**High education in Great Britain.**

All British universities are private institutions. Students have to pay fees and living costs, but every student may obtain a personal grant from local authorities. If the parents do not earn much money, their children will receive a full grant which will cover all the expenses. Students studying for first degrees are known as “undergraduates”. New undergraduates in some universities are called “fresher”. They have lectures, there are regular seminars.

After three or four years the students will take their finals. Those who pass examinations successfully are given the Bachelor’s degree: Bachelor of Arts for History or Bachelor of Science. The first postgraduate degree is Master of Arts, Master of Science. Doctor of Philosophy is the highest degree. It is given for some original research work which is an important contribution to knowledge. Open Days are a chance for applicants to see the university, meet students and ask questions. All this will help you decide whether you have made the right choice.

The most famous universities in Britain are Oxford and Cambridge. They are the two oldest English universities and they both have a long and eventful history of their own. Oxford and Cambridge are regarded as being academically superior to other universities and as giving special privilege and prestige. Cambridge University consists of a group of 32 independent colleges. The first students came to the city in 1209 and studied in the schools of the cathedral and monasteries.

Further education in Britain is for people over 16 taking courses at various levels up to the standard required for entry to higher education. The Open University offers degrees for people who do not have a formal education and qualifications, or who are older. Students study at home and then post them off to a tutor for marking. Most courses take six years and students get a number of credits for each year’s work. The Open University was founded in 1969 and started its first course in 1971. About 120, 000 people have enrolled since then.