Development Studies Education in Universities in the New Millennium: A United Kingdom Perspective

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Abstract

This paper examines recent trends in development studies education in the UK, and considers their relevance for Japanese universities. The UK development studies sector has expanded its student numbers greatly in the past two decades. However, its growth has been conditioned by financial pressures and by increasing external evaluation of its teaching and research. While these external pressures to some extent have improved teaching quality and research performance, they also have diverted staff efforts towards the short term and towards money making. One by-product of the need to recruit overseas fee-paying students is that the UK now is playing a significant role in educating a new generation of Japanese development professionals. Some problems are common to both countries, such as how to combine multi-disciplinarity with professional training, and how to help students gain the initial experience necessary to establish themselves in a career.

1. Introduction

Development studies have been a feature of Japanese national university postgraduate programmes for a decade, since the opening of the first graduate studies institute—the Graduate School of International Development at the University of Nagoya—in 1991. Development studies as a subject at universities in the UK has a longer history, with major institutions dating from the late 1960s and early 1970s, and some even earlier. Nevertheless, a visitor to Japan is struck by the similarities between various problems faced by Japanese university institutes and those faced by British universities that teach development. Foremost among these issues is how to combine professional training and credibility in an academic discipline, on the one hand, and an interdisciplinary(2) approach on the other. Another pressing issue is how best to help students establish careers as development professionals. With their longer history, British university development institutions may have experience from which Japan could learn, but the learning process is certainly not only one-way. There are features of Japanese programmes, such as their use

of overseas fieldwork and their integration of subjects like law and education into development studies, which have much to teach Western institutions. A distinctive feature of the UK university scene, however—development studies included—is the high degree of financial stringency and external assessment under which it must operate. These constraints have conditioned the growth and activities of UK development studies since the 1980s, and will continue to do so in the new millennium.

The development studies sector of the UK—both within and outside of universities—has been reviewed by two major studies. Gerald Meier (1994) conducted a critical survey of development research on behalf of the UK Development Studies Association. More recently, Merilee Grindle and Mary Hilderbrand (1999) from the Harvard Institute for International Development were commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (the British equivalent of JICA, the Japan International Cooperation Agency) to do a wide ranging study of development studies education. These two reviews provide a background against which this paper picks a number of themes that illustrate similarities and contrasts between the UK and Japan, and that offer scope for mutual learning. First, however, a brief overview is given of development studies in the UK.

2. Development Studies at British Universities

'No other country has a comparable development studies enterprise (to that of the UK)', in the view of Grindle and Hilderbrand. The demand for its services will intensify, they believe, since it can provide an approach to understanding the workings of accelerating globalisation, and particularly how to strengthen globalisation's positive effects while ameliorating the growing gaps between poor and rich. The strengths of the UK development studies sector lie, they say, in its cross-disciplinary approach, its contributions to understanding the micro-foundations of development, and its willingness to challenge 'mainstream' (usually American) views, thus setting the critical agenda. It also has a tradition of training public officials both from within the UK and from developing countries. Development studies research in the UK has long been associated with teaching and postgraduate training, although one major research organisation—the Overseas Development Institute in London—lies outside the university sector. British university development studies centres maintain links with universities in developing countries, often supported by the British Council. Such links help to build capacity in developing countries—for example by sending staff to the UK for postgraduate training—and also offer staff and students from Britain the opportunity to visit to gain first-hand experience of development.

