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Introduction The University of Cambridge is a loose confederation of faculties, Colleges, and other bodies. The University works with a relatively small central administration, and with central governing and supervisory bodies consisting of, and mainly elected by, the current academic personnel of the Faculties and Colleges. An unusually large part of Cambridges day-to-day administration is carried out by teaching staff on behalf of their colleagues, and the Universitys legislative structure is in practice unusually open to consultation and participation. The procedural rules are embodied in the Universitys Ordinances, which prescribe in some detail the formal administrative practices. These rules are made in most cases by the University itself, within a framework set by the Statutes, which can only be changed with the approval of The Queen in Council. The Universitys volume of Statutes and Ordinances, published triennially with annual supplements, is readily available throughout the University, and contains the basis of its constitution, procedures and practice. Full details of the membership of all the academic and administrative bodies described in this booklet are given in a special October issue of the Universitys weekly official journal Cambridge University Reporter, with subsequent changes noted in ordinary issues. To understand how the Cambridge structure operates, it helps to keep the historical origins in mind. The University was established

in about 1209 to examine and to confer Degrees. The first Colleges, each autonomous and independent with its own Governing Body and Charter, were established later, from 1284, principally to teach and house students at all levels. Today, the Colleges are mainly concerned with the teaching of their undergraduates and the academic support of both graduate and undergraduate students, and of scholars and research workers of outstanding merit. In this century the role of the University has hugely expanded through the provision of facilities, such as teaching and research laboratories, which it is practically possible only to provide centrally. The University employs Professors, Readers, Lecturers and other teaching and administrative staff who provide the formal teaching (lectures, seminars and practical classes). The Colleges supplement their teaching with supervisions, given by Fellows or others appointed by the College, and each College also provides library and other learning resources exclusively for its own members. The University retains sole responsibility for examinations and for conferring Degrees. The Colleges, on the other hand, have responsibility for selecting, admitting and accommodating all undergraduate students, and a student cannot enter the University unless he or she also becomes a member of a College. However, the University lays down the admission qualifications for undergraduate students, and also has certain controls over the statutes of the individual colleges. This Guide deals only with the principal officials, institutions and procedures of the University as distinct from the Colleges. The University of Cambridge is one of the oldest universities in the world,

and one of the largest in the United Kingdom. It has a world-wide reputation for outstanding academic achievement and the high quality of research undertaken in a wide range of science and arts subjects. The University pioneers work in the understanding of disease, the creation of new materials, advances in telecommunications and research into the origins of the universe. It trains doctors, vets, architects, engineers and teachers. At all levels about half of the students at Cambridge study arts and humanities subjects, many of whom have gone on to become prominent figures in the arts, print and broadcast media. The University's achievements in the sciences can be measured by the sixty or more Nobel Prizes awarded to its members over the years.

**Constitution of the University**

The University is a self-governing body: the legislative authority is the Regent House, which consists of the three thousand or so members of the teaching and administrative staff of the University and Colleges who have the MA (or MA status) or a higher degree. The principal administrative body of the University is the Council, which consists mainly of members of the academic staff elected by the Regent House. The General Board of the Faculties co-ordinates the educational policy of the University and the Finance Committee of the Council supervises its financial affairs.

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