University education

*The are 44 universities (not counting the Open university\*) in Britain. Although the Government is responsible for providing about 80 per cent of universities’ income it does not control their or teaching nor does it have direct dealing with the universities. The grants are distributed by the University Grants Committee, a body appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Science.*

*The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the Scottish Universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh from the fifteenth and sixteen centuries. All the other universities were founded in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.*

*There are five other institutions where the work is of university standard: the University of Manchester Institute of Science and technology; the two postgraduate business schools which are supported jointly by industry and the Government - the Manchester Business School and the London Graduate School of Business Studies, associated with the London School of Economics and the Imperial College of Science and Technology; Cranfield Institute of Technology for mainly postgraduate work in aeronautics and other subjects; and Royal College of Art.*

# Studies and degrees

Courses in arts and science are offered by most universities. Imperial College, London, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology and some of the newer universities concentrate on technology although they also offer a number of courses in social studies, modern languages and other non-technological subjects. About 45 per cent of full-time university students in Grate Britain are talking arts or social studies courses and 41 per cent science and technology: about 10 per are studying medicine, dentistry and health, and the remainder agriculture, forestry, veterinary science, architecture and town and country planning.

*University degree courses generally extend over three or four years, though in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science five or six years are required. The first degree of Bachelor(Master in the arts faculties of the older Scottish universities) is awarded on the completion of such a course, depending on satisfactory examination results. Further study or research is required at the modern universities for the degree of Master and by all universities for that of Doctor. Actual degree titles vary according to the practice of each university. A uniform standard of degree throughout the country is ensured by having external examiners on all examining boards. In the last decades there has been a tendency for degree courses to become more broadly based in subject matter, particularly in the new universities.*

*University teaching combines lectures, practical classes (in scientific subjects) and small group teaching in either seminars or tutorials.*

*Most member of the academic staff devote time to research and at all universities there are postgraduate students engaged in research.*

# Students

*Admission to the universities is by examination and selection. Women are admitted on equal terms with men but at Cambridge their numbers may be limited by ordinance. The general proportion of men to women students is about three to one; at Oxford it is over four to one, and at Cambridge seven to one. Over a third of all full-time university students in Britain are living in college and halls of residence, slightly under a half are in lodgings, and the remainder live at home.*

Despite recent expansion programmes, applications for places at universities for arts studies still exceed the number available. Prospective candidates for nearly all the universities apply for places through the Universities Central Council on Admissions. The only student who apply directly are applicants to the Open University and British candidates who apply only for the university of Glasgow, Aberdeen and Strathclyde.

*In 1971-72 there were about 234,000 full-time university students in Grate Britain including 43,000 postgraduates. In 1970-71 there were some 22,822 part-time students. Some 30,000 home and overseas candidates were also registered in 1972 for London University’s external first degree examinations*.

# Staff

In 1970-71 there were about 23,000 full-time university teachers in Great Britain; about 10 per cent of them were professors. The ratio of staff to students was about one to eight.

# Awards

In England, Wales and Scotland most adequately qualified British students can obtain awards from public funds in order to attend full-time at a university, college of major further education establishment. In England and Wales local education authorities provide awards. In Scotland students’ allowances for advanced courses are granted by the Scottish Education Department. The amount of these awards depends upon the income of the student and his parents. Grants for postgraduate study are offered annually by the Department of Education and Science, the Research Councils and the Scottish Education Department. In Northern Ireland university and postgraduate award and teacher training scholarships by the Ministry of Education, the conditions of award being the same as those for Great Britain