

Joint degrees and engaging with a Europe of Knowledge: lessons from a UK perspective of a challenging collaborative endeavour

Jan Katherine Bamford

Creative Industries, Faculty of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, London, UK
Email: j.bamford@londonmet.ac.uk

International joint degrees offer the possibility of internationalising the curriculum, enhancing intercultural skills for both staff and students and enhancing global job opportunities. This paper examines the challenges for staff and institutions engaging in developing a 'Europe of Knowledge' by offering a suite of international joint degree programmes in the business area. This case study of staff perspectives and quality assurance assessment of joint degrees offers insights into the challenges and the lessons that can be learned and the lived reality of this type of international curriculum development from the practitioner perspective.

Keywords: international joint degrees, international collaboration, Bologna Process, international quality assurance

Introduction

The significance of the growth in joint degree programmes has been highlighted as an issue that is worthy of attention (Guttenplan 2011), European policy supports their development, (Leuven Communique 2009) and yet institutions offering international joint degrees appear to be polarised in a few countries, France, Germany, UK, USA and Spain (Kuder and Obst 2009). The Institute for International Education (IIE) promotes the importance of joint and double degree programmes, stating that universities are looking to such programmes as a way to offer students international experiences following a survey report of 180 higher education institutions, (Kuder and Obst 2009). The claim is that they promote diverse language and 'cultural fluencies', which will prepare students for successful careers. The possibility of students gaining transferable skills important in the global job market and gaining certificates which evidence qualifications in more than one country's higher education system would appear to make such programmes of study attractive to both institutions and students. Culver et al. (2012), when looking into the added value that such programmes could offer graduates, found this to be the case and that further study of these types of programmes needed to be undertaken. The aim of this paper is to present an exploration of some of the challenges and lessons for institutions wishing to offer such programmes of study. This is achieved through the use of a case study of a suite of joint master's programmes offered in the UK and France. Data was gathered through twelve in-depth interviews with practitioners, managerial, teaching and administrative staff from both institutions. An interview with the International Director of another institution in France which also offered joint degrees was also undertaken in order to give the findings greater validity and to explore the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) position from the experience in another institution. Participant observations were also undertaken as well as an analysis of the UK's QAA's reports on

institutional collaborative provision. Asgary and Robbert (2010) acknowledge that there is a dearth of research on international dual awards. This paper attempts to address this research gap through an in-depth examination of practitioner experience of collaboration on international joint awards, thus highlighting some lessons that can be learnt from such collaborations. Whilst the difficulties in generalising the findings from a case study of only two institutions are acknowledged, it is hoped that some insight will be given into the realities and challenges for institutions and individuals participating in such interlinked collaborative programmes.

The case focused on three joint master's programmes delivered in London and France in the business subject field, specifically in marketing communications, tourism and finance. The two institutions were very different in terms of size, quality processes, funding arrangements and make-up of the student body. Differences in location were also notable, with the English institution situated in an urban environment and the French situated in a small town in rural France. The French institution was one of the group of elite French business schools known as *Grandes Écoles*. The paper considers the challenges of offering international joint degrees around the key themes arising from the literature and the data; these were: the policy context, quality assurance, the international competitive environment for higher education, the need to develop a relationship between staff, and international branding and the motivations for engaging in such collaborative programmes.

The importance of considering joint degree programmes and the policy context

Dale (2010) offers us some insight into the development of a Europe of Knowledge, which joint degrees represent, and the call by the European Union (EU) for higher education (HE)

institutions in Europe to create opportunities for students' mobility. This mobility drive is evidenced in policy documents such as the Prague and Berlin Communiqués, 2000 and 2003 respectively, as well as through EU initiatives such as Erasmus Mundus, which have influenced higher education institutions' international activities. The continuing importance of the policy agenda and institutional engagement with this agenda within the European Higher Education Area is further evidenced in the Leuven Communiqué (2009). Leuven set a target of mobility within Europe of 20% of graduates by 2020 (the 20/2020 target). It required that institutions establish partners in another country within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in order to facilitate the mobility of higher education students. One way to achieve this is through the establishment of joint degrees with a partner institution. However, this may be considered to be one of the most ambitious modes of collaboration because of the expectations of a 'joint' curriculum delivered across institutions and across national borders.

