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India

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German Academic Exchange Service

Indo-German Higher Education Cooperation:

Guidelines for Student Exchange,
Dual/Double & Joint Degree Programmes

Imprint

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Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)
German Academic Exchange Service
Regional Office New Delhi
R.K. Khanna Stadium, 1 Africa Avenue, New Delhi 110029, India

Project coordination:

Ms. Shikha Sinha, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi

Editor:

Dr. Katja Lasch, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi

Author team:

Dr. Katja Lasch, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi
Ms. Constanze Mittag-Buhmann, TUD Dresden University of Technology (until 31.03.2023)
Dr. Cornelia Krause, TUD Dresden University of Technology
Ass. iur. Karen Schlüter, Maître en Droit
Dr. Solenne Schwanemann, Leibniz University Hannover
Ms. Christine Meyerhof, Leibniz University Hannover (until 30.06.2023)
Ms. Susanne Krause, Hof University of Applied Sciences
Dr. Amitava Datta, Jadavpur University, Kolkata
Dr. Ravikant Ranjan, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IITR)
Dr. P. Arumugam, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IITR)
Dr. Manish Jain, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi
Dr. Naresh Sharma, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune
Dr. Rajesh Pankaj, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)
Ms. Vani Samuel, Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)
Ms. Snigdha Sharma, Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) (until 31.03.2023)

Concept:

Dr. Katja Lasch, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi
Ms. Shikha Sinha, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi

Proofreading:

Mr. Puneet Nangia, The German Language School

Layout and typesetting: www.everything.design

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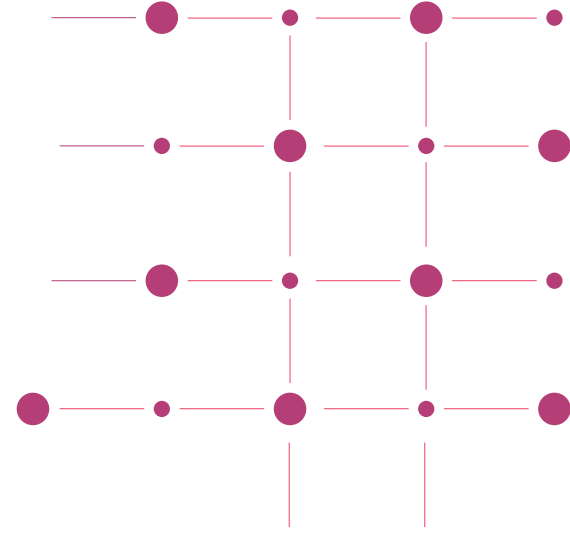
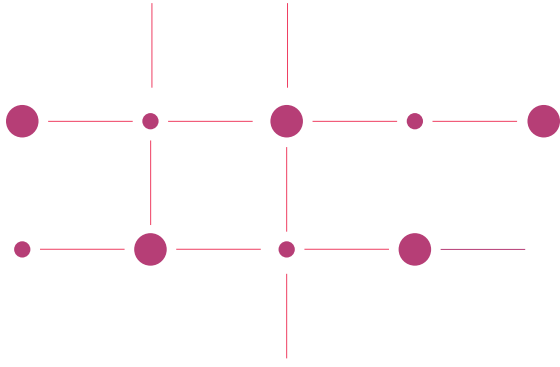
Disclaimer

The information in this document was compiled by the participants of an Indo-German working group and reflects their assessment. The guidelines are for informational purposes only and do not claim to be exhaustive. The information provided is, therefore, not legally binding.



Contents ●

1. Introduction	04
2. Higher education in India	06
2.1 Overview of different types of HEIs and degree programmes	07
2.1.1 Types of HEIs	09
2.1.2 Degree structure	10
2.2 Internationalisation and international cooperation	12
2.2.1 Internal structures for internationalisation	12
2.2.2 External approval structures for international cooperation	13
2.2.3 Assessing the partner institution/programme	13
3. Higher education in Germany	15
3.1 Overview of different types of HEIs and degree programmes	15
3.1.1 Types of HEIs	16
3.1.2 Degree structure	17
3.2 Internationalisation and international cooperation	19
3.2.1 Internal structures for internationalisation	20
3.2.2 External approval structures for international cooperation	20
3.2.3 Assessing the partner institution/programme	21
4. Models of cooperation	22
4.1 Student exchange/twinning: Bachelor and master programmes	23
4.2 Dual/Double and joint degrees: Bachelor and master programmes	25
4.3 Doctoral studies/PhD	29
5. Challenges, barriers and hurdles	31
6. Useful weblinks	34
7. Templates and model contracts	36
8. List of terminology	38
List of abbreviations	43



Chapter 01

Introduction

Internationalisation of higher education is on the agenda of countries and universities worldwide. Germany and India have been highlighting internationalisation as a key factor in their current policies and strategies to develop their higher education and research systems. The German government published its first internationalisation strategy for higher education in 2008, emphasising the importance of international cooperation. With the introduction of the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), India is also prioritising the implementation of significant reforms in its education system. This includes fostering international research, innovation, and collaboration in higher education.

This paper is published at a time when German Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are re-evaluating and readjusting their internationalisation activities. Due to geopolitical shifts, including a military conflict in Europe and changes in political systems, cooperation with longstanding partners is being questioned or even broken. Furthermore, Germany is witnessing a decrease in the number of students and a shortage of skilled workforce. These factors have led HEIs to focus on internationalisation to attract talent to study programmes and cooperation projects. This holds true even for institutions that have not been significantly involved in international activities.

In India, internationalisation has gained momentum as the NEP 2020 addresses the necessity for a more

strategic approach. The regulations of the University Grants Commission (UGC) on twinning, joint degree, and dual degree programmes, first published in 2021, are establishing an overall framework in India, allowing a broad set of international activities for HEIs. With the request to establish international offices in all HEIs, they are starting to take up a more structured and focused approach. Internationalisation is no longer limited to top institutions, and it is expected that in the next few years, a broader set of institutions will be involved in international activities.

India and Germany have a longstanding partnership in higher education and research, reflected, among other things, in the presence of 11 German higher education and research institutions with an office in India and 450 cooperation projects between HEIs. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has been active for more than 60 years and supported more than 2,300 students and researchers and 79 cooperation projects in 2022.

Enhancing cooperation between India and Germany remains a top priority on the political agenda, particularly in the field of higher education. Germany's Indo-Pacific strategy underscores the need to foster collaboration with the region, with a special emphasis on India. During the Indo-German intergovernmental consultation in May 2022, both governments concurred on the need to enhance and broaden cooperation in the field of higher education, focusing, among other



things, on structured cooperation programmes. In the “India-Germany Vision to Enhance Cooperation in Innovation and Technology”, signed in 2023, both countries expressed their intention to jointly work towards a roadmap for innovation and technology, aiming to support economic development and address global challenges.

These developments offer an opportunity to initiate new collaborations and deepen existing ones, particularly in structured exchange programmes. The present publication aims to assist Indian and German HEIs in advancing their cooperation and establishing structured programmes with their partners. The focus is on addressing administrative and legal questions while setting up semester exchange programmes, as well as dual/double and joint degree programmes.

The guidelines in this publication provide an overview of the higher education systems in both India and Germany. They offer basic information on the types of HEIs, degree structures, internal structures of internationalisation, and the processes for obtaining approval for international cooperation. This provides an initial and comprehensive understanding of complex higher education systems.

In the second part, the publication presents an overview and compares the definitions, regulations, requirements, and characteristics of student exchange/twinning programmes, dual/double degree, and joint degree

programmes at the bachelor, master, and PhD levels in both higher education systems. The information in these chapters is compiled based on legally binding regulations and the experience of the authoring team. Each chapter concludes with key takeaways and recommendations. These guidelines aim to offer practical support. A dedicated chapter in the document focuses on barriers and hurdles, highlighting points to consider when setting up a structured exchange programme in order to avoid potential pitfalls. Additionally, the document contains an overview of important weblinks for further information and terminology. A compilation of model contracts and sample agreements furnished by Indian and German HEIs can be accessed online through the link: <https://www.daad.in/en/guidelines/>

A joint Indo-German working group, comprised of representatives from HEIs and other experts, compiled the information. They assessed and compared the legal regulations and contributed their expertise in implementing international academic collaboration programmes. Given this context, it is important to note that this publication does not claim to be exhaustive and does not make any legally binding statements.

The guidelines reflect the perspective and assessment of the authoring team, aiming to provide readers with initial information on the topic.

New Delhi, October 2023

Higher education in India

The Indian higher education system has developed significantly after gaining independence from British colonial rule. It has seen exponential growth in the number of institutions and student enrolments over the last three decades. The following overview aims to outline key features of the Indian higher education system, providing guidance for informed decision-making and strategy development, particularly in the context of internationalisation.

India follows a federal structure of division of powers. Apart from the central government, there are 28 states and 8 union territories. All states have an elected legislature and government. Union territories may also have an elected legislature, and the President, acting on the advice of the central government, appoints an administrator to run them.

Education is included in the concurrent list of the Constitution of India¹. This means that both state and central governments have the authority to pass laws regarding education. Through an act of the Parliament or a state legislature, all states, union territories, or the central government can establish a university. This university may be a central university (funded by the central government), a state university (funded by the government of the state or union territory), a deemed university (government, government-aided, or private),

or a private university (unaided). Under the state list, state governments also have the power to incorporate, regulate, and dissolve universities. Additionally, under the union list, the central government has the power to determine standards for higher education, research, and scientific and technical institutions. Before India's NEP 2020, the central government had a Ministry of Human Resource Development, which has been renamed the Ministry of Education.

The NEP 2020 outlines broad directives for HEIs. Various authorities are in place to oversee different types of HEIs, setting norms, accreditation, quality, standards, and certification.

UGC: The UGC is a subordinate authority of the Ministry of Education and the largest regulatory authority. All HEIs in India must be recognised by the UGC. Its further responsibilities include regulating and funding public HEIs within its jurisdiction, including open/distance-mode universities.

Professional regulatory authorities: Specialised institutions, such as technical HEIs, medical colleges and universities, as well as agricultural and law universities, fall under specific regulatory authorities. These authorities are responsible for accreditation of study programmes, quality assurance of curricula,

1) For regulations in India, see: The Constitution of India: <https://www.mea.gov.in/Images/pdf1/S7.pdf>, accessed 16.08.2023, p. 315, 317, 319.

and partly for the funding of the institutions under their authority. The most important authorities are the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for technical institutions, the National Medical Commission (NMC) regulating medical education and professionals, the Bar Council of India (BCI) handling legal education, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) for teacher education, the Council of Architecture (COA) for architecture, and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) coordinating agricultural education and research.

The autonomy of HEIs in India is typically restricted. They must abide by both federal and state regulations and are under the control of either the UGC, state-level authorities, or subject-specific regulatory authorities. In the realm of international cooperation, this encompasses, for example, the requirement for approval from different higher-level authorities for the appointment of international faculty or clearance for cooperation contracts.

In contrast to the various HEIs regulated by these bodies, the Institutes of National Importance (INIs), including institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs), and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), are governed by separate legislations. They enjoy considerable autonomy, allowing them, among other things, to set tuition fees themselves, independently create new courses, revise course content, hire academic staff without central approval, and award degrees independently. These institutions have the authority to initiate various forms of international cooperation without being subject to regulations from higher-level authorities. The NEP 2020 envisions changes in the regulation of international cooperation, particularly concerning minimum standards and approval structures. These minimum standards are detailed in Chapter 5.

