

Cotutelle Programs at Hokkaido University

(1) Outline

Cotutelle refers to joint research supervision provided by at least two universities for doctoral students, and students who have completed studies at their universities through cotutelle are awarded a diploma with the words of “under a cotutelle agreement with ○○ University”. Such an educational program with the use of cotutelle is called a cotutelle program.

Since a cotutelle program has only research supervision which is provided for doctoral students, it is different from Joint Degree (JD) program, Double Degree (DD) program and other academic degree programs that include the entire curriculum for an academic degree (e.g., classes, research supervision, and enrollment period). Although cotutelle programs are widely implemented in Europe, Australia and many other countries, their definitions and forms vary depending on the universities or regions. There are cases in which an academic degree is conferred only by one university where students are originally enrolled, cases in which an academic degree is conferred jointly by universities, as is the case with JD programs, and cases in which an academic degree is conferred by each of the universities, as is the case with DD programs. A cotutelle program can have different names, such as “joint PhD program” or “conjoint doctoral degrees program”. When working together with other universities, it is necessary to make sure whether it is the same as cotutelle defined by Hokkaido University, or DD or JD from the content of the program rather than the name.

(2) Definition of cotutelle and a cotutelle program

Cotutelle and a cotutelle program at Hokkaido University are defined as follows:

Cotutelle: a form of research supervision for which agreements are made between Hokkaido University and overseas universities to allow doctoral students to receive research supervision from faculty members of each university for at least one year in principle. Unlike mere research supervision on commission, this program allows students to receive more institutional and systematic research supervision, and requires supervisors of partner universities to attend academic degree reviews as examiners. If a program called “joint PhD” or “conjoint doctoral degrees” in partner universities has the same content as cotutelle defined by Hokkaido University, it is classified as cotutelle at Hokkaido University. From now on, any joint research supervision with overseas universities for doctoral students at Hokkaido University shall be referred to as cotutelle.

Cotutelle program: an educational program in which research supervision is provided jointly with overseas universities under cotutelle scheme. Students who have received joint research supervision in a cotutelle program and satisfied requirements for completion in their universities shall be awarded a diploma with the words, “under a cotutelle agreement with ○○ University”.

A DD program for doctoral students may be implemented as a cotutelle program, and students who have satisfied requirements for completion at the partner university will also be awarded an academic degree from the partner university.

(3) Comparison between a cotutelle program and related programs

	Cotutelle program	DD program	(Reference) JD program ※This program has not yet been introduced at Hokkaido University
Positive implications	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fact of having received research supervision in overseas universities is stated in the diploma. <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlike DD and JD programs, a cotutelle does not directly affect the curricula of both universities, so it can be implemented with relative ease. 	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students can earn academic degrees from two universities over a shorter period using the credit transfer system among other things. <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without affecting the curriculum of each university, a DD program can be implemented using the credit transfer system alone. 	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The burden of earning a joint degree with overseas universities is less than a DD program (it's possible to complete the program in the standard duration of study). Studying at overseas universities directly leads to the acquisition of an academic degree. <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced programs can be established that cannot be offered by a single university.
Negative implications	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing in particular (if students fail to satisfy the requirements of the cotutelle program (e.g. receiving research supervision overseas for one year), they may return to a normal program) <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is necessary to make arrangement and adjustments with partner universities for joint degree examination. 	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since students are to complete two curricula, the temporal and financial burden is larger than when completing Hokkaido University's curriculum alone (it's possible to reduce the burden to some extent through the credit transfer system and mutual tuition waiver to prevent tuition from being collected from both universities). <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is difficult to make arrangement and adjustments with universities that have a different academic calendar. It is difficult to make adjustments for the overall implementation of an academic degree examination. 	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since this is a joint education program, students cannot earn an academic degree without completing study at overseas universities. <p>Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for program establishment are strict. For example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a new major (must be approved by the Council for University Establishment and School Corporation) Assignment of a full-time faculty member A joint curriculum must be developed by making arrangement and adjustments, such as the ratio of workload among universities and subjects jointly provided, in the countries with different academic degree systems.

(4) Basic system

a. Enrollment status of students and tuition fees

Students shall be formally enrolled in the single university they originally belong to, and tuition and other fees shall be in principle paid only to the university in accordance with the memorandum. However, arrangements and decision for tuition fees shall be made in consultation with the partner university. Hokkaido University shall admit program participating students from partner universities as special research students.

b. Supervision system and the period of research supervision

Teaching staff from both universities shall jointly supervise students. Each university shall appoint a chief supervisor and sub-supervisor(s).