At present, there are development studies degree programmes in at least fifteen British universities, or at least eighteen if the separate colleges of London University that mount development programmes are treated as separate institutions. These programmes are typically postgraduate, although a small number of universities also offer undergraduate degrees in development. Grindle and Hilderbrand identify 60 master's (MA and MSc) programmes on development in 18 institutions. Approximately 900 master's students in development graduate annually from British universities, and about 250 Ph.D students are enrolled at any one time. Individual undergraduate and postgraduate courses on development at various universities date from the 1950s. This parallels the emergence of development studies (particularly development economics) as a subject at that
time, when many British colonies in Asia and Africa were achieving independence (Meier 1994: 470-1). Recent years also have seen a major expansion. Over a fifth of master’s programmes currently on offer were newly set up in the 1990s. Although the mounting of new courses sometimes reflects financial pressure to generate additional earnings from student fees, the increase in student numbers is striking. The numbers on master’s programmes tripled between 1988 and 1998, and the number of Ph.Ds received doubled between 1984/8 and 1994/8.(7)

In Britain, unlike Japan, almost all universities are financed by the state.(8) Financial cutbacks for British universities date from the early 1980s and led to reductions in staff in many departments and cuts in resources for teaching, research and support facilities. Over the two decades to 1997, although there was a doubling of total student numbers in UK higher education, funding per student fell by 40 per cent (Dearing 1997: 4). Development studies were affected by these cuts in ways broadly similar to other subjects, but the pressure placed on universities to make money of their own had a differential impact. Development studies had potential to recruit additional overseas students, the incentive to do so having been generated by the British government increasing their fees to a level several times higher than that of students from Britain (and the European Union). This pressure continues. Another pressure is to earn money from outside consultancy. Whilst it would be wrong to see these money-making pressures in an entirely negative light, they have had some negative effects, which are taken up in later sections. The pressures amount to a partial privatisation. Japanese national universities, which seem to be facing partial privatisation in the future, may wish to contemplate the British experience.

In the 1990s financial pressures were intensified and complicated by external assessment. In principle, British university staff members spend one-third of their time on academic research and this is financed by the central government.(9) The use of Research Assessment Exercises (‘RAE’s) at approximately five-yearly intervals has introduced a system where the amount of this centrally financed research time per staff member in each individual university department or faculty would depend on the rating of the department achieved in the RAE.(10) In a rating system which went from grade 1 (the lowest) to grade 5 (the highest, and to which a star could be added for particular prestige), a ‘five-star’ department would receive significantly more money per staff member than previously, and a lowly one-star department much less. A low rated department then would have to increase its student numbers per staff member in order to finance itself, thereby squeezing the available research time for staff. In contrast, staff in a highly rated department could have a reduction in teaching loads. In consequence, highly rated departments could appoint more staff, and in theory at least give staff more than a third of their time to do research, and low-rated department staff would have less than a third of their time to do research.(11) (12) Highly rated departments would become more attractive locations for recruiting research-minded staff, and low-rated departments less so, thus initial differences would tend to become cumulative. Since the RAE grading depends heavily on the publications produced by individual staff members—the weighting is 80 per cent for individual publications in determining a department’s grading in the forthcoming RAE 2001—the pressure on staff to do research is intense. This is at a time when they face other pressures to earn money through consultancy and to recruit fee-paying overseas students. The RAE has produced some favourable change by rewarding research and putting pressure on poorly performing individuals and departments to improve. However, even for highly rated departments it has generated some distortions. Staff feel pressured into producing publications in
the short term, since the RAE takes account only of a person’s publications in the five-year period of the Exercise. Since research project finance is rarely granted for more than three years, and since the core funding given by DfID to a small number of institutions has been cut in favour of more tendering for research projects on a competitive basis, the pressures towards the short term mount. Such tendering is also time consuming and costly.

However, much effort has been placed in the British universities research assessment exercises in assessing quality, with well-respected people doing the assessment. The UK Development Studies Association in its response to the Harvard report was strongly supportive of the British RAES (DSA 1999).

My impression is that the external evaluations of Japanese academic centres are undertaken primarily with a view to helping them build on strengths and rectify weaknesses. These evaluations are voluntary. However, the Japanese Ministry of Education (Monbusho) has decided to enforce third party evaluation and has already set up an institution for that purpose. If a more market-driven system like that of the UK is introduced, with results of evaluations widely publicised as in the UK, the distortions could be reduced by relying more on reputation effects than on direct financial pressure to bring about change. In the UK, there are preliminary indications that the RAES will continue after RAE 2001, but that they will generate lower financial rewards or penalties than at present.