2.1 Overview of different types of HEIs and degree programmes

The Indian higher education sector is remarkably diverse and extensive. According to the All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020–21, there were a total of 56,205 HEIs in India in 2020–21. Out of the 41.3 million students, approximately 78.09% were enrolled in undergraduate-level courses during this period².

Broadly, there are three main categories of institutions:

In general, a distinction can be made based on the type

- **Universities:** Universities are empowered to confer³ degrees under specific acts of the Parliament or state legislatures. India had 1,113 universities in 2020–21, of which 657 were public universities - i.e., run and funded by the government - and 446 were private (unaided) universities. In general, universities can autonomously determine their admission procedures, curricula, and syllabi.
- **Colleges:** Colleges do not have the authority to confer degrees in their own name and are, therefore, affiliated with or recognised by universities. Out of the 43,796 colleges, 65% are private-unaided. A significant portion of colleges primarily offer undergraduate programmes (65%), with only 4% having more than 3,000 students.
- **Stand-alone institutions:** Stand-alone institutions operate independently from colleges or universities and typically offer diploma or postgraduate diploma-level programmes. These programmes necessitate recognition from one of the statutory bodies.

of funding (state/private/mixed), jurisdiction (central government/state level), and autonomy (autonomous/non-autonomous). A significant number of colleges and universities have a specialised focus. The various types of universities can be categorised as follows: general universities offering degrees in various disciplines (humanities, sciences, commerce, law, management, arts, etc.), technical universities providing various engineering and management programmes, agriculture and allied institutions, medical universities, institutions focusing on legal education (law), and those offering Sanskrit and other Indian languages.

2) AISHE 2020–21: <https://aishe.gov.in/aishe/BlankDCF/AISHE%20Final%20Report%202020-21.pdf>, accessed 16.08.2023.

3) AISHE 2020–21: <https://aishe.gov.in/aishe/BlankDCF/AISHE%20Final%20Report%202020-21.pdf>, accessed 16.08.2023. pp- A-8.

2.1.1 Types of HEIs

Within the three primary categories of institutions mentioned in the preceding section, the Indian higher

education system exhibits further distinctions. As stand-alone institutions do not offer courses leading to a bachelor or master degree, they are not included in this overview.

Types of HEIs	Key features	Degrees offered	Numbers in 2020–21
Universities and university-level institutions ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer degree programmes ● Empowered to confer degrees independently <p>The following types of institutions are covered:</p>	Bachelor Master Diploma PhD	Total 1,113
	<p>Central university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Centrally regulated by the UGC ● Financed by the central government through the UGC ● Offers a wide range of subjects ● Highly regulated with a reduced level of autonomy 		51 (public)
	<p>State university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established by a state or provincial act ● Regulated by both the UGC and state authorities ● Financed by state governments ● Highly regulated with a reduced level of autonomy 		403 (public)
	<p>Open university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established by state governments (14) or the central government (1) ● Solely offers distance education ● Financed by state governments or the central government ● Centrally regulated by the Distance Education Bureau (part of the UGC) ● Highly regulated with a reduced level of autonomy 		15 (public)
	<p>State private university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established through a state or central act by a sponsoring body ● High level of autonomy ● Private-funded 		365
	<p>Deemed to be university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Declared by the central government ● HEI with specific focus areas and high academic standards, providing education and research facilities across various disciplines ● Public or private-funded ● High level of autonomy if private-funded 		80 (private) 10 (public) 10 (private government-aided)

Types of HEIs	Key features	Degrees offered	Numbers in 2020–21
	Institutions of National Importance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public institutions conferred by the central government ● Specialised subject focus ● Directly funded by the central government ● High level of academic and administrative autonomy ● Include IITs, National Institutes of Technology (NITs), IISERs, and others 		149
Colleges/Institutions affiliated with or recognised by a university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer degree programmes ● Not empowered to confer degrees independently ● Mandatorily affiliated with a university or university-level institution There are two major types of colleges ² :	Bachelor Master Diploma	43,796
	University/Constituent college: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintained by the university ● Exams, curricula, and degrees provided by the university ● Administrative decisions taken by the university ● Typically located on the same campus as the university ● Public or private-funded ● Reduced level of autonomy 		
	Affiliated college: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Operates independently as a college ● Exams, curricula, and degrees provided by the university ● Administrative decisions, such as those concerning enrolled students, are determined by the college ● Public or private-funded ● Reduced level of autonomy 		

1) Other categories of universities encompass institutions established under state-legislature acts and other entities established through state or central acts, all of which have the authority to confer degrees.

2) Other types of colleges are specified in the AISHE 2020–21.

Autonomous colleges: The central government can grant constituent and affiliated colleges the status of an autonomous college. These colleges have a high degree of autonomy, allowing them, for instance, to review and restructure existing course programmes, create new programmes, establish their own methods for student assessment, and manage their own admission procedures. The degree or certificate is conferred by the parent university.

Useful links:

- The UGC provides an overview of different types of institutions: <https://www.ugc.gov.in>.
- The AISHE covers all HEIs in India, gathering data on various parameters such as teachers, student enrolment, programmes, examination results, education finance, and infrastructure. The annual reports are accessible here: <https://aishe.gov.in/aishe>.

2.1.2 Degree structure

The Indian higher education system is currently undergoing a change in the degree structure. Until 2023, most bachelor programmes were offered as three-year-long undergraduate courses, and master programmes typically spanned two years. However, with the introduction of a national credit transfer system, there has been a revision in the degree structure, making it mandatory to offer the so-called “exit pathways”. Students who opt to exit before completing their full programme can now obtain certificates, allowing them to re-enter the programme at a later stage. With the introduction of the Academic

Bank of Credits, students can accumulate credits from prior learning experiences and use them when re-entering the programme in the future. Furthermore, the new degree structure enables students to directly enter a PhD programme after completing their master degree and, in some cases, after their bachelor degree.

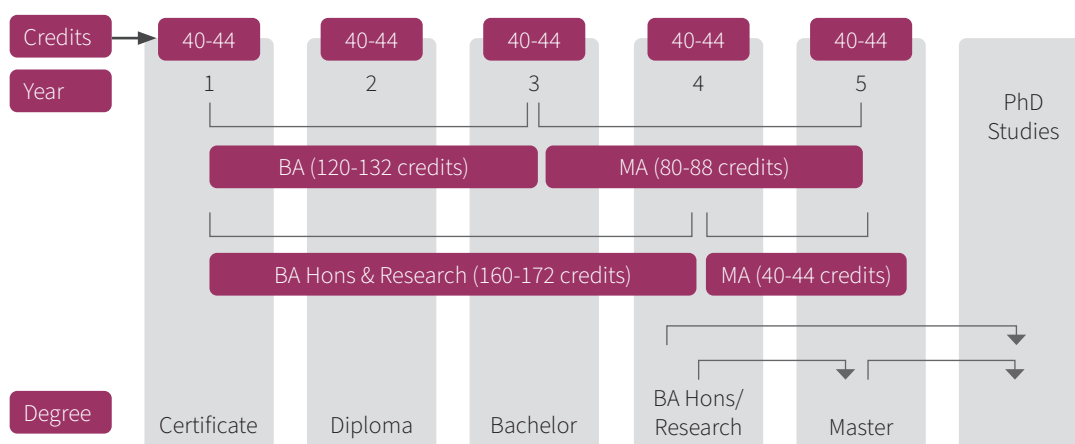
The following table provides an overview of the various certificates and degrees offered by Indian HEIs. Each academic year is worth 40-44 credits, according to the national credit transfer system accorded by the National Credit Framework (NCrF) 2023⁴.

Degrees/ Certificates	Details
Undergraduate certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of one year of the undergraduate programme (for students who opt to exit) ● Securing 40 credits in coursework ● Securing four credits for a vocational course or internship during the summer vacation ● Option to re-enter the degree programme within three years
Undergraduate diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of two years of the undergraduate programme (for students who opt to exit) ● Securing 80 credits in coursework ● Securing four credits for a vocational course or internship during the summer vacation ● Option to re-enter the degree programme within three years
Bachelor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of a three-year undergraduate programme ● Securing 120 credits in coursework ● Awarding of a degree in the major discipline ● Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of Vocation (BVoc), Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor of Physical Education (BPEd)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of a four-year undergraduate programme ● Securing 160 credits in coursework ● Awarding of a degree in the major discipline ● Bachelor of Engineering (BE), Bachelor of Technology (BTech)
Bachelor (Honours with Research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of a four-year undergraduate programme ● Research stream: Research project or dissertation under the guidance of a faculty member in major discipline ● Securing 160 credits, of which 12 are dedicated to the research project or dissertation ● Awarding of a degree in the major discipline
Postgraduate diploma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion of one year within a two-year master programme (for students opting to exit) ● Securing 40 credits

4) NCrF 2023:

https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/9028476_Report-of-National-Credit-Framework.pdf, accessed 16.08.2023, pp. 34-50.

Degrees/ Certificates	Details
Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a two-year master programme after obtaining a three-year bachelor degree • Securing 80 credits • Master of Arts (MA), Master of Commerce (MCom), Master of Science (MSc), etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a one-year master programme after obtaining a Bachelor Honours with Research • Securing 40 credits • MA, MCom, MSc, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a two-year master programme after obtaining a four-year BE or BTech degree • Securing 80 credits • Master of Engineering (ME), Master of Technology (MTech)
PhD/Doctorate	<p>Programme duration of three to six years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum requirement of twelve credits for coursework • Entrance qualification: Master degree with at least 55% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale • Four-year bachelor degree with at least 75% marks in aggregate or its equivalent grade on a point scale



Overview of the credit structure in India – own illustration

In specific fields such as architecture, medicine, or pharmacy, bachelor programmes with a duration of five to six years are offered.

PhD studies: In India, the doctorate is awarded through individual doctoral studies. There are no graduate schools in place. At the commencement of the doctorate, it is compulsory to complete courses, both theoretical and methodological, relevant to the discipline or research topic (coursework). In most PhD programmes, the actual research work does not commence until the coursework is finished.

The UGC has established regulations that the respective universities or HEIs may fully adopt or adapt as long as

they do not violate the UGC regulations. The doctorate typically requires three to six years for completion. The formal prerequisite for doctoral studies is a master degree. Under the provisions of India’s NEP 2020, a four-year Bachelor Honours with Research may also be deemed sufficient for admission to the PhD programme, provided it meets specific conditions.

Useful links:

- An overview of the new degree structure is available here: https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/2990035_Final-NHEQF.pdf.
- Gain insight into the NCrF 2023 here: https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/9028476_Report-of-National-Credit-Framework.pdf.

2.2 Internationalisation & international cooperation

India's recent NEP 2020⁵ has a separate section on internationalisation, marking the first instance of such inclusion in central policy. Internationalisation places emphasis on increasing the enrolment of international students in Indian HEIs in the future, facilitating increased mobility for Indian students to study, transfer credits, or research abroad, and vice versa. The NEP 2020 promotes courses and programmes in subjects like Indology, Indian languages, AYUSH systems of medicine, yoga, arts, music, history, culture, and modern India. Furthermore, the policy encourages the adoption of internationally relevant curricula in sciences and social sciences. It aims to achieve global quality standards, attract greater numbers of international students by making India "a global study destination providing premium education at affordable costs", and achieve the goal of "internationalisation at home" through opportunities for social engagement, residential facilities, on-campus support, and more.

