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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW 2017

University of Visual and Performing Arts

Institutional Review Report

University
of
Visual and Performing Arts

QUALITY ASSURNACE AND ACCREDITAION COUNCIL

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISION

2018

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Section 1: Introduction to the University and Its Review Context

The University of the Visual & Performing Arts was established on 1ˢᵗ of July 2005. It is the only University in Sri Lanka primarily dedicated to theoretical and practical training, and research and development in visual and performing arts.

Vision and Mission of the University

Vision

> To be the most sought after and undisputed leader in visual and performing arts regionally, while producing competent creative artists.

Mission

> To disseminate knowledge and skills in the fields of visual and performing arts while developing and refining art, culture and research to achieve excellence regionally and to be self-sufficient in the field by year 2020.

The University of the Visual and Performing Art has a history spanning over 120 years. The origin of the University can be traced back to 1893, the era in which the Ceylon Technical College was established. Among the first courses to be taught at the college were Drawing and Painting. On 1 October 1949, the Department of Drawing and Painting moved from the Technical College at Maradana to the 'Heywood' building at Horton Place and was subsequently renamed as the 'School of Art'. A diploma in Fine Arts was awarded to students upon the completion of five years of study.

On 2 July 1952, Music and Dance were included in to the curriculum and the institute became named as the 'Government College of Fine Arts'. On 1 October 1953, the Departments of Music and Dance were moved to No. 21, Albert Crescent in Colombo 7, while the Art and Sculpture courses continued to be conducted at the 'Heywood' Building. Three years after this, in 1956, this institution was once again renamed as the 'National Institute of Arts' and it was taken under the purview of Ministry of Education, and expanded into three schools, namely, School of Art and sculpture, School of Music and School of Dancing and Ballet.

With the enactment of the University Act No. 1 of 1972, the institution became known as the 'Institute of Aesthetic Studies' and got affiliated to the University of Sri Lanka in 1974. The Institute had 03 Schools and an Academy, namely; School of Art and Sculpture, School of Music and School of Dancing and Ballet, and the Ramanathan Academy of Jaffna. In 1975, the Ramanathan Academy became affiliated with the University of Jaffna.

In 1980, with the restructuring of the university system following the enactment of Universities Act No. 16 of 1978, the 'Institute of Aesthetic Studies' was affiliated to the University of Kelaniya. In 2005, the 'Institute of Aesthetic Studies' with diversity of art forms (i.e. traditional, modern and contemporary) and professional practices (i.e. eastern, western and indigenous schools), was upgraded to the status of a university, and it was named as the University of the Visual & Performing Arts (UVPA). At present, the UVPA consists of four faculties, namely Faculties of Dance & Drama, Music, Visual Arts and Graduate Studies and twenty-two academic departments

Most of the academic departments of UVPA are located at the heart of the urban, elite, and cultural environment, surrounded by museums, archives, art galleries and theaters. Reputed permanent and visiting academic staff and enthusiastic students have earned the respect and fame for the University. University is continuously attracting students with the highest 'Z' score in GCE'AL in aesthetic subject stream. At present 2217 students are reading for bachelor's degrees in the University. Most of the renowned visual artists, musicians and dancers in Sri Lanka are products of the University.

Section 2: Review Team's Observation on the Self-Evaluation Report

The self-evaluation report reflects the sincere effort taken by its writers. With adequate interaction with the relevant stakeholders, they were able to produce holistic and well organized self-evaluation report. In fact, the SER reflects as a self-realization narrative by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the University with the genuine acceptance of the existing deficiencies. It also has highlighted the future directions envisaged and their expectations.

The review team wishes to underline the fact that the University needs to work as a team under a dedicated leadership to realize the envisaged progress in quality enhancement process and to reach the expected quality and standards.

Section 3: A Brief Description of the Review Process

Preparation by the Review Team

The reviewers upon completion of desk evaluation of the SER submitted their individual desk review reports to the Director of the QAAC of UGC. Reviewers met at the pre-review meeting arranged by the QACC with notes on tentative outcomes of desk evaluation and additional information and clarifications required. Reviewers reached consensus on the desk evaluation outcomes and agreed on the shared responsibilities of the review process. The chair of the review team interacted with the Vice Chancellor and the Director of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) of UVPA and agreed on the dates and the schedules for the site visit.

