

Lessons on Double Degree Programs from CAMPUS Asia Monitoring

Higher Education Evaluation Center of the Ministry of Education
(HEEC)

National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education
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Korean Council for University Education
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Introduction

Today, internationalization is a very important issue for universities in East Asia, including China, Japan, and Korea. Many universities aim to raise their level of education and research to international standards. There are also many universities that are proactively sending their students to study abroad and accepting international students.

Double degree programs are one of the major focuses of internationalization. A double degree program offers a degree program in cooperation with a university in another country, with both universities respectively awarding degrees to students. While enrolled, students have the advantage of taking classes not only at their own university, but also at a partner university in a foreign country, allowing them to receive a distinctive education at both universities.

This is why a growing number of universities have shown interest in starting a double degree program. The government has also recommended double degree programs as an important means of university internationalization.

Soon after having decided to start a double degree program, though, some universities may find themselves unsure about where to start. There may be many questions to be asked: How do we find partner universities? How do we prepare for the program? How do we collaborate with each other in running the program? What about other basic considerations? What kind of on-campus department do we need to organize? How many people do we need? How much will it cost to run the program? Even such basic information can often be unclear.

Since 2011, the quality assurance institutions of the three countries, the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE), the Higher Education Evaluation Center (HEEC) of China's Ministry of Education, and the Korean Council for Universities Education (KCUE), have been conducting monitoring as a quality assurance initiative for CAMPUS Asia, an international joint education program launched by the governments of the three countries in 2010 to promote inter-university exchange with quality assurance. The purpose of the monitoring is to understand the required quality of international joint education programs, including double degree programs, and to identify good practices. This publication has been prepared based on the insights related to double degree programs obtained through such activities.

Lastly, we would like to give our heartfelt gratitude to all those who provided advice and support in creating this publication.

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About the Monitoring Criteria

Some topics in this publication are listed with reference numbers, such as “Criterion 1-1.” These criteria represent the criteria (see table below) from Monitoring+ (2018-2019), the latest initiative conducted for CAMPUS Asia Monitoring. The Monitoring+ Report* published in December 2019 introduces many examples of outstanding efforts made by participating universities in China, Japan, and Korea for each of these criteria. Please refer to the report for good practices related to the topics.

Monitoring Criteria	
1. Objectives and Implementation	3. Student Support
1-1. Establishment of Objectives and Sharing	3-1. Student Admission
1-2. Implementation System	3-2. Support for Learning and Living
2. Collaborative Development of Academic Program	4. Added-value of the Collaborative Education Program (Outcomes)
2-1. Curriculum Integration	4-1. Student Satisfaction
2-2. Academic Staff and Education	4-2. Credit Transfer and Degree Awarding
	5. Continuous Quality Improvement

(*) *CAMPUS Asia Monitoring+ Joint Monitoring Report: Good Practices from CAMPUS Asia Consortium among China, Japan and Korea (2019)*

https://www.niad.ac.jp/english/campusasia/monitoring_plus.html#report

Case Studies

This publication introduces examples from the CAMPUS Asia Monitoring+ Joint Monitoring Report as case studies related to the topics. Given below is a brief description of programs introduced as examples.

Program	Participating Universities		
	China	Japan	Korea
Collaborative Education Program in Marine Science and Technology, Based on “China-Japan-Korea Version” of ERASMUS / OQEANOUS	Shanghai Ocean University	Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology	Korea Maritime and Ocean University
Program for Nurturing Medical Research Leaders to Solve Global Health Problems / NMRL	Peking University Tsinghua University Shanghai Jiao Tong University Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine	Osaka University	Yonsei University
Sustainable Urban Architectural Environment in Asia / SUAE Asia	Tongji University	Kyushu University	Pusan National University
China-Japan-Korea Intercollegiate Cooperative Project for Nurturing Leading Infrastructure Engineers / NLIE	Shandong University	Nagasaki University	Sungkyunkwan University
Empowering Next Generations of East Asian Leaders for Global Peace / ENGAGE	Peking University	Waseda University	Korea University

Date of Information

The data, regulations, and other information used within this publication are based on information current at the time in 2020.

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1

What Should Be Considered When Designing a Double Degree Program?

>>Criterion 1-1

To start a double degree program, it is first necessary to find a foreign partner university to run the program with.

At first glance, this does not seem so difficult. Today, the internationalization of higher education is being advocated in many countries, and many universities seek to partner with overseas universities. We could soon find a partner from such universities after some searching.

Let us take a moment and think... Is developing a double degree program an end in itself? This should not be the case. You intend to achieve a higher goal through a double degree program, and a double degree program is just the means to reach that.

First, it is necessary to think again about what internationalization means for your university and what the double degree program is for. For example, let's say you want to stimulate the research activities of your university by deepening the research partnership with the other university through a double degree program. In this case, the partner university should at least as good as your university in terms of the level of research, otherwise you cannot expect any benefits.

Or maybe you want to send more students from your university to study abroad than before with a double degree program. In this case, you need to choose a country or university that will appeal to the students of your university. Otherwise, no student would be seeking to study abroad after the double degree program is launched.

Universities generally have their own university-wide goals and strategies for internationalization, either separately or as part of the overall plan of university administration. If the purpose of a double degree program are not in a direction consistent with the university-wide objectives, the achievement of the program is likely to have limited effect on the university. Alignment with university-wide goals and strategies is an important perspective in designing a double degree program.

As you can see, when developing a double degree program, you need to think carefully about its goals. Some might say that this is rather obvious but it is often overlooked. In fact, there have been cases where double degree programs started in an unintentional way because of the relationship with the partner university.

In order for a double degree program to be successful in the long run, it must be conducive to a well-defined vision that is in line with the university-wide international strategy.

Key points >>

The first important step is to clearly define the goals, stating what the double degree program intends to achieve.

2

How Do You Find a Partner University for the Program?

You will be collaborating with the partner university of the double degree program for an extended period in education and research. As mentioned earlier, it is important to consider whether you can expect benefits from the university you are considering partnering up with in terms of education and research at your university. It is also important to consider whether that university can be trusted as a partner in terms of the administration and operation of the program.

In running educational programs, problems can frequently arise in many ways and at various levels, from views on educational policy to problems with individual student visas and housing. This should not be a surprise, considering that the partner universities are in countries with different systems and cultures. It may be helpful to arrange in advance between both parties on how to deal with issues surrounding the operation should be agreed upon in advance between the partners. Nevertheless, no matter how thoroughly the arrangements are, it is impossible to cover all the various problems that may arise in reality.

In the end, every time a problem arises, the partners should consult with each other and work together to solve it. What becomes essential here is a trusting relationship between the partners. It gives a sense of security that your partner university will take good care of your side even if something happens.

If you think about it that way, it would be wise to choose a university with which your university already has a certain relationship as a partner for your double degree program. Indeed, many of the current double degree programs were developed from earlier relationships with partner universities, such as an exchange of students through a previous partnership, or a close collaboration between some faculties, departments, or graduate schools or majors.

This does not mean, of course, that there is no other way to find a partner university. In some countries, public organizations make lists of higher education institutions in their countries and provide them externally in order to facilitate the “matchmaking” of double degree program partners. It is also a good idea to proactively use such resources.

Key points >> Double degree programs are only possible with reliable partner universities.

3

What Are the Requirements for Double Degree Programs?

In a double degree program, universities in the home country and overseas discuss the implementation of educational programs and credit transfer, and mutually award degrees to each other's students. Since it involves the awarding of degrees, one may think that there would be a lot of requirements and regulations for the establishment of a double degree program.

In fact, as far as Japan's side is concerned, this is not too much of a concern (although there may be country-specific regulations on the part of partner universities).

In Japan, double degree programs with foreign universities are governed by current laws and regulations, such as the School Education Act and the Standards for the Establishment of Universities, and there are no laws or regulations specific to double degree programs (Table 1). For example, credit transfer is implemented within the current Standards for the Establishment of Universities and Graduate Schools, which stipulate that the maximum number of credits to be transferred is 60 for undergraduate students and 15 for graduate students (Table 2).