The NEP 2020 outlines provisions for encouraging and facilitating research and teaching collaborations, as well as faculty and student exchanges with high-quality international institutions, including the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with them. High-performing Indian universities will have the opportunity to set up campuses in other countries, while select top global universities will be encouraged to operate in India, subject to special provisions concerning regulatory, governance, and content standards in alignment with other autonomous institutions in India.

It is crucial to emphasise that international cooperation between Indian and foreign/international institutions is governed and facilitated by at least three sets of agreements and norms. Bilateral agreements between India and another country can promote internationalisation and collaboration in various forms, including research, recognition of degrees, credit transfer, and mobility. Different notifications, regulations, and circulars by the UGC lay down the larger regulatory norms. Additionally, the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) also plays a significant role in facilitating internationalisation.

Useful links:

- Access the NEP 2020 document here:
https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

2.2.1 Internal structures for internationalisation

In India, until 2021, most HEIs did not have a dedicated international office. In contrast to Germany, where it is customary to have a separate international office with appointed non-academic staff responsible for tasks such as student and faculty exchange, mobility, joint research grant applications, MoUs, and credit transfer, in India, these responsibilities fell under the purview of academics.

In 2021, the UGC mandated all HEIs to establish an international office. This office is intended to act as the nodal point for international activities, overseeing the coordination of international students, promotional activities, and serving as the single point of contact for international cooperation initiatives. This move is expected to streamline and enhance cooperation activities by centralising information and establishing a designated point of contact for international partners.

Depending on the type of institution, a university academic holds the position of dean of international affairs at many Indian institutions for a tenure of three to four years. Deans of international affairs are primarily responsible for leading the current international offices. Given the time-limited nature of this position, a challenge for Indian HEIs arises in ensuring the seamless transfer of knowledge and maintaining continuity in international cooperation efforts.

In Indian HEIs, the authority to sign MoUs and cooperation agreements lies with the vice chancellor of the university or the director of the institution. In specific cases, they might delegate this authority to department chairs or deans, depending on the nature and relevance of the collaboration.

Furthermore, within Indian HEIs, faculty members are required to seek permission from the institution for research collaborations and applications for research grants. The specific internal procedures may vary. Generally, both faculty and students need a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the institution for travel purposes.

5) NEP 2020:

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf, accessed 16.08.2023, p. 39.

2.2.2 External approval structures for international cooperation

Recently, the UGC issued regulations governing academic collaboration between Indian and international HEIs to facilitate student exchange, dual/double degree, and joint degree programmes. These regulations set forth the minimum standards for implementing structured programmes for institutions falling under the aegis of and receiving funds through the UGC (central universities, state universities, publicly funded deemed to be universities, and their affiliated colleges). However, institutions with a high level of autonomy, such as Institutions of National Importance, Institutions of Eminence (IoEs), and privately funded institutions, are not legally bound by these regulations. Detailed provisions can be found in Chapter 4.

According to the regulations, an Indian HEI must initially formalise a written MoU or agreement with its partner institutions, outlining the purposes and related provisions of collaboration. Subsequently, after obtaining internal approval from the appropriate authority, such as the board of governors/management, further approval from relevant statutory councils is required before commencing collaboration, particularly in technical, medical, legal, agricultural, and other professional programmes. In contrast to institutions with a high level of autonomy, for example, Institutions of National Importance like the IITs or the IISERs, most Indian HEIs must navigate through additional permissions from competent authorities, including relevant regulatory bodies and central/state governments, for MoUs. This may lead to potential delays.

The UGC regulations define eligibility criteria for the facilitated establishment of dual/double and joint degree programmes. Indian institutions regulated by the UGC must have an international office in place and fulfil one of the following criteria:

- Accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) or any other agency authorised in this regard, with a minimum score of 3.01 on a 4-point scale
- Securing a position in the top 1,000 of either the Times Higher Education World University Rankings or the QS World University Rankings at the time of application
- Securing a position in the top 100 in the university category of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)

International HEIs must be ranked in the top 1,000 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings or the

QS World University Rankings at the time of application. If an international institution does not fulfil these criteria, a dual/double or joint degree is not possible with institutions regulated by the UGC.

Useful links:

- For detailed guidelines from the UGC, refer to the UGC Academic Collaboration Regulations: https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/4555806_UGC-Acad-Collab-Regulations.pdf

2.2.3 Assessing the partner institution/programme

With over 40,000 HEIs and more than ten different types of institutions, the Indian higher education system is complex. In addition to information on the autonomy level of the institution, it is also imperative to consider the accreditation status of the programme. Internal rankings can also be useful in evaluating the partner institution.

Accreditation and internal rankings

In the last decade, the Indian government has developed a national accreditation system under the NAAC. Additionally, the government has established national ranking systems across various disciplines under the NIRF. Both systems play a crucial role in evaluating potential cooperation partners.

The **NAAC** is responsible for conducting assessments and accrediting HEIs. It evaluates these institutions for their adherence to established standards and quality in terms of their performance using seven criteria: curricular aspects; teaching-learning evaluation; research, innovation, and extensions; infrastructure and learning resources; student support and progression; governance, leadership, and management; and institutional values and best practices. HEIs applying for accreditation are graded on a scale ranging from 0 to 4, with 4 denoting the highest grade. Institutions must attain a minimum score of 1.5 for accreditation.

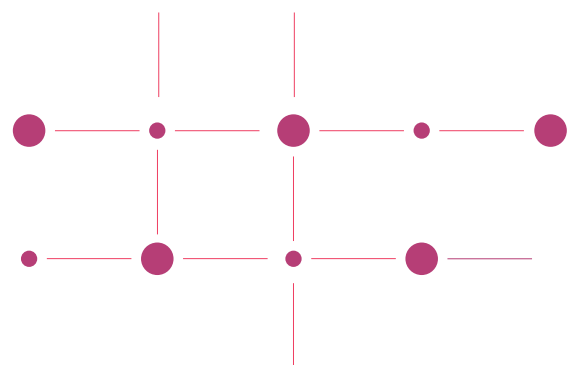
Useful links:

- For more detailed information about the NAAC, visit their official website: <http://naac.gov.in/>
- Learn about the NIRF here: <https://www.nirfindia.org>

The **NIRF** ranks institutions across the country based on criteria such as teaching and learning, research and professional practice, graduation outcomes, inclusivity, and perception. Presently, 2,478 institutions participate in the ranking across different categories. In addition to the overall rankings of universities, colleges, and research institutions, the NIRF also publishes rankings in the fields of engineering, management, pharmacy, medical and dental, law, architecture and planning, and agriculture.

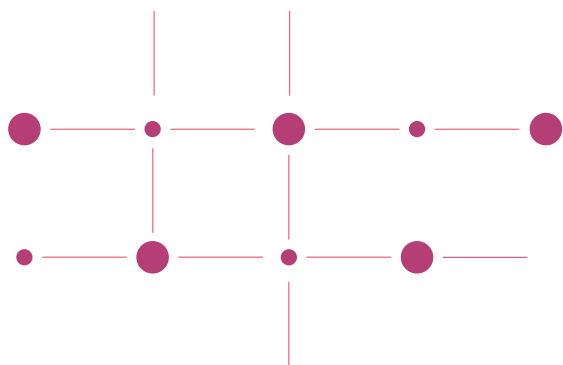
International rankings

Only a few Indian universities make it into the top 1,000 of international rankings such as the Times Higher Education World University Rankings or the QS World University Rankings. Consequently, these rankings offer only restricted insights.



Key takeaways:

- 1)** Pay attention to the status and level of autonomy of your cooperation partner, as they may require additional approvals from higher-level authorities, potentially leading to delays in processes.
- 2)** If one of the international partner institutions does not meet the criteria set by the UGC regulations on dual/double and joint degree programmes, such collaborations can only be implemented with Indian institutions that have a high level of autonomy, such as the Institutions of National Importance and private-funded institutions.
- 3)** When establishing international cooperation programmes, it is advisable to select colleges and universities that offer degrees at the bachelor, master, and PhD levels.
- 4)** Many institutions are in the process of setting up their international structures and international offices. If available, the international office is a good first point of contact for your inquiries. Otherwise, seek guidance from your cooperation partner within the specific Indian institution.
- 5)** When considering cooperation with an Indian partner, it is advisable to conduct an initial assessment of the partner using data provided by the NAAC and the NIRF rankings. International rankings may be of limited use, as only a few Indian institutions are listed. It is advisable to collaborate with institutions that have undergone a quality assessment and received NAAC accreditation.



Higher education in Germany

The German university system exhibits significant differences from the Indian system. The subsequent overview aims to provide insights into higher education in Germany, particularly in the context of internationalisation.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the principle of federalism encompasses a two-fold separation of powers. This comprises horizontal separation in the traditional sense, dividing legislative, executive, and judiciary powers at both the level of the federation (*Bund*) and the 16 federal states (referred to hereafter as *Länder*, singular *Land*). Additionally, it involves vertical separation between the *Bund* and the 16 *Länder*. Unless expressly stipulated or permitted by the Basic Law, that is, the federal constitution (*Grundgesetz*), the exercise of governmental powers and the discharge of governmental functions are vested in the *Länder* (Article 30 of the Basic Law). Consequently, according to German legislation, educational and cultural matters, including higher education, primarily fall under the purview of the *Länder*, along with the administration of these matters. The State Higher Education Acts (*Landeshochschulgesetze*) regulate the higher education system in each *Land*⁶.

The *Länder* are responsible for the basic funding and organisation of HEIs. Each *Land* has its own laws governing higher education. Therefore, the actual structure and organisation of the various higher education systems may differ from *Land* to *Land*. Due to educational federalism, the level of autonomy

from the state takes on diverse forms throughout the country. Nevertheless, there is a guarantee of academic freedom and institutional autonomy that extends across the entire system. This guarantee is reinforced not only by individual *Land* laws concerning higher education but also by the *Grundgesetz*, as outlined in Article 5, Paragraph 3, and in similar provisions in the *Länder* constitutions. This constitutional principle pertaining to academic freedom guarantees the autonomy and self-governance rights of HEIs. Consequently, universities establish their fundamental principles, degree programmes, and examination procedures and requirements independently. As a result, HEIs possess the authority to autonomously enter into international agreements.

3.1 Overview of different types of HEIs and degree programmes

HEIs in Germany are either state-owned (public and government-funded) or state-accredited private institutions. Currently, there are 423 state- or public-accredited HEIs offering approximately 20,000 different study programmes in about 180 locations. Most of these institutions are state-funded, with some being church-run, and around 114 are private institutions recognised by the state. Approximately 5.5% of students are enrolled in private universities, while the rest attend state-funded ones. Despite the increasing presence of private HEIs, public HEIs clearly remain in the majority.

6) The information in this chapter is based on: Brigitte Göbbels-Dreyling; Henning Rockmann: Governance of higher education in Germany, in: Leadership and governance in higher education, 5 (2015) 1: <https://zdb-katalog.de/title.xhtml?zdbid=2621004-6&vol=2015>, p. 157-178.