In addition, periodic assessments of university departments’ teaching quality—now referred to as subject reviews—have been introduced. By stressing student evaluations of teaching, teaching quality probably has been improved, and evaluation might have a similarly positive effect if introduced more widely in Japanese universities. Japanese students have commented to me that teaching is of a much more variable quality in Japan compared to the UK. However, teaching quality visitations generate heavy transactions costs in terms of preparation for the visits. They tend to improve the documentation associated with teaching (such as course outlines) more than they do the quality of teaching itself. Although performance on teaching quality does not affect a department’s finances directly, it does so indirectly as a factor that can aid student recruitment. The teaching quality assessment system in the UK, which since 1997 has been administered by the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education), is still in process of change.\(^{(13)}\)

3. **Research on Development**

In a good university, the quality and range of the staff’s academic research feeds into successful teaching. In this sense, research ultimately affects the quality of what there is to teach, and universities whose staff participate in national and international development research efforts are the most likely to attract the best students. Research is also essential for informing government: “The Department for International Development relies on the development studies sector for critically important expertise on wide-ranging and substantive issues, including in-depth country-level expertise about the settings in which DfID specialists operate” (Grindle and Hilderbrand 1999: 12). As Japanese aid increasingly moves from ‘hardware’ projects (like building dams) to ‘software’ projects involving policy advice, such informing of government through research will be of increasing value. Developing more
university research capability on Africa (and perhaps also Latin America) also will be important, as Japanese aid stretches beyond Asia. However, Japan is different from the UK in the sense that its government-related research capability is more extensive, with the Institute of Developing Economies linked to the Japan External Trade Organisation, and the Foundation for Advanced Studies in International Development with its connections to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Overseas Development Institute in London is the nearest British equivalent, though it has no official link to government. A strength of the Japanese development scene is the way in which IDE in particular has provided a cadre of experienced researchers who have subsequently moved to universities, and presumably helps to provide continuing links to policy making. Also, the Japanese development research institutes engage in quasi-university functions, with a graduate programme run by IDE via its IDEAS (IDE Advanced Studies) institute; and a new graduate programme run by FASID through its links with the Graduate Research Institute of Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo.

The strength and vitality of British research on development is widely acknowledged. In a survey of over twenty top development journals, British authors accounted for 21 per cent of articles, compared to 36 per cent for US authors. All other OECD countries combined (Japan included) contributed less than the British. In terms of citations, British authors were cited as often as those from the US. British strength was greatest in economic policy, poverty and livelihoods, and industrialisation. The Grindle and Hilderbrand report, though, had little to say on the impacts on policy of British research (DSA 1999).

However, the sustainability and quality of the British research output has been put at risk by financial pressures. There is now heavy dependence on outside sources to finance field trips, to buy out faculty time over and above their notional one-third allocation for research, and to pay for research assistance. Given that DFID is the largest single source for British research finance on developing countries, there has been a tendency for British research directions to be driven by the dictates of the aid budget and the need for immediate applicability to policy. DFID’s concentration of aid on the poorest countries has been matched by a tendency to give research funding more to projects on those countries. Within Asia, there has been more finance available for countries such as India in relation to richer countries like Malaysia. A positive effect has been to support UK researchers’ strong existing research interest in Africa, where many of the world’s poorest countries are situated. DFID also identifies key research themes that it is interested in financing, recently in the form of large programmes for which institutions can propose projects. It has tended to reduce the availability of funding for researchers proposing themes of their own. Thus a natural tendency for British research on development to be highly policy driven has been intensified.