The implementation and discussion of this policy is evidenced by the Trends reports, commissioned by the European Universities Association. Crosier et al. (2007) in Trends V indicated that many institutions in Europe have experimented with the development of joint programmes or that they are intending to do so. They found that the majority of joint programmes are in the second cycle (i.e. master's level). Their report underlines the importance of joint degrees for the Bologna Process and the need for the analysis of the joint degree experience at master's level. Crosier et al. state that:

At this stage, it would seem reasonable to suggest that joint programmes are playing a significant role in constructing the European Higher Education Area, by giving institutions opportunities to work together and learn from each other. (Crosier et al. 2007, 31)

With the launch of the EHEA in 2010 and the recognition of internationalisation as an important driver of change in the context of Bologna (Sursock and Smidt, Trends 2010) joint degree programmes can be seen as encouraging inter-university collaborations.

Recent reports produced by the Institute for International Education (2011) on joint double degree programmes and the AACSB (Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business, 2011) on internationalisation highlight the importance of such programmes as a focus for future institutional international approaches to student education.

From a UK perspective, Sweeney (2010, 11) refers to the need to develop a 'culture of mobility', which arises as a consequence of the Bologna Process. He states that this mobility culture should encompass the setting up of joint degrees with partner institutions outside the UK. Further, when

considering the need for the development of opportunities for mobility, a flexible and innovative approach to the curriculum is required. It is certainly the case that curriculum development which relies not just on cross-institutional collaboration but also cross-country collaboration is underscored by both innovation and flexibility at both an institutional and individual level.

The definition of a joint degree

The existing literature evidences a lack of clarity over the terms 'double diploma' and 'joint degree'. The term joint degree has been used by the London institution to denote a course where two degree titles are achieved for a course that is jointly delivered by two partners. There are variations in the usage of the term and it is often used interchangeably with the terms joint awards, dual awards and double diplomas. The difference in usage of the terms in France where double degree is often used to denote an advanced entry articulation agreement with an overseas partner is an example of how institutions can interpret and operate differently within a national context.

The joint curriculum model that is the focus for this paper necessarily presents more challenges and requires more transparency and communication between the institutions. Schule (2006, 3) defines the terms in the following ways:

Joint degree: a single diploma issued by two or more institutions offering an integrated study programme.

The single diploma (bachelor, Master, Doctor) is signed by the rectors of all participating universities and recognised as substitute of the national diplomas [sic].

Double degree: two nationally recognised diplomas issued separately by the universities involved in the integrated study programme.

Schule (2006) makes the comment that the legal environment in Europe has prevented truly joint degree programmes, in the sense that one institution always has to be responsible for the award. He argues that joint degrees need to operate outside national regulatory frameworks, as diplomas would have to be issued jointly by institutions, which is not possible in the current environment. Schule (2006) identifies the positive aspects of JDDs with regard to joint curriculum development and the possible difficulties for joint degree programmes. His checklist is perhaps the most comprehensive analysis for institutions wishing to consider this type of collaborative venture. In contrast, Davies (2009) defines joint masters as being 'a Masters delivered by two or more HEIs awarding single or multiple diplomas' (2009, 12), providing an accessible definition which is relied on here.