3.1.1 Types of HEIs

Types of HEIs ¹	Key features	Degrees offered	Numbers 2022–23
Universities <i>Universitäten</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theoretically oriented and provide research-focused components ● Emphasis on (basic) research ● Wide range of programmes across various subject areas ● Some specialise in specific subject areas 	Bachelor Master Staatsexamen Diplom/ Magister PhD	108 state and private state-recognised
Universities of applied sciences <i>Hochschulen für angewandte Wissenschaften/ Fachhochschulen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emphasis on practical application and applied research ● Professional character of studies with structured curricula: Practice-oriented in study offerings and teaching mode ● Subject areas: Technology/Engineering, business, social work and health studies, media and design, arts, and crafts ● Integrated and supervised work assignments in industry or enterprises ● Close relationships in cooperation with companies or industry 	Bachelor Master Diplom (PhD) ²	211 state and private state-recognised
Schools of art, film and music <i>Kunsthochschulen, Filmhochschulen und Musikhochschule</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer programmes for careers in the field of art ● Focus on creative subjects: Music, directing, writing in theatre, fine arts, film, fashion design, media and communication, etc. ● Admission based on talent 	Bachelor Master (Diplom) PhD	52 state and private state-recognised

1) Other types of HEIs include theological universities (16), pedagogical universities (6), colleges for public administration (30), and dual universities/vocational academies.

2) In some federal states, selected universities of applied sciences with a strong focus on research are granted the right to award doctoral degrees, for example, in Baden-Württemberg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Bavaria.

Useful links:

- A database of German HEIs offering the option to filter by types of HEIs, location, etc. can be accessed here: <https://www.hochschulkompass.de/en/higher-education-institutions.html>
- The full list of study programmes offered by German HEIs is provided by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK): <https://www.hochschulkompass.de/en/study-in-germany.html>



3.1.2 Degree structure

German HEIs offer the following types of degrees:

Bachelor: This is the first level of higher education recognised in the job market, providing foundational knowledge in an academic subject. Upon completion of the bachelor programme, one can either enter the job market or pursue a master degree. Completing the programme requires 180 or 210 credits as per the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Master: Following a bachelor degree, this programme aims to deepen knowledge or specialise in a specific subject. It prepares students for further academic pursuits, such as a doctorate, or for entering the job market. Completing the programme requires 90 to 120 ECTS credits. To attain a master degree, one needs a total of 300 ECTS credits from the bachelor and master programmes.

Staatsexamen: These are final examinations organised and evaluated by a state-run examination board, applicable in fields such as law, teacher's education, and medicine. *Staatsexamen* programmes are not eligible for dual/double or joint degrees. However, student exchange/twinning programmes are possible.

Diplom: This was the typical degree format before the bachelor/master structure was established. It is comparable to a master degree. A Diplom is primarily awarded in the natural, social, and engineering sciences, while a Magister Artium is mostly awarded in the social sciences and humanities.

PhD: A master degree, *Diplom* or *Staatsexamen* is generally a prerequisite for pursuing a PhD. German universities typically do not offer fast-track PhD programmes. If the candidate's master degree is not recognised as fully equivalent, the doctoral commission of the faculty may stipulate conditions (*Auflagen*). These conditions, which may involve courses or exams, must be fulfilled before the doctoral candidate is fully accepted. It is important to note that the authority to grant a doctorate is vested exclusively in universities (and, in some federal states, equivalent HEIs) and, more specifically, in faculties.

There are two main paths to obtaining a doctorate in Germany:

1. Individual doctorate: Candidates approach a university department to conduct their research under the guidance of a professor on a one-to-one basis. Contact should be initiated directly with the professors. A binding offer of supervision from a professor is required before the faculty formally accepts the candidate as a doctoral student and work on the dissertation commences. This mode is the most common in Germany.

2. Structured doctorate: Candidates apply directly for a doctorate at a graduate school (*Graduiertenkolleg*, Research Training Group, etc.), often with an international or interdisciplinary focus. This type of doctorate is more structured than an individual doctorate, as doctoral candidates are required to participate in seminars, workshops, and other activities in addition to their research. Typically, PhD programmes at a graduate school are conducted in English and span three years.

Degrees offered	Universities <i>Universitäten</i>	Universities of applied sciences <i>Hochschulen für angewandte Wissenschaften/ Fachhochschulen</i>	Schools of art, film and music <i>Kunsthochschulen, Filmhochschulen und Musikhochschulen</i>
Bachelor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Six semesters ● 180 ECTS credits¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Six or seven semesters (including internship semester) ● 180 or 210 ECTS credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Six or seven semesters ● 180 or 210 ECTS credits
Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Four semesters ● 120 ECTS credits² ● Qualifies for a PhD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Three or four semesters (depending on the ECTS credits gained in bachelor studies; for a master degree, a total of 300 ECTS credits need to be achieved) ● 90 or 120 ECTS credits ● Qualifies for a PhD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Three or four semesters (depending on the ECTS credits gained in bachelor studies; for a master degree, a total of 300 ECTS credits need to be achieved) ● 90 or 120 ECTS credits
Staatsexamen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depending on the subject field, takes five to six years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable
Diplom/Magister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Study duration: Ten semesters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable
PhD/Doctorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research-based ● Individual or structured in graduate school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only awarded in cooperation with a university as the institution conferring the title³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable

1) For full-time studies, 30 ECTS credits are typically awarded per semester (30 ECTS credits x 30 hours = 900 hours).

2) Different study durations and numbers of ECTS credits may apply for the continuing education master.

3) In some federal states, selected universities of applied sciences with a strong focus on research are granted the right to award doctoral degrees, for example, in Baden-Württemberg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Bavaria.

Useful links:

- For a comprehensive overview of the study programmes and degrees offered by German HEIs, visit: www.study-in-germany.de
- Gain insight into the ECTS provided by the European Commission: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system>

3.2 Internationalisation and international cooperation

3.2.1 Internal structures for internationalisation

The autonomy status of German HEIs allows them to develop their own internationalisation strategy, defining the goals and focal points specific to their institution. Typically, these internationalisation strategies are published on the institutional websites, serving as a valuable initial source of information for possible cooperations.

Internationalisation at German universities encompasses various levels including management, faculties, research institutes (where applicable), and administration.

- **Rector/President or vice-rector/vice-president for international affairs:** These positions are part of the university management and serve as the legal representatives for internationalisation. They hold the legal authority to sign agreements. While the university management can define basic guidelines for internationalisation, long-term implementation and realisation of the strategy typically involve various self-governing bodies, such as the senate.

- **Faculties/Academics:** They play a pivotal role in selecting international partners and determining the types of cooperation. Faculties have the privilege to choose their cooperation partners and decide on the nature of the cooperation they wish to establish. However, as a general rule, the authority to conclude cooperation agreements lies with the university management.

- **International offices:** These offices are typically present in all German HEIs. They function as central service units for all aspects of internationalisation. They support their respective universities in both developing and implementing the institution-wide internationalisation strategy. Given their profound knowledge of their own institution, they serve as valuable initial points of contact when exploring potential partnerships.

To **formalise institutional cooperation** with a German university, there are several avenues to consider:

- **Letter of Intent (LoI):** This is a unilateral declaration of intent, which is, in principle, not legally binding. Instead, it expresses interest in further negotiations and the eventual conclusion of an agreement.

- **MoU:** Typically, an MoU is a legally non-binding agreement between two (or more) parties. It outlines the terms and details of a mutual understanding or

agreement, specifying each party's requirements and responsibilities. However, it does not establish a formal, legally enforceable contract. Nonetheless, an MoU often serves as an initial step towards the development of a formal contract.

- **Cooperation agreement:** This is legally binding and is signed by the rector, president, or head of the university (provided that the respective *Land's* higher education act grants the authority to conclude contracts). Legal representatives of HEIs may internally delegate the authority to sign legally binding documents. Such agreements often regulate, in addition to mobility for study purposes, cooperation in the field of research, and sometimes administrative cooperation. Cooperation agreements can be framework agreements that are further detailed by additional documents, such as an exchange agreement.

- **Exchange agreement:** This typically regulates student mobility and, if applicable, lecturer mobility. It can serve as a supplementary document to a cooperation agreement, specifying the mobility aspects of the cooperation.

3.2.2 External approval structures for international cooperation

In Germany, the role and design of internationalisation fall under the general responsibility of individual HEIs within the framework of their autonomy, enabling them to establish agreements with international partners.

Useful links:

- For a comprehensive overview of the international cooperations of German universities, consult the database of the HRK:
<https://www.internationale-hochschulkooperationen.de/en/international-university-partnerships.html>

Each specific *Land's* Higher Education Act does not explicitly outline authorisation norms for the conclusion of cooperation agreements. However, all *Länder's* Higher Education Acts contain guiding principles that consider internationalisation and/or international exchange as a core task of HEIs.

Some *Länder's* Higher Education Acts include provisions for agreements with international HEIs for awarding a dual/double or joint, professionally qualifying degree (that is, bachelor and master, as per Section 58 Paragraph 6 of the Thuringia Higher Education Act (ThürHG) or Section 66 Paragraph 5 of the Saarland Higher Education Act (SHSG)).

Therefore, when establishing dual/double or joint degree programmes with German HEIs, it is necessary to cross-check the requirements of the specific *Land's* Higher Education Act.

Dual/double and joint degree programmes necessitate accreditation. The basis for accreditation is a state treaty between the 16 *Länder*, known as the State Treaty on the Organisation of a Joint Accreditation System for Quality Assurance in Study and Teaching at German Universities ("State Treaty on Study Accreditation").

The Foundation Accreditation Council is entrusted with the responsibility of implementation, overseeing the accreditation process for study programmes, and ensuring compliance with quality assurance standards in teaching and study programmes. The Foundation formulates rules for the accreditation of study programmes and for system accreditation. It also carries out the accreditation of accreditation agencies.

An annex of the aforementioned state treaty is the Model Law Ordinance (*Musterrechtsverordnung*). Section 10, Paragraph 6 stipulates that a joint degree programme coordinated and offered by a German university in conjunction with one or more universities in foreign countries from the European Higher Education Area, leading to a joint degree, must possess the following characteristics:

- Integrated curriculum
- Study share at one or more international universities, usually at least 25 percent
- Contractually regulated cooperation
- Coordinated access and examination system
- A common quality assurance

The *Länder* implemented the Model Law Ordinance, which only provides a framework. Consequently, there are a total of 16 regulations. They do not deviate or deviate only minimally from the specification. Since India is not part of the European Higher Education Area, the *Länder* regulations do not apply. Nonetheless, they

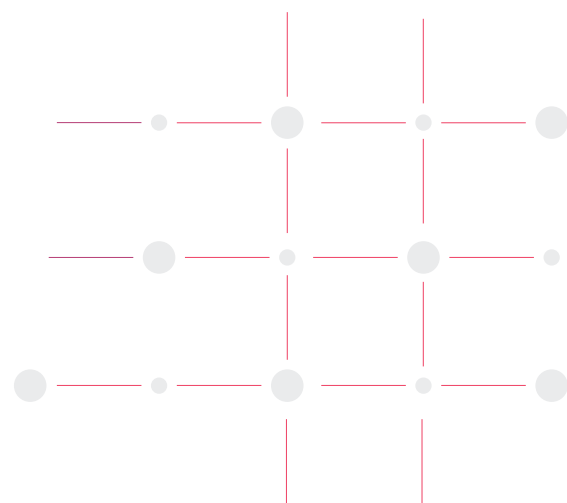
offer important guidelines for the accreditation of study programmes in Germany.

Cotutelle procedures are not mentioned in the State Higher Education Acts, with the exception of Saarland (Section 69 Paragraph 4 of the Saarland Higher Education Act (SHSG)). Due to the absence of uniform regulations for cotutelle, the HRK strongly recommends that universities amend or supplement their individual doctoral regulations to facilitate cotutelle procedures.

No specific legal regulation apply **student exchange/ twinning programmes**.