Another pressure, and one for which the RAEs are mainly responsible, is a tendency to move from multi-disciplinary research towards that based on narrower academic disciplines. Papers exhibiting excellence in a single discipline are what the most prestigious journals favour, particularly in development economics. Meier (1994: 455-7) argued that UK development economics in particular tended to take a ‘soft’ approach, lacking the theoretical and (especially) quantitative rigour of its American counterpart. This is a
controversial area and it is of interest here since my impression is that development economics in Japan conforms more to the US than to the UK model. Certainly, there are well-regarded graduate schools in the UK, such as the University of Warwick, which take a highly rigorous line in their postgraduate teaching of economics. However, there has been a tendency among British development economists (and even more among many students of development economics) to equate American-style rigour with the narrow neo-classical view of development identified with the so-called Washington consensus policies of crude liberalisation of markets. British economists have been willing to step outside the narrow boundaries of their discipline to take a more institutional and social view of development. Indeed, it is sometimes odd to find Japanese economists arguing in international journals in favour of the benefits of trade liberalisation in particular developing countries, when they themselves come from a country which has such a successful history of using import restrictions as a way of nurturing future export industries! Perhaps less adherence by Japanese economists to an American model of what constitutes development economics would help the formation of an East Asian view of development. Such a view, despite the 1997-8 Asian crisis, would have much to teach the Third World. This is especially so as the Washington consensus seems to be in process of breaking down (Stiglitz 1998).

Nevertheless, the pressures on development economists and other development researchers to publish in single-discipline journals are likely to increase, despite the increasingly widely accepted view in favour of a broad-based approach to development. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: 36) suggest encouragement for research combining teams of researchers from different disciplines.

4. Multi-disciplinarity and Professional Training

The tensions between disciplinary based research and multi-disciplinary research also are found on the teaching and training side. A poll among students at the Graduate School of International Development at Nagoya University in mid-1999 identified the need for a professional training as their foremost concern. This was particularly so among Japanese students, who took the view that a multi-disciplinary approach did not provide this sufficiently. Similar feelings would characterise some British graduate students, who find their employment prospects depend heavily on professional skills.

Multi-disciplinarity seems to be a strong feature of Japanese international development studies. Taking the three top national university development institutes—the Graduate School of International Development at the University of Nagoya (GSID), the Graduate School of International Co-operation Studies at Kobe University (GSICS), and the Graduate School for International Development and Co-operation at Hiroshima University (IDEC) —there is an even wider range of academic disciplines than at most British institutions. There are not only the widely found subjects like economics and sociology, but communications, education, law and (at IDEC) an array of scientific subjects. Japanese academic specialists in law, for example, are said to be making a major contribution to the reform in Asia of company law and property rights more generally, essential features of economic reform programmes.
While this array of disciplines is a strength on the research side, offering a rich environment for collaborative work, on the teaching side its full potential may not be being utilised. Multi-disciplinarity may be substituting for disciplinary expertise, instead of complementing it. Where students are admitted without their being required to have an undergraduate training in the subjects they will take at master's level, it will be hard for them to achieve a level of expertise appropriate for obtaining employment as a development professional even during a two-year master's programme. This could be dealt with to some extent by the sequencing of courses. This is especially true in such subjects as economics, which need to be taught in a highly sequential way. However, even the possibilities for sequencing of courses may not fully be being exploited. Indeed, in economics it may be that master's graduates are not suitable for Ph.D programmes, so master's graduates from economics departments are recruited who then will work in a single-disciplinary fashion even though located in multi-disciplinary Schools. A better method would be to recruit graduates in particular disciplines for master's programmes centred around a specialised subject, such as development economics. The programmes then could build on the students' existing expertise by means of more specialised course, while exposing them to other academic disciplines through courses in subsidiary subjects. By this method, in two-year master's programmes students could be given both adequate professional expertise, and real understanding of how to use this expertise in relation to a wider multi-disciplinary approach of the development process. Japanese university development institutes do group their students into broad 'departmental' programmes, but this is not enough to overcome the problem. Even though some master's programmes, such as a master's in development economics or a master's in law for developing countries, would recruit graduates in those disciplines, there could still be offered a general master's in development studies, which took a wide spectrum of graduates who wanted to work, say, in NGOs.