The structure of the joint degree courses in this case is illustrated in Figure 1. In order to achieve two master's awards,

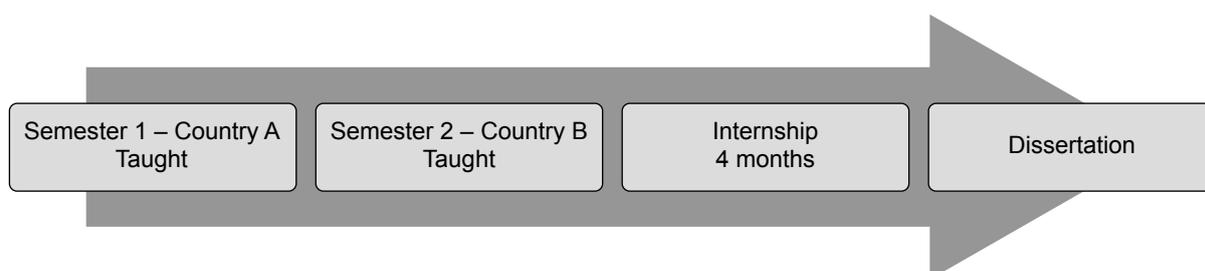


Figure 1: Joint degree course structure

all elements of the courses had to be completed. The regulatory frameworks of each institution were applied where the course was delivered – therefore one taught semester and the dissertation in the case of the London institution and a taught semester and the internship in the case of the French institution. This illustrates both the joint nature of the curriculum but also its separateness, as two sets of regulations were employed in this case. The delivery of half of the courses' teaching as well as the credit awarded is dependent on the 'other' institution.

The current environment for joint degrees

The focus for much of the curriculum collaboration between institutions in Europe seems to be at the postgraduate rather than the undergraduate or doctoral levels. This is highlighted by the Bologna Trends reports and the recent AACSB (2011) report. Davies (2009) echoes this in finding that joint programmes of study are more likely to be offered at master's level and are likely to grow in popularity because of the demands of the market. His findings indicate that a large majority of higher education institutions surveyed were planning to develop more joint degrees. This is also noted in the AACSB (2011) report.

The drivers for institutions engaging in this type of activity appear to be largely centred around globalising initiatives but there is some indication of variations in primary drivers. Schule (2006) acknowledges that certain types of institution in Europe, such as the *Instituts Supérieurs de Commerce* also known as *Grandes Écoles* (Blanchard 2009), have used double degrees in order to increase their competitiveness (2006, 4). Schule states that institutional profiles need to be given careful consideration since, for example, the differences between a professional approach to education and a theoretical approach could prove significant. The competitive environment, branding and market environment for schools of business in France, when these joint master's degrees were developed was quite different to the UK environment for post-92 institutions. At the start of the collaboration the differences were acknowledged by the partners, but they were considered to be a strength, offering each institution the potential to benefit from attributes that they could not offer, such as location (Forte and Bamford 2008).

One of the key areas of concern is the application of ECTS credits, established by the Bologna Process. An example is the possible difficulty in measuring and equating credits for differing workloads in institutions. This concern arose during the original negotiations, the formal quality approval of the courses and seemingly during the administration of the courses as a constant issue to consider. Schule states that this can become a 'major obstacle to international mobility unless the participating universities show a flexibility not built into the ECTS system' (2006, 28).

When acknowledging that joint master's degrees are not problem-free, Davies (2009) observes that national frameworks compound the challenges with regard to a lack of clarity in information and a clear understanding of the challenges, the difficulties posed by variable entry points, credit weighting, workloads and learning outcomes. This can result in 'ad hoc compromise and approximation' (2009, 54).

One of the challenges witnessed and commented on by interviewees was in relation to ECTS credits and the differences

in achievement expectations at each institution. For the programmes in this study there were a different numbers of subjects studied at each institution and there was an apparent difficulty in the translation of grades from one system to another. In London, assessments were marked out of 100 and in France they were awarded marks out of 20. On the surface this does not seem problematic but it became apparent that very few of the students achieved an overall distinction from the London institution – only three students achieved an overall distinction in their Master's over a sample of 98 students over all three courses in one year. The evidence suggests that students did not receive a distinction for a 15/20 grading and yet it is equal to 75% in the UK, with 70% being a distinction classification. The aggregation of grades across a number of modules across two institutions meant that students simply did not achieve the higher band of grades. The institutions thus had to renegotiate grade equivalences, as more flexibility was required in their translation and in marking standards between the two institutions.