Research supervision period at a university where students go to study abroad shall be at least one year in principle (this can be cumulative). The time of commencement of research supervision overseas shall be determined in consultation with the partner university, and shall also be sometime from the first year to the first semester of the second year in the doctoral degree program in principle.

c. Academic degree examination method

Teaching staff of the partner university (students' supervisors) shall be involved in academic degree examinations for students who originally belong to Hokkaido University as a home university. The examination method shall be determined in sufficient consultation with the partner university and be subject to the graduate school's internal regulations. Students who originally belong to the partner university shall be examined in accordance with the university's academic degree examination method.

For travel expenses and accommodation fees involving the degree examination, advance arrangements shall be made in consultation with the partner university. If the teaching staff from the partner university cannot attend an academic degree examination due to unavoidable reasons but it is judged that they can fully participate in the examination using a TV conference system and the like, attendance in such a manner shall be acceptable. This should be taken into consideration when making a memorandum.

d. Statement in diplomas

Diplomas (in Japanese) issued by Hokkaido University to students who have completed a cotutelle program shall include the words, "Research supervision required for the completion of the doctoral degree program was provided jointly with ○○ University."

Diplomas in English shall include the words, "under a cotutelle agreement with ○○ university" at the end of the text.

e. Conclusion of agreements and memorandums

To ensure the stable and continuous implementation of the educational program, an inter-university academic exchange agreement or a departmental academic exchange agreement shall be signed before concluding a memorandum which is necessary for the implementation of the cotutelle program. The memorandum shall include the content and implementation method of research supervision, the system for supervising students, and arrangements for tuition and other fees. A memorandum for each student shall also be concluded in consultation with the partner university to confirm individual matters related to the exchange of students.

If the partner university requests the implementation of a program with a name which is different from "cotutelle program" (e.g. joint PhD) and if it meets the definition above, a memorandum shall be concluded as a cotutelle program. If the partner university wish to use different names, it is desirable to conclude a memorandum that includes an article stating, "this program shall be titled as a cotutelle program by Hokkaido University and a joint PhD program by ○○ University."

f. Others

Necessary matters other than those specified in this document shall be determined in consultation with the partner university. It should also be noted that the conferment of academic degrees on students who have completed a cotutelle program shall be subject to the Hokkaido University General Rules of Graduate Schools and other related regulations.

Double Degree Programs at Hokkaido University

Until now DD programs have been implemented based on the report from the Working Group on International Education Exchange Promotion of March 2009, but henceforth shall be implemented based on the system below.

(*Changes are underlined)

(1) The definition of DD program

Since the Central Council for Education has provided a new definition of DD, Hokkaido University has reviewed its definition of DD, and decided to use the following definition in accordance with the definition of the Central Council for Education.

Academic degrees separately conferred on students participating in educational programs on the same academic degree level established separately by Hokkaido University and an overseas university, when they have satisfied the requirements for graduation or completion of a program at each university through the credit transfer and other systems.

(Reference: definition of DD)

- Source for the definition by the Central Council for Education: Guidelines for Building International Joint Diploma Programs Including Double and Joint Degree Programs (November 14, 2014)

Academic degrees separately conferred on students who have completed a number of educational programs on the same academic degree level, established by universities under a partnership and satisfied the requirements of each of the universities. Such degrees will be conferred on qualified students by each of the universities.

- Source for the previous definition by Hokkaido University: Guidelines for Credit Transfer and the Introduction of Double Degree Programs for Accelerating International Education at Hokkaido University (March 31, 2009)

Academic degrees that students earn from Hokkaido University and its partner university after receiving education and research supervision from both universities while they are enrolled in each, in an educational program made between both universities as part of student exchanges based on an inter-university academic exchange agreement

(2) Basic system

a. Enrollment status of students and tuition fees

- 1) Since academic degrees are conferred on students who have completed the curricula of both universities, students shall be enrolled in both universities as regular students. However, students shall be formally enrolled in the single university to which they originally belong (hereinafter referred to as a “home university”).

- 2) Students to be admitted shall be selected in accordance with the admission policy of the host university.
- 3) While it is desirable for tuition fees to be only paid to the home university by exchanging a memorandum to prevent tuition fees from being collected by both universities, arrangements for tuition fees shall be made in consultation with the partner university before the decision.

b. Supervision system and the period of research supervision

Relevant graduate schools shall build a research supervision system that allows students in the master's or doctoral degree program to receive research supervision from teaching staff of both universities. Each university shall appoint a chief supervisor and sub-supervisor(s).

