

# Why do a Double Degree?

TUFS places great importance on study abroad as part of a good educational experience at university. Of course, it is possible to do short visits of a week or two, whether to brush up language skills in Seoul or do a study tour to the United Nations in New York, for example. It is also possible to spend up to a year at one of our partner universities on a longer-term student exchange programme. However, the ultimate way to preserve your study abroad on your CV **as a qualification as well as an experience** is to do a double degree (also called a dual degree).

## WHAT IS A DOUBLE DEGREE?

A double degree is when you receive two separate degrees from two universities. This is possible because the universities negotiate a credit transfer agreement which allows you to graduate from both universities, often within the period of a single degree (although sometimes it takes a little longer).\* You receive two degree certificates: one from each university.

\* A double degree is different to a joint degree. In a joint degree, the universities develop a joint curriculum and you graduate with a single graduation certificate containing the name of both universities. TUFS does not offer any joint degrees at present.

## WHAT ARE THE MERITS OF A DOUBLE DEGREE?

Of course, a double degree is considerably more work than a single degree, and can often involve a lot of extra expense because of extended study abroad or additional fees. However, here are the major merits:

- A degree certificate from another university is a very **useful qualification**, particularly if you want to work/study further in the language or country of your second degree.
- Entry to a double degree programme is a clear indication that your academic performance at TUFS is strong. Entry requirements are tough and it is a **badge of honour** to be selected.
- Doing a double degree is considerably cheaper and quicker than gaining the same qualifications separately. Fees for international students can be very high, particularly in English-speaking countries. Calculate for yourself the cost of doing the degree abroad on your own plus your degree at TUFS, and then compare it to the cost of the double degree. You will be astonished at what **good value for money** double degrees are!
- School of Japan Studies students who have completed their degrees at the University of Central Lancashire or University of Melbourne and are back at TUFS doing job hunting during their 5th year can do job-hunting having already graduated from an English-speaking nation university. This will really give you **an advantage in the Japanese job market**.

## WHAT ARE THE DEMERITS OF A DOUBLE DEGREE?

Of course, a double degree is not for everyone. Here are the main issues to be careful of:

- A double degree is considerably more work than a single degree and can involve writing two graduation theses. Your ability to do part-time work and club activities is inevitably affected. This may result in the extension of your degree (for example, 5 years for your BA instead of 4).
- The tight schedule of double degrees make job hunting in your final year difficult. This can be resolved by extending your BA to 5 years, or your MA to 3 years, and can be a massive advantage in the job market (see Merits above). However, if you definitely want to graduate from TUFS in 4 years (BA) or two years (MA), a double degree is probably not for you.
- Double degrees inevitably cost more than single degrees, and require extended time abroad. Scholarships are not always available and you must have sufficient financial resources to cover extra travel and accommodation expenses.
- If you are already a recipient of a scholarship (from JASSO or another private foundation), you might not be able to participate in the double degree without forfeiting your scholarship. Check the rules and regulations of your scholarship carefully before applying.

The most important thing with double degrees is to **prepare early**. From the first day of your first year, consider carefully if a double degree is for you and prepare accordingly. Contact the programme coordinator, get the necessary qualifications (especially a good GPA and the required English score), and prepare financially. We are always ready to answer your questions about whether a double degree is the right option for you.

Philip Seaton, Head of the International Education Support Office