

DOUBLE DEGREES

1. What is a Double Degree (alternative terminology: dual, simultaneous)

A Double Degree programme presumes a student working towards two different university degrees in parallel, either at the same institution or at different institutions, sometimes in different countries. The two degrees may be in the same subject area, or in two different subjects. A double degree typically takes less time than it would take to complete each programme separately.

The difference between a double degree and a double major is that the first leads to two different university degrees, whereas the later leads to one.

Undergraduate double degrees are more common than the graduate ones¹. Common graduate double degrees are the Master's in Business Administration/Juris Doctor (MBA/JD), MSc/MBA and MSc Architecture & MA or MSc. Urban Planning or Design. There are also double degree programmes that lead to one Bachelor and one Master's.

Examples: 1) MBA/MEng. offered by U. of Alberta's Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Business; 2) the Jeffrey Skoll BSc/MBA offered by the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering and the Rotman School of Management at the U. of Toronto; 3) the MA/MPH combines a Master's of Arts in Modern Middle Eastern & North African Studies with a Master's of Public Health in Epidemiology; offered by the Rackham School of Graduate Studies and the School of Public Health at U. of Michigan; 4) Master's in Electrical Eng. & Master's in Management Science & Eng. (MEE/MMSE) offered by two departments at U. of Stanford (see appendix for more examples).

2. What is a conjoint (joint) programme?

The following is the definition used in a [Conference of the Deans of Quebec Universities \(CREPUQ²\) 2007](#) document (it may or may not apply to a non-Quebec context): The academic and administrative management of a conjoint programme is divided between the two partner institutions. The programme is placed under the responsibility of a programme committee that consists mainly of faculty from the two partner institutions. The admission and the registration take place in one of the two institutions; this is also the institution that counts these students. Each institution recommends the issue of its own degree.

The difference between a double degree and a conjoint programme is that the later leads to two degrees of the same type, usually in two different contexts.

¹ Common double degree programmes are BA & BEd (known as "concurrent-education" programmes) and BSc. Eng. & BA or BSc. Queens U. offers the later combination, called "dual degree", which takes 5 years to complete.

² Conference des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec

In Quebec, some of the conjoint degrees are also double degrees, if a protocol of understanding in this sense has been established between the two institutions involved. Examples of graduate conjoint degrees that are also double degrees: 1) PhD Biology from U. Quebec at Montreal and U. Henri-Poincaré (Nancy I) and 2) PhD Philosophy from U. Quebec at Montreal and U. de Provence d'Aix-Marseille. Examples of conjoint degrees that are not double degrees: 1) the PhD in Museology, Mediation and Patrimony offered by U. Quebec at Montreal and U. d'Avignon and 2) the conjoint MBA from U. of Toronto and Global Executive MBA from U. of St. Gallen (Switzerland). After graduation the student obtains two degrees, one from each institution, yet these are not considered to be double degree programmes.

It is not clear to me when the two degrees are to be considered different. For example, the above programme, which leads to an MBA in the European context and an MBA in the N. American context is labeled conjoint, yet the Double Master's degree (Double Maîtrise) established in 1999 (first graduation 2003) divided between the U. of Cambridge and U. of Paris II, Assas-Panthéon, in which the student completes two years at Cambridge and two years at U. de Paris and earns a degree in English Law and one in French Law is considered double.

Also, Stanford U. uses the label "joint degree" for programmes that fit the definition of a double degree.

3. Dual registration

At Queen's University a student may ask the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Head(s) of the department(s) involved for permission to register in two different concurrent programmes, one of which may be a graduate programme. Permission must be obtained for each term. If allowed, the student must file separate registrations for each programme (s/he may be full-time only in one) and pay tuition in each one (unless the two programmes are within the same department). Hence, dual registration may lead to two different degrees, one of which is graduate, obtained simultaneously. The Faculty of Applied Science at Queen's U. calls them [dual degrees](#). They are generally offered at undergraduate level.

4. Co-supervision

Since 1994 in Europe there is the possibility of co-supervision (Fr: cotutelle) for doctoral students. If there is an agreement of co-supervision between two institutions from two countries, the doctoral student may write his/her thesis partly in one institution and partly in the other. S/he will be directed jointly by two supervisors, one from each country. The thesis must be submitted in both languages of instruction, if they differ. The student will defend in both languages (if they differ) in front of a committee consisting of faculty from both countries and will obtain two doctoral degrees, one from each country involved. The degrees awarded being of the same type, co-supervision may not be said to lead to a double degree, unless there is a protocol of understanding between the two institutions that says otherwise.

5. How it works in broad lines (typically)

Admission:

- The student fills an application to each University or department in the programme and specifies in both applications that is for a double degree;
- Admission is offered to a selective set of students that are considered capable to handle the requirements of both programmes. Both departments/institutions must offer admission, usually with the knowledge and approval of the Graduate Dean;
- Admission is coordinated by designated members of each department's (or institutions) admissions committee. Members make recommendations to their home department/institution. They may serve also as an initial Master's/PhD review committee.

Supervision and degree requirements:

- The student has two advisors, one in each department/institution. The review committee consists of faculty from both.
- The student completes the course requirements of each department, but each department sets its requirements so that the sum is less than they will be if the two degrees were taken separately. Up to a certain number of credits in high level courses may be applied to fulfill the requirements of both programmes. If the two departments involved are in different countries, the student typically completes a certain number of credits (1-2 years of the programme) in one country and then completes the rest in the other country. Example: the double degree offered jointly by U. of Sherbrooke and the U. de Troyes (France). Students in this programme start their Master'ses at U. of Sherbrooke, where they complete 30 credits during the first year, in the Master's on Environment programme. Afterwards, they continue in France in the Master's on Environmental Management and Sustainable Development (Maîtrise en management environmental et développement durable (MEDD)) offered by U. de Troyes. This particular programme also requires an internship after the first year at Sherbrooke. The internship may be completed in Canada, in France or anywhere else in the world.