Institutional Review Site Visit

The review team reached Colombo on 26th November 2017 evening and successfully completed the site visit from 27th November as per the schedule. First meeting was with the Director of the IQAU and SER writers. The Director of IQAU made a presentation on the SER report and it was followed by a fruitful discussion. In fact, the SER as well as the discussion reflected the self-awareness of the University on their shortcomings and gaps, and the future steps that are to be taken to address the identified shortcomings and gaps.

Following that the review team met the newly appointed Vice Chancellor and had a fruitful discussion. Review team appreciated his open-minded expressions on the current status of the University and future developments envisaged. Next session was held with the Council members. Although only two members attended the meeting, the discussion was very useful. This was followed by the meetings with the senior administrative officers of the University; Registrar, Bursar, DRs, SARs, SABs, Senior Internal Auditor, Librarian and Senior Assistant Librarians. Next meeting was held with the Heads of Departments, senior academics, and Heads of Units and Centres, and the discussions were very enlightening and thought provoking; it was more of a brain storming session, stating with a few conflicting stands and finally ending with consensus. This was followed by a discussion session with the Deans of faculties; although all the Deans could not attend the scheduled meeting, the review team was able to meet all of them subsequently during the visits to the respective faculties as per the schedule.

Review team was impressed with the vibrant teaching-learning sessions conducted; individual student-based teaching-learning practices (ISBTL) and studio- and practice-based teaching-learning sessions, lively students' performances, and enthusiastic engagements of students in learning sessions. During the review visits, the review team was given the opportunity to experience students' innovative performances of music and visual art/artifacts.

At the meeting with the administrative staff of the University, the issues related to the space and several other aspects were highlighted. During discussions with the technical officers and other support staff, they expressed their commitments to their duties, and also emphasized the difficulties that they were faced with in discharging their duties. Meetings with the Student Counselors enlightened the issues related to student welfare and counseling. Meetings with external stakeholders including employers, industry, private sector and alumni were also very useful and enlightening.

Review team spent considerable time with the students from various faculties and departments. The student group had representations of different levels and gender. Students were very open and contributed actively to the discussion on their study programmes and related issues. Review team also visited the student hostels in different locations and noted the key issues of such places. Review team also observed the facilities relevant to the

academic programmes. Scrutinizing the documentary evidences was a tedious exercise. Members of the SER writing were very helpful in this regard. Logistical support provided to the review team indeed was commendable.

Section 4: Overview of the University's Approach to Quality and Standards

The UVPA has identified the importance of quality assurance (QA) and has appointed a Director to oversee the internal quality assurance (IQA) activities as far back as in 2011. Moreover, QA and related activities have been incorporated QA to its Strategic Plans of 2013- 2017 and 2014- 2018. Subsequently, the internal quality assurance unit (IQAU) was formally established at the UVPA in response to the UGC Circular of May 2015. The IQA system has facilitated two internal reviews and three programme reviews and organized several training workshops on QA related topics and themes for its staff.

In order to facilitate the activities of IQAU, an office facility was opened at the Kohuwala premises on 4th April 2017. However, the academic staff member appointed as the Director of the IQAU is from the Faculty of Visual Arts, located at Horton Place, and such arrangement is not certainly conducive for effective functioning internal quality assurance system. In addition, the IQA system has not been supported fully with required physical and human resources yet.

Though the members are appointed to the Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) at faculty-level, there is little evidence about its involvement in QA activities within the respective faculties. Furthermore, QA related activities have not been in the regular agenda of the Faculty Board and the Senate meetings. However, some faculties/departments have taken initiatives to incorporate best practices within their faculties such as regular curricula reviews, adoption of innovative teaching and learning methods and objective assessment procedures, releasing examination results within a stipulated time, etc.

The deficiencies in assuring quality with respect to the defined quality assessment criteria are described in detail under each criterion. In addition, Criterion No.10 describes the present status of the IQA system of UPVA with recommendations.

In general, the review team finds that there is much to be done to institutionalize internal quality assurance system and internalize the quality culture within the University.