5. Consultancy

Consultancy has been a feature of British university studies in international development since their early days. The Overseas Development Group ( 'ODG') at the University of East Anglia, to which all members of the School of Development Studies ( 'DEV') belong, was set up in order to provide faculty with the opportunity to spend one third of their time on outside consultancy. The rationale was that consultancy would make them better teachers and better researchers, with more practical work to draw on. Established in the late 1960s, it antedates the financial pressure that now makes consultancy earnings an attractive proposition for financially straightened British universities. Nowadays the rationale for consultancy remains as strong as ever, although there is pressure on faculty to concentrate on financially lucrative work, such as running training courses. There is a danger that less remunerative but more interesting consultancy work is downgraded. That particularly applies to work for some UN agencies, whose fees do not fully buy out faculty time or cover university overhead costs. Consultancy also has been used as a vehicle to build capacity in developing countries, through training courses both in-country and in the UK.

Some faculty from Japanese development institutions are already active in consultancy,
and the main lessons to learn from the UK may be how best to provide appropriate inducements to faculty to do consultancy. In DEV, consultancy earnings are given (in part, and indirectly) to the university via our ODG company, and individual faculty members are given time off teaching.\(^{(28)}\) If consultancies are very profitable, faculty members are given half the profits earned over and above what is necessary to buy out their time from teaching. In some other British universities, faculty give half their outside earnings to the university and keep the rest for themselves. However, there are many different models.

One criticism made by Meier in his report (1994) on UK development research was that consultancy was not resulting in the production of as much published research as he would have expected. This remains a problem in that the better access to data experienced by faculty when they work as consultants rather than academic researchers is counterbalanced by restrictions placed by confidentiality. Pressure on international and national development agencies continues to be needed to allow publication of results unless they disclose information that is truly confidential.

6. Student Intake

British university courses in international development have a long tradition of attracting international students. In 1998 only 18 per cent of master’s graduates and 26 per cent of Ph. D recipients were of British nationality, although their absolute numbers had risen since the mid-1980s.\(^{(29)}\) In the mid-1980s the largest contingent of master’s students was from Africa. By the late 1990s the largest numbers were from Asia, although the absolute numbers of Africans also had risen.

Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: 42) note the difficulties British students find in getting funding for postgraduate work, especially Ph.Ds, in the context where universities are becoming increasingly reliant on fee-paying overseas students for their income. Some overseas students have their fees paid through British Council scholarships and other forms of aid, but British universities are active in seeking out self-financing students. Japanese students have come to the UK in large numbers to do development studies; development studies are now the single most popular subject among Japanese postgraduates in the UK.\(^{(27)}\) Students from Japan are attracted by the UK’s long history of work on development, by the idea of obtaining a qualification that demonstrates their competence at work in English, and in some cases by the availability of subjects not much taught in Japan, such as gender studies. The fact that most UK master’s programmes last only one year, compared to two years in Japan and the United States, probably also is an attraction. At East Anglia, Japanese students are now the largest contingent among postgraduates in development studies. While we welcome and enjoy their presence, we are making attempts to diversify, particularly into China (which at present is greatly underrepresented).

A contrast between development studies in the UK and Japan is the extent to which overseas students are financially supported, support in Japan from Monbusho being very generous. My impression is that this gives Japanese universities a wider range of nationalities among students, enriching the student body, although there is some tendency for students from China to occupy the same dominant position in the intake in Japan as Japanese students.
7. Pressures on Faculty

The Grindle and Hilderbrand report (1999: viii-ix) notes the increasing pressure on faculty in the UK not only constantly to improve their teaching and research performance but also to earn money. Since this is happening in a context where British academic salaries scarcely have increased in real terms for twenty years, they also note a problem of recruitment into the sector. However, my impression of Japanese universities is that faculty are also very pressured, and sometimes working extraordinarily long hours! One minor suggestion from the UK is that such pressure could be reduced by adopting the British (and American) university practice of using senior (graduate) administrators more. Such administrators could do tasks such as School publicity and postgraduate programme organisation, currently undertaken in Japan by members of faculty.

