Higher Education in The U.K.

There are more than 60 universities in the U.K. The leading universities are Cambridge, Oxford and London. English universities differ from each other in traditions, general organization, internal government, etc. British universities are comparatively small, the approximate number is about 7-8 thousand students. Most universities have under 3000 students, some even less than 1500 ones. London and Oxford universities are international, because people from many parts of the world come to study at one of their colleges. A number of well-known scientists and writers, among them Newton, Darvin, Byron were educated in Cambridge.

A university consists of a number of departments: art, law, music, economy, education, medicine, engineering, etc.

After three years of study a student may proceed to a Bachelor's degree, and later to the degrees of Master and Doctor. Besides universities there are at present in Britain 300 technical colleges, providing part-time and full-time education.

The organization system of Oxford and Cambridge differs from that of all other universities and colleges. The teachers are usually called Dons. Part of the teaching is by means of lectures organized by the university. Teaching is also carried out by tutorial system. This is the system of individual tuition organized by the colleges. Each student goes to his tutor's room once a week to read and discuss an essay which the student has prepared.

Some students get scholarship but the number of these students is comparatively small. There are many associates and clubs at Cambridge and Oxford. The most celebrating at Cambridge is the Debating Society at which students discuss political and other questions with famous politicians and writers. Sporting activities are also numerous.

The work and games, the traditions and customs, the jokes and debates - all are parts of students' life there.

It should be mentioned that not many children from the working-class families are able to receive the higher education as the fees are very high (more than L1000 a year). Besides that special fees are taken for books, for laboratory works, exams and so on.