Useful links:

- The German Accreditation Council provides an independent database of all accredited study programmes (only in German): <https://antrag.akkreditierungsrat.de>
- The HRK has published guidelines for implementing binational doctoral programmes, including a template for a contract: <https://www.hrk.de/hrk-international/mobility-and-mutual-recognition/cotutelle/>



3.2.3: Assessing the partner institution/programme

The partner institution and programme can be assessed in different ways. In addition to information on programme accreditation, the course content and rankings can also serve as tools in evaluating the partner institution. All German state or state-recognised HEIs can serve as valuable partners for international cooperation. Their bachelor and master programmes should be accredited according to the regulations outlined in the State Accreditation Treaty (*Studienakkreditierungsstaatsvertrag*).

Internal rankings:

Germany does not have an official national ranking system for higher education, as the aim is to offer comparable high-quality higher education nationwide.

However, private entities, like magazines and companies, conduct various unofficial rankings. They employ different approaches in their assessments. Germany's largest ranking, based on factual data and the assessment of students as well as professors, is the CHE ranking ([CHE University Ranking for Germany | ZEIT Campus](#)), conducted by the weekly newspaper "DIE ZEIT".

International rankings:

Only a few German universities can be found in the top 100 of international rankings like the Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Rankings of World Universities (ARWU) (4 in 2022), the QS World University Rankings (3 in 2022), or the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (3 in 2022), as research achievements are crucial for these rankings. It is important to highlight that research in Germany takes place not only at universities but also at non-university public and private research institutions. Usually, researchers in these institutions are affiliated with a university. However, their research results do not contribute to the research statistics of the universities and, hence, do not factor into the international rankings.

Universities of applied sciences and other types of HEIs do not appear in these rankings as their primary educational focus is practice-oriented teaching and not basic research. The absence of an evaluation system based on rankings in Germany is another reason why only a few German universities are represented in international rankings.

Key takeaways:

- 1)** Pay attention to the location of your partner institution, as this may impact the implementation of international cooperation; specific regulations need to be respected in different *Länder*.
- 2)** Staatsexamen degrees are not eligible for dual/double and joint degrees. Twinning and student exchange programmes, however, are possible.
- 3)** In Germany, dual/double or joint degrees offered by HEIs and based on new curricula need to be accredited.
- 4)** Select your partner from the different types of institutions in the German higher education system. Consider the potential benefits that their specific key features may bring (for instance, cooperation with universities of applied sciences for more practical-oriented teaching approaches). Based on your desired mutual activities, you can choose prospective partners from any of the different types of institutions within the German higher education system.
- 5)** The international office is typically an important initial point of contact for your inquiries. They will direct and forward your request to the relevant persons within their institutions and support the initiation of cooperation.
- 6)** When seeking cooperation with a German partner, do not rely solely on international rankings, as only a few German institutions are listed in them.

Models of cooperation

This chapter describes the relevant models of cooperation between HEIs. The chapter focuses on student exchange or twinning programmes, followed by dual/double and joint degree programmes. The last section explains cooperation models for doctoral studies. For each collaboration model,

the regulations and implementation practices in India and Germany are briefly explained, and differences are highlighted. Additionally, the authors offer some recommendations that could help to avoid pitfalls and facilitate cooperation.



4.1 Student exchange/twinning: Bachelor and master programmes

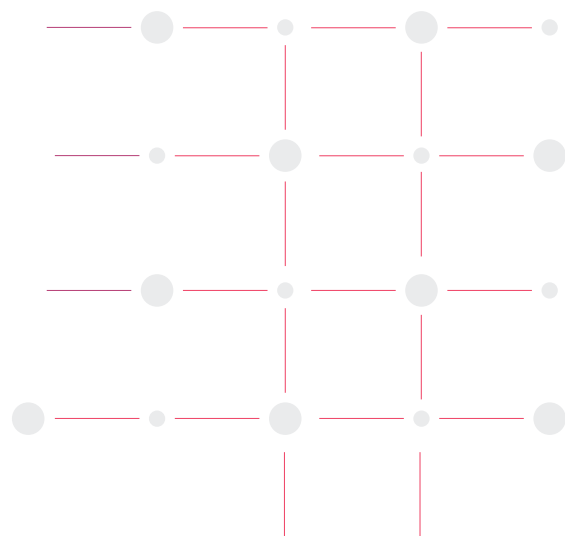
	Germany: Student exchange programme	India: Student exchange programme/twinning programme
Definition	An arrangement between HEIs that allows students to complete a part of their studies at a host institution abroad. The credits earned abroad are partially or fully credited towards their degree at their home institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student exchange: An arrangement for students to spend a short duration of their studies at a host institution abroad. ● Twinning programme: A collaborative arrangement wherein students enrolled in an Indian HEI may pursue their programme of study partly in India, in accordance with the relevant UGC regulations, and partly in an international HEI.
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students maintain enrolment at their home institution throughout the study programme and additionally at the partner institution during the student exchange programme. ● Based on the transcript of records or grade report from the host institution, the home institution assesses each student's course credits and grades individually. ● The credit transfer system adheres to the ECTS. ● Each international student receives a transcript of records as evidence of classes attended and academic accomplishments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provisions for exit pathways for students should be anticipated. ● The credits earned by the student from the international HEI must not exceed 30 percent of the total credits for the study programme.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An individual Learning Agreement (LA) is necessary for each exchange student. This agreement is vital for regulating the recognition of their period abroad within the study programme at their home institution. ● It is recommended to have a student exchange agreement between both institutions. In cases where a tuition waiver is needed, an exchange agreement is mandatory. ● The student exchange programme does not require an MoU between the institutions involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To benefit from a tuition fee waiver and facilitate credit transfer, a student exchange agreement between the institutions is mandatory, based on a mutually agreed number of slots. ● In the absence of a student exchange agreement, the international student is obliged to pay the tuition fees at the host institution.
Degree	The degree is awarded by the home institution only.	
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International office: Responsible for the initiation and central-level implementation of MoUs/Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs). ● Faculty/Departments: In charge of initiating and executing student exchange agreements at the faculty level, as well as issuing the mandatory LA. In universities of applied sciences, the international office may provide support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Departments: Responsible for granting permission to students for courses or modules to be taken abroad, ensuring that credits earned at the international partner institutions do not overlap with course contents or curriculum.

Recommendations:

1) Engaging in student exchange collaboration is typically the initial step to initiating or strengthening international cooperation between two HEIs.

2) It is advisable to establish a contractual basis for student exchange to facilitate and ensure the sustainability of the cooperation. Within an MoU or a student exchange agreement, both partners should define general terms for the programme, such as tuition fees, number of students exchanged, balance in exchange, and financial support for students.

3) Recognising credits earned by students abroad on an individual level may result in partial credit recognition. Since India does not have a national credit transfer system yet, it is recommended to establish regulations for mutual recognition of credits between the partner institutions. Additionally, having a learning agreement in place that specifies the courses and recognised credits for each student is advised.



4.2 Dual/Double and joint degrees: Bachelor and master programmes

A significant distinction exists in international degree programmes between dual/double degree programmes and joint degree programmes, with the degree awarded being the primary criterion. Upon completion of a

double degree programme, both partner HEIs confer two degrees. Each participating HEI issues a separate degree certificate. In a joint degree programme, one degree certificate is jointly awarded by both institutions.

	Germany: Double degree	India: Dual degree
Definition	<p>Double degree programmes: These are integrated international study programmes that lead to the national university degrees of both institutions. This occurs after completing studies at the German home institution and partially at the partner institution abroad. Each participating institution issues a separate degree certificate.</p> <p>A further distinction is made between shared and joint study programmes with different characteristics.</p> <p>Shared study programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is built upon two independent existing degree programmes with autonomous curricula at both partner universities. ● These programmes can be offered as double degree programmes if the partner institutions agree on the course components that can be studied at the respective partner university. <p>Joint study programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The partner universities offer a jointly structured and newly designed programme. ● The modules are exclusively designed to earn a double degree and are agreed upon by both universities. 	<p>Dual degree programmes: These are degrees conferred separately and simultaneously by both the Indian and international HEIs upon completion of the degree requirements of both institutions.</p>
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is designed as an integrated/interlocked study programme based on existing study programmes. ● Requirements for course completion at both universities, along with automated credit recognition, are outlined in the agreement. ● A substantial part of the programme (e.g., at least 30 ECTS credits in master programmes) is offered by both partners. ● Admission takes place at the home institution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is a new, jointly designed study programme (including joint admission, joint study and exam regulations, and joint quality assurance). ● At least 25% of the total credits must be earned at each partner university. ● Recognition of qualifications and study times is in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Lisbon Convention. ● Acceptance of ECTS credits as the grading system and the transfer of grades from different grading systems are regulated.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Requirements for course completion as well as automated recognition of credits are as outlined in the agreement. ● The coursework requirements are in line with those of the home institution and extend to the host institution if mandatory course requirements are essential. ● At least 30% of the total credits must be earned at Indian institutions.

Germany: Double degree

India: Dual degree

Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Students fulfil the study requirements of both universities.● Adjustment of examination regulations might be necessary.● Students are required to be enrolled at the home institution for the entire duration of the program.● Exit pathways are possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agreement on admission and examinations is necessary.● No exit pathways are possible (due to its structure, students can only change their entire study programme).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Admission takes place at the home institution.● Selection of students is done according to the admission procedures of the home institution.● Admission to the dual programme is granted to students upon successful completion of milestones in the degree at their home institution.● The students adhere to the rules of the home institution and complete a part of their studies at the host institution.● The credits earned at partner institutions must be distinct, without any overlap in course content or curriculum.● Provisions for exit pathways are available for students unable to complete the dual degree programme.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cooperation agreement for the specific double degree programme, including terms of the study programme, objectives and scope, modalities of participation for students and teaching staff, committee structure, examination procedure, as well as degree requirements from both parties.● The programmes call for a possible adaptation or redesign of existing (faculty) study and examination regulations.● Awarding of a double degree must be permissible in the partner country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Approval is needed from the appropriate authority.	
Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The degree is conferred separately and simultaneously by both partner institutions upon completion of degree requirements from both institutions.● Two separate certificates are issued.● It is required that only one degree be awarded for an academic achievement, for instance, by interlinking separate certificates.		
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● International office: Cooperation agreement● Administrative staff at the faculty/department level: Admission, academic advice, study plan, recognition, and course mapping● Academics: Recognition and credit mapping● International office at universities of applied sciences: Admission, academic advice, study plan, recognition, and course mapping● Rectorate/President: Official signatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Director/Dean: Official signatures	
Definition	Joint degree programmes: These are academic courses where in a single degree is awarded, accompanied by a joint certificate issued by the participating universities.	Joint degree programmes: For these programmes, the curriculum is jointly designed by the collaborating Indian	

Germany: Joint degree

India: Joint degree

Definition

A further distinction is made between shared and joint study programmes with different characteristics.

and international HEIs. The degree is awarded by both the Indian HEI and the collaborating international HEI, with a single certificate bearing the crests and logos of both collaborating institutions upon successful completion of the programme.

Shared study programme

- This is built upon two independent existing degree programmes with autonomous curricula at both partner universities.
- These programmes can be offered as double degree programmes if the partner institutions agree on the course components that can be studied at the respective partner university

Joint study programme

- The partner universities offer a jointly structured and newly designed programme.
- The modules are exclusively designed to earn a double degree and are agreed upon by both universities.

