

UNIT 2: Higher education. A new university model**Objectives**

Students will learn to

- identify and express in their own words the issue discussed in the article, the two different sides of the issue presented in it as well as who defends each one (thus applying their inferring and paraphrasing skills)
- discriminate main ideas from secondary ideas, supporting details and redundant or unnecessary information
- think critically as to determine why each party defends their particular point of view (thus applying their cognitive skills —namely analyzing and reasoning about the proposed issue)
- summarize a text into about a 30% of its original length (thus applying their synthesizing skills)
- identify lexical items when reading and / or listening to the text with the help of the context (thus using their compensation skills)

Contents**Lexicogrammatical and discursive areas**

- Format and characteristics of British written media language, as represented by news articles from the BBC News website
- Collocations

Domain areas

- Education
- Legal language

Activities**BLOCK I****1. Read the following article by Will Woodward from the BBC News Website.****University plan sparks anger**

Teaching-only institutions to award degrees
by Will Woodward

Government plans to allow higher education institutions which teach only one subject and carry out no research to be called universities were angrily condemned last night by vice-chancellors and lecturers.

Margaret Hodge, the higher education minister, confirmed she was going ahead with proposals announced in January to allow institutions to become teaching-only universities. She said such universities could specialise in one or two subjects opening the way for a potentially significant expansion and liberalisation of the student market. "The most important requirement for the university title should be the quality of an institution's teaching and the number of students enrolled," Mrs Hodge said. "Having a specialist focus should no longer be a bar to becoming a university. That is why we are drawing up new criteria that will open up the door to successful institutions who have been shut out for too long."

READING PRACTICE 2

2008/09

The new breed of universities will have to show that they are upholding standards and will be given degree-awarding powers for a limited period. Doctorates could only be awarded by universities which conduct research. The new system is expected to be in place by autumn 2004. The government named seven institutions which already award higher education degrees but could apply for the new title: University College Northampton, Canterbury Christ Church University College, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, Liverpool Hope University College, the Bolton Institute, the London Institute and University College Worcester.

But Roderick Floud, the president of Universities UK, the vice-chancellors' body, said: "We are very clear that research and teaching are both fundamental to a university. Breaking this link would take us out of step with Europe. We are also clear that the existence of different definitions of a university in the nations of the UK will be extremely problematic." He added that vice-chancellors had made ministers aware of their concerns. "We are disappointed that government should have published their intended criteria at this stage, without consultation."

Sally Hunt, the general secretary of the Association of University Teachers, said: "This announcement makes a mockery of the very concept of a university and displays the government's completely impoverished view of higher education. "The recognised worldwide definition of a university is an institution that does teaching and research under the same roof. And the government is even signed up to a European declaration that recognises that teaching-only institutions cannot be universities. "This decision probably makes the UK government the only one in the western world that says you can be a university without conducting research."

But a spokesman for the Department for Education and Skills dismissed their concerns. "There is no one 'legal' definition of the term university either in the UK or in European legislation. There are already a range of specialist universities across the EU and they are well respected. There is no reason why any new English teaching-only university will be any different."

2. Two opposing opinions and attitudes are put forward in the above news article. Say who defends each one and summarize the position of each side in no more than 6 lines (each).

3. Synonyms. Look for words or phrases in the text which mean (approximately) the same as the following:

1. To do or complete something, especially something important
2. To begin to do something, especially when somebody has given permission or has expressed doubts or opposition
3. Something that prevents or stops somebody from doing a particular thing, going somewhere, etc.
4. To prepare something (e.g. list, plan, contract) by writing it
5. To become or make something possible, available or able to be reached
6. Type of, kind of, sort of
7. To make an official decision to give something to somebody as a payment, prize, etc.
8. A group of people who work or act together, often for an official purpose, or who are connected in some other way
9. Comments or actions that are intended to make somebody or something seem ridiculous
10. To decide that something or someone is not important and not worth considering

4. Antonyms. Find words or expressions in the text which mean (approximately) the opposite to the following.

1. Not to let somebody or something do something; not to let something happen or be done
2. Not large or important enough to have an effect or to be noticed
3. Said of something which has not achieved the intended results or of someone who has not achieved their aims or intended results
4. Not serious or not very important
5. Not knowing or not realizing (about) something

BLOCK II

Now read the text again and find words or expressions which mean (approximately) the same as the following.

1. An area of knowledge studied in a school, college, etc.
2. To express very strong disapproval, to criticize someone or something, usually for moral reasons
3. A person who teaches at university or college
4. To spend most of your time studying one particular subject or doing one type of business
5. To arrange for yourself or for somebody else to officially join a course, school, etc.
6. The highest university degree
7. The head of a university in Britain, who is in charge of the work of running the university
8. A detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding
9. Weakened or made worse in quality
10. A feeling of worry, especially one that is shared by many people

BLOCK III

1. Study these collocates for some of the words in the text.

- Government **plans to** allow...
- ...were **angrily condemned** last night...
- ...universities which **conduct research**.
- We **are clear that** research...
- ...**made** ministers **aware** of their concerns.

2. Now fill in the gaps with one of the verbs presented below. The verbs are in the base form, so change them to the correct form when necessary:

- a) attach
- b) gain
- c) provide
- d) address
- e) draw
- f) fly

READING PRACTICE 2

2008/09

- g) set
- h) commit
- i) receive
- j) complete

1. In order to _____ the assignment successfully, the student had to do some previous reading on the topic.
2. More than 5.000 anti-illiteracy classes have been opened since 1999 to help Tibetan women _____ access to education.
3. SSA _____ assistance to victims of domestic violence.
4. I would like to _____ your attention to a case of child prostitution in Turkey that is being heard at the criminal court of Mardin at the moment.
5. Derby Evening Telegraph contributor Jim Brennan is to _____ an award for his contribution to the community through journalism.
6. Poor countries urged to _____ importance to tourism development.
7. China _____ the issue of pension fund reform.
8. You will find kitesurfers _____ their kites in the wind.
9. You'll learn the importance of _____ limits, and start to get comfortable with making rules and being strict with your children when necessary.
10. Man _____ murder while talking to cop.

3. Study the following structures:

- She said such universities could specialise in one or two subjects **opening the way for** a potentially significant expansion and liberalisation of the student market.
- **Having** a specialist focus should no longer be a bar to becoming a university. [-ing clause as subject of sentence]
- **That is why** we are drawing up new criteria...
- **We are very clear that** research and teaching are both fundamental to a university.
- This announcement **makes a mockery of** the very concept of a university...

4. Now rephrase the following sentences using one of the structures presented above.

1. I don't have any doubts about it: I'm not suited to being a teacher.
2. My opinion is that justice was ridiculed at the O.J. Simpson's trial.
3. If you don't stop eating fruit candy and chocolate all the time, you will put on a few kilos.
4. And that is the reason why he is not going to school today.
5. Removing customs control could result in an increase in drug smuggling.