Another official Japanese document on double degrees is the Guidelines for Building International Joint Diploma Programs Including Double and Joint Degree Programs (November 2014), which was established by the Working Group on the Internationalization of Universities, Central Council for Education. The Guidelines, on the one hand, provide detailed regulations based on the legal system for joint degrees, since approval from the government is required for the establishment of a program. On the other hand, for double degree programs, the Guidelines only refer to the basic idea of "promoting cooperation through agreements that are one step ahead of mere credit transfer agreements" and some points to keep in mind for administration (Table 3).

As regulations governing double degree programs, in China, there is "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools." Korea has "Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act," stating that no approval is required to implement a joint program including a double degree as long as the partner university is licensed by the competent ministry or accredited by a quality assurance agency in the country concerned while guaranteeing the quality of education. The system design of the program is also based on the agreement between the universities, as far as it complies with the Higher Education Law which stipulates basic matters regarding credits and degrees.

Table 1: Laws, Regulations, and Official Guidelines Concerning Double Degree Programs in China, Japan, and Korea

	China	Japan	Korea
Laws and regulations related to double degree programs	Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running School	School Education Act; Standards for the Establishment of Universities; Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools, etc.	Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act
Laws and regulations established specifically for double degree programs	None	None	None
Government and other official guidelines concerning double degree programs	None	Guidelines for Building International Joint Diploma Programs Including Double- and Joint-Degree Programs (2014)	None

Table 2: Maximum Number of Transfer Credits Allowed in China, Japan, and Korea

		China	Japan	Korea
Undergraduate	Maximum number of transfer credits allowed	None	60	Three-fourths of credits required to complete the program
	Number of credits required to complete the program	None	124 or more (Except for courses related to medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or veterinary medicine.)	120 or more (Except for courses related to medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or veterinary medicine.)
Graduate school	Maximum number of transfer credits allowed	None	15	Three-fourths of credits required to complete the program
	Number of credits required to complete the program	None	30 or more	60 or more (Master and Doctoral Programs.)
Laws and regulations governing the maximum number of transfer credits (entity)		None	Standards for the Establishment of Universities; Standards for the Establishment of Graduate Schools, etc.	Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act

Table 3: Institutional Differences between Joint Degrees and Double Degrees

	Joint Degrees	Double Degrees
Degree	Both universities jointly issue one degree (single degree)	Both universities issue their degrees (two degrees)
Organization	Establish a curriculum (international cooperation curriculum) in the relevant faculty	No regulations
Scale	20% or less of the capacity of the relevant faculty	No regulations
Establishment approval	Necessary	Unnecessary
Minimum number of credits required at both universities (Graduation Requirements)	1/2 or more at your own university, about 1/4 or more at your partner university	No regulations

In running a double degree program, your university will be collaborating in some way with a foreign university. In China, Japan, and Korea, there are no regulations specific to double degree programs. This is because, in a double degree program, the home university and the partner university overseas issue degrees separately. (On the other hand, in a joint-degree program, both universities jointly organize and implement a course of study and issue a single degree).

In other words, universities award degrees on their own, relative to the actions of their partner universities on the foreign side. For example, there are already various regulations, including the School Education Act, regarding the awarding of degrees and the organization of courses in Japan. Therefore, there is no need for a new regulation for double degree programs.

However, this is not to say that running double degree programs is easy without much trouble. Today, we are already in an era where the quality of internationalization is valued over quantity. Many universities are striving to promote value-added and high-quality internationalization. Poorly planned double degree programs would not only be ineffective, but would also end up being costly and time-consuming to run.

Key points >>	In China, Japan, and Korea, there are no specific regulations for double degree programs. Double degree programs are operated within the framework of existing laws and regulations. The method for running the double degree program should be designed based on various agreements between participating universities.
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4

How Does It All Begin for a Double Degree Program?

Currently, there are many double degree programs in China, Japan, and Korea. In general, the current programs tend to be science-related, when in fact, they cover various disciplines of study.

A closer look at the actual process of establishing a double degree program tells that there are not many cases where a target area is decided first and then a program is developed accordingly. In most cases, programs tend to be developed based on a proposal from a degree program of a certain area. For example, an academic staff of certain research area may propose a double degree program to expand cooperation in education with the foreign university that he or she has worked with for many years.

The department or university headquarters receiving the proposal will consider from various aspects whether it is possible or desirable to run a course of study in this area as a double degree program. There are many things to consider, such as funding, personnel, administration, the job market for students, and know-how on internationalization. Once approved, as a result of the review, the double degree program is finally set to sail.

In this case, a course of the study is the foundation of the double degree program. The program is designed in a way that allows students to replace credits to be obtained in the course with credits that can be obtained in a course provided at the partner university. When building on an existing course, the framework of the program is already defined, such as the quality of human resources to nurture through the program, the competencies to be acquired, and the learning outcomes of each subject.

On the other hand, universities can of course take on a more ambitious plan to set up a double degree program from scratch. There is no doubt that it will be quite a challenge to establish a new department or major, as it involves various tasks while requiring coordination with the partner university. It may allow you to incorporate novel educational content not found in existing courses.

Key points >>

The double degree program can be created smoothly if it is developed based on existing degree programs.

5

How Do You Ensure Bilateralism and Reciprocity Between Partner Universities?

A double degree program is a degree program jointly administered by two universities. Both parties will naturally bear the burden equally and fulfill their respective obligations in its operation. Also, students move between the two sides in the form of study abroad, and both sides should be equal in this regard as well. Reciprocity cannot be achieved if it becomes a one-sided relationship where students are sent from only one university and no international students are sent from the other.

The above is a matter that first concerns the idea of double degree programs as collaborative education. However, that is not all. It also leads to the issue of actual burden. Let's say that University A sends 10 students to University B every year under a double degree program, while University B sends no students to University A.

In this case, University B incurs the educational burden for 10 students. If University B also sent 10 students to University A, the labor and expenses would be offset; however, this is not the case because only University A sends students. The burden of the double degree program, then, is imposed on University B. University A, on the other hand, will not only have the burden of 10 students reduced, but it will also enjoy the benefit of being able to use the name of University B under the double degree program.

In other words, this double degree program is operated at University B's expense, and there is not much benefit to run the program for University B. Moreover, if there are further issues such as scholarships and student housing, it can lead more directly to a matter of financial gain and loss.

In fact, student exchange in double degree programs in Japan tend to be one way, meaning that the number of students accepted into Japan greatly exceeds the number of students sent overseas. This is not only an issue for the country as a whole but also, as we have seen above, a serious issue for individual universities that concerns the scale of burden they incur.

When starting a double degree program, it is important to ensure the aforementioned bilateralism and reciprocity in the selection of partner universities and program design. It goes without saying it is important that the two universities continuously secure students for the program in order to maintain substantial reciprocity. Publicity for student recruiting and programs will be essential in gaining engagement from motivated students. At the same time, it is also important for universities to clearly define the required academic standards and screening methods for the program to ensure the quality of students enrolled in the program.

Key points >>

It is important that both universities participate in the program on equal terms, in terms of student exchanges, class offerings, etc.

6

What Agreements Are Made Between Partner Universities?

>>Criterion 1-2

What kind of document should be signed with the other party towards establishing a double degree program?

In Japan and Korea, there are no specific laws or regulations providing required documents. Usually, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is signed between universities upon the launch of a program. It outlines the purpose of the program, the obligations of both parties, the implementation structure, forms of exchange, and other aspects [Case Study 1]. MOU, thus, is the basic document of a double degree program.

However, an MOU alone is not enough to make the program work. Other various agreements are required. What kinds of agreements are needed depends on the program and the discussions among the universities. These can include the requirements of student exchange and the number of students to be exchanged, student recruitment and screening procedures, educational and research plans, student status at the host university, how financial burden is shared, grade evaluation and credit recognition, and quality assurance activities. There are various ways to conclude an agreement. For example, universities can conclude an overall agreement in the form of an MOU and agree on credit transfer and grade evaluation policies in separate documents. Also, in most cases, some kind of agreement on tuition fee is arranged. This is because in a double degree program, it is common to mutually waive tuition between the universities. In addition, some programs may have commitments to provide each other's students with student housing. In this case, it may be necessary to negotiate a special agreement regarding student housing and housing provision.

