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Welcome to the World of Academia

Welcome to the world of academia, where a single word can have entirely different meanings.

The most significant point of confusion lies with the word "faculty."

In the United Kingdom and most Commonwealth countries, the term "faculty" refers to a large administrative and academic structure within a university. It is a broad division that groups together related departments and schools under a common umbrella. For instance, a university might have a Faculty of Social Sciences, which encompasses distinct units like the Department of Economics, the School of Law, and the Institute of Education. This UK faculty is led by a senior academic administrator known as a Dean. Other structures include colleges, schools, etc.

Conversely, in the United States, the word "faculty" almost exclusively refers to the people—the collective body of academic professionals engaged in teaching and research. When an American university says it is "hiring new faculty," it means it is recruiting new professors and lecturers. The term describes the academics themselves, not the structure they work within.

The individuals responsible for teaching and research are known by different umbrella terms. In the UK system, these individuals are collectively called Academic Staff (or sometimes Academic Personnel). This group includes all roles from Professors and Readers to Senior Lecturers, Lecturers, and Research Fellows. They are the engine of the university's core mission: the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

In the US system, this same group of people is called the Faculty. So, while a UK academic is a "member of academic staff," their US counterpart is a "member of the faculty." The job titles within this group are similar, including Professors (Full, Associate, Assistant), Adjunct Professors, and Instructors.

Both systems agree on the terminology for non-academic employees. These are the essential professionals who support the academic mission but are not primarily involved in teaching or research.

In both the UK and US, these individuals are most commonly referred to simply as Staff. In the UK, you might also hear the more descriptive term Professional Services Staff. This vital group includes everyone from administrators, librarians, and IT support specialists to finance officers, marketing teams, facilities maintenance crews, and student services advisors. They ensure the university operates smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

To put it simply:

- UK Faculty (structure) = Similar to a US College or School (structure)
- UK Academic Staff (people) = US Faculty (people)
- UK Staff (support people) = US Staff (support people)

At ADU, we use the American model, where our faculty are our academic staff hosted in colleges.

**#Academia #HigherEducation #AcademicStaff #Faculty #University #Education #UKvsUS #Teaching #Research #StaffSupport**

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