Section 5: Commentary on the Ten Criteria of Institutional Review

5.1 Criterion 1: Governance and Management

The University of Visual and Performing Arts follows the general administrative structure of a state University of Sri Lanka and complies with respective Acts, relevant Ordinances and their amendments, Establishments Code, rules and regulations. However, is imperative that, where appropriate, the procedures and practices must be institutionalized by formulating policies, regulations, by-laws, and procedures. Such documents can be collated and compiled as two important manuals, namely, the Manual of Academic Procedures (e.g. University Calendar) to guide academic administrative matters and the Manual of Standard Operational Procedures (e.g. Manual of SOPs) to guide the general administration of the University. Further, such manuals will function as easy reference manuals, and help to create greater awareness of such standard procedures among all stakeholders. Strategic plans and action plans of the are available. However, action plans for smaller entities not available. The non-availability of such documents may have resulted in underutilization of budgetary allocations. A participatory approach in the preparation of action plans is not evident. The University has established *ad-hoc* committees with defined TORs. The Council monitors the progression of the activities of the University. A Strategic Plan Management Committee has been established for this purpose. The organogram of the University has not been updated to include newly established units/entities.

The funds are allocated in agreeable manner to all concerned. However, the basis for fund allocation is unclear. The funds may not have been allocated as per the requirements, since requirements are not identified in action plans of different entities. This may be the root cause of not being able to spend the funds available. However, disbursement of funds in procurements, management of facilities and equipment, etc., are done as per regulations and

an internal auditing system is in place. Nevertheless, few cases of inappropriate fund disbursement have been noted.

University is considering an amendment to Vision and Mission statements. Agreeing upon these statements as early as possible is needed, since the graduate profiles and the focus of the study programmes should be aligned with the Vision and Mission of the University. Without having a clear and definitive graduate profile and educational focus, designing of outcome-based curricula is not possible. Tracking of the progress of the graduates is limited to only the exit survey reports. Student satisfaction as regard to the study programmes, learning resources, common amenities counseling services, etc., and the employability of graduates have not been monitored.

The information management system of the University is elementary and fragmented. An inclusive management information system (MIS) is necessary for smooth and efficient functioning of the institute. ICT is used in day to day activities. However, a comprehensive ICT/ IT Policy has not been institutionalized yet. The available LMS is mostly used for external programmes. Internet facility is available. Wi-Fi access points are also installed. However, with the increasing demand, the bandwidth appears to be adequate.

Adequate evidence was not available on how the University ensures academic honesty and integrity, and manages conflict of interest and ethics. The appointments are done under the guidance of established regulations. The SDC is conducting training programmes for all staff categories. Job descriptions are given to all nonacademic staff. University has taken a positive step by calculating the student contact hours for all academic staff. But this practice must be further refined and strengthened by adopting the guidelines on "Ethics and Academic Accountability for Academic Staff in the Sri Lankan University System" prepared by Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka.

University is yet to institutionalize a staff performance appraisal system and reward system. Such system will allow to identify underperforming staff and as such remedial measures could be taken as appropriate. Further, a reward system for high performers will also encourage the staff to acquire the required knowledge and skills to become effective teachers, and also to reach greater heights in academic and research activities.

Being the foremost university in visual and performing arts, UVPA is strategically placed for establishing international relations for sharing the knowledge in arts and culture. Unfortunately, this potential has not been optimally used, and is only limited to a couple of MoUs signed with foreign institutes on personal basis. Establishment of an institutional mechanism for promoting international relations is strongly recommended.

Review team realized that there have been a number of occasions when petitions against some staff have been sent to higher authorities. This situation is not healthy and would have been avoided, if the grievances of staff are resolved in house. Therefore, establishment of a grievance redress committee for the benefit staff would be useful.

It appears that the University has not paid much attention to gender-based issues; such as ensuring gender equity and equality (GEE) and curbing sexual and gender-based harassment/violence (SGBV). Though some actions against ragging have been taken, the University has not been able to minimize and curb ragging.

5.2 Criterion 2: Curriculum Design and Development

The curriculum development process of the UVPA reflects its own evolution from traditional school of aesthetic education to the modern university system. It is commendable that the University while preserving and cherishing the aesthetic education through its existing curricula, has commenced the process of modernizing curricula to meet the current expectations of higher educational quality and standards.