Case Study 1

Provisions of a MOU

The following provisions are included in the memorandum of understanding of NMRL, a double degree program for "Nurturing Medical Research Leaders to Solve Global Health Problems."

- **Purpose of program** (expected learning outcomes, etc.)
- **Basic requirements** (place of enrollment, attained degrees, etc.)
- **Admission, enrollment and withdrawal** (number of accepted exchange students, years of exchange, provisions for withdrawal, etc.)
- **Coursework and transfer credits** (course/transfer credit structure, language of communication, etc.)
- **Issue / Conferral of Doctorate** (number of required theses and other provisions for awarding degrees, etc.)
- **Financial issues** (tuition waivers, travel expense, support for grants/scholarships, etc.)
- **Intellectual rights** (Handling of research results and patents, etc.)
- **Miscellaneous issues** (provisions declaring reasonable effort to provide financial/administrative support, etc.)

Key points >>

To start the double degree program, the university enters into various agreements, such as MOUs, with the partner university.

7

How Large Should the Program Be?

In China, Japan, and Korea, there is no law or regulation specifically established for double degree programs (although there is a legal provision for joint degrees), so the size of double degree programs, such as the number of students, varies from university to university. Some large universities run an entire department as a double degree program, while others operate double degree programs with even less than ten students.

Double degree programs are much more expensive than regular degree programs. They are also demanding from the perspective of teaching, as universities have to deal with changes in class design, the opening of new courses, student recruitment, and coordination of student exchanges. Given that a double degree programs are jointly operated with partner universities in foreign countries, it is also necessary to consider the communication and transportation costs that come with it. From the managerial standpoint, universities may make a loss from a double degree program if the student quota is set too low. Most universities cannot afford to create many English language courses for just a few students. However, if the student quota is set too high, there might not be enough students to fill the seats.

Similarly, when considering the size of a double degree program, it is important to balance it with the university's intake capacity. In China, Japan, and Korea, international students accepted under a double degree program are basically treated as full-time students (i.e., they will have a double enrollment at their home university and the university in Japan), and they will be included in the intake capacity of their department. In other words, if the number of foreign students in the double degree program is increased, the number of Japanese students to be enrolled will decrease accordingly.

In short, although this may seem somewhat an obvious conclusion, we have to decide on the size of the program by comprehensively examining various factors. Other factors that should be taken into account include the intentions of the partner university (universities that are interested in the managerial aspect tend to seek to expand the size), and your university's internationalization strategy (short-term deficits may be tolerated if the double degree program has a medium- to long-term strategic value).

Another point to add is that there are few universities that run a double degree program on its own. In most cases, double degree programs tend to overlap with exchange programs or are run in line with very short summer school programs. Efficient management can be achieved by having organizations and personnel needed for a double degree program for other international programs as well. This can also be another aspect to be taken into account when planning the size of a double degree program.

Key points >>

The size of the double degree program is determined by various factors, such as cost and intake capacity.

8

How Do You Deal with Systemic Differences?

Universities in different countries have different systems. Some of the systemic differences stem from laws and regulations, while others are rooted in the cultural and customary aspects of the country. Overcoming these differences is a challenge that generally comes with the internationalization of a university. This issue is particularly important in the case of a double degree program, in which universities need to cooperate with each other on a deeper level.

In fact, there are many and varied problems that arise from differences in systems. A good example of this is when there is a difference in the laws and regulations governing higher education between partner universities. For instance, the duration of a master's program may not necessarily be two years in other countries as it is in Japan. In China, the master's program is basically three years. In Korea, it is usually a two-year study (program), but it may be shorter or longer depending on the program. As such, it becomes difficult to decide at which stage of the master's program students should be transferred to and from each other. Also, as a more specific example, when determining the period of enrollment, some universities only count the period in which the student from the partner university physically attends that university (as opposed to also including the period for which the student applied for enrollment).

Variation of academic calendars can also be a source of confusion. As is well known, the academic year in China starts in September as with many countries in Europe and North America, while in Japan, it starts in April, following the academic calendar that is less common internationally. In Korea, the academic year starts in spring like Japan but in the month of March (Fig. 1). Students are usually transferred to and from partner universities during long holidays between semesters, so different academic calendars can make it difficult to schedule sending and returning to Japan in a timely manner. Ideally, a double degree program should allow students to continue their studies smoothly even when they move from one university to another. Thorough discussions may be necessary to coordinate the study period with partner universities following different academic calendars.

Provided below as examples are academic calendars generally followed in China, Japan and Korea. Some universities may adopt a system that does not match these examples. In addition, detailed dates may change from year to year, so please check the official information of each university for the accurate calendar.

China

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Semester	1st Sem.		Second Semester					First Semester				
Quarter	Winter Qtr.		Spring Quarter		Summer Quarter			Autumn Quarter		Winter Quarter		

*Periods indicated in blue represent extended breaks

- *1: There are also universities under the trimester system in addition to the calendar above.
- *2: As Lunar New Year comes variably every year, the start of winter vacation and Second Semester/Spring Quarter varies accordingly.

Japan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Semester	2nd Sem.		First Semester					Second Semester				
Quarter	4th Qtr.		First Quarter		Second Quarter			Third Quarter		Fourth Quarter		

*Periods indicated in blue represent extended breaks

- *1: There are also universities under the trimester system in addition to the calendar above.
- *2: April enrollment is assumed in the calendar above. Some universities permit September and October enrollment in addition to April in order to cater to enrollment of exchange students.
- *3: In addition to the extended breaks indicated in the calendar above, there are two extended national holidays that occur as a result of multiple back-to-back holidays — Golden Week (around May 1) and Silver Week (around the 4th week of September). The duration of the extended holidays vary from year to year. Some universities conduct regular classes during national holidays and these extended national holidays.

Korea

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Semester			First Semester						Second Semester			

*Periods indicated in blue represent extended breaks

- *1: A semester usually consists of 15 weeks and some classes open during summer and winter breaks. Universities can operate on the quarter system or the trimester system under their respective academic regulations.
- *2: While admission at undergraduate level takes place in first semester, admission at postgraduate level is available in both first and second semester. Please note that admission at undergraduate level for foreigners under specific conditions might take place in both first and second semester.

Figure 1: Academic Calendars in China, Japan and Korea

Internships can also be an issue. Many double degree programs incorporate internships as it is a great way for students to gain multicultural experience in corporate and social settings. However, in some countries, internships are considered as work, in which students may only be able to engage to a limited extent under their student visa.

Similarly, university systems may be also different. It is rare for a university and its partner university to have the exact same systems from procedures for taking courses to how final examinations are held. Academic and life support for students can vary from country to country. One university may take extra care for its students while the partner university in another country may take a laissez-faire approach, possibly causing friction between the two sides.

A common difference we hear about double degree programs is the difference in scholarships and accommodation treatment. These basic terms are usually agreed upon in advance between two universities. Nevertheless, some unexpected differences may be found due to circumstances beyond the scope of the agreement.

The differences mentioned here are just the tip of the iceberg. The important question is, how do we overcome such differences? Unfortunately, there is nothing universities running a double degree program can do about issues rooted in national laws and regulations. You could try lobbying for legislative change, but there is little chance of solving the problem overnight. For other issues, all you can do is to either come up with a solution on your own or to negotiate with your partner university to find a solution together.

“Coming up with a solution on your own” may not sound like a very helpful advice, but there may be more you could do than you would expect. For example, a Japanese university that participated in CAMPUS Asia changed its semester system to solve the issue of the academic year, a problem embedded in the national system. By dividing a year into six semesters, this particular university was able to handle students from most of the partner universities, regardless of the differences in their academic calendar. Of course, this was not an easy task, as it was a teaching system reform that involved the entire university. The fact that this university did it is a testimony to its enthusiasm for internationalization.

Key points >>

In running the double degree program, it is necessary to deal with systemic differences between countries.

9

Should the Courses Be Offered in English?

We often come across universities that are interested in starting a double degree program but are reluctant because they find providing classes in English rather difficult. This is a challenge not only for double degree programs, but for the internationalization of universities in Asia in general.

