|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Higher Education in the USA.**  Many students, upon finishing high school, choose to continue their education. The system of higher education includes 4 categories of institutions.  The ***community college***, which is financed by the local community. Tuition fees are low in these colleges, that's why about 40 per cent of all American students of higher education study at these colleges. On graduation from such colleges American students get "associate degree" and can start to work or may transfer to 4-year colleges or universities (usually to the 3rd year).  The ***technical training institution***, at which high school graduates may take courses ranging from six months to three-four years, and learn different technical skills, which may include design business, computer programming, accounting, etc. The best-known of them are: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Technological Institute in California.  The ***four-year college***, which is not a part of a university. The graduates receive the degree of Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS). There are also small Art Colleges, which grant degrees in specialized fields such as ballet, film-making and even circus performance. There are also Pedagogical Colleges.  The ***university***, which may contain: 1) several colleges for students who want to receive a bachelor's degree after four years of study; 2) one or more graduate schools for those who want to continue their studies after college for about two years to receive a master's degree and then a doctor's degree. There are 156 universities in the USA. Any of these institutions of higher education may be either public or private. The public institutions are financed by state. Most of the students, about 80 per cent, study at public institutions of higher education, because tuition fees here are much lower. Some of the best-known private universities are Harvard, Yale and Princeton.  It is not easy to enter a college at a leading university in the United States. Successful applicants at colleges of higher education are usually chosen on the basis of: 1) their high-school records which include their class rank, the list of all the courses taken and all the grades received in high school, test results; 2) recommendation from their high-school teachers; 3) the impression they make during interviews at the university, which is in fact a serious examination; 4) scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests.  The academic year is usually nine months, divided into two terms. Studies usually begin in September and end in July. Each college or university has its own curriculum. During one term a student must study 4 or 5 different courses. There are courses that every student has to take in order to receive a degree. These courses or subjects are called major subjects or "majors".  At the same time there are subjects which the student may choose himself for his future life. These courses are called "electives". A student has to earn a certain number of "credits" (about 120) in order to receive a degree at the end of four years of college. Credits are earned by attending lectures or laboratory classes and completing assignments and examinations. Students who study at a university or four-year college are known as undergraduates. Those who have received a degree after 4 years of studies are known as graduates. They may take graduate program for another 2 years in order to get a master's degree. Further studies are postgraduate which result in a doctor's degree.    **Vocabulary** community college — колледж, в котором учатся студенты, живущие дома, и где учеба дешевле, так как часть расходов берут на себя местные органы власти tuition fee — плата за обучение associate degree — степень ассоциата, первоначальная ученая степень, присваивае­мая после двух лет обучения graduate — выпускник public — государственный private — частный applicant — кандидат, претен­дент, соискатель, абитуриент grade — оценка, отметка scores — баллы Scholastic Aptitude Test — тест на проверку способностей ученика: экзамен из двух частей, предлагаемый поступающим в университет term — семестр curriculum — учебный план, программа major subjects — профилиру­ющие предметы electives — предметы по выбору, факультативные предметы credit — балл или зачет за прослушанный курс assignment — задание  ***Questions*** 1) What kind of institutions are there in the American system of higher education? 2) Is it easy to enter university in the USA? 3) What is necessary for a school graduate to get a place at a university? 4) Are all subjects compulsory for university students? 5) What degrees can students get at the university? 6) Can you compare Belarusian and American universities? 7) What is necessary for a Belarusian student to go to university in the USA? 8) Would you like to study in one of American universities? Why?   There is a considerable choice of post-school education in Britain. In addition to universities, there are also polytechnics and a series of different types of assisted colleges, such as colleges of technology, art, etc, which tend to provide more work-orientated courses than universities. Some of these courses are part-time, with the students being released by their employers for one day a week or longer periods.  Virtually all students on full-time courses receive grants or loans from the Government which cover their tuition fees and everyday expenses (accommodation, food, books, etc).  Universities in Britain enjoy complete academic freedom, choosing their own staff and deciding which students to admit, what and how to teach, and which degrees to award (first degrees are called Bachelor degrees). They are mainly government-funded, except for the totally independent University of Buckingham.  There is no automatic admission to university, as there are only a limited number of places (around 100,000) available each year. Candidates are accepted on the basis of their A-level results. Virtually all degree courses are full-time and most last three years (medical and veterinary courses last five or six years).  Students who obtain their Bachelor degree (graduates) can apply to take a further degree course, usually involving a mixture of exam courses and research. There are two different types of post-graduate courses — the master's degree (MA or MSc), which takes one or two years, and the higher degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), which takes two or three years.  **Vocabulary** grant — грант; дотация, субсидия loans — заем, ссуда tuition fees — плата за обучение expenses — расходы bachelor degree — степень Бакалавра admission — прием master's degree — степень Магистра  ***Questions*** 1) What is a choice of post-school education in Britain? 