

UNIVERSITY FINANCE IN BRITAIN

THE annual survey of the academic year 1963-64 by the University Grants Committee* is this year issued as a separate publication and it is proposed to continue this practice in future, partly to avoid delaying the presentation of the statistics. The survey begins by summarizing the changes in organization and membership which followed the acceptance by the Government of recommendations made by the Robbins Committee. (These have since been superseded, at least partly, by subsequent changes under Mr. H. Wilson's administration, though the Committee continues to be responsible to the Secretary of State for Education and Science and not to the Treasury.) It is stated that the Committee on Audio-Visual Aids in Institutions of Higher Education is expected to report in the spring of 1965 and the Committee on Libraries "within the next year or so". A new standing advisory panel on computers with Sir Willis Jackson as chairman was established in conjunction with the Department of Education and Science, "to consider and advise, in the light of available resources, on proposals which are referred to them for the provision of computer facilities and related matters in institutions of higher education". The staff of the Committee had risen to 50 by January 1963 (compared with 22 in January 1953) and, after a comprehensive review of organization and procedures in the office, agreement was reached on a new staffing complement. The increase in staff has far outstripped the accommodation available, but it is hoped that the alternative premises secured at 13-14 Park Crescent, London, W.1, will be ready for occupation early in 1965 and suffice for needs in the foreseeable future.

On university expansion to 1967-68, the survey comments that analysis of the replies of the universities to the request sent to them in October 1963 showed that the aggregate total of places offered by 1967-68 was substantially greater than that required to meet the Robbins objective of 197,000. Discussions on scaling down, involving 35 institutions, were started in January 1964, and completed in February 1964. Following these, the Committee advised the Government as to the addition required to the building starts programme for 1965, and on May 14, 1964, the Government announced that £54.5 million would be authorized for building starts in the period January 1, 1965-March 31, 1966. The Committee had also to consider the appropriate procedures for organizing the transition to university status of the colleges of advanced technology and the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh. All the colleges concerned agreed to the proposal to appoint Academic Advisory Committees for this purpose, in consultation with the University

Grants Committee. Membership of these Committees is dealt with in an appendix to the survey. A similar procedure was adopted for the Royal College of Art and the College of Aeronautics.

The survey also recapitulates progress with the ten-year programme of expansion to 1973-74, recording the reconstitution of the New Universities Sub-Committee under Sir John Wolfenden's chairmanship, and the discussions on academic salaries with the National Incomes Commission are also summarized. The Committee has also agreed with the Government on a formula covering the principles which should govern the discontinuance of family allowances to new appointments, promotions, and transfer from one university to another. The University of St. Andrews is setting up, in collaboration with the University Grants Committee, an Academic Advisory Committee for the development of Queen's College, Dundee, as a separate university, and it is expected that the University of Dundee will be inaugurated in October 1966, or, at latest, in October 1967. Developments in British Business Schools and management studies, following the reports of Lord Franks and of Lord Normanbrook's working party, are also summarized.

The Committee has also undertaken, at the Government's request, further enquiries regarding the location of a new medical school and the expansion of existing medical schools, consequent on the recommendations of the Gillie Report and the Platt Report. On July 27, 1964, the Minister of Health announced that the new medical school would be located at the University of Nottingham, with a new teaching hospital of 1,200 beds and an annual entry of 100 students. He also stated that, on the advice of the University Grants Committee, existing medical schools would be expanded to increase the annual intake of British-based students by about 150 by October 1966. Early in 1964 the Committee decided to review the existing arrangement for controlling the cost of residential accommodation for university students, and the Committee and the Department of Education and Science are now considering the recommendations of a joint working party appointed for this purpose. Early in 1963 the attention of the universities was directed to some of the possibilities in the application of new building techniques to university building and in particular to the Clasp system which the University of York is adopting in its building programme and modifying for university use. In conjunction with the education departments and the Ministry of Public Building and Works, a working party was set up to consider more rapid and cheaper means of providing student residence in a period of emergency expansion; the results of this survey were communicated to the universities in November 1963.

* University Grants Committee Annual Survey, Academic Year 1963-1964. (Cmnd. 2571.) Pp. 28. (London: H.M.S.O., 1965.) 1s. 9d. net.

LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PLANNING FOR GROWTH

ROADSHEET No. 487, issued by Political and Economic Planning* and prepared by G. Denton, summarizes the most urgent conclusions for Britain to be derived from recent experience with institutions, the planning of targets, the balance of payments, incomes policy, fiscal policy and regional policy.

As regards institutions, from their formation early in 1962 to October 1964, the National Economic Development Council and the National Economic Development Office were the chief institutions for long-term economic planning for growth, and considerable progress was made

during the period in fulfilling the main purpose of the Council—that of involving both sides of industry with the Government in the formation of economic policy. The main problems encountered by both institutions concerned their position on the edge of the administrative structure and the recruitment of staff. The Council was, in constitution, a typical advisory body but required to influence Government, industry and the Unions in a predetermined direction. It was supported by an Office independent of any Government department, yet in close touch with Whitehall and also with representatives of organizations of industry and with the Trades Union Congress.

* *Planning*, 31, No. 487 (March, 1965): *Planning for Growth*. Pp. 75-114. (London: Political and Economic Planning, 1965.) 6s.