As a matter of fact, double degree programs themselves do not necessarily require classes to be provided in English. A good example is the cultural studies of China. Since the subjects of study are Chinese thought, literature, and history, it is probably best to provide classes in Chinese. In fact, there are double degree programs in other areas of study where classes are offered in the local (non-English) language, including Chinese.

Having said that, there are still challenges that we face (in implementing the program). For example, in the case of cultural studies of China, Chinese universities, as universities in the “home ground” of this research field, would be far ahead of their overseas partner universities in terms of the level of research. It may well be a concern that the level of classes may be disproportionate between the two universities. Besides, while foreign students majoring in Chinese history would greatly prefer to study in the “home ground” country, few Chinese students would think of studying Chinese history abroad. In the end, the mobility of students would be unilateral. When this happens, it is impossible to ensure bilateralism and reciprocity as a double degree program.

Let us now think as to whether it is possible to use the local language as the medium of instruction in fields, such as areas of science or humanities and social sciences including economics and psychology, where learning contents overlap across national borders. The bottom line answer to the question is that it is not impossible but not very realistic. This is because students would have to learn the local language in order to take the course. Given the time and effort required to do this, it would be more efficient to use English which has become a de facto common international language.

As such, it would be more practical to choose English as the language of instruction for double degree programs. Nevertheless, there still remains a problem. The use of English as a classroom language is often seen as a submission to the intellectual hegemony of the Anglo-American world.

In addition, if the partner university is in a non-English-speaking country, it is not rare that the academic staff and students do not have sufficient English proficiency. For universities, it is a challenging task to find ways to enhance learning effectiveness (while coping) with limited language proficiency in English.

The above situation has led an increasing number of universities to focus on enhancing English language education for their students. Some universities also offer English language training for their academic staff.

Key points >>

English is the most practical choice for the language of instruction for the double degree program.

10

What Level of Study, Undergraduate or Graduate?

If you look at the double degree programs that are already in place, you will notice that many of them are run at the graduate level. Which is better to run a double degree program, the undergraduate level or the graduate level? In terms of ease of running a double degree program alone, the first answer that comes to mind would be the graduate level.

The first reason is the small number of credits. For example, in undergraduate education in Japan, students are generally required to be enrolled for at least 4 years and earn at least 124 credits to graduate. In the case of a double degree program, how many of the 124 credits should students obtain from partner universities (i.e. how many courses should be provided in English) depends on the design of the program, but let's say they need to earn nearly half. (On a side note, up to 60 credits earned at foreign universities can be transferred according to the Standards for the Establishment of Universities in Japan. In Korea, based on Enforcement Decree of the Higher Education Act, credits earned at a foreign university can be accepted as credits at your own university up to three-quarters of the credits required for graduation.) If elective courses are also included, then dozens of courses would need to be provided in English. This is very demanding for both the academic staff and the university.

Meanwhile, the number of courses in a master's program is not as large as in an undergraduate program. In Japan, students of a master's program only need to earn 30 or more credits. Even if half of the courses are to be offered in English, the number of such courses would be far less than that for an undergraduate program. In addition, with a doctoral program, the workload for providing English courses will be further reduced as it involves much less coursework.

The second reason concerns the level of English required in class. In general, the more advanced the content of the course is, the easier it is to provide the course in English given that the terms used are more specialized and limited. Conversely, for example, in liberal arts courses, the academic staff are required to have quite a high level of proficiency in English. For example, imagine a critical thinking course where active learning methods are used for discussion. The reality is that there are not many academic staff with such high English proficiency in any university.

For the above reasons, it is easier to run a double degree program in a graduate school. However, there is more to consider than just whether it is easy or not. That is, we need to consider to what extent courses should be taught in English at the undergraduate stage in a non-English-speaking country.

Undergraduate education is the level at which the foundations of any discipline are cultivated. In order to build a solid foundation, it is best to use your own language. If students end up with a vague understanding due to unfamiliarity with the foreign language of instruction, it would be a big obstacle to their later studies. This is even more so because, as mentioned above, undergraduate education requires a higher level of English language proficiency in a way. In fact, studies in countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden have shown that teaching in English at the undergraduate level is less effective.

Thus, a double degree program at the undergraduate level faces challenges that involve both practical

and ideological considerations. At the same time, however, it should be pointed out that the educational benefits of exposure to different cultures are greater the younger the student is. It is always better to strike the iron while it is hot. It is important to implement double degree programs at the undergraduate level while taking into account the above challenges, in order to develop talented people who will lead society in the future.

Key points >>

Double degree programs are easier to run at the graduate level, but more meaningful to run them at the undergraduate level.

11

What Is Meant By Compatibility of Curriculum?

>>Criterion 2-1

Any double degree program should include some components that are academically compatible between partner universities. A double degree program would be impossible if the two universities offered programs or courses that were completely irrelevant to each other. As an extreme example, a Chinese literature program at University A and a materials engineering program at University B cannot make a double degree program. What then is meant by compatibility of curriculum?

First of all, it is important to note that a double degree program is a single educational program that is completed with a degree. As far as that goes, it is no different from any other educational program. Courses are taken in a prescribed sequence to ensure that students acquire knowledge and skills in their major and achieve expected learning outcomes. After a certain number of credits have been earned, students are finally awarded with a degree.

What makes a double degree program unique is that some of the courses required for completion are taken at partner universities. The courses students take while studying abroad should fit well into the overall course of study at their home university. This is because the integrity of the degree program would not be ensured if students were allowed to take whatever courses they wanted to take at the partner university. Here is another extreme example: if a student majoring in an atomic engineering earns credit for a course in Indian philosophy while studying abroad, there is no way that the credit for this course could be transferred to his home university. This is true not only for double degree programs, but also for regular degree programs.

In other words, a double degree program requires a connection between courses in two universities. How the courses are connected varies from program to program. Some programs have a relatively loose connection (Fig. 2-1), while other programs have a well-integrated structure with a high degree of commonality (Fig. 2-2). In the latter case, students should feel as if they are continuing their studies at their home university even when they are studying abroad.

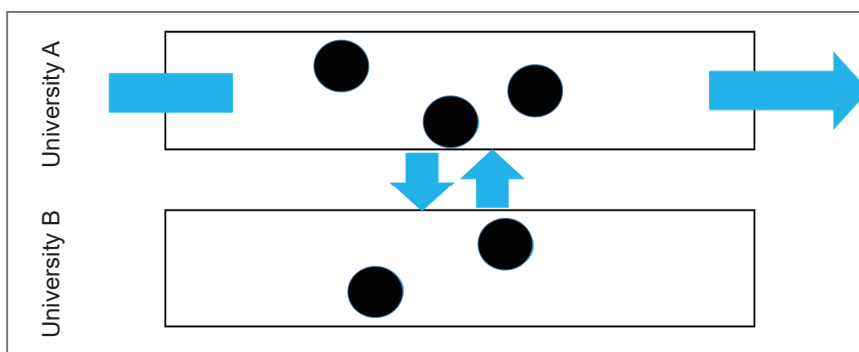


Figure 2-1

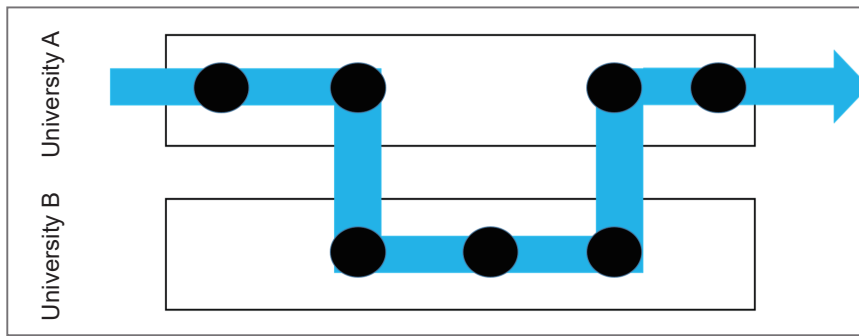


Figure 2-2

Key points >>

Ideally, courses provided at two universities under the double degree program should suit each other within a certain time window as courses of a single-degree program.