This seems to evidence the approximations referred to by Davies (2009). It reinforces the need for a careful consideration of the difficulties in working across national education systems as there is an impact on the student experience and both institutions learnt the importance of the need for transparency. These differences and difficulties were commented on by tutors in interviews as a frustrating aspect of the programmes and were a source of continual compromise.

The quality assurance position

Quality assurance is raised by Culver (2013) as a challenging area for international joint degrees. An aspect of this quality assurance is commented on by Schule (2006) with regard to the issue of two awards being given for one programme of study. He cites the Coimbra Group's² position of concern at not being able 'to catch two fishes with one hook'. There is certainly a question of ethics to be raised with regard to the issue of an award of two master's diplomas for the same work. However, this conflicts somewhat with how such courses are situated within the 'market', where the promotion of such courses relies on the possibility of students gaining a double diploma. Observation of both institutions' marketing activity demonstrated that there was an emphasis placed on this achievement and that it became a marketing tool. This raises a question with regard to the demand of the market taking precedence over ethical concerns in this sort of collaborative activity. Certainly, this particular aspect of such programmes of study raises questions with regard to issues of quality which may ultimately undermine the credibility of the joint double master's awards. Schule's (2006) solution to the problem of the possibility of a wilful misrepresentation on the part of students with regard to their qualifications is that the diploma and diploma supplement should clearly state that the award is part of a double diploma and in this case the diploma supplement highlighted this.

The position with regard to the responsibility for ensuring quality as far as UK institutions are concerned is expressed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in their Code of Practice on Collaborative provision:

The Code is based on the key principle that collaborative arrangements, whenever and however

organised, should widen learning opportunities without prejudice either to the standard of the award or qualification or the quality of what is offered to the student. Further, the arrangements for assuring the quality and standards should be as rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny as those for programmes provided wholly within the responsibility of a single institution. This remains the case even when the partner organisation is itself also an Awarding Institution, as with joint or dual awards (Paragraph 7, 1999 QAA code of Practice, cited in the QAA, 2008: 4, Outcomes From Institutional Audit Report).

The phrasing in this paragraph leaves some questions with regard to monitoring the delivery of programmes (or part of the programme) overseas and how far this can be achieved within other national frameworks of practice. The tone of the 2008 report is clear in expressing concern with regard to learners in collaborative partnerships being put at risk where there is distance from the UK awarding body. In addition this position is reinforced by the QAA with regard to the reliance on a partner's reputation as being insufficient from the perspective of quality (2008, 13).

With regard to the joint curriculum aspect to joint degrees, the QAA's position would appear to place some doubt on the UK institutions' ability to accredit work done by students in a partner institution in another country without moderation of that work by the UK institution. An example of this can be seen in a QAA collaborative links report (QAA 2006) on one UK institution which failed to demonstrate that the quality concerns of the QAA had been met with regard to its postgraduate double master's activity with a French partner. The report demonstrates that the issue of quality and transparency – which, in that instance, could not be seen to be evident in the crediting of work done in another institution – are an important aspect of maintaining the standards expected of postgraduate higher education in the UK. This reinforces notions of international higher education being constrained within national frameworks of delivery.