2) What do all students on full-time courses receive? 2) How are first degrees called? 3) Is there any automatic admission to university? 4) What are two different types of post-graduate courses?    **Higher Education in Britain.**  Only 25 per cent of the student population goes on to higher education. Competition to get into one of Britain's universities is fierce and not everyone who gets A-levels can go. Students usually need three A-levels to go to university and grades at A-level go from A, the highest grade, to E.  Students apply to universities months before they take their A-levels. The students are given a personal interview and the universities then decide which students they want. They offer them a place which depends on A-level results. The more popular university, the higher the grades it will ask for.  Most big towns in Britain have both a university and a college of higher education. A British university usually consists of colleges. The departments of the colleges are organized into faculties. There are 91 universities and 47 colleges of higher education in Britain. The most famous and prestigious universities are those in Oxford and Cambridge.  Universities offer three- and four-year degree courses. A degree is the qualification you get from university when you pass your final exams. You are then awarded a BA (Bachelor of Arts), BSc (Bachelor of Science) or BEd (Bachelor of Education).  Students who are studying for degrees are called undergraduates. They go to large formal lectures, but most of the work takes place in tutorials: lessons in groups often or more when students discuss their work with the lecturer.  Most British students choose to go to university a long way from their home town. University is seen as a time to be independent, to live away from home and develop new interests. British students do not have to pay to go to university, but do need money to live away from home while they are studying. Some students whose parents do not earn a lot of money are given a grant from the local education authority. If students do not get a grant, parents are expected to pay for their children. In fact, the grant is not a lot of money. Students used to work during holidays to earn more money, but it is now difficult to find such jobs. The result is that more students are dropping out, failing to finish their courses.  Not all students study full time at university or college. Many people combine their studies with work. Large companies often have their own in-house training schemes. The British government very enthusiastic about such training schemes, because so few people go to university.    **Vocabulary**  grade — оценка, отметка  degree — (ученая) степень  to award — присуждать  bachelor — бакалавр  undergraduate — студент университета  tutorial — консультация, практическое занятие  grant — грант; дотация, субсидия, стипендия  to drop out (of) — бросать (учебу)  to study full time — учиться очно    **Questions**  1) Is it difficult to get a place at a university in Britain?  2) How long does a student have to study to take a UK degree? What kind of degrees can students be awarded?  3) What are the advantages and disadvantages of going to university or college in Britain?  4) What can students do if they don't get a grant and their parents refuse to pay for their education?  5) Do many British go on to higher education?  6) Would you like to enter any British university or college? Why?  7) What is necessary for a Belarusian student to go to university in Britain?  8) Can you compare British and Belarusian universities?  According to the world university rankings compiled by the Times Higher Education, more than half of the world’s top 200 universities are located in either the US or the UK. Both countries share a rich tradition of quality higher education, excellent research facilities, and a culture that promotes intellectualism as well as academic freedom. However, while both certainly provide an excellent environment for learning, there are many differences between the two countries regarding the structure of the university as well as student life. In this article, we will explore the primary differences between the American and British systems of education.  **Length of Time**  Perhaps the most important difference between the education system in the US, and the UK, is the amount of time it takes to finish your degree (except in Scotland, where a bachelor’s degree also lasts four years). In general, degree programs in the US take about one year longer than programs in the UK, although this varies depending upon whether you receive a Master’s degree prior to a PhD. In both systems, you can go directly to a PhD program out of your undergraduate program, but in the UK it is more common to complete a Master’s degree program before moving on to a PhD. Courses of study are shorter in the UK because the course programs are generally much more focused than in the US.  **Academic Term**  Most universities in the US begin their terms in mid to late August, although smaller liberal arts colleges may start later. Most take a rather lengthy break beginning in mid-December and begin the second semester in early to mid-January. However, universities that are on different calendars, such as a trimester or quarter-based system, may begin their winter break at the Thanksgiving holiday, which falls at the end of November. The academic term in the UK is a bit more varied. While most also use the semester system, the trimester and quarter systems are used in some universities. Many schools start in September or October and end in May or June, making for a slightly longer academic year. However, the academic term is less standardized throughout the United Kingdom; if you choose to study there, your university might use a much different calendar.  **University Organization**  Many universities in the UK are made up of “colleges” which are dedicated to a specific subject matter. While the colleges are still governed by the university, each college has quite a lot of autonomy from each other as well as the university itself. You live with others in your college, eat with others from your college, and generally stay within your college for the duration of your studies. Rather than applying to the central university admissions department, like you do in the US, you either apply directly to the college of the subject you want to study, or in the case of undergraduate programs, you apply through a centralized system which allows you to apply to several colleges at once. This system is called the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, or UCAS. This means that you have to know what you want to study before you even apply.  