8. Careers in Development

The continuing demand for development studies research has been accompanied in the UK by a large expansion in places for graduate students. To a large extent, this fulfills a need to train development professionals from Third World countries. Many such students will return to jobs in their own countries. For home country graduates, however, there is fierce competition for jobs, and only the best are likely to succeed. A similar situation seems to face Japanese graduates of development studies institutions in Japan, particularly from master's programmes, and also the Japanese graduates of UK development studies courses. In Japan, apparently JICA annually has 2000 applicants for only about 50 places, and IDE has 2000 applicants for only about 10–20 places. (28)

One encouraging aspect is the growth in the number of non-government organisations (NGOs) in recent years. NGOs have raised awareness of development issues among the wider public and among prospective university students. NGOs also have provided a channel for the employment of graduates who are interested in development, provided they are willing to work for the relatively low financial rewards. This is especially so in the UK, which has a much wider range of NGOs, and larger NGOs, than Japan. Nevertheless, some Japanese students who come to the University of East Anglia to study development as postgraduates already have experience of working for NGOs.

How a student initially gains development experience also is a particular problem, since most properly paid jobs seem now to require prior experience. The JICA overseas volunteer system helps. In Britain, universities try to help their students by placing them as interns in international agencies such as UNIDO and UNCTAD. The UK Overseas Development Institute has been running a Fellowship scheme financed by British ODA, under which young graduate economists (who now can be of any nationality) from British universities are placed for two years in ministries of developing countries. These fellowships are small in number (about 20 a year), but over the nearly 30 years since the start of the scheme, the Fellows have had a good track record of subsequently establishing careers as development professionals.
9. Conclusions

The large expansion of international development studies in Japanese and British universities has performed the function of increasing both countries' research capacity and training large numbers of professionals from developing countries. The sectors' activities both back up each country's aid programme, and increase awareness of issues related to world poverty. Both countries offer highly interdisciplinary programmes in development, though the subject coverage varies between the countries. Law is a more central feature of Japanese than of UK development studies. Both countries use links with universities and other institutions in developing countries to build capacity in those countries.

Some doubts have been raised as to whether the UK may be training enough British doctoral students to take up faculty positions in development studies in universities in the future, but there is little evidence of a shortage of British applicants for development studies posts in government. Japan similarly has no shortage of applicants for government posts as development professionals. NGOs have provided a useful employment outlet for development studies graduates in the UK, and to a lesser extent in Japan too, as well as doing much to raise public consciousness about development issues.

It is unlikely that the British development studies sector in universities will experience great changes in the early years of the new millennium. However, it is possible that increasingly intensive use of teaching quality assessments in all subjects in British universities may impose additional bureaucratic restrictions on the sector, as academics are forced to concentrate more and more on the documentation associated with teaching rather than teaching quality itself. Within development studies, it remains to be seen how far in future resources will be concentrated in a few centres or spread more widely.

To a British observer, Japanese university development studies institutions seem still to be living in a 'golden age'. There is generous government funding for salaries, for research, and for student scholarships. There is also generous support from Monbusho to attract Western and Third World scholars to spend time in Japan as academic visitors. Funding is not conditional on outside assessment of institutional performance. Yet, in view of Japan's economic difficulties in recent years, and the decline in the number of students in Japan of university age, some restructuring may well become necessary. It was announced by Monbusho in May 2000 that Japanese national universities will be partly privatised in the future. When that happens, British experience will be some guide as to what to expect.