The report's tone is unambiguous in the allocation of responsibility of quality to UK institutions. It illustrates and reinforces the theme of transparency and effective management of collaborative partnerships and that the monitoring of academic standards for British degrees must be maintained by British higher education institutions. The wording of the report indicates that a reliance on the Bologna implemented ECTS credit scheme is not sufficient to meet the QAA criteria and, from a UK perspective, UK external examiners need to confirm standards of marking in order to ensure that the standards of UK postgraduate education are being met. The tone of the report is reflected by Culver's (2013) conclusions on the difficulties in achieving quality assurance in multi-country degree programmes. Whilst Beerkens (2004) aids in understanding the nature of collaborative networks of higher education institutions, the view that these networks have become so important that the nation state is losing its grip on higher education institutions and that international benchmarks are necessary (2004, 19) has not yet come to pass. The discussion above reflects the continued importance of nation state frameworks for higher education. These rarely allow for only one diploma to be awarded jointly from different institutions. Schule (2006) and Guruz (2011) both comment

on the difficulties with regard to this despite the introduction of the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQR) in 2008, national legislation would be needed to overcome the difficulties of issuing a joint diploma.

The need for compatibility between the institutions

The way in which the institutions interact with each other is an important aspect of the student experience in facilitating the joint degree as a holistic international higher education experience. The dimensions of difference involved have the potential for enhancing the experience and producing additional educational benefits but care needs to be taken in communication, transition and aiding in negotiating the different *modus docendi* (mode of teaching) of each institution. The maintenance of communication between the institutions and a suitable, transparent support network are fundamental aspects of the student experience.

Beerkens (2004) underlines the importance of the compatibility of the higher education institutions involved in a collaboration, to the extent that it is a precondition for the collaboration to succeed. With reference to the relationship of the institutions in this case, one of the course leaders had the following comments to make on the way in which these two institutions engaged in the collaboration:

A clear lead from the top has encouraged the development of the relationship. The lead is based on a personal friendship but also a recognition of the financial imperatives which characterise any joint initiative. Each director has helped the relationship by appointing a liaison person at each institution and although the personalities may have changed in the course of institutional reorganisation, the recognition of the value of the relationship remains as strong as ever ...

Hence, the importance of the role of institutional liaison. I have described this role as the 'catalytic converter' in the relationship as problems can occur in other parts of the relationship which have to be resolved post hoc. It is also becoming clear that the role has an internal development dimension – explaining why and how the relationship adds to the strength of both institutions. The education is delivered according to the rules determined by the host institution and mutual standards are accepted.

[Course Leader, French institution]

The QAA place a strong emphasis placed on the importance of a liaison tutor in terms of making sure of the quality and equivalence of experience in educational terms of each institution. What is interesting to note here is the importance given to the 'financial imperatives' in the comments, thus tending to confirm – if only from the French perspective – the link to financial drivers for institutions engaging in international education. The QAA Code of Practice (2004, 11, paragraph A6) warns institutions against financial or other temptations that may compromise standards. In the quote from the course leader above, the financial basis for the relationship is underlined by the use of the words 'financial imperative' but reinforced with the use of the word 'value'. Beerkens' (2004) identification of the need for 'chemistry' between the actors would appear to be reflected in both the tone and the words

of the interview abstract above and in comments made by other staff. The cultural differences between each institution were noted and led to cultural learning at both institutions. The second interview excerpt offers another example of the comments in relation to the importance of the role of institutional liaison.

The importance of global branding?

Both the French institution in the case study and many of the high ranking *Grandes Écoles* have sought accreditation from AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) and EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System accredited by the European Foundation for Management Development, EFMD) in order to market themselves internationally. According to AACSB, seeking accreditation has a direct relationship with internationalisation activity

The AACSB report on the Globalisation of Management Education (2011) provides some useful insights into business schools' motivation for engaging in international activity. AACSB acknowledges that in 2004 the primary reason for deans to internationalise was the heightened educational experience of the students. However, in the 2011 report it states that financial motivations have increasingly played a more important role in 'forming strategic program alliances' (AACSB 2011, 14). It underlines the importance of international accreditation as being as much about 'the pursuit of excellence (along globally recognised standards of quality) as it is about branding and positioning in the globalizing worlds of business and higher education' (2011, 70). Staff from both institutions commented on the institutional motivations for engaging in joint degree study, although the driving forces of finance and international branding were more strongly expressed by the French institutions' staff. Students were made aware of the 'elite' branding of the institution at an early stage of their studies. The AACSB also states that one of the purposes of international accreditation is to eliminate the need for 'potential collaborative partners to understand the differences between national accreditation schemes' (2011, 70). This seems to be a rather bold claim as it presumes that international accreditation is more important than national accreditation, which is not a line that the QAA appears to have adopted.