Characteristics

- This is designed as an integrated/interlocked study programme based on existing study programmes.
 - Requirements for course completion at both universities, along with automated credit recognition, are outlined in the agreement.
 - A substantial part of the programme (e.g., at least 30 ECTS credits in master programmes) is offered by both partners.
 - Admission takes place at the home institution.
 - Students fulfil the study requirements of both universities.
 - An adjustment of examination regulations might be necessary.
 - Students are required to be enrolled at the home institution for the entire duration of the program.
 - Exit pathways are possible.
- This is a new, jointly designed study programme (including joint admission, joint study and exam regulations, and joint quality assurance).
 - At least 25% of the total credits must be earned at each partner university.
 - Recognition of qualifications and study times is in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Lisbon Convention.
 - Acceptance of ECTS credits as the grading system and the transfer of grades from different grading systems are regulated.
 - Agreement on admission and examinations is necessary.
 - No exit pathways are possible (due to its structure, students can only change their entire study programme).
- The programme is to be jointly designed and agreed upon by both parties, with details outlined in an agreement.
 - At least 30% of the total credits must be earned at each partner university.
 - The credits earned at partner institutions as part of a consecutive curriculum must be distinct, without any overlap in course content or curriculum.
 - Provisions for exit pathways are available for students unable to complete the joint degree programme
 - Joint Master with Research:
 - Only research work at the partner institution
 - No coursework at the partner institution
 - Student co-supervised at the host institution

	Germany: Joint degree	India: Joint degree
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperation agreement for the specific joint degree programme, including terms of the study programme, agreed curriculum, objectives and scope, modalities of participation for students and teaching staff, as well as recognition of qualifications and study times. ● For joint study programmes, regulations for the joint committee and administration structure, along with joint admission and examination procedures, are necessary. ● The programmes call for an adaptation or redesign of existing (faculty) study and examination regulations. ● Awarding a joint degree must be permissible in the partner country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An institutional agreement is necessary, providing details of joint administrative activities, joint admissions and examination procedures, as well as fees or stipends for the students. ● The agreed curriculum must be included in the annexure of the agreement. ● Approval is needed from the appropriate authority.
Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A single degree conferred jointly by both partner institutions upon completion of the degree requirements. ● A single certificate bearing the crests and logos of both collaborating institutions. 	
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International office: Cooperation agreement ● Administrative staff at the faculty/department level: Admission, academic advice, study plan, recognition, and course mapping ● Academics: Recognition and credit mapping ● International office at universities of applied sciences: Admission, academic advice, study plan, recognition, and course mapping ● Rectorate/President: Official signatures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director/Dean: Official signatures

Recommendations:

1) The consideration to introduce dual/double or joint degree programmes typically arises from well-established student exchanges and established partnerships.

2) HEIs in Germany often establish shared study programmes with a double degree option at both the bachelor and master levels in collaboration with international partners.

3) Joint degree programmes continue to be an exception due to varying regulations and accreditation requirements in the participating countries.

Therefore, for collaborations with German partners, starting with semester exchange/twinning programmes is recommended. At a later stage, it may be worth considering the establishment of dual/double or even joint degree programmes.

4) Within the European Union, joint master degrees are supported and funded within the framework of the Erasmus programme. As a result, German universities have gained substantial experience in setting up joint degree programmes, and there are a growing number of initiatives aimed at addressing the challenges of establishing joint degree programmes with non-European partners.

4.3 Doctoral studies/PhD

A significant distinction can be drawn between co-supervision and international PhD programmes that lead to dual/double or joint degrees. Co-supervision may occur within a university, with supervisors selected from different departments, or the candidate may have a supervisor from two universities. The candidate is enrolled in the doctoral programme at one university, which designates the primary supervisor. The name of the second supervisor (co-supervisor) is included on the

submitted thesis. Both supervisors oversee the doctoral research and participate in the defence. In the case of German universities, the doctoral candidate is permitted to have the status of a visiting doctoral candidate at the partner university. While no official agreement between the two universities is required for co-supervision, it is essential to obtain ratification from the academic regulatory body of the Indian university. Unlike co-supervision, cotutelle, dual/double, or joint doctoral programmes lead to a degree conferred by both partner universities.

Germany: Cotutelle, double degree or joint doctoral programme

India: Dual degree or joint degree

Definition

Cotutelle: This entails a binationally supervised doctorate. A supervisor from the home university and one from the international university jointly supervise the doctoral thesis. The cotutelle can result in:

- A double degree, where each university confers its own certificate with an indication (on the certificate or a supplement) that it is a cotutelle. This is the most common procedure.
- A joint degree, where both institutions issue a single certificate. This is a less common procedure.

- Dual doctoral degree: This involves joint supervision of the doctoral student. Two certificates are granted, one from the host institution and one from the home institution, indicating that the degree is awarded in the dual degree mode.
- Joint doctoral degree: This also entails joint supervision of the doctoral student. Both institutions jointly issue a certificate bearing the names and logos of both institutions.

Characteristics

- The doctoral candidate must be admitted and enrolled at both universities for the entire duration of the doctorate. In general, doctoral candidates may apply for an academic leave of absence (*Beurlaubung*) during their time at the partner university.
- Research time must be spent at both universities.
- The doctoral candidate must submit a single thesis to both universities.
- One disputation before a jury composed of professors from both universities is necessary.
- Individual terms for each doctorate are outlined in an agreement.
- The agreement must comply with the doctoral regulations of both universities.
- Regulations may be partially adapted to accommodate the individual interests of both universities and the doctoral candidate.
- The entire process is detailed in the agreement: Enrolment, semester and tuition fees, allocation of research stays, language of the thesis, insurance, copyright and intellectual property rights, list of mandatory courses,

- Admission into the regular PhD programme occurs through a selection process at the home institution.
- Enrolment in the dual/joint degree programme is possible only after one year following clearance of the comprehensive examination or coursework.
- The student is co-supervised by a supervisor at the partner institution.
- A period of six to twelve months is dedicated to research at the partner institution.
- The student is required to submit a single thesis that adheres to the requirements of the home institution and follows a framework jointly devised by the collaborating institutions.
- An oral defence is conducted at the home institution.
- Thesis examiners are nominated by both institutions in accordance with the framework of the agreement.

	Germany: Cotutelle, double degree or joint doctoral programme	India: Dual degree or joint degree
	<p>composition of the PhD defence jury, grading scheme, prerequisites for the degree certificate (e.g., publication), etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The agreement is signed by the presidential board, the deans of the involved faculties, the supervisors, and the doctoral candidate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If required, an agreement is established for each enrolled student.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The admission criteria for both universities must be met. ● A cotutelle agreement (individual or framework agreement with an individual appendix) must be established to outline the specific terms of each doctorate. ● The agreement must receive approval from the legal departments (and any other relevant departments as per university regulations) of both universities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The programme necessitates a cooperation agreement or an MoU detailing crucial requirements of the programme, including joint admissions, examinations, fees or stipends, and conferred degrees. ● The agreed curriculum must be included in the annexure of the agreement.
Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two certificates linked to each other or a single certificate jointly awarded by both institutions 	
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International office or graduate academy: Cooperation agreement ● Faculty/Department: Administration of the doctoral procedure (admission, doctoral examination, etc.) ● Rectorate/Professors: Supervision of the doctorate process ● President: Official signatures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International office: Administration of the entire process ● Professors: Supervision of the doctorate and contribution to the cooperation process

Recommendations:

1) Only a few German universities offer joint degrees for cotutelle. Most of them primarily confer double degrees for cotutelle procedures.

2) If there is a strong collaboration with the partner university and numerous cotutelle or double degrees are already in progress between both institutions, it is advisable to establish a framework agreement (*Rahmenvertrag*) with individual appendices. This will streamline and expedite the cotutelle procedure for new doctoral candidates between both universities.

3) Negotiations between universities can be lengthy. Therefore, it is crucial to initiate discussions as early as possible. It is of utmost importance that the agreement includes comprehensive information about the doctoral procedure during the cotutelle to prevent any potential issues before the doctoral examination.

Challenges, barriers & hurdles

Establishing a structured international exchange or dual/double and joint degree programmes involves the integration of two distinct education systems, which may add to the complexity arising from cultural and linguistic differences. National education systems, as well as different types of universities within these systems, have their own specific course structures, approved by their respective governing bodies/senates or national education regulatory bodies, as applicable.

Given that the jurisdiction of the agreement spans two different countries, both partner institutions must collaboratively establish common points. This necessitates close cooperation on an equal footing, as a single institute cannot regulate every aspect of such programmes.

Key aspects to consider while setting up student exchange/twinning, dual/double, or joint degree programmes include:

Academic calendar: In Germany, the academic year is divided into two semesters with lecture and examination periods. The winter semester commences in October/November and concludes in March/April, while the summer semester starts in March/April and concludes in September.

In India, the academic year also consists of two semesters, including lecture and examination periods. The winter semester begins in January and ends in June, whereas the summer semester starts in July and ends in December. Due to the non-identical semester calendars, it can be challenging to establish suitable windows for student mobility without causing a loss of one semester. Potential options for initiating mobility could be the second half of December or the first half of June.

Overview of the semester commencement dates in Germany and India:

	Germany	India
Winter semester	October/November	January (second week)
Summer semester	March/April	July (second week)



Change in leadership: The dean of international relations/global affairs and the Head of Department (HoD) are the main driving forces behind the international office on the Indian side. Typically, they hold their positions for two years (dean) or three years (HoD), and extensions are possible. A change in leadership may jeopardise the effectiveness of the cooperation. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a clear mandate and consensus at the institute level from both sides. This is to ensure that the incumbent stakeholders align with their predecessors and continue to support the programme, preventing inadvertent delays.

Course mapping: Both partner institutions should carefully analyse the course modules of the proposed cooperation programme, ensuring that the available course modules on both sides are similar. This will enable students to complete the prerequisite courses before moving to the partner institute. Academicians from both sides should discuss and agree on the course modules on both sides.

Credit transfer: Both sides adhere to different credit systems, and on the Indian side, the credit transfer system is not yet standardised. Different Indian institutions may still have varying credit structures, as the workload is defined by each institution. On the German side, the ECTS is binding. Both sides should outline the details and collaborate on the credit transfer process within the agreement. Given that the Indian side is currently in the process of establishing a national credit transfer system and an Academic Bank of Credits for higher education, it is advisable to verify the most recent regulations.

Curriculum structure: Dual/Double and joint degree

programmes may necessitate changes in the curriculum and course structures. These changes should be reflected in the course book (*Modulhandbuch*) or syllabus. Regular verification and communication of changes are recommended.

Degree: In the case of joint degrees, it is imperative for the partner institutions to reach an agreement regarding the nature of the degree. This may lead to complexities, for example, in the field of postgraduate engineering studies, where discussions may arise about whether to award an MSc or an ME/MTech. The perception of these two degrees in the respective countries may differ.

Leading HEIs like the IITs more frequently award an ME in the field of engineering in India. ME programmes typically encompass a significant amount of coursework credits and hold a high reputation, while MSc programmes are more research-oriented.

In Germany, an MSc is a more widely used designation that covers various fields of study, including engineering. An ME is primarily conferred in the field of engineering. Universities of applied sciences more frequently award an ME, while universities more frequently award an MSc in the field of engineering. ME programmes are more practical-oriented, while MSc programmes are more research-based.

Departmental considerations: On the German side, international exchanges may be department-driven, potentially resulting in different department-specific agreements within the same university, especially in the case of cotutelle doctorates.