Thesis, defense and degrees awarded:

- The student may submit a joint thesis.
- The student may defend in front of a committee consisting of faculty from both departments/institutions or in front of a committee authorized by one of the institutions (especially when the programme is divided between two countries).
- The student will be awarded one degree from each department/institution. The two degrees are in different fields or are of different types (for example, MSc in Mathematics + MSc Computer Science or MSc + MA).

Appendix:

1. Keywords:

English: double degree, dual degree, joint degree, conjoint degree, simultaneous degree

French: double diplôme, double Maîtrise, double Doctorat, double diplômation, cotutelle

2. Article: <http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2008/02/23/engaging-globally-through-joint-and-dual-degrees-the-graduate-experience/>
3. Policy for Dual Masters at U. of Maryland
(http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC_DOCUMENTS/DesignXI_Dual.htm):

Design of Academic Programs

Section XI: Policy for Dual Masters and Doctoral Programs

Approved by the Graduate Council on December 8, 1997

This policy is to permit a doctoral student in one graduate program to pursue concurrently a masters degree in another field. For example, a doctoral student in Economics might wish to acquire a masters in Business or a doctoral student in Physics might obtain a masters in Mathematics. The dual degree path is recommended only for the most academically gifted students who can handle the demands of two concurrent degree programs.

The following are the guidelines that will govern this new dual-degree policy:

1. The student must first be enrolled in a doctoral program before he/she can apply for the masters.
2. The student must be in good standing in his/her doctoral program and be making satisfactory progress towards the doctorate.
3. Both the doctoral and the masters programs must agree to allow the student to participate.
4. The two programs must agree, in advance, on a joint course of study for the student. A copy of this dual course-of-study plan must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval.
5. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to pursue two concurrent doctoral degrees.
6. With the exception of already approved joint masters programs, this option is not available for students who wish to pursue two concurrent masters degrees.

The following are some of the consequences of the concurrent pursuit of the two degrees:

1. On the student's transcript, the name of the doctoral program will appear first, which will indicate the primary program, followed by the masters program, which will indicate the secondary program.
 2. The student's GPA will be calculated as the combined GPA for both programs. Separate GPAs cannot be provided.
 3. If the masters portion of the course of study continues beyond the doctoral portion, the student will have to be readmitted as a masters student. This readmission will be pro forma and no application fee will be charged.
 4. Courses that were completed more than seven years before completion of the masters portion of the program cannot be counted towards the masters degree.
4. Examples of double degree Graduate (or with a grad. component) programmes from N. America:

JD + MBA – U. of Toronto - <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/degree/jdmba/>

MEng + MBA - U. of Alberta <http://www.engineering.ualberta.ca/ece/Prospectivestudents.cfm>

MBA + Global Executive MBA - U. of Toronto/U. of St. Gallen (Switzerland)
<http://www.gradschool.utoronto.ca/programs/masters/MBA-Global-Executive.htm>

BASc + MBA – U. of Toronto <http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/skoll/index.htm>

Various BSc + MSc – Yale College -
http://www.yale.org/yalecollege/publications/ycps/chapter_iii/special/simultaneous.html

JD + MBA, MA Education + MBA, M Public Policy + MBA, MS in Environment & Resources + MBA
 – Stanford U. http://www.gsb.stanford.edu/mba/academics/joint_degrees.html

JD + MBA – Northwestern U. <http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/jdmba/index.htm> (other u.'s that offer JD/MBA: Duke, Harvard, Villanova, Detroit at Mercy, Alabama, Vanderbilt, Seattle U.)

MA Math + MSc Computer Science – U. of Pittsburg <http://www.cs.pitt.edu/grad/dualms.php>

MSc Architecture + MSc. Urban Design – Georgia Institute of Technology
<http://www.coa.gatech.edu/ud/dual.htm>

Master's in Urban and Regional Planning + Master's in Landscape Architecture, Master's in
 Public Administration + Master's in Natural Resources – Virginia Tech. U.
<http://www.nvc.vt.edu/uap/programs/dual.html>

Master's in Architecture + Master's in Urban Studies and Planning – MIT
<http://architecture.mit.edu/masters-dual-degrees.html>

MSc. Nuclear Engineering + MSc. in either: Mechanical, Electrical, Civil, Chemical or Computer
 Science – Ohio State U. <http://nuclear.osu.edu/nuclear/degreeprograms/mastersprogram.html>

M Architecture + MEng. – U. of Nebraska-Lincoln
http://bulletin.unl.edu/graduate/Graduate_Degrees_Offered#Dual_Degree_Programs

PhD Philosophy – U. de Quebec a Montreal & U. d'Aix-Marseille -
<http://www.fsh.uqam.ca/international/ententes.php>

PhD Museology, Mediation and Patrimony – U. de Quebec a Montreal and U. d'Avignon
<http://www.uqam.ca/nouvelles/2005/05-113.htm> <http://www.uqam.ca/nouvelles/2003/03-007.htm>

Master's in Environment + MEDD – Sherbrooke U. and U. de Troyes
http://www.usherbrooke.ca/environnement/etudier/maitrise/cours/double_diplomation.htm