The course leader from the French institution expressed the following views on international benchmarking with regard to both institutions:

The French institution is in the process of positioning itself as a quality destination for students in its national market using international accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS). Depending on various French student publication surveys, the school appears between 11th and 18th position amongst the Grandes Écoles of which there are 39. Last year it appeared in the top 40 European management programmes in the FT classification. The London institution has a different profile and is considering accreditation with AMBA. It boasts a maximum rating of 24³ in teaching quality excellence and 3A research assessment exercise rating in the Tourism subject. [Course Leader, French institution]

These comments with regard to international branding display that both league position and global branding were important to the French institution, but also that they expected their partners to reflect similar ambitions. Interviews with the London institution staff also demonstrated the important role of the accrediting bodies on the operations of both institutions whilst acknowledging that the approach of the French had an influence on institutional strategy in this area as they had been encouraged to apply for membership status of AACSB.

Participants' views on the motivations for the collaboration

The motivational aspirations of the French school in offering joint degree programmes were echoed in the staff responses at the London institution. The internationalisation motivation identified in the Trends reports (Culver et al. 2007, Sursock and Smidt 2010) was made reference to by many of the staff but the globalising influence of such programmes seemed to dominate the strategic thinking. This is illustrated in the following comments in response to a question to the decision maker at the London institution:

The French school is a business school of some standing in the European scene, and it has to be said that their reputation was significant in my decision to progress this relationship. That being said, its genesis I think relates to the fact that I take the view that in the world in which we're currently living, globalisation being the way that you might describe that world, it's extremely important that students get exposed to alternative ways of looking at business and management practice. So the idea of a collaboration with the French school in the course area was attractive to me because I think it allowed those students to have that exposure to ways of looking at business and management practice. So I think that was the primary motivation for the collaboration, and we've attempted to develop similar models with other institutions in different parts of the world. [Manager in the London institution]

The interview data from the French staff illustrated a difference in approach to international collaboration, to international activity in general, as well as to the administration and promotion of such programmes and the motivational aspects of engaging in such activity.

So I think it is a good idea to have a joint degree, a double degree programme, because I want to send the students abroad because I want them to realise how we have to learn and they have to know how to be independent, which is not the case in France ... [Course leader at French school and tutor at other GEs]

There was a clear desire to provide the opportunity for engagement with 'others', and a reflection that the *Grande École* system does not allow for the development of independent learning. When asked about French students' views on difference, French tutors responded that there is a negative attitude amongst French students to different pedagogies and that an experience of an 'independent study pedagogy' would be beneficial.

A comment from an International Director at a French school illustrates the different approach with regard to teaching and learning, most specifically learning outcomes:

... the profs are the doyens, the knowledge base, espousing their own research and their own professional experiences to the students ... And so the idea that you will have checks and balances in a curriculum that ascertain whether the learning outcomes have been met don't exist. [International Director of French GE]

The point about learning outcomes is important as it illustrates a fundamental difference in approach to British universities. Whilst the ENQR requires that institutions in Europe now frame their courses in a learning outcomes format, this comment underlines that this is a different approach from French institutions and a challenging approach.

It is clear from the QAA report that the status (taken here to mean league table positioning) of an institution does not circumvent the requirement of UK quality processes, for example, the requirement of external examining of partners' courses. This reinforces a preference for UK institutions of strictly adhering to the UK quality procedures and does not aid with dealing with difference. The Bologna position is one of harmonisation, so, likewise, it does not deal with difference and provides institutions with little guidance on addressing issues of difference. The comments made with regard to learning outcomes above are just one example of the differences which directly affect students and how they negotiate with the institutions.