Eligibility criteria: Both partners should agree on the admission criteria of the partner institution and formalise it in the signed agreement. However, in the case of an integrated master programme where a bachelor student continues directly into the master programme without leaving, the partner institution may not align with the integrated programme structure and may require a diploma certificate from the undergraduate degree.

Expectation management: Some university regulations may necessitate approval from various committees, regulatory bodies, or higher authorities, potentially leading to extended timelines. Awareness of the different regulatory procedures at the partner university is crucial.

Fee structure: Tuition fees, if applicable, are typically paid to the home university, as outlined in the agreement.

In Germany, public higher education is generally free of charge for international students, with the exception of HEIs in the *Länder* Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. Tuition fees may apply to specific programmes. If tuition fees are applicable, discussions about waiving these fees should occur during the programme's establishment. In Germany, a semester contribution fee is charged once students register on-site, granting them access to various facilities and student services.

The Indian institution may increase the tuition fees for international students. However, this can be waived under the agreement.

Language barrier: In India, the medium of instruction for higher education is typically English. However, in Germany, not all courses are offered in English. Besides academic courses, students from both sides should be at ease when communicating with academicians or for their daily needs and should be familiar with the medium of communication.

Programme structure: In India, master programmes typically last one and a half to two years, depending on the course. In Germany, master degrees can also last one and a half to two years. Some degree programmes may lead partner institutions to believe that the time required to complete the degree is insufficient, particularly in cases where intensive internships or training are essential.

Specific learning agreement: Some universities under the agreement may require student-specific or individual learning agreements with defined course workloads.

Sustainability and quality assurance: Ensuring the sustainability and quality assurance of the programme can be challenging if the programme does not receive continuous support from academicians or other stakeholders involved.

Clarification with the partner university



What additional value does the faculty or university gain from establishing a (double) degree programme?



What is the process for designing the curriculum? Who needs to be involved?



How many students are expected to participate in the programme each year?



How will the partner university acknowledge the academic achievements?



Are there any fees associated with the programme? If yes, what is the amount?



What is the language of instruction for lectures? What language proficiency level is required, and how can students provide evidence of their proficiency?



At which university do students need to enrol, and at what time of the year does this enrolment happen?



How compatible are the semester/term schedules of the cooperating universities?



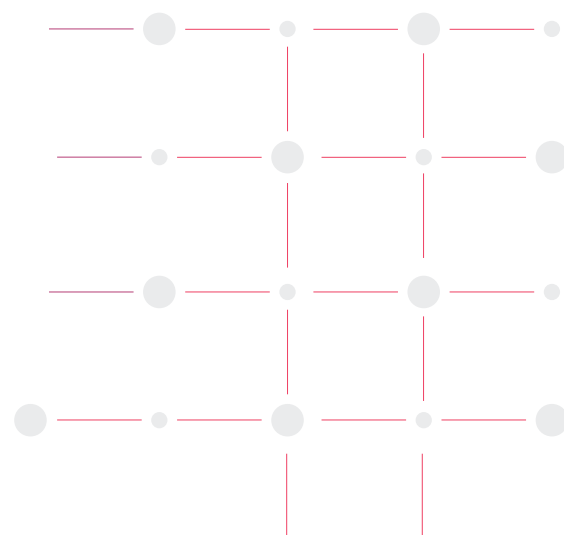
Which documents do the students receive from each respective university, and at what point in time do they receive them?

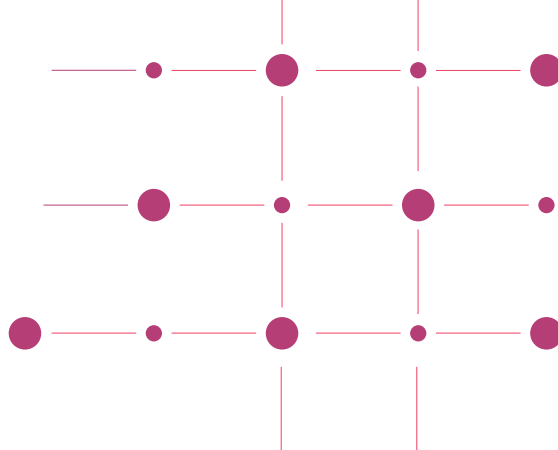
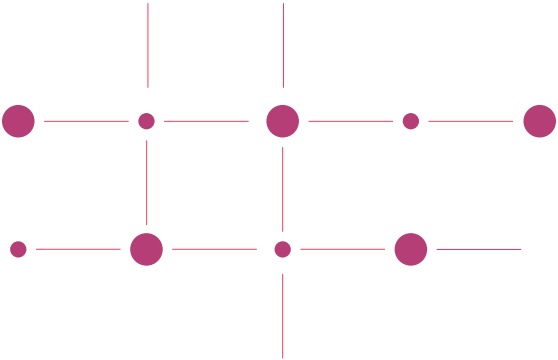
Chapter 06

Useful weblinks

Description	URL
India's NEP 2020	https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
Overview of HEIs in India	https://www.ugc.ac.in/centraluniversity.aspx
Regulations of the UGC on twinning, joint, and dual degree programmes	https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/4555806_UGC-Acad-Collab-Regulations.pdf
Regulations of the UGC on the credit transfer system (draft)	https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/5266217_Draft-version-ABC-Regulations-2021-SPT-02-01-2021.pdf
Ranking results of the NIRF	https://www.nirfindia.org/2022/Ranking.html
Overview of the accreditation status of Indian HEIs by the NAAC	https://assessmentonline.naac.gov.in/public/index.php/hei_dashboard
Academic Bank of Credits for HEIs in India	https://www.abc.gov.in
Request of the UGC to establish international offices in HEIs	https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/7959205_Office_for_International_Affairs.pdf
National Higher Education Qualifications Framework (NHEQF)	https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/2990035_Final-NHEQF.pdf
Minimum standards and procedures for awarding a PhD degree	https://www.ugc.gov.in/pdfnews/0909572_Minimum-Standards-and-Procedure-for-Award-of-PhD-Degree.pdf
All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE)	https://aishe.gov.in/aishe/gotoAisheReports
Strategy for the internationalisation of education, science, and research by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) (in German)	https://www.bmbf.de/SharedDocs/Publikationen/de/bmbf/2/31254_Internationalisierungsstrategie.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3

Overview of HEIs and degrees in Germany	https://www.study-in-germany.de/en/plan-your-studies/study-options/higher-education-system/
Database of all the state-accredited German HEIs	https://www.hochschulkompass.de/en/higher-education-institutions.html
State Treaty on Study Accreditation (<i>Studienakkreditierungsvertrag</i>) regulating the accreditation of study programmes in Germany (in German)	https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2016/2016_12_08-Studienakkreditierungsstaatsvertrag.pdf
Overview of structured and individual PhD programmes in Germany	https://www.research-in-germany.org/en/your-goal/phd/two-ways-to-get-your-phd.html
Guidelines for binational doctoral programmes, including a template for cotutelle contracts, by the HRK	https://www.hrk.de/hrk-international/mobility-and-mutual-recognition/cotutelle/
Overview of international cooperation agreements of German universities	https://www.internationale-hochschulkooperationen.de/en/foreign-institutions.html
Overview of the regulations of the ECTS	https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/higher-education/inclusive-and-connected-higher-education/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system
Joint statement from the 6th German-Indian inter-governmental consultations (2022)	https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/975226/2029884/ef9976fc9ac337ec51a38219e21b80cd/2022-05-02-joint-statement-6th-german-indian-inter-governmental-consultations-ger-ind-en-data.pdf?download=1
India-Germany vision to enhance cooperation in innovation and technology (2023)	https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/975228/2168914/28389a9a195dd51e3db27e5cec2591df/2023-02-26-erklaerung-indien-d-engl-data.pdf?download=1





Chapter 07

Templates & model contracts

The HEIs within the working group offer various templates and model contracts that can facilitate the establishment of cooperation projects. The following models and templates are available at <https://www.daad.in/en/guidelines/>

Cooperation form	Title of the document
<u>Joint master programme</u>	Joint master programme: Coursework-based and thesis-based (India)
<u>Dual/Double degree master programme</u>	Agreement of cooperation for a double-degree master programme in computer science between University A, Germany, and University B, India (India)
<u>Joint master programme</u>	Steps outlined by Institute X for setting up a joint master degree programme (India)
<u>Joint master programme</u>	Agreement on a joint master degree programme between Partner Institute A and Partner Institute B (India)
<u>Cotutelle: Joint/Dual/Double doctorate</u>	Agreement for joint supervision of doctoral studies leading to the award of a dual/double or a joint doctoral degree (Germany)
<u>Cotutelle: Joint/Dual/Double doctorate</u>	Joint doctoral supervision: Cotutelle guidelines and agreements (Germany)

Cotutelle: Joint/Dual/Double doctorate

Guidelines for cotutelle/joint supervised PhD contract (Germany)

Cotutelle: Joint/Dual/Double doctorate

By-laws of Justus Liebig University Giessen for bi-national doctorates (Germany)

Cotutelle: Joint/Dual/Double doctorate

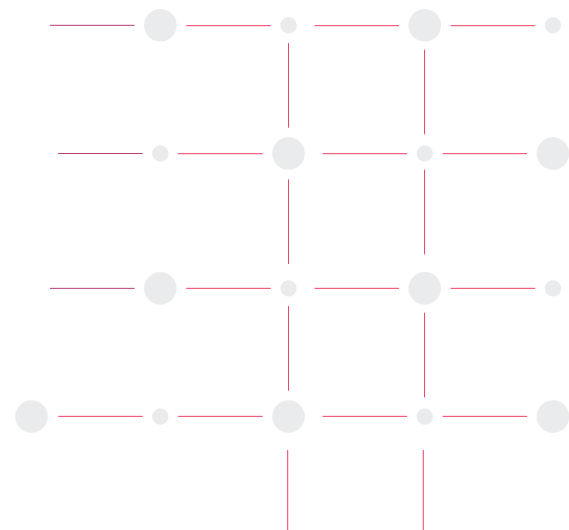
COTUTELLE DE THÈSE (Jointly supervised doctoral thesis) (Germany)

Joint doctoral programme

Joint doctoral degree programme: Guidelines and terms of engagement (India)

Joint doctoral programme

Agreement for a joint doctoral degree programme (India)



List of terminology

Term	Explanation
Types of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	
University and University-level Institutions (IN)	These are institutions authorised to award degrees under specific acts of Parliament or state Legislatures.
Institutes of National Importance (IN)	This status is granted to selected HEIs by an act of the Parliament of India. These university-level institutions are funded by the central government and enjoy high autonomy, both in administrative matters (such as setting fees) and in academic affairs.
Institutions of Eminence (IN)	20 HEIs are selected as Institutions of Eminence under the Institutions of Eminence Scheme by the UGC. These include both public and private institutions. They are granted greater autonomy, both in administrative and academic matters. Public institutions under this scheme receive additional institutional funding.
Deemed to be Universities (IN)	These are HEIs distinct from universities, known for maintaining a high standard in a specific field. They are designated by the central government and possess the academic status and privileges of a university. They have full autonomy in determining their offered programmes, syllabi, application and admission procedures, as well as fees.
Central Universities (IN)	These are universities established and funded by the central government through the UGC, operating under the purview of the Ministry of Education (MoE). They are subject to high regulation with a reduced level of autonomy.
State Universities (IN)	These are universities established, funded, and operated by the state government. They are regulated by the UGC and have a reduced level of autonomy.
Affiliated Colleges (IN)	These are colleges that offer courses of study leading to qualifications from a university. They do not have the authority to confer degrees independently and are maintained by the university. Examinations, curricula, and degrees are provided by the parent university, and they have a reduced level of autonomy.