12

How Do We Ensure Compatibility of Curriculum?

>>Criterion 2-1

So, what exactly can be done to ensure compatibility of curriculum in a double degree program? In fact, this is the most important and challenging part of establishing a double degree program.

In a nutshell, it is essential to thoroughly align curriculum with partner universities. It is not enough for the courses at the two universities to both referred to as “History.” We should narrow down the curriculum into individual courses that make up both curriculum and see if there is a solid correspondence between them. In doing so, just looking at the course titles will not be good enough. Ideally, you should check the learning content of the course, if necessary, by looking at the materials. For example, even if both Universities A and B have a course titled “Fundamentals of History,” University A may cover the rudiments of deciphering old documents while University B might offer an overview of world history.

With such understanding of the content of individual courses, both universities can determine whether the other’s courses fit well into their own program. Close consultation and coordination with partner universities are also required regarding the operation of credit and degree systems, evaluation methods for grades, and teaching methods, which are essential for the organization of courses. The more thorough this alignment is, the stronger compatibility of the courses will be and the more integrated the program will be. Also, by bringing in the characteristics and strengths of each participating university, it will be possible to add value to the program.

In the fields of engineering and business administration, international academic organizations may recommend and certify the structure and content of courses. In such cases, it is possible to set up courses with strong commonality, as long as both universities adhere to such recommendation.

Alignment can be a time-consuming process. After all, it is a task of coordination with foreign universities with different educational systems and cultures, so it is only natural. If you are starting from scratch, it is best to keep in mind that it is going to take at least a year. Regular reviews will be also required once the program is started.

Now, what do you do if it turns out that the courses of two universities do not suit each other well? Naturally, each university will have to address this issue by modifying the course design or by other means. However, there is also a countermeasure that can be uniquely used for double degree programs, that is, collaboratively developing new courses. Of course, this will call for even more effort. However, if done successfully, you can create a course with a strong educational impact that is in line with the purpose of the program. Not only that, but as a result of such collaboration between the two universities, it will be a symbolic course that represents the program.

This is by no means an idealistic view. In fact, some of the double degree programs of CAMPUS Asia have worked their way through extensive consultation between partner universities from the very beginning of the planning phase and created new textbooks together, which led to mutual exchange of academic staff. Some universities are even willing to work together to develop a core curriculum for these programs [Case Study 2].

Case Study 2

Collaborative curriculum development

In the NLIE (China-Japan-Korea Intercollegiate Cooperative Project for Nurturing Leading Infrastructure Engineers) program, original curriculum was established through meetings at the development phase among the partner universities. The curriculum combines lectures, practicums, field trips, and projects in fields such as civil and environmental engineering that demonstrate the advantage of conducting research and industrial collaboration jointly among the partner universities.

Key points >>

Aligning curriculum between the partner universities at the deepest possible level leads to quality program.

13

Who Are Your Students?

>>Criterion 3-1

Like any other educational programs, the ultimate goal of a double degree program is to develop talents. The goal of developing human resources with the right abilities is the very reason why double degree programs exist.

The approach to a program can be reverse engineered from the qualities of desired human resources. That is, we can decide upon what courses should be included in the curriculum, how credits will be allocated, and what teaching and learning methods will be used. The same applies to screening. The appropriate screening method and criteria can be determined based on what kind of students you are looking to nurture.

Therefore, a double degree program is no different from other educational programs in principle. There are, however, some circumstances unique to double degree programs.

In Japan, for example, double degree programs are not usually large enough to form a single department. In that case, the program would not be able to conduct screening solely for its sake at the time of admission. Typically, applicants are recruited and screened for the program at the end of the first year. In that case, the desired type of students cannot be secured if the requirements of the program conflict with what is taught in the freshman year. An example would be when the program requires English proficiency above a certain level, but students have not received enough English education in their courses.

In order to prevent this from happening, it is necessary to inform students at an early stage about the academic requirements of the double degree program [Case Study 3].

Another issue is the coordination of screening with partner universities. In a double degree program, students from both universities study side by side in a single classroom. So, for example, if there is too much of a difference in academic performance among students, it will interfere with the smooth delivery of classes. This is especially important in the rudimentary courses where students are in the “entry” stage of the program.

To avoid this, it is necessary to thoroughly align the screening criteria and standards between partner universities. That way, both universities can select suitable students for the program. Of course, if the screening criteria could be standardized and examiners could be sent to each other to conduct joint screening, the integrity of the program would be significantly enhanced.

Case Study 3

Creative ways to publicize the program to students

In OQEAANOUS (Collaborative Education Program in Marine Science and Technology, Based on “China-Japan-Korea Version” of ERASMUS), the program is publicized to undergraduate students through various means in order to recruit them for the master’s degree program, including the double degree program. In particular, the short-term exchange program for 4th year students hoping or planning to enter the master’s program provides an opportunity for students to attend lectures in graduate courses and visit research facilities, enabling them to learn early about the preparation needed for graduate-level research.

Key points >>

Securing the right students for the double degree program requires a lot of publicity efforts at the university and coordination with the partner university.

14

What Types of Student Support Services Are Necessary?

>>Criterion 3-2

Multifaceted support from the university is integral to ensure that students are able to concentrate on their studies. The need for such support is even greater in double degree programs involving study abroad.

Student support can be broadly divided into academic support and life support. The former refers to support for academic study itself, including course guidance, advice on courses, and guidance on research and papers. This type of support is usually provided by academic staff, but in some cases, by students such as TAs and tutors. This is based on the idea that they can build a carefree relationship with each other more easily because they are close in age [Case Study 4].

The latter relates to students' lives in general. Specifically, it includes consultation and support for residence permits and scholarships, as well as the arrangement of student dormitories and housing. Counseling is also important because some students may feel mentally unstable when living in an unfamiliar country. Some students may want to get a job in their destination country after completing the double degree program. In that case, job placement assistance would also be included here.

There is also support that spans both their studies and daily life. Universities offer language courses to help students learn the local language to the extent necessary for daily life, as well as cross-cultural experience programs to better understand the local society and culture.

As you can see, student support covers a wide range of areas. The important thing is to have a system in place to provide support to students in a timely manner. For example, course guidance is needed when students are choosing courses at their partner university. Once they get their lives on track, advice on courses will be more relevant.

So-called one-stop system would be desirable in providing support. The system concentrates a variety of service points in a single location, so that no matter what kind of problem students may have, they can expect support and advice as long as they go there.

It is also important to decide upon the scope of support with your partner university. Otherwise, students may fall into the gap between the services of the two universities, unable to receive support from either of them. For example, in housing placements, students may request more than what the host university's services offer. In such case, it should be discussed to what extent the university has the responsibility to respond.

The following table 4 shows main student support services, categorized into those provided for students sent to partner universities and those provided for students accepted from partner universities, which are described in chronological order. In addition to double degree programs, this table also includes services for short-term student exchanges.

Table 4: Examples of Support for Program Students

	Students sent to partner universities	Students accepted from partner universities
Before study abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for studying abroad (fees, insurance, procedures, etc.) • Pre-program language training • Research guidance (by university supervisors of both sending and receiving universities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior information on living (housing, expenses, scholarships, etc.) • Prior information on study (course guide, syllabus, credit approval procedures, etc.) • Immigration procedures (visa, etc.)
During study abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online learning support • Online understanding of living conditions, counseling, and risk management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various procedures after arrival in Japan • Housing • Japanese training • TA and tutor assignment • Research guidance • Cross-cultural experience • Learning facilities (library, IT facilities, etc.) • Counseling • Risk management • Student network • Employment support
After study abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up and reunion activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up and reunion activities

Since living in a foreign country is full of totally new experiences, students can often be overwhelmed. It is, of course, necessary to fulfill the needs of students and provide them with attentive support. However, that does not mean that universities can provide indefinite support. For universities, the cost of support services can be an area of concern. Besides, it is not very desirable for students to become dependent on the university and academic staff for even the little things in life. Universities need to figure out just the right extent of support.

