

ALL THAT GLITTERS...

As more city colleges introduce programmes where you can study half the course in India and the other half overseas, it's important to make an informed choice and weigh the actual advantages of each option



Angad Anand, 21, always wanted to study computer science in the US. But his parents were hesitant to send him abroad at the age of 18. So, he decided to join a twinning programme at a leading college in Mumbai, which allowed him to complete the last year of the course at an American university. This fall, along with 11 of his batchmates, he will be travelling to California State University for the final year of his computer science degree course.

Over the last few years, twinning courses, in which you can study a certain part of the course in India and the rest at a partner university abroad, have gained recognition in India as a popular method of completing graduation and post-graduation degrees from foreign universities. However, before students get carried away by the lure of studying abroad through these programmes, they should analyse whether this method fulfils their requirements, say experts.

Win-win-win
After studying part of the course abroad, the student receives a foreign university degree in their desired fields which will help them embellish their CV. This kind of system is attractive for all the three players: Indian colleges believe that their brand value increases with such associations; foreign universities increase their income with the influx of more students; and Indian students perceive it to be a cost-effective and convenient method to getting an international degree.

MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE

Verify the rankings and claims of the foreign university by thoroughly searching about them online and speaking to counsellors and graduates

- Speak to professors of both universities and clarify your doubts
- Make a campus visit at the Indian college to check its facility and infrastructure, and the foreign university if possible
- Find out the hidden costs of the programme (eg. travel, daily expenses. stay)

SOME TWINNING PROGRAMMES

- Vidyalankar School of Information Technology with Penn State University(US), California State University(US), Aston University(UK), Sheffield -Hallam University(UK) and Hult International Business School(UK)
- Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal's Institute of International Studies with Kingston University, London
- BSE Institute Ltd with Singapore Management University, Singapore
- Padmashree DrDYPatil University with University of Central Lancashire(UK)
- ECube Global College with Newcastle University, UK
- St Xaviers College with Liverpool Hope University and University of Bath, UK



The Pluses

1. Varied course content:

"Since foreign universities want to maintain the quality of their students, the curriculum of such programmes in India has to be at par with their international standards," says Shilpa Pathak, career counsellor at RN Podar School in Santacruz.

For instance, ECube Global College, Thane, which has an association with Newcastle University, UK, syncs its syllabus with the partner university. Students of computer science at Vidyalankar School of Information Technology in Wadala study additional subjects including American history, psychology and international relations during the

first three years of the course in India. Many colleges also conduct 'bridge courses' to bring their students up to speed before they leave for the foreign university.

2. Affordability:

Students can explore another country and gain international exposure without a heavy burden on their pockets, since they have to spend only a year or two abroad for the degree, instead of three or four.

3. Peer support:

Students who are not comfortable with travelling away from home at a young age, find the twinning programmes useful, as they will have their batch-mates from India there for company. "This gives them a sense of security and familiarity and allows them to concentrate on their studies better," says Sandeep Goenka, director of ECube Global College.

YOUR VOICE

"Although the course is more expensive than the typical Indian course, it provides a lot of exposure to the international style of education. My son was able to study subjects including yoga, photography and painting while pursuing his degree in information science and technology from Penn State." - Nirmala Champa, parent

"A student should only join the programme if they are very sure about what they want to do, not merely because they'll get a foreign degree.

- Shantanu Rajadhyaksha, graduated from Pennsylvania State University through a programme at Vidyalankar School of Information Technology