In the UK it is debatable how far rigorous external assessments and open competition for research funding, with their heavy accompanying transactions costs, really improve performance rather than simply distort it. In any case, as Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: ix) wisely observe, "... without sufficient funding, competition will not produce excellence." Nevertheless, the development studies sector in the UK remains strong and active. DfID, having commissioned the Grindle and Hilderbrand report, is showing encouraging signs of taking its findings seriously. For example, it is moving towards longer term financing of research through establishing research centres, and is attaching Ph.D student funding to such centres. One by-product of the pressure on British universities to recruit overseas fee-paying students...
is that Britain now is playing a role in educating a new generation of Japanese development professionals.

Notes

(1) Also, visiting research fellow at the Graduate School of International Development, University of Nagoya, 1 November 1999 to 31 March 2000. I am grateful to Rhys Jenkins, Masako Ota, and Michael Tribe for very helpful comments. However, I alone am responsible for the views expressed here and for any errors.

(2) The precise meaning of this term is discussed later. See especially note 20.

(3) See Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: vii, 10-12)

(4) These fifteen are those listed in CDSC (1999). This source omits some institutions which are active in development-related areas but which do not have centres labelled 'development studies'. Some of these other institutions are covered in the report by Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999).

(5) The justification is that such colleges have a high degree of autonomy.

(6) Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: 38) identify four: East Anglia, Leeds, School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London) and the Open University. The OU conducts its programmes by distance learning. However, my understanding is that although the OU offers courses in development, it does not offer a degree in development. According to UCAS (1999) there are at least 30 universities that offer some undergraduate teaching in development studies.

(7) See Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999 table 13). Unfortunately the numbers in table 13 only cover students on which there is information on regional origin. Thus table 13 gives a total of 539 masters graduates for 1998 compared to the total 900 they identify elsewhere. So the growth indicated by table 13 may be unreliable in its details, though there is no doubt it has been considerable.

(8) In England, this finance is administered by HEFCE, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (see http://www.hefce.ac.uk). In other parts of the UK, higher education is administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, and the Department of Education Northern Ireland.

(9) The one-third time is notional. A faculty member's entire salary is paid by the government through HEFCE. Each faculty member is meant to spend one-third of her or his year doing research and the remaining two-thirds doing teaching and university administration. British universities have about five months 'vacation', when there is no teaching: a month each at Christmas and Easter, and three months in the summer (the British academic year runs September to September). Most research therefore takes place during vacations, although part of the vacations is also spent doing teaching preparation. During times of the year when staff are teaching, there is no time separately set aside for research. The finance for the notional one-third research time only covers a faculty member's salary. Departments usually have small amounts of finance to cover minor research expenses such as trips to conferences (my own School allows staff the equivalent of about 750 US dollars a year for such expenses, for example). Major research expenses such as overseas fieldtrips must be covered by research grants from outside bodies such as the Economic and Social Research Council or, in the case of development studies, from the UK Department for International Development. Outside research grants sometimes also finance a person's time, so they can be freed from teaching responsibilities. In Japan, a lump sum minimum research fund is given to a School and distributed between staff, without there being a notional proportion of their time they should spend on research. Monbusho's scientific
research fund offers additional finance, which can be applied for.

(10) A pressure towards this new system was provided by the incorporation into the university sector of a large number of former polytechnics. These lower level institutions were upgraded to university status in the early 1990s, and had previously been funded far less generously than 'proper' universities on a per-student basis. Some change in the funding formula was necessary that generated very different levels of funding per student for different institutions.

(11) In practice, this means that staff in a highly rated department would have lower teaching loads during term time (that is, during teaching periods), and staff in low rated department would have heavier teaching loads. The length of university vacations remains the same, though more of the vacation probably would be taken up with teaching preparation in the case of low rated departments, whose staff would have very heavy teaching loads. Whether staff even in highly rated departments really can spend more than one third of their university-financed time on research, however, would be doubted by many British academics. What is certain is that staff in low rated departments now research for much less than one-third of their total time!

(12) In June 2000, a survey—the so-called transparency review—was being undertaken under the auspices of the Higher Education Funding Council for England to ascertain approximately how much time actually was spent in practice by British academics in the academic year 1999–2000 on teaching, research, and administration. The results are not available at the time of writing.