By contrast, in the US, you apply to the larger university and for the first year or more, you take courses from a variety of fields and only declare a major at the end of the first year or perhaps even during the second year. American universities have different “schools,” or departments, such as the School of Arts and Sciences, which houses a number of related majors. However, even after you declare a major at an American university, you are still expected to take classes outside of that field, known as “electives.” For this reason, we can say that the general emphasis of higher education in the US is breadth, or getting a range of knowledge from a variety of different subjects. In the UK, the emphasis is more on depth; getting a very thorough understanding of your chosen subject.  **Homework and Grades**  Because the US system emphasizes breadth, courses require weekly or even biweekly readings as well as other assignments such as small writing projects, major research papers, and oral presentations throughout the course. In the UK, most schools are much more lecture-based, with only occasional assignments throughout the semester. In some cases, there may be no actual required assignments and instead your entire grade may be based on one final exam. In the US, your grade will be based on your performance on the variety of assignments, with a final exam making up only a percentage of your total grade.  **Cost**  The cost of education in both countries is far from cheap, but the cost of an education in the United States is generally higher. According to a law passed in 2012, universities in England may charge up to £9000 (approximately $14,300) per year. Of course, this applies only to citizens of the UK and the EU, not international students. Fees for international students can be significantly higher. The government sets the limits for tuition fees, and each individual school sets its own fee up to that limit.  By contrast, the government has very little control over what universities charge in the United States. The US differentiates between in-state tuition fees and out-of-state tuition fees, as well as between private and public universities. These distinctions determine the tuition fee. The average tuition fee for public two-year institutions is around $3000 per year, while the average fee for private four-year institutions is around $29,000 per year. Finally, some private four-year institutions can cost up to $50,000 per year. In order to help students cover the cost of tuition in both countries, loans are available through the government with favorable terms and interest rates. Visit our Financial Aid Center for more information about financing your education in the US, and our Financial Aid for the UK section to learn more about funding an education in the UK.  **Accommodation**  Both countries provide students with residence halls in which to live. They are roughly equivalent, although in the UK it is more normal to have a bedroom by yourself, whereas in the US, you may very well share a bedroom with at least one other person. However, after the first year, students in the US may have additional housing options available to them, such as private housing or off-campus housing. It is also more common for dormitories to be self-catered in the UK, while the US normally provides a range of full dining options for its students. One potentially significant difference is that maid service is common in the residence halls in the UK, although students pay a nominal fee for this service.  Conclusion  While both countries provide a great education, each system approaches education slightly differently, and there are advantages and disadvantages to each. If you are considering getting your education in either the US or the UK, you should take into consideration the various differences mentioned in this article, especially the amount of time it takes to finish the degree, the tuition fees and whether you prefer more depth or more breadth in your degree program.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | America | Britain | | Length of Time | BA: 4 years MA: 2 years PhD: 5-7 years or longer | BA: 3 years MA: 1 year PhD: 3 years | | Academic Term | Most schools use the semester system, but some use a trimester or quarter system. Most schools start in mid to late August and end in May. | Most also use a semester system, but some use trimester or quarter systems. The start and end of an academic year varies by university. | | University Organization | Universities are often divided into schools by subject, but these schools do not typically have a lot of autonomy from the university. | University acts an umbrella organization for the different colleges. Colleges are fairly independent of one another. | | Style of Education | More varied, liberal arts, study outside your major. | Take only classes in your college. | | Depth vs Breadth | Breadth | Depth | | Homework | Constant reading and writing assignments | General assignments or no assignments throughout the semester | | Cost | High | Moderate | | Grades | Based on overall performance on all assignments | Based mostly on the final exam | | Athletics | Important social activity; athletic scholarships available. | Intramural sports; generally no athletic scholarships available. | | Living Situation | Dormitories with roommate. Off-campus housing occasionally available. | Dormitories without roommate generally. Off-campus housing generally available. | | Types of Degrees | Associates, Bachelors, Masters, PhD, variety of vocational and professional degrees. | Higher National Diploma, Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education, Foundation Degree, Bachelors, Masters, PhD, variety of professional and vocational degrees. Postgraduate degrees divided into taught and research degrees. |     **The Bologna Process.**  http://study-english.info/    A European reform process aimed at creating the European Higher Education Area.  The aim of the Bologna Process is to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to European students and staff as well as to students and staff from other parts of the world.  The envisaged European Higher Education Area will  • facilitate mobility of students, graduates and higher education staff;  • prepare students for their future careers and for life as active citizens in democratic societies, and support their personal development;  • offer broad access to high-quality higher education, based on democratic principles and academic freedom. |