty's international relations office.

Quality assurance must, therefore, include the question, how students are informed and prepared for the stay abroad. The preparation should not be limited to information about the study abroad period only, but also include language training and questions of cross-cultural communication.

4.3.4 Programme and Assessment Organisation

Within the organisation of JDD programmes, the question of assessment and re-sits is extremely important for students. In some countries, all modules have to be passed before the student progresses to the next year. Universities regularly organise an examination period for re-sits – often after the summer break – and after successful participation allow students to pass to the next year. Those who fail again or cannot participate, for example due to health reasons, will either leave the university or repeat the whole year. In other

countries, universities allow students to continue their studies and to re-sit examinations in the next semester. Then it may happen that a student has already passed the whole study programme with the exception of one lower semester module.

For JDD students, this organisational difference may create a nightmare. A student who failed or was ill at the arranged date of examination, will regularly have to re-sit this examination at a date after having already left the country. This forces the student to travel back in order to take the re-sit examinations which leads to unnecessary travelling costs and to disruptions in the learning process.⁵³

It is also a question of fairness that students are able to re-sit examinations under similar conditions and as often as their fellow students who study the same modules at another university. Even though the consortium may try to provide for common rules, national laws may make this impossible. Likewise, how similar or different are the provisions for fraud and plagiarism?

Other issues to be discussed are complaint procedures, the participation of partner universities' academics in assessments, individual breaks due to illness, pregnancy, parental leave, long-term internships or gainful occupation.

4.3.5 Monitoring and Evaluating the Programme

As there are at least two institutions from different countries involved in JDD programmes, the issue of monitoring and evaluation creates a complexity much higher than in a purely national context. Internal quality procedures of one institution might be unknown in another or, in extreme cases, even violate national law in the partner university if applied there.⁵⁴

Thus, it is extremely important that the participating institutions agree upon a common standard of quality assurance. ENQA's standards and guidelines 1.1 to 1.7⁵⁵ are helpful but need to be specified:

⁵³ In the author's classes, it happened more than once that in the midst of the semester, Spanish students had to travel back to their home universities in order to re-sit examinations and thus, could not present their essays to the class as scheduled.

⁵⁴ The publication of teachers' evaluations which is common in some countries, would most likely violate privacy laws in Germany, for example.

⁵⁵ ENQA, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Helsinki 2005, <http://www.enqa.net>, pp. 15-19.

- The policy statements of the participating institutions must be comparable and should not comprise contradictory objectives. In particular, the relationship between teaching and research has to be addressed as soon as research-orientated universities and universities of applied sciences co-operate in JDD programmes. In addition, the organisation of the quality assurance system has to be discussed. Some universities might have outsourced parts of the feedback system, so that the implementation of JDD issues might be difficult.
- The consortium may create their own JDD monitoring group. The group's rights and degree of autonomy has to be agreed upon. Students, lecturers and administrators in all institutions must be asked about the programmes outcomes and implications for the rest of the institutions.
- Student feed-back on individual lecturers are likely to be carried out within the national context. The question occurs, however, whether the national standards of teacher evaluation are sufficient for JDD programmes. In addition to "national" criteria, the teachers' own experience in cross-cultural communication, teaching a culturally diverse student group and international business might contribute to a positive learning outcome. Participating universities should give teachers in JDD programmes opportunities to develop and extend their international teaching capacity, for example by privileged access to language courses and Socrates Teacher Mobility. They should also have the means to remove poor teachers from the JDD programme.
- Even though the university's quantity and quality of learning resources meet the academic standards, the commitment to JDD programmes may in addition require information about and from the partner universities' countries, for example in form of journals and books. Moreover, international students often use not only those sources available at the host university and in the host university's language but also from their home country. Programme evaluation should also focus on the question whether lecturers and local programme directors accept such international sources even though they do not speak the students' native language.

This list can only show which type of issues the monitoring and evaluation of JDD programme have to raise in addition to the already complex “national” standards. It is by far not complete but, together with all the other issues discussed in this paper, might help to develop a check-list for new JDD programmes. A first draft of such a check-list is attached in the Appendix.⁵⁶

5 Conclusion

As the discussion in this paper showed, JDD programmes were already implemented before the Bologna process was initiated. Their major purpose was to increase the employability of internationally mobile students in a world in which higher education systems differed fundamentally from country to country. After the implementation of the Bologna process, the discussion on JDD programmes has changed its focus. Joint degrees came to the fore whereas double degrees – which still play a major role in reality – seem to be losing ground.

Both joint and double degrees have in common that a variety of issues, which are irrelevant in programmes with only one national diploma, have to be addressed. The fundamental decisions range from the definition of undergraduate and postgraduate to financial issues. Curriculum development may offer students the opportunity to combine the strengths of different universities provided that the recognition of courses is properly arranged and differences in academic calendars tackled. Issues around quality assurance are still not solved; the European initiatives to develop a framework will bring more clarity in the near future.

The discussion in this paper followed the general line of the debate in Europe where joint and double degree programmes are dealt with jointly. This seems to be necessary as European politicians, academics and practitioners still do not distinguish clearly between both forms. On the other hand, this could also be a major weakness of this paper. Although both forms contribute to the formation of a European Higher Education Area, the history and the underlying philosophies may be different. Joint degree programmes require a joint curriculum development and a very close co-operation of the partner institutions

⁵⁶ For up-dated check-lists, see the consortium’s web page www.CIDD.org

during the dissemination of the programme, and, therefore, are by definition newly established programmes. Double degree programmes may also be built upon existing programmes with already intensive student exchange. Therefore, most double degree programmes focus on student exchange.

In addition, many double degree programmes have been seen as the only legally feasible way and as a second-best solution as long as there was no joint or single pan-European degree available. It is still too early to judge whether the attempts of the European actors in Higher Education to facilitate the introduction of joint degrees will in the long-run displace double degree arrangements or whether joint and double degree programmes will be applied as closely related but nevertheless alternative approaches to international university education.

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Appendix

CHECK LIST

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?

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

“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?

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

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)?

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

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?

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

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?

JOINT AND DOUBLE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

A CHECK LIST

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, 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: