



Dual and Joint Awards

1. Context

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, herein referred to as Trinity, is committed to maximizing its higher education and research impact through the development of strategic partnerships, nationally and internationally, which offer Dual and Joint Awards.

Trinity, as with all other Irish Universities, is subject to the requirements of the [TrustEd Ireland \(International Education Mark\)](#) and the [Code of Practice for the provision of programmes of higher education to international learners \(2023\)](#).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support the College's Strategic Plan (2025-2030) and its related strategies with respect to the development of strategic national and international partnerships. It communicates Trinity's policy on Dual and Joint Awards to Trinity staff and current students, to prospective collaborative Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), other awarding and accrediting bodies and to prospective applicants.

3. Benefits

The policy enables the widening of Trinity's collaboration with HEIs and thereby increases diversity in national and international education opportunities for students and staff. The policy also increases the scope of the education experience that Trinity offers and enables greater mobility for students, as well as increased opportunities for research nationally and internationally.

4. Scope

This policy applies to Trinity's schools and academic areas engaging in taught programmes of study at level 8 and level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) leading to Dual and Joint Awards, to relevant administrative areas, and to existing and prospective partner HEIs¹.

5. Principles

Trinity's Dual and Joint Awards policy is underpinned by the following key principles:

5.1 the protection of the reputation of Trinity, nationally and internationally.

¹ Dual and Joint Awards at level 10 are currently considered on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Graduate Studies and Council.



- 5.2 the protection and maintenance of the academic integrity and reputation of study programmes offered in Trinity and the awards conferred.
- 5.3 the avoidance, where possible, of double counting of credits towards awards.
- 5.4 the consolidation of Trinity's position as Ireland's premier university.
- 5.5 the facilitation of collaboration with HEIs and other awarding bodies that will enhance Trinity's global presence and reputation.

6. Policy

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 Trinity complies with the Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees, European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) 2012² in defining what it means by dual and joint awards.

6.1.2 For the purpose of this policy, two programme structures are recognised:

- i. A **dual** programme of study consists of two separate but linked programmes of study leading to two (Dual) awards, one from each institution³. A dual programme has two separate and complementary curricula, normally delivered sequentially by each of the two partner HEIs.
- ii. A **joint** programme of study leads to a Joint Award⁴ and refers to an integrated curriculum that is designed, developed and delivered collaboratively by partner HEIs⁵.

6.2 Key features related to Dual Programmes of Study and Associated Awards

6.2.1 Each institution is primarily responsible for its own programme of study, and the rules and regulations of the partner institutions apply to their own programmes and associated awards.

6.2.2 Participating institutions establish parameters within which they will enter into dual award arrangements, with due consideration of issues relating to double counting of learning, possible exit points and awards, inter-dependence of awards, responsibility for management of quality assurance, administrative responsibilities and student experience.

²[Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees.](#)

³A Dual Award is not awarded for a joint programme of study.

⁴A joint programme may also lead to a single award in cases where a partnership involves only one designated awarding body.

⁵Where two institutions collaborate to provide one integrated curriculum that results in two awards, one from each institution, this is called a Double Award.



- 6.2.3 Where inter-institutional partnerships leading to Dual Awards exist, each partner holds the position of either First or Second Institution.
- 6.2.4 The First Institution is defined as the institution at which a successful applicant registers to commence a Dual Award programme and undertakes the first part of the linked curricula.
- 6.2.5 The Second Institution is defined as the institution at which the student completes the Dual Award programme, that is, the second part of the linked curricula, entitling him/her to be conferred with two separate awards.
- 6.2.6 The conferral of the award for the programme of study successfully completed in the First Institution can only be triggered by the student's successful completion of the programme of study in the Second Institution.
- 6.2.7 Trinity's preferred position is to act as Second Institution i.e. to deliver its curriculum after that of the partner institution.

6.3 Key features related to Joint Programmes of Study and Associated Awards

- 6.3.1 Partner institutions offering a joint programme of study normally designate one as the Administrative Hub responsible for the overall administrative co-ordination of the joint programme.
- 6.3.2 The partner institutions will agree if students on their joint programmes can register (i) with each of the partner institutions, via agreed mechanisms which may be specific to the collaboration, or (ii) with only one institution which becomes the designated Home Institution for those students.
- 6.3.3 Participating institutions establish parameters within which they will enter into joint award arrangements, with due consideration of issues relating to possible exit points and awards, responsibility for management of quality assurance, administration and student experience.
- 6.3.4 Trinity's preferred position, where possible, is that students who have satisfied all relevant academic requirements on a joint programme leading to a Joint Award will be awarded a single joint parchment and that there will be a single graduation ceremony hosted by the Administrative Hub institution. The graduation ceremony will follow the protocol of the Administrative Hub institution.
- 6.3.5 The Administrative Hub will be responsible for producing a single transcript and/or Diploma Supplement.



6.3.6 A Joint Award may be issued as:

- i. A single joint parchment bearing the crests of those partner institutions which are designated awarding bodies, offering a joint programme of study and is nationally recognised in the relevant jurisdictions. The Joint Award is conferred on successful graduates of the joint programme at a graduation ceremony in the agreed partner institution.
- ii. More than one parchment of the same award level, attesting to the completion of the joint programme and the attainment of the joint qualification. This often occurs where a HEI is resident in a jurisdiction that prohibits the joint conferring of a qualification with institutions outside that jurisdiction. The inclusion of other collaborating HEIs' names and crests on a parchment could result in the award not being recognised in one of its home countries. This is overcome by the issuing, where necessary, of separate parchments. This is referred to generally as a multiple award.

6.4 Key Features of both Dual and Joint Award provisions:

- 6.4.1 General and academic due diligence will be carried out in respect of all inter-institutional partnerships leading to the establishment of Dual and Joint Awards.
- 6.4.2 All institutional agreements will pay due attention to the quality assurance requirements of the relevant jurisdictions and of the partner institutions.
- 6.4.3 The establishment of Dual/Joint Award partnerships is based on an agreed inter-institutional framework that adheres to the principles stated in this policy (section 5 above).
- 6.4.4 Dual/Joint programmes under development are subject to the normal course approval procedures required in each of the partner institutions including but not limited to:
 - i. Partner institutions will agree a common admission and registration process and the target intake of students.
 - ii. Partner institutions will agree, where necessary, grade equivalences.
 - iii. Trinity will identify an academic coordinator in the relevant academic area to drive the development of each Joint/Dual programme.
 - iv. Overall responsibility for the financial viability of the programme in Trinity will lie with the relevant Faculty Dean(s) and Head(s) of School.
 - v. Partner institutions will agree at the programme proposal stage where the conferring of awards will take place.
 - vi. Entitlements and privileges of students are subject to the rules and regulations of the institution at which they are registered at the given time.
 - vii. The minimum credit input by each partner for programmes leading to Dual and Joint



Awards will be agreed by the participating institutions at the programme proposal stage and will be approved by the relevant committees of participating HEIs.

- viii. Partner institutions will comply with the Data Protection legislation as legally appropriate in each relevant jurisdiction in relation to the confidentiality of any personal data held by them.
- ix. Programmes leading to Dual and Joint Awards are subject to periodic quality reviews to assure their quality as required by Trinity and the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Act, 2012.

7 Responsibility

The responsibility for this policy lies with the Registrar, Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate.

8 Related Documents

- 8.1 [Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision](#) (IHEQN, Appendix 2, p.29-31):
- 8.2 [Guidelines for Good Practice for Awarding Joint Degrees, European Consortium for Accreditation](#) (European Consortium for Education)
- 8.3 [Programme and Curriculum Design and Approval Policy](#)
- 8.4 [Non-EU Collaborative and Transnational Education Partnerships Policy](#)
- 8.5 [Quality Review Procedures for Dual and Joint Degree Programmes](#)
- 8.6 [IUA Guidelines for establishing collaborative research degree programmes](#)
- 8.7 [European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes](#)
- 8.8 [Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region.](#)
- 8.9 [Double Degrees and Joint Degrees – What is the difference?](#) (Queen Mary University of London)

9 Document Control

- 9.1 Approved by: University Council
- 9.2 Date of initial approval: 21 October 2015
- 9.3 Date revised Policy approved: 8 April 2026
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- 9.5 Date of next review: 2028/29