The period for which Hokkaido University students in the master's degree program receive research supervision at the partner university shall not exceed one year.

c. Academic degree examination method

The number of theses submitted for academic degree examination shall be two in principle, and the thesis examination shall be conducted by each university. Only if approved in consultation with the partner university, students can submit only one thesis to be examined by both universities. In this case, the graduate school shall deeply discuss the feasibility for the quality assurance of the academic degree beyond a doubt.

Both universities shall actively accept supervisors from the partner university as examiners to review the theses in graduate schools.

Completion accreditation tests (e.g. oral test of thesis examination) for master's or doctoral students shall be conducted in an appropriate language in both universities, and academic degrees from each university shall be conferred on the students in accordance with the regulations of each university. Only if one thesis is submitted and a joint thesis examination is conducted with the attendance of teaching staff from the partner university and Hokkaido University (at least two members from each university), the examination may be carried out on a single occasion. In a joint thesis examination for students who originally belong to Hokkaido University as a home university, the chief examiner must be a teaching staff of Hokkaido University.

*The joint thesis examination mentioned here refers to an examination in an academic degree examination committee meeting, and does not include a preliminary examination incidental to the academic degree examination committee meeting. The method and procedure of an academic degree examination shall be subject to the regulations of each university.

d. Credit approval and requirements for completion

- 1) Credits for subjects that students have studied at both universities shall be awarded in consideration of the educational effects of the classes and necessary academic workload outside classes, among other things, in accordance with their categories.
- 2) The number of credits earned at both universities can be mutually counted as the number of credits required for completion at each university. For credit transfer conversion, refer to Manual for Credit Transfer with Overseas Universities (February 2015, Executive Office for Education Reform and Office of International Affairs).

- 3) To earn academic degrees from both universities, students must satisfy requirements for completion in the curricula of both universities, including taking courses provided at individual universities.
- 4) The conferment of academic degrees at Hokkaido University shall be subject to the Hokkaido University General Rules of Graduate Schools and the Hokkaido University Regulations Concerning Academic Degrees.

e. Conclusion of agreements and memorandums

To ensure the stable and continuous implementation of the educational program, an inter-university academic exchange agreement or a departmental academic exchange agreement shall be signed before concluding a memorandum which is necessary for the implementation of the DD program. The memorandum shall include the content and implementation method of the educational program, the system for supervising students, and arrangements for tuition and other fees. A memorandum for each student shall also be concluded in consultation with the partner university to confirm individual matters related to the exchange of students.

If a DD program is implemented in the doctoral degree program, the partner university shall be informed that the outlines of doctoral theses submitted for degrees conferred by Hokkaido University and summaries of thesis examination results will be published online within three months of the date of conferment, with the full text of the theses within one year, in accordance with the Regulations Concerning Academic Degrees.