Case Study 4

Involving alumni of the program

At Waseda University, one of the partner universities in the ENGAGE (Empowering Next Generations of East Asian Leaders for Global Peace) program, students completing its long-term program receive the title “CAMPUS Asia Ambassador” and engage in outreach-type activities, including sharing their own studying abroad experience with students who are not yet part of the program.

Key points >>

Double degree programs require more careful student support than regular education programs.

15

How Do You Measure Learning Outcomes?

>>Criterion 4-1

It is important to measure the outcomes of an educational program. It is an indication of what value the program has added to students' academic path. From this point of view, many countries have recently placed emphasis on "learning outcomes."

There has been a lot of debate about what learning outcomes are, especially when it comes to how to measure them. It is not enough to just impose a unified, standardized test. In today's education, besides knowledge and skills directly related to the area of specialization, a wide variety of other abilities are valued, such as the ability to think critically, the creative intellectual ability to find and solve problems, and the ability to take leadership roles. These are all difficult to measure in paper tests. Student surveys (questionnaires) are often suggested as a means of measurement, but this is only an indirect evaluation based on students' subjective perspectives and thus is not a perfect solution.

In short, it is important to use a multifaceted evaluation method that can measure the academic skills and abilities required of desired human resources that the program aims to foster.

The above is by no means limited to double degree programs, but there are also some unique factors that need to be taken into account in cases of double degree programs. The first is that overseas experience, which is difficult to measure in numerical terms, is evaluated as program outcomes. It is not easy to properly assess this. Many of the current programs, for example, require students to make a presentation of their study abroad experience. This gives students a good opportunity to reflect on what they have learned in their destination countries. More to the point, it also provides guidance for the lower grade students who come and listen to the presentation [Case Study 5].

Another point to keep in mind is that coordination with your partner university is essential here again. Views on evaluation vary considerably from country to country. It is crucial that both universities communicate well with each other and can evaluate students' learning outcomes based on a shared understanding.

Case Study 5

Evaluation of multi-faceted learning outcomes

In NMRL (Program for Nurturing Medical Research Leaders to Solve Global Health Problems), in order to measure the learning outcomes at the completion of study abroad, the students give an oral presentation on their accomplishments during their study at the host university, and the supervisory academic staff fill out a sheet (as shown on the right) with the overall evaluation. In addition, by requiring the students to submit a report regarding their study abroad, the program is able to utilize them to recognize the knowledge and abilities that the students have gained, as well as assess the level of attainment of program objectives.

Key points >>

It is essential to capture the multifaceted learning outcomes derived from the features of the double degree program in cooperation with the partner university.

16

How Does Credit Transfer Work?

>>Criterion 4-2

During the monitoring of CAMPUS Asia, we often hear university staff asking what they should do with credit transfer under a double degree program. In fact, credit transfer is often performed under current double degree programs.

There are no special procedures for credit transfer under double degree programs. The procedures are the same as usual exchange programs. Universities review whether the credit in question earned in a foreign university is equivalent to a credit from a course in their own program. The credit is accepted if deemed appropriate as a result of such review.

You may now be thinking you do not have to think about credit transfer anymore. Let us take a moment and think it through. As mentioned earlier, a double degree program is a single, complete degree program, just like normal degree programs offered at universities. The only difference is that it is run jointly with a foreign university.

In a typical degree program, would you have to review whether certain credits are valid after a student has earned it? No, you would not. The curriculum stipulates in advance what courses are compulsory and how many credits students can earn from elective courses. Double degree programs, thus, should also define in advance a set of courses that students need or are allowed to take, rather than accrediting credits *ex post facto*.

Besides, the *ex-post* review of credits is problematic from a quality assurance perspective. It is theoretically possible that a credit would be “rejected” as a result of such review. However, if the credit in question is from one of the core courses in a double degree program, it is virtually impossible to reject it. If you were to reject it, you would run the risk of making the program unviable. In addition, students would possibly have to repeat the same year if credits they earned at their study abroad destination, thinking they were transferable turned out not acceptable upon returning home. But if you accredit every credit, there is no point in reviewing it. You will also lose the chance to check the quality of education at your partner university.

In short, it is not appropriate in a double degree program to transfer credits after the completion of coursework. This is by no means an idealistic view. Some universities that are currently operating double degree programs have set out a table of corresponding courses after thorough discussion with their partner universities.

For example, one university created a table that shows its course titled “Advanced Genetics I” as equivalent to its partner university’s “Biology Intermediate A” in terms of the content and level of the courses. The university created this correspondence table and shared it with its partner university. In this case, if a student studied abroad and took “Intermediate Biology A,” the student would be automatically deemed to have completed “Advanced Genetics I” at the student’s home university.

Not only does this help to ensure that students at both universities do not duplicate their coursework, but it also greatly enhances the integrity of the program.

In addition to a correspondence table, it is also a good idea to agree on the maximum number of

credits that can be transferred and the credit calculation method in advance with your partner university. Moreover, it is often the case that the number of credits granted for one course and the definition of one credit (e.g. class hours) will vary from university to university. Therefore, the starting point for laying the foundation for credit transfer is to understand each other's credit systems (or, in some cases, the national regulations).

Key points >>

It is ideal to have in place a course correspondence table between partner universities in advance, rather than checking the transferability of credits after coursework.

17

How to Deal with a Thesis?

>>Criterion 4-2

When designing a double degree program, thesis requirements often become topics of discussion. Some programs at the undergraduate level do not require a thesis. Let us consider this issue using a master's thesis as an example.

The focus will be on the number of theses. In a regular master's program, students write a thesis at the end of the course. If it is accepted, they will receive a degree. In the same manner, a double degree program is completed with a thesis, except that degrees are awarded by both the home university and the partner university. In many programs, two degrees are awarded with one thesis. However, some people have objected to this. They argue that it is unreasonable to double-approve a single academic achievement. There is no provision for this in the current MEXT guidelines on double degree programs (see p. 7-8).

Many of the current double degree programs require two theses to be submitted. That said, they do not require two theses with completely different content. Most programs allow for a certain amount of overlap between the two theses. This is only natural, as it is unrealistic to ask students to write two theses with completely different content. Master's programs in Japan are designed in a way that requires students to write one thesis in two years. This is because no matter how hard students work, there is no reason to believe that they can afford to write two separate theses.

In fact, this problem is not limited to the technical issue of the number of theses, but is related to the essence of double degree programs. The question of whether two degrees awarded for one thesis are legitimate is also applicable to credits. Credits earned at a partner university will be eventually counted as part of required credits at the home university, which leads to the awarding of two degrees. In other words, the problem of double counting always comes with double degree programs, whether it is about theses or individual credits.

This has a lot to do with the fundamental approach to education. Different universities can have different views on this issue. However, one thing we can say for sure is that if you eliminate double counting altogether, double degree programs will become pointless. Taking two non-overlapping programs at two universities is the same as taking two master's programs. It is not possible to do this in a two-year time frame. Besides, what is the point of calling it a "double degree program" to refer to two separate master's programs? In other words, a double degree program allows students to save time and effort compared to taking two separate master's programs. Therefore, a double degree program will always inevitably involve some sort of double counting.

The important thing is to turn this double counting into something more productive and useful than a mere double-approval. For example, in the case of a thesis, you can take advantage of this challenge by performing a joint supervision or a joint examination. That is, academic staff appointed from both universities work together to give guidance to students and review submitted theses. Some of the current double degree programs already have such a system in place [Case Study 6].

