

India, Germany, Polytech: an International Student about the Double Degree Program

Yukti SHARMA clearly knows what she wants: while still living in India, she decided to enter a foreign university for a double degree program. No sooner said than done. Yukti enrolled in the “Mechatronics” international program at Leibniz University of Hannover (LUH; Germany); however, she started with coming to Polytechnic University, where she is currently studying intelligent systems. How Yukti ended up at a Russian university, studying computer science and electrical engineering, and the advantages of double degree programs, read in our interview.



- Yukti, glad to see you! You have made a long way to come to Polytechnic University. Tell us, what do you study at our university?

Here at Polytechnic University, I study under the [“Intelligent systems”](#) program and plan to pursue a Master’s degree in computer science and engineering. This program runs in conjunction with a course in Germany: after completing the two of them, I will receive two degrees at once.

- Leibniz University of Hannover and Polytechnic University are long-term strategic partners. Tell us, did you aim to get two degrees right away?

- Yes, I originally wanted to enter a double degree program. Before entering a German university, I did a lot of research. I liked the lines of study offered by both LUH and SPbPU. Already in St. Petersburg, I began to learn more about the educational programs of Russian universities and realized that a lot of students from India come to Russia to study in various areas, such as IT technologies, medicine, business, and others.

- What is the advantage of the double degree program for you?

- The main thing for me is that I can work and collaborate with a large number of people from completely different industries. For example, here at Polytechnic University I work with people from the field of computer science, and in Germany I will work with people from the field of mechanical engineering or electrical engineering. Dual degree programs create a diverse environment. I think that in the era of global technologies, robotics and computer science, it is essential to know not only the details of one specific subject, but other areas too.

- How is your training organized? How do you deal with a large volume of work?

- Everything is conveniently planned out. I study here at Polytechnic University for a year, and then I will go to Leibniz University of Hanover. A minor obstacle is that I received my Bachelor's degree in electronics, now I am studying computer science, and in Germany I will study mechanics and electronics. But the support of the teachers helps a lot!

- What do you do in class? Do you have any project activities?

- We have a lot of laboratory work and projects. Within each subject, we have a term paper or term project. Our teachers prepare us for a variety of oral exams, interviews, and the final qualification work. The main focus is on the latter work, which I am going to defend upon graduation. The subjects that I study here are not only theoretical; I also know how to apply my knowledge in practice. I must admit that here, at Polytechnic University, study consists of practical work rather than theoretical work, and this is very important.

- What disciplines do you like the most?

- My favorite classes are those taught by Professor Vadim ONUFRIEV: he teaches "Knowledge Engineering and Knowledge Management". This topic was completely new to me, but the professor's lectures were so wonderful that I had no problems understanding the material. This course is combined with the discipline named "Software Development Technologies." Professor Onufriev teaches it as well. As part of this subject, we had practical and design work, which made it possible to put into practice the skills gained from the engineering knowledge course.

- What is your opinion about exams? Is it usually hard to take them?

- My principle is to diligently work throughout the semester. This makes you feel much easier during the examination session. It's not difficult for me at the exams per se, but during the semester the work can be quite intense. I pass the exams without ruffle or excitement!

- Are you satisfied with your education?

- Yes, overall I am satisfied. It's a bit of a pity that in the second semester we had a lot of online classes: I prefer face-to-face training more. But I understand that due to the current situation in the world there is simply no other way out. We all faced new realities. We had to adapt to learning online - both students and teachers.

- How has your studies changed during the pandemic?

- As I said, everything has moved online. But I still think I was quite lucky. I study computer science at Polytechnic University, and for me it's essential to have a computer at home. I hope that by the time I go to Germany, the quarantine measures will not be tightened, and the students will have the opportunity to study in person. I cannot imagine remote laboratory work in the field of mechanics and electronics - in such situations, students should be present in the laboratory!

- What advice would you give to students who are thinking about entering SPbPU?

- The most important thing I can advise is to take courses in the study of the Russian language. It was the language aspect that became the most difficult for me. My Master's program is entirely in English, but whenever I go out into the street, I understand that not too many people in St. Petersburg speak English. At the very least, it is worth studying basic knowledge of the Russian language before entering the university. This will help you communicate with employees in dorms, shops, shopping malls, and so on.

St. Petersburg is a very beautiful city, I recommend everyone to visit it. While I was studying at Polytechnic University, I had the opportunity to go to Moscow - it's great there too. In general, I want to say that life in Russia has become an interesting and rewarding experience for me.

- Yukti, thanks for the interesting interview! We wish you good luck and success on your life path!

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