(13) The QAA was set up in 1997 following the publication of the Dearing report (Dearing 1997). The QAA is collectively owned by the UK's academic institutions, and in England it is contracted to the Higher Education Funding Council for England to undertake teaching evaluations. TQAs were previously undertaken more directly under the auspices of HEFCE. For more information on the QAA, see its website: http://www.qaa.ac.uk

(14) JETRO in turn is under the supervision of MITI, the Ministry for International Trade and Industry.

(15) ODI's own nearest Japanese equivalent would be the International Development Centre of Japan.

(16) However, ODI has produced in the past at least one key operational manual for DfID. This is a guide to economic appraisal of environmental projects, published by Her Majesty's Stationary Office in 1991, commissioned by DFID (then known as the Overseas Development Administration).

(17) Another important source of research finance is the European Union.

(18) See DfID (1997). A new white paper on international development is expected in November 2000. This will be on globalisation and the opportunities and challenges it presents for progress in reducing poverty and providing sustainable development in the poorest countries (See http://www.OneWorld.net/consultation/dfid).

(19) An expression of the strength of this research interest is that at the most recent inter-university colloquium of SCUSA—the Standing Committee on University Studies of Africa—held at the University of East Anglia in September 1999, there were over 30 papers, mostly by either British or African authors. British work on Africa is stronger on anglophone than francophone African countries, for historical reasons.

(20) Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: 11) use multi-disciplinary in two different senses: first to refer to where researchers from different academic disciplines work together to handle complex
areas of study, and second to refer to work where particular individuals have expertise in more than one discipline. Interdisciplinary is also used in the UK to refer to the latter situation, although it more often refers to a case common in development studies where the mixing of disciplines is such that distinct disciplinary work cannot be identified.

1) However, although British researchers are known for taking a broad view of development, they were criticised by Meier (1994) for a lack of multi-disciplinary research.

2) Also, in the most recent RAE (1996), there was no review panel for development studies as an academic specialism. My own School, for example, was assessed as a geography department!

3) The terms teaching and training are used here interchangeably, since there has been an increasing tendency for people to refer to postgraduate training. Note though that British universities also mount a range of short courses for development professionals, which are training in the narrower sense of the word.

4) Note that a difference between Japan and the UK is that in the UK graduate students are mainly admitted on the basis of their performance in their bachelors degree, rather than sitting an entrance examination as in Japan.

5) Each faculty member of DEV signs a contract with ODG that she or he will spend one-third of their time on outside-financed work (up to a maximum time away of two years in any six). This one-third is completely separate from the notional one-third time that all British university staff spend on research. So, in principle, a member of DEV/ODG is a university staff member for eight months of the year (of which one third of those eight months is notionally spent on research), and a consultant for four months a year. Increasingly, however, the ODG one-third is being used for outside-financed research projects as well as for proper consultancy.

6) However, see the caveat in note 7 about the Grindle and Hilderbrand statistics in their table 13, from which the present information is taken. The Ph.D figures refer to 1994-8.


8) Information from interviews with JICA and IDE in spring 2000.

9) This seems a particular problem in development economics, reflecting difficulties in doctoral student recruitment in UK academic economics more generally. In October 1998, in the top ten British university economics departments combined, only 17 new British students enrolled on economics Ph.D programmes (Machin and Oswald 2000: 336).

10) Grindle and Hilderbrand (1999: 41) quote DfID as saying there was no shortage of good applicants for DfID positions. One worrying feature, they found, was that few British doctoral students were interested in careers in university development studies, perhaps a feature of low real salaries and better opportunities elsewhere.

11) However, Monbusho also places some restrictions on visitors that lessen the attractiveness of such schemes. This particularly refers to the tight restrictions placed on visitors which in practice prevent them from attending overseas conferences or engaging in any overseas fieldwork.

References


Dearing (1997) The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education [in the UK], chaired by
Sir Ron Dearing (page numbers in text refer to website summary: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/ncihe)