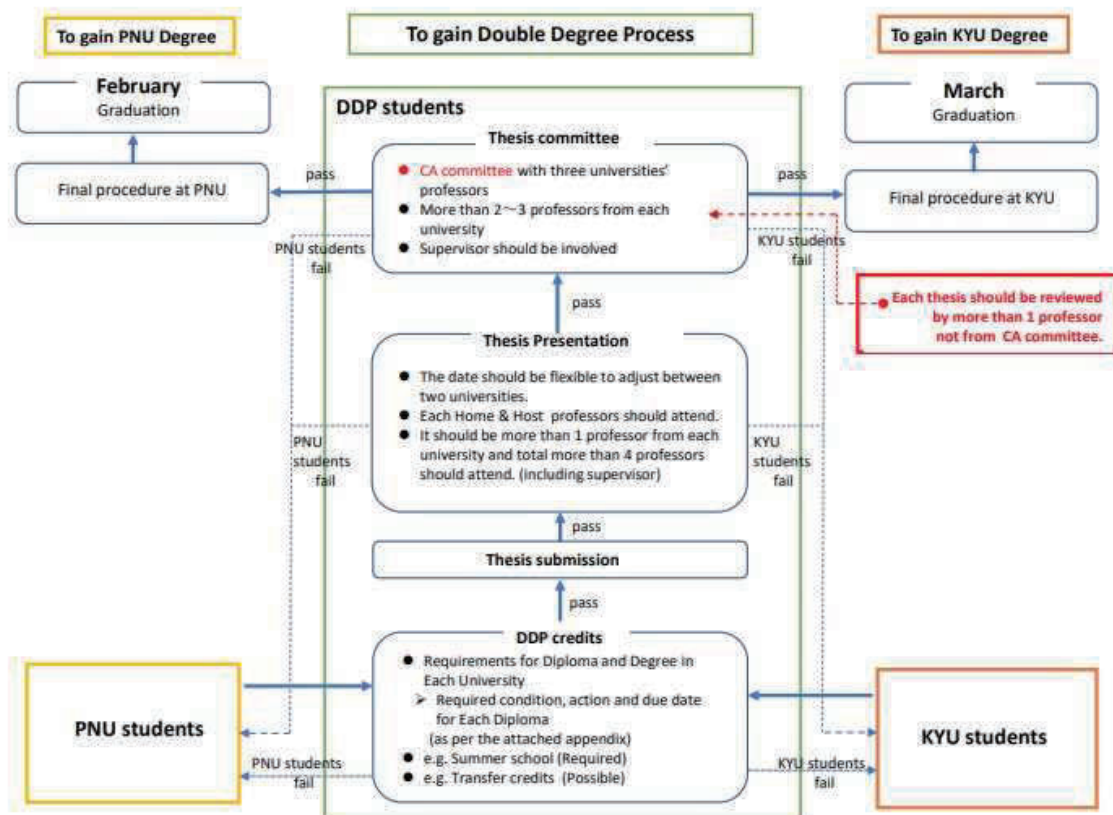
The above once again point out that it is desirable to enhance the integration of your double degree

program and collaboration with your partner university to make the program more like a joint-degree program.

Case Study 6

Joint review of final thesis

In the SUEA Asia (Sustainable Urban Architectural Environment in Asia) program, the policies for the double degree program including the credit transfer system, requirements for awarding degrees, and review procedures are stipulated in the agreements among the partner universities. A system of joint thesis review is in place, wherein a thesis committee consisting of academic staff from each partner university in China, Japan, and Korea is established (shown below is the process for awarding a double degree).



Key points >>

As for theses, mutual participation by the partner universities should be enhanced through joint research guidance and thesis review.

18

How Do You Build Academic Team?

>>Criterion 1-2, 2-2

The academic staff with overall responsibility for study is appointed as the head of a double degree program (referred to as the Study Director here). In Japan, this position is often assumed by a senior academic staff who is an executive of the department. If the university's financial situation permits, perhaps a new academic staff may be hired for the double degree program. These academic staff will be teaching full-time under the Program Director and will also play a central role within the team of academic staff in the operation of the program.

However, these academic staff alone will not be able to teach all the courses required for a double degree program. Other academic staff on campus will also be asked to teach classes in the program. Bringing together the support from the current academic staff through cooperative relationship is essential for successful delivery of the program.

When starting up a program, it is very difficult to get the necessary courses in place. No matter how much you try to divert existing courses, you will have to open quite a few new courses. If such a new course covers completely new content, it takes a lot of effort to design the course and prepare the materials. This will be a huge burden for the academic staff. On the other hand, however, you would run the risk of deteriorating the appeal and educational effect of the program if you merely changed the "package" of the existing courses while keeping the same content. In other words, the success or failure of the program depends on how many of current academic staff are willing to participate in education under the program and with what level of enthusiasm.

To make the matter more complicated, it is not usually the director of a double degree program who holds this key to success. The Study Director is only responsible for the program and has no authority to direct academic staff outside of the program. It is the departments and universities positioned above the program that can direct these academic staff. Conversely, this problem is not going to be solved unless a higher-ranking group in the department or university takes action.

All the above shows how much responsibility and awareness on the part of the academic staff and the university is called into question. This is especially true these days, as more and more programs are requesting academic staff from across departments to teach in order to enhance the interdisciplinary appeal of their programs.

Key points >>

Building academic team for the double degree program calls upon support not only within the program but also from the department and the entire university.

19

How Do You Build Administrative Team?

>>Criterion 1-2

Unlike a typical domestic degree program, a double degree program involves cross-border student transfer to a foreign university. Communication and contact with foreign partner universities also occurs on a daily basis. It would be essential to build some kind of special administrative team that would take care of the double degree program, apart from the usual administrative departments. In fact, this is the case with Japanese universities participating in the CAMPUS Asia double degree programs.

The size and structure of the administrative team may vary greatly depending on the program, country, and situation of the university. What would seem to be common to program administrative teams, though, is that they involve academic staff responsible for the operation of the program and staff managing the overall administrative tasks (referred to as Program Coordinators here). As we have already discussed the team of academic staff above, let us now take a look at the administrative staff.

A Program Coordinator is the key person of the program's operation. They undertake a vast range of duties, from academic affairs, and general and accounting duties, to providing advice and support to students and contacting with partner universities. If the program's financial circumstances allow, it would be possible to put more staff under the Program Coordinator, but it is not likely to happen. Therefore, the Program Coordinator will need to be able to handle a wide variety of these tasks.

In addition, the Program Coordinator should have a good command of a foreign language. Generally speaking, English is sufficient for communicating with international students and partner universities. However, especially when the partner university is located in Asia, there are cases where communication in English is not always smooth. In that sense, if circumstances permit, it is best to have someone who speaks the national language of the partner university in the administration team for the double degree program (with any luck, the partner university may be able to assign academic staff with language skills for language native to your university).

It would be great if such personnel could be found on campus (or in the immediate vicinity), but that is not always the case. Looking at actual double degree programs in Japan, the Program Coordinator tend to be specially appointed or part-time staff.

When considering the administrative team, it is advisable to pay attention to collaborative relationships with the existing administrative organizations on campus. For example, some universities already have international student centers, international exchange centers, and departments in charge of accepting and dispatching international students. Such organizations provide academic and living support for incoming international students and guidance for dispatched students. Building good collaboration with these organizations would facilitate the running of the double degree program.

As for the academic aspect of the program, it is important to work in cooperation with the departments in charge of academic affairs. It plays an important part not only in efficiency of the teaching administration but also in the proper administration of the double degree program. Given that double degree programs are also subject to the academic regulations and procedures of the department, it is necessary for the team to work together with the relevant administrative department.

Key points >>

The Program Coordinator plays a key role in the administrative operations of the program.

20

How Do You Communicate Effectively with Partner Universities?

>>Criterion 1-2

In many CAMPUS Asia programs, the administrative structure consists of two levels. One level oversees the program as a whole and the other deals with day-to-day academic affairs, student support, and other practical matters. A committee is formed for each of the two levels. Here, let us call the former the Steering Committee and the latter the Working Committee. In a typical department, the former serves as the Faculty Council and the latter as the Academic Affairs Committee or Student Committee. The Study Director and the Program Coordinator both play central roles.

Universities also establish a point of contact and communication for their partner universities on these two levels (Fig. 3). At the Steering Committee level, the holistic and fundamental issues involved in the operation of the program are addressed. On the other hand, day-to-day issues are taken up by Working Committees of both universities. From the point of view of communication, it would be good to have frequent meetings with the other university, but in reality, it is difficult to do so from the perspective of cost. Nevertheless, many programs seem to have a Steering Committee meeting with their partner universities at least once a year. Working Committees typically have meetings as frequently as this, or even a little more. At the practical level, there seems to be many cases in which the staff of their respective universities communicate flexibly with each other when necessary without a meeting. In addition, all programs use a web conferencing system and other ICT technology to facilitate communication.