Institutional culture

When asked about the different cultures of each institution, a manager in the London institution made the following comments:

[Laughing] I don't know whether culture has much to do with it. I think that reputation has something to do with it and I think that finances have something to do with it. I've already mentioned that we've had to modify our thinking on the financial side to reflect the financial realities as they impact on the French School. I think the French school are collaborating with us largely because of our position or our location. They want to offer their students a London experience and they think that is attractive to those students. We want to offer an experience to our students which is international, perhaps rural France wouldn't be the obvious location. But what we're offering them is an experience of a business school which is accredited by EQUIS and by AACSB which has some cachet and some value to our students I think. [Manager at the London institution]

The interesting aspect of this interview excerpt is the interviewee's laughter in relation to the mention of culture, perhaps demonstrating that the issue of cultural interactions had not featured in the internationalisation strategy of the London institution despite the recognition of cultural differences between the British and the French at other times during the interview. In addition, the word 'value' is used with regard to branding by international bodies, something that does not address the student experience. The importance of the

location of London is also underlined here, which is seen in balance with the benefits of elite branding.

The response from some French staff was that the cultural difference between the institutions had an impact on students in terms of the rules and norms of behaviour and much of this was related to the fact that the cohort of students recruited to the dual awards came from the ESC⁴ programme and that MSc programme resided administratively under the ESC structure, despite its international students which were recruited by the London institution. The difference in the French students' background and approach was a factor in some of the administrative difficulties, as students from France came from an integrated programme of study and students joining the course in London were new to the course.

When specifically asked about the cultural differences of the institution, the following response was elicited from one of the course leaders in France:

It would appear the university treats the business school as 'another partner': in some instances with little difference from a franchise college. My institution probably sees itself as 'privileged' and certainly equal partner for two reasons: the course has been very successful financially and the business school has invested heavily in raising its profile nationally and internationally. [Course Leader for French school]

Here a clear acknowledgement is made of the difference between the two institutions which creates a gap that needs to be bridged. There appears to be a critique of the London institution's approach, which again underlines the need for the clear channels of communication and development of transparency referred to by Davies (2009). The comments also underline the difference in approach to the administration of the course at each institution. These differences in administrative approach require clear communication between partners in order to preserve the sustainability of joint degree programmes.

Concluding comments

The findings indicated that for the joint degrees in this case, the challenges of difference needed to have been given further attention as well as ethical issues, such as the need for more transparency. The research therefore holds some general interest for academics and higher education institutions wishing to embark on collaborations to develop such programmes of study. The claims that the AACSB, make about joint degrees appearing to represent the future for international higher education activity emphasise the importance of understanding the challenges that such programmes involve.

The need for transparency underlines the need for an ethical context to international higher education which requires further consideration both from institutions but also from policy makers. There is certainly a tension with regard to the pull of market forces in the international higher education environment and from a UK perspective the warnings from the QAA with regard to the temptations of financial benefits. In this case it seems that financial benefits provided an incentive for the institutions to develop the joint degrees.

The different *modus docendi* (mode of teaching) at each institution also enhanced the separateness of each institution rather than 'jointness' and highlighted the issue of difference

which had an impact on student achievement. The separateness of each institution was further entrenched by national frameworks of quality monitoring and regulations which provide the structures for master's education that institutions must follow in order to maintain governmentally set standards of quality.

The future will surely see a growth of joint degrees. The continued marketisation of higher education, increased use of technology and the influence of Erasmus Mundus and EU policy will inevitably result in a rise in these types of programmes where the education experience is a shared process between one or more higher education institutions and the students. If these courses are to be useful educationally, more work will need to be done to ensure greater integration in the design and delivery of the courses.