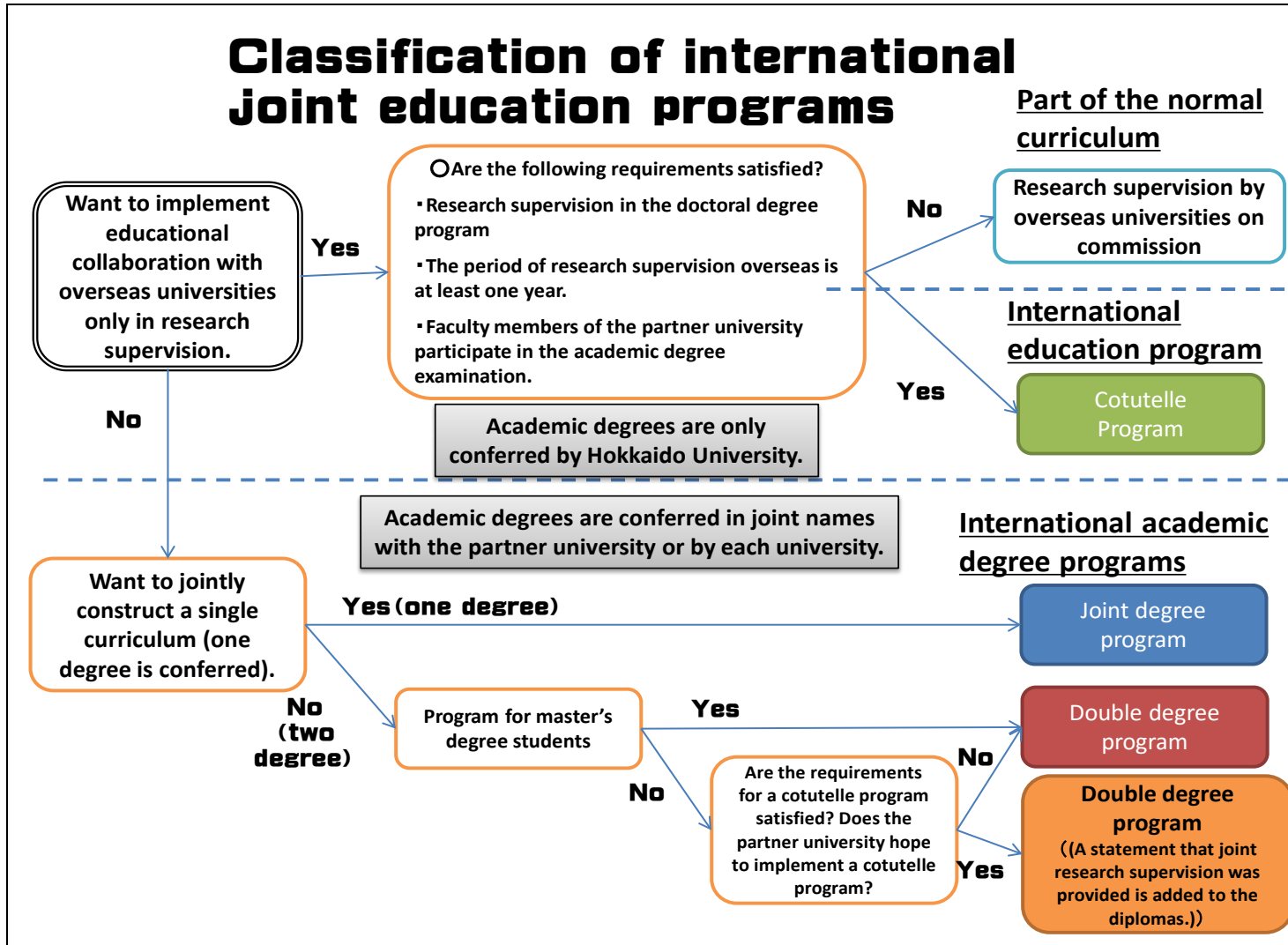
f. Others

- 1) Matters other than those specified here shall be determined in consultation with the partner university.
DD in this document refers to a program with overseas universities but not with domestic universities.
- 2) Since no DD program is currently being implemented in the undergraduate schools of Hokkaido University, this document was prepared with the DD programs for master's and doctoral students in mind. Accordingly, b and c above as well as Reference 1 and Reference 2 below do not apply to the DD program in the undergraduate course.
- 3) If a DD program for doctoral students satisfies the requirements for the above-mentioned cotutelle program, the words, "under a cotutelle agreement with ○○ University" may be added to diplomas issued by Hokkaido University in consultation with the partner university.

Reference 1. Differences in academic degree examinations among international joint education programs

		Standard curriculum		DD		JD
			Cotutelle program		Cotutelle program	
Doctoral degree program	Number of theses to be submitted	1	1	2 in principle (Can be 1)		1
	Number of academic degree examinations	1	1	2 in principle (Can be 1)		1 (Joint examination with the partner university)
	Number of degrees	1	1	2 (If requirements for the cotutelle program are satisfied, a statement indicating the implementation of joint research supervision may be added to the diplomas.)		1 (Degree in joint names and signatures with the partner university; not classified as cotutelle)
Master's degree program	Number of theses to be submitted	1		2 in principle (Can be 1)		1
	Number of academic degree examinations	1		2 in principle (Can be 1)		1 (Joint examination with the partner university)
	Number of degrees	1		2		1 (Degree in joint names and signatures with the partner university)

*A cotutelle program is implemented in a similar manner to a JD program in some overseas universities. However, since a single degree is conferred in joint names in a JD program in Japan, it is not necessary to add the name of the partner university to the diploma. Accordingly, the cotutelle program shall not be applied to JD programs.



*At Hokkaido University, international joint education programs refer to the three programs of cotutelle, double degree and joint degree.