

# My Dual Degree Adventure: Studying International Business in Maastricht and Rome

*Before embarking on my dual degree adventure in Maastricht, I obtained a bachelor's degree in Economics and Management at LUISS University. My journey at LUISS continued and was enriched by enrolling in the MSc Dual Degree Programme in International Business with a specialization in Strategic Corporate Finance with Maastricht University School of Business and Economics in The Netherlands.*

*The decision to apply for this program was fuelled by my desire to challenge myself in a different environment and step out of my comfort zone. Studying abroad in such a renowned university as SBE Maastricht seemed like a fantastic opportunity to broaden my horizon and prepare me for an international career.*

*My educational experience in the program was a tale of adaptation and growth. The two systems, in Italy and Maastricht's Problem-Based Learning (PBL), are very different. Before I came to Maastricht, I was accustomed to traditional lectures with expert professors delivering content, while at SBE I relied heavily on self-learning from research articles and participation in class. Initially, I found the transition challenging, especially when it came to statistics and econometrics where my background was limited. However, with time and determination I managed to overcome these hurdles, ultimately achieving great results.*

*One notable aspect of Maastricht's PBL system was the emphasis on student-led tutorials, which meant facilitating lessons in class. Initially, I struggled with lengthy presentations, but after a few weeks, I became proficient at leading 1-2 hour sessions. Among the courses, Corporate Governance & Financial Stakeholder stood out for me as it aligned well with the PBL system. Entrepreneurial Finance was another favourite, despite its challenging final exam.*

*Handling practical matters such as housing, travel, and getting around was an independent endeavour for me. Finding accommodation in Maastricht was a challenge due to high demand, but starting early and seeking help from friends who had previously lived there helped me to secure a nice apartment. Administrative processes, thanks to the support from the Dual Degree Offices at both LUISS and SBE Maastricht, were smooth and hassle-free.*

*Outside of academics and thesis work, I made the most of my time abroad. Maastricht's central location in Europe made it perfect for me to travel and explore. I visited cities like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Alkmaar, Utrecht and cities in Belgium as well. During the warmer months, I cherished moments at the city's parks and enjoyed wandering around the charming streets of Maastricht. Living in the Netherlands and experiencing Maastricht was a truly memorable and enriching experience. The initial difficulties were worth it as I integrated into the system and the vibrant international community. Maastricht's youthful atmosphere and multicultural environment made it an ideal place to live and study.*

*For future students who are considering applying to this program, I recommend familiarizing yourself with the PBL system in advance and starting your studies from day one, as the short study periods (only 7 weeks) demand consistency and dedication. There will be challenging moments, but persevere and remember to enjoy your stay in Maastricht. Embrace the adventure because, as students in the Dual Degree we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to challenge ourselves, grow and explore in this international city.*

*After the completion of my Dual Degree studies and the receipt of two MSc degrees from LUISS and SBE Maastricht, I could start my international career in an Audit position with EY in Luxembourg. The seeds of my employment in Luxembourg were already planted during a company visit with SBE's study association SCOPE, an opportunity I had thanks to my participation in this unique programme!*

Giorgio Spada, LUISS University