Notes

- ¹ British national higher education quality awarding body.
- ² A network of 40 European Universities formed in 1985 consisting of some of the most prestigious and oldest universities in Europe.
- ³ The 24 is a reference to the 24/24 the London institution received from the QAA.
- ⁴ The *École Supérieure de Commerce* Programme (ESC) programme is normally three years following two years of *classes préparatoire* after the Baccalaureate. It is the main programme of study offered in all *Grandes Écoles* that are members of the *Chapitre des Grandes Écoles*.

References

- AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) 2011. *Globalization of management education: changing international structures, adaptive strategies and the impact on institutions*. Bingley: AACSB International.
- Asgary N, Robbert MA. 2010. A cost-benefit analysis of an international dual degree programme. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 32(3): 317–325.
- Forte P, Bamford J. 2008. Reflections on managing international master's programmes internationally. Paper presented at the ALHE 2008 Conference, 3–5 December 2008, Canterbury.
- Beerkins HJJG. 2004. Global opportunities and institutional embeddedness: higher education consortia in Europe and South East Asia. CHEPS/UT. [Online] Available at: <http://www.utwente.nl/chepsdocumenten/thesisbeerkins.pdf>. [Accessed 9 May 2007].
- Blanchard M. 2009. From 'Écoles Supérieures de Commerce' to 'Management Schools': transformations and continuity in French business schools. *European Journal of Education* 44(4): 586–604.
- Crosier D, Purser L, Smidt H. 2007. *EUA Trends V: universities shaping the European higher education area*. Brussels: European Universities Association.
- Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher and Education. 2001. Prague Communiqué, Towards the European Higher Education Area. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/MDC/PRAGUE-COMMUNIQUE.pdf>. [Accessed 10 June 2010].
- Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher and Education (2003). Berlin Communiqué. [Online]. Available at: http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/bologna_process/decision_making/prague_2001_and_berlin_2003.cfm. [Accessed 30 August 2010].
- Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher and Education (2009). Leuven Communiqué, The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the new decade Joint Declaration of the European Ministers. [Online] Available at: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/conference/documents/Leuven_Louvain-la-Neuve_Communique%C3%A9_April_2009.pdf. [Accessed October 29th 2011].
- Culver SM, Puri IK, Spinelli G, DePauw KPK, Dooley JE. 2012. Collaborative dual-degree programs and value added for students: lessons learned through the Evaluate-E project. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 16 (1): 40–61.
- Dale R. 2010. Constructing universities' responses to Europe's Lisbon Agenda: the roles of the European Commission in creating the Europe of Knowledge. *LLAKES Research Paper*, (19).
- Davies H. 2009. *Survey of master's degrees in Europe*. Brussels: European University Association.
- ENQA 2009. *Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area*, 3rd edn. Helsinki, Finland: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Available from: www.enqa.eu/pubs.lasso. [last accessed August 12th 2012].
- Guttenplan D. 2011. Dual-degree programs are gathering steam. *New York Times*, 28 March.
- Kuder M, Obst D. 2009. Joint and double degree programs in the transatlantic context: a survey report. New York: Institute of International Education and Freie Universität Berlin.
- QAA. 2006. University of Westminster: collaborative provision audit report. Mansfield: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
- QAA. 2008. Outcomes from institutional audit, collaborative provision in the institutional audit reports. 1–28. Mansfield: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
- Sastry T, Bekhradnia B. 2007. The academic experience of students in English universities. *HEPI Report*.
- Schule U. 2006. *Joint and double degrees within the European higher education area: towards further internationalisation of business degrees*. Paris: Consortium of International Double Degrees.
- Sursock A, Smidt H. 2010. Trends 2010: a DECADE OF CHANGE in European higher education. Brussels: European Universities Association.
- Sweeney S. 2010. *The Bologna Process: responding to the post-2010 challenge*. York: Higher Education Academy.