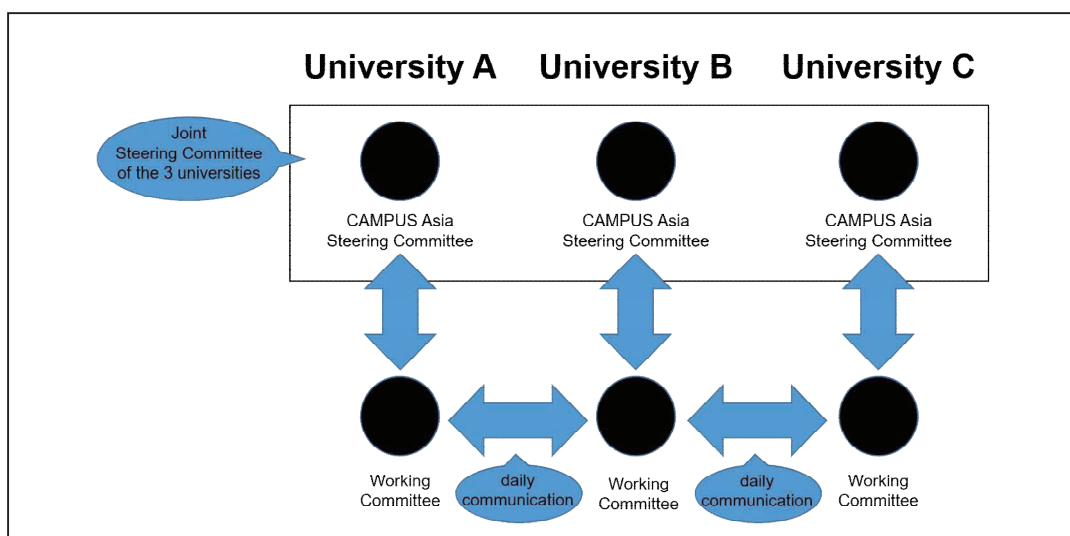


Figure 3: Program Implementation Structure

Key points >>

Communication with the partner university takes place on two levels: the Steering Committee level and the Working Committee level.

As already mentioned earlier, a double degree program is no different from a typical degree program in that it is completed with a degree conferral. The only difference is that part of the program is conducted by a foreign partner university.

So, the quality assurance of a double degree program is no different than that of any other degree program at your university as far as the courses offered at your university are concerned. In other words, the quality of the double degree program is assured through the self-assessment and accreditation that each university is obligated to perform and the internal quality assurance procedures defined by each university.

The challenge lies in the quality assurance of the courses provided by your partner university. Given that the courses are also part of the program, the integrity and consistency of the program will not be ensured if the quality of these courses is questioned. It will also affect the degree to be awarded by your university upon the completion of the program. A false rumor circulating that the university is giving away degrees without being fully accountable for the entire course of study could seriously harm the prestige and brand of the university.

So, how can we ensure the quality of the courses provided at your partner university? In fact, this is quite a challenge. In the end, it all comes down to proactively collecting information at every opportunity.

For example, you can ask your partner university for an opportunity to visit and see their class. This will be quite costly since your partner university is in another country, but you could ask your peer academic staff going to that country on a business trip to visit the partner university to see how the courses are delivered.

Oftentimes, students sent to the partner university are asked to share their opinions and views. Of course, we cannot cover all the courses with this method, but it is enough to get a rough idea about the core courses of the program. Their information should be fairly reliable, since it is based on first-hand observations over the course of a semester. At the same time, we should also keep in mind the limitations that it is only through the students' eyes.

In other cases, in an attempt to make the programs of partner universities more visible, some universities collect data, such as the amount of time spent in class during the study abroad program, the amount of time spent preparing for and reviewing the courses, and the amount of time students received guidance. This will provide a realistic representation of the status of the program in numerical terms, which can be used to adjust the content of the program with partner universities and improve the teaching system.

An effective measure would be to agree on quality assurance when negotiating a double degree program. Both universities can discuss what quality assurance procedures and standards they have in place, and exchange a written agreement if necessary. That way, both sides can be reassured that a certain level of quality is to be maintained on the other side through quality assurance mechanisms. In CAMPUS Asia, some universities have worked with their partner universities to develop and implement

quality assurance systems, including self-assessment and external evaluation [Case Study 7]. Different universities in different countries can have different ways of thinking and approaches to quality in education. It may be necessary to start with the fundamental question of what quality assurance means. Building a common understanding and conducting quality assurance activities using shared procedures and standards would be an important attempt in terms of ensuring the quality of the program as a whole and in terms of building awareness of quality assurance among program members.

As a conclusion, universities need to mix and combine the various measures described above as appropriate, but the underlying foundation for all of these measures is a trusting relationship. What is important is a sense of trust that the other university is taking good care of education. In this sense, the selection of a partner university is an important starting point.

Case Study 7

Quality assurance efforts in the program

Quality assurance efforts in the NLIE program can be broadly divided into three categories. The first is to continuously monitor the quality of educational content based on the student's learning results. Student satisfaction surveys, student completion reports by the student, etc. are used for quality analysis. The second is a review of the program by the Steering Committee. To maintain the quality of the entire program, the quality of the syllabus, credit transfer criteria, and adequacy of student selection criteria are regularly reviewed. The third is the Program External Evaluation Committee, which includes experts from outside the university. This committee is tasked with assessing the implementation status of the program and making suggestions for improvement, and suggestions for continuous improvement are used among participating universities as guidelines for program management.

Key points >>

For quality assurance, it is important to understand how the courses are actually offered at the partner university through various channels.

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How Do You Estimate Program Costs?

A double degree program differs significantly from a regular degree program in terms of expenses. In a nutshell, it is quite costly to run a double degree program.

First is labor costs. Costs for the administrative team will largely depend on how it is structured, but a Program Manager is indispensable. It would be great if the right person for this job can be found from the current academic staff (though, of course, the university still has to pay for the person), but if not, in the case of Japan, a new employee should be hired as a special appointment or temporary employee. There will also be labor costs for other administrative staff, if assigning any.

The same applies to academic staff. A Study Director may be appointed from within the university, but otherwise, added personnel costs is introduced for every new academic staff hired for the program. The same applies to hiring part-time academic staff from off-campus. Some sort of compensation may be required when recruiting full-time academic staff from the university. Additionally, some universities increase allowance for delivering classes in English.

Recurring administrative costs include expenses that generally come with running a degree program and expenses specific to double degree programs. An example of the latter category is the cost of communication with partner universities. Today, correspondence does not cost as much as it used to thanks to email and other technologies. However, when it comes to the exchange of opinions and meetings, remote meetings can sometimes be indirect and ineffective. It is thus inevitable that academic staff will have to travel to meet their counterparts of the other university.

However, the most important financial issue in a double degree program is the cost of sending and accepting students. It is quite expensive to let them study at two universities.

Tuition fees will be mutually exempted if such an agreement is made with the partner university (however, this is often tough to negotiate because some countries have surprisingly high tuition fees while others offer free tuition). Still, there are travel expenses, and living in a foreign country is a significant expense. It would be unrealistic to have students to pay all these costs. This would also give rise to concern that fewer students would apply to the program due to the financial burden. If that happens, the program may not be filled to capacity. It is also problematic from the viewpoint of fairness if only affluent students have the opportunity to join a double degree program.

This is why so many colleges and universities have some kind of scholarship in place for their double degree programs. In Japan, the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) provides scholarships for students studying abroad, including double degree programs (for both accepted and dispatched students). In addition, universities are making great use of competitive funds, such as grants provided under MEXT's Inter-University Exchange Project, which supports the CAMPUS Asia programs. In Korea as well, scholarships for students and subsidies for universities are provided under the CAMPUS Asia Fund of the Ministry of Education. However, this type of competitive funding is time-limited and typically ends after several years. Yet, you cannot abolish a program simply because such competitive fund has expired.

Will the university find its own financial resources and continue the program, or will it raise external funds somehow or increase its own revenues? This could be where the university is challenged in terms of how serious it is about its double degree program.

Key points >>

Running the double degree program can be costly. It is necessary to always consider how to cover the expenses.