Autonomous Colleges (IN)	The status of an autonomous college is conferred by the central government. These institutions operate with a high level of autonomy and have the ability to review and restructure existing course programmes, design new programmes, establish their own assessment methods for students, and conduct their own admission procedures. The degree or certificate is awarded by the parent university.
State Private Universities (IN)	These are universities funded and established privately through a state or central act. They are regulated by the UGC and enjoy a high level of autonomy. They have the authority to confer degrees but are not permitted to have affiliated colleges located off-campus.
Private Colleges (IN)	These are independent educational institutions that establish their own policies and objectives and are funded privately. These colleges must receive approval from the UGC.
Universitäten (Universities) (D)	These HEIs ensure the integration of research and teaching, possess the authority to award doctorates and habilitations, encompass the entire spectrum of natural sciences and humanities, and have a corporate legal structure with corresponding autonomy rights.
<i>Hochschulen für Angewandte Wissenschaft (HAW)</i> (Universities of Applied Sciences) (D)	These institutions prepare students for professional roles through application-oriented teaching and study methods. They support applied sciences through teaching, study programmes, continuing education, and practice-oriented research and development. They only have in exceptional cases the capacity to independently confer doctoral degrees.
Terms related to study and PhD programmes	
Studiendokumente (Study Documents)	These comprise a set of documents that outline the entry, study, and examination regulations.
Studiengang (Study Programme)	This is an accredited curriculum that leads to a degree, consisting of a series of courses (referred to as modules in Germany).
Disputation, Verteidigung (Thesis Defence)	This is the act of presenting the PhD thesis to a panel of professors for assessment of a candidate's presentation skills and thesis. This constitutes an oral examination and contributes, alongside the written examination (dissertation), to the doctoral grade.
Promotionsordnung (Regulations for PhD Programmes/Doctoral Regulations)	These are the guidelines governing doctoral studies, including admission and examination procedures, issued by the faculties (Fakultäten).
Joint Study Programme	This is a study programme based on a newly designed and integrated curriculum that is coordinated and offered jointly by different international HEIs. This programme can be offered at the Bachelor or Master level.

Jointness of a Programme	This refers to the extent to which a programme has been collectively developed by all partner institutions and the degree of integration in terms of curriculum, quality assurance, marketing, selection and admissions, management, exam regulations, and funding.
Shared Study Programme	Partner universities offer two independent degree programmes with autonomous curricula, provided as full study programmes at their respective institutions. These programmes can be offered as double degree programmes if the partner institutions agree on course components that can be studied at the respective partner university. Each institution is responsible for the accreditation of the underlying study programmes. Shared study programmes can be offered at the bachelor or master level.
Separate Diploma	These are distinct certificates that are awarded separately and simultaneously by partner institutions upon completion of degree requirements from both institutions. These separate diplomas are interlinked.
Joint Diploma	This is a single certificate and degree conferred through a joint agreement between participating universities, displaying the crests and logos of both collaborating institutions upon successful completion of the programme.
Conventional Mode	This refers to a mode of delivering learning opportunities through face-to-face interaction between the teacher and learner in a regular classroom environment while not excluding supplementary instructions, if any, through online means.
Exit Pathways	This is an official acknowledgement of completing a significant portion of studies within a course programme with a document, enabling the continuation of the programme at a later stage.
Credit Recognition	This is the recognition of academic achievements and acceptance of credits earned at one HEI by another HEI.
Transcript of Records/Academic Records	This is an official record of a student's work, displaying courses or modules taken, credits earned, and the grades received.
European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)	This is a tool of the European Higher Education Area for enhancing transparency in studies and courses. The ECTS allows credits earned at one HEI to be counted towards a qualification pursued at another. ECTS credits represent learning based on defined learning outcomes and their associated workload.

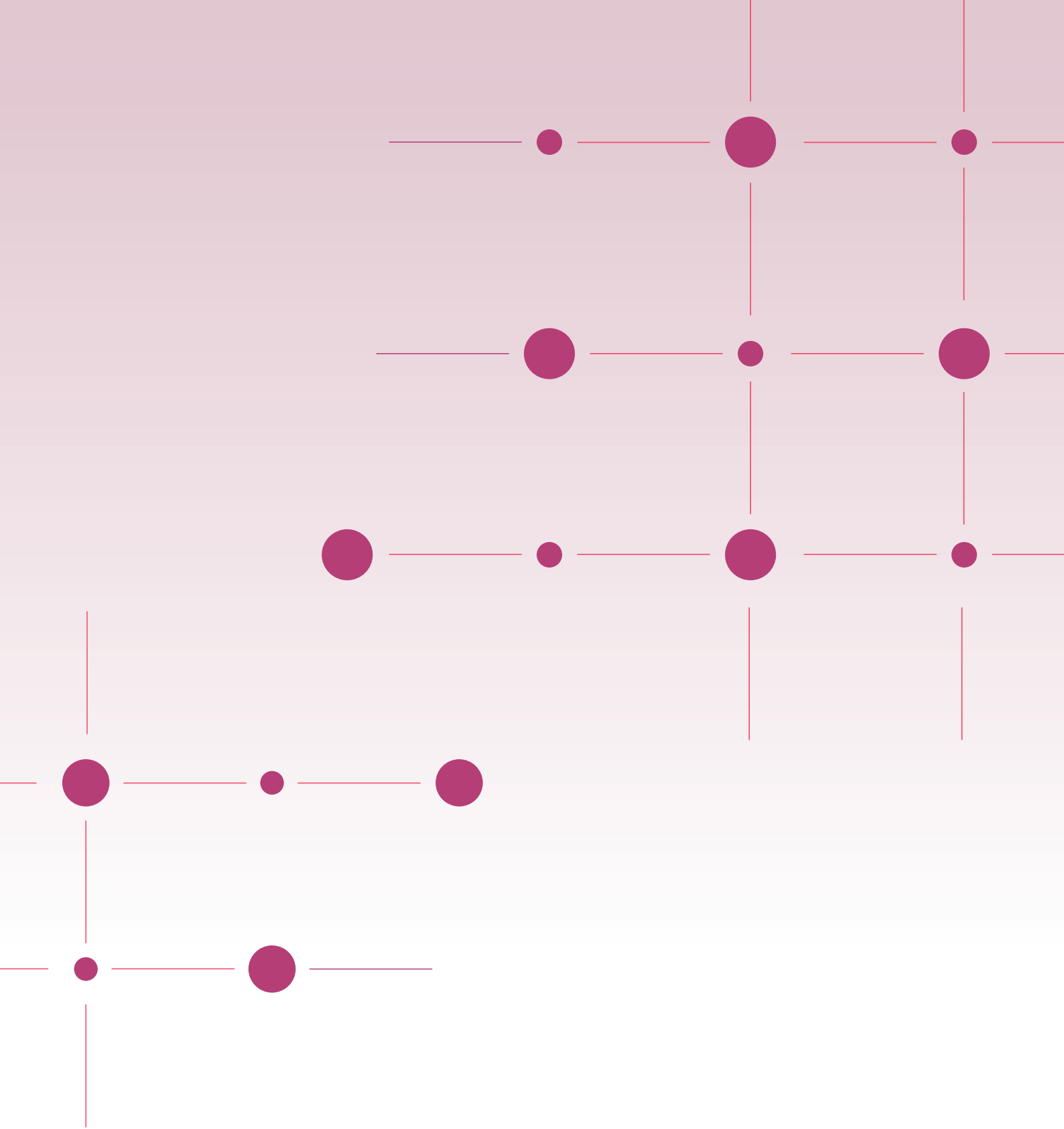
Cooperation agreements and treaties	
Learning Agreement	This is a template applicable to Erasmus+ mobility for studies between EU Member States or third countries. It facilitates a transparent and efficient preparation for the study period abroad and ensures that students receive recognition in their degree for the educational components successfully completed abroad.
Letter of Intent (LoI)	This is a (unilateral) declaration of intent which is, in principle, not legally binding. Instead, it expresses interest in further negotiations and the final conclusion of the agreement or MoU.
Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	This is not a legally binding document that outlines the broad concepts of mutual understanding, goals, and plans shared by the parties. It establishes the framework for cooperation. MoUs can be concluded at the departmental, faculty, or institutional level.
Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)/Cooperation Agreement	This is a legally binding document signed by the rector, president, or head of an HEI. It provides detailed descriptions of the specific responsibilities and actions to be undertaken by each party in order to achieve their goals.
Institutions	
Statutory Authority (IN)	This is an entity established by law to carry out functions that are eligible, under that law, for funding, either partially or entirely, through government-provided funds. Moreover, the governor, the cabinet, or the government holds the authority to appoint or dismiss the majority of the board or other governing body of such an entity.
University Grants Commission (UGC)	This is a statutory body established by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India. It is responsible for the coordination, determination, and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination, and research in university education.
Association of Indian Universities (AIU)	This is an organisation and association of universities in India, including central and state HEIs, Institutions of National Importance, and deemed universities.
National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)	This is an organisation that assesses and accredits HEIs. It evaluates institutions for their adherence to standards and quality in terms of their performance related to educational processes and outcomes, teaching-learning processes, faculty, research, infrastructure, learning resources, organisation, governance, financial well-being, and student services.

National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)	This is a ranking methodology that ranks institutions across India based on criteria including teaching and learning, research and professional practice, graduation outcomes, inclusivity, and perception.
<i>Hochschulrektorenkonferenz</i> (HRK) (German Rectors' Conference)	This is an association of public and government-recognised universities in Germany.
<i>Akkreditierungsrat</i> (Foundation Accreditation Council)	This is a legal body responsible for deciding on the accreditation of study programmes (programme accreditation) and the accreditation of quality management systems (system accreditation) based on experts' reports. It also authorises accreditation agencies in Germany.
European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)	This is the official register of external quality assurance agencies for HEIs or study programmes in the European Higher Education Area.
Legislation	
<i>Grundgesetz</i> (German Constitution)	This is the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.
<i>Landeshochschulgesetz</i> (State Higher Education Act)	This is an act that regulates higher education at the state level.
<i>Studienakkreditierungsstaatsvertrag</i> (Interstate Treaty on Study Accreditation)	This is a treaty on the organisation of a joint accreditation system to ensure the quality of teaching and learning at German HEIs.
Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India	This is a schedule that specifies the allocation of powers and functions between the union and the state legislatures.
Union List	This is a list of 97 numbered items in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, on which the Parliament has exclusive power to legislate.
State List	This is a list of 61 numbered items in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, on which the state parliaments have the power to legislate.
Concurrent List	This is a list of 52 numbered items in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, on which the centre as well as the states have the power to legislate.



List of abbreviations

AISHE	All India Survey on Higher Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BCom	Bachelor of Commerce
BE	Bachelor of Engineering
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BTech	Bachelor of Technology
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRK	German Rectors' Conference
IISER	Indian Institute of Science Education and Research
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
LA	Individual Learning Agreement
INI	Institute of National Importance
MA	Master of Arts
MCom	Master of Commerce
ME	Master of Engineering
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSc	Master of Science
MTech	Master of Technology
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NCrF	National Credit Framework
NEP	National Education Policy
NIRF	National Institutional Ranking Framework
UGC	University Grants Commission



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
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