Three faculties have established CDCs for curricula revision and development. Few departments have started to design the curricula by adopting SLQF guidelines and standards and attributes defined in subject benchmark statements (SBSs), where applicable. Only a handful of courses were made efforts to align the course contents, teaching and learning methods and assessment strategies with those of intended learning outcome of courses and study programmes as prescribed by the QACC guidelines.

University has developed a graduate profile (GF), and it is committed to come up with discipline specific GPs. The university policy is clearly defined to enhance the 'soft' skills of students. The newly established Faculty of Graduate Studies has adopted the SLQF guidelines in designing the curricula of postgraduate study programmes.

The staff has been trained in the applications of the concept and principles pf outcome-based education (OBE) and student-centrered learning (SCL) approach and methods in curriculum design and development and delivery. One of the key elements of best practice in programme design is needs analysis. In this respect, it is observed that only a few tracer studies have been done. As accepted in the SER, in most Departments, curriculum design, contents, delivery and assessments have not reached the desired level of quality and standards.

Curriculum revision in line with the prescribed best practices by the QACC of the UGC is prime need of the hour. Following deficiencies and shortcoming in curriculum design and development were noted: i.e. unavailability of curricula of study programmes and courses, absence of lesson plans, lack of evidences as regard to alignment of course contents, teaching and learning methods and assessments with the course /lesson and programme ILOs, absence of records on student feedback assessments, teacher evaluation reports, etc.

Review team wishes to reiterate the need for relaxing the compartmentalization that exit among the departments and avoiding duplication of courses. This had also been highlighted by the earlier IR reports. In this respect, certain *ad-hoc* naming or clustering like Department of Indian and Asian Dances can be given as example. Similarly, the Department of Visual Communication Design, Department of Multimedia Arts and Department of Print Making can merge with clear and open discussions. Similarly, the Department of Applied Music and Mass Communication and Department of Ethnomusicology can have open dialogue with holistic perspective of music. Similar interactions can happen within the Departments under the Faculty of Dance. Having separate History and Theory of Art Departments in each faculty also need re-thinking. The need of having course units such as Astrology in all levels of a degree programmes must be scientifically addressed. Teaching Anthropology and Sociology for the aesthetic student is a valuable aspect However, it is advisable to create the required cadre and train a person with in depth knowledge and experiences in Sociology and Anthropology of Aesthetic studies. The resource persons must live in the creative environment rather than functioning as a visiting scholar.

5.3 Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning strategies adopted comply with the university vision and mission. Review team was impressed with the vibrant teaching-learning sessions of individual students-based teaching -learning practices (ISBTL) and studio and practice-based teaching-learning activities, and also with lively students' performances and enthusiastic engagement in learning. Review team too has got the opportunity to experience students' innovative performances of music and visual art/artifacts.

The present-day scope of the teaching and learning process must be student-centered in line with the outcome-based education (OBE) concept and philosophy. The main theoretical underpinning of the outcomes-based curriculum is the model of constructive alignment, which is defined as coherence and alignment between the content, intended learning outcome, teaching and learning strategies and assessment of an educational programme.

The SDC of UVPA has held several workshops on preparation of lesson plans. Moreover, the lesson planning is a component of the staff development programme offered to probationary lecturers/academics. UVPA has taken initial steps to make the learning and teaching processes more outcome-based and student-centered. University has attempted to set up systematic foundation through adoption of required policies, by-laws, and codes of ethics to promote internalization of such aspects of teaching and learning. Moreover, maintaining lesson plans, taking student feedbacks, expanding access to e-resources, adopting active learning, and developing research components of the curricula are among the other required aspects of the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, it is expected that the faculties should uses multiple teaching and learning methods to promote students' engagement in the learning process and adopt an assessment strategy aligned with teaching-learning methods and ILOs. Under the present-day outcome-based education, it is necessary to assess the expected shifts from teaching to learning; skills to thinking; content to process; and teacher instruction to student demonstration. In this regard, both students' feedbacks as well as direct teaching practice observations are important to arrive at the correct path. The faculties should work in this direction to ensure the internalization of best practices. In this regard regular internal monitoring by the IQAC is necessary to foster and promote widespread adoption of best practices.

It is expected to have diverse delivery modes to maximize the student engagement in learning at group level and individual level. For a large group it is appreciated to have lectures with panel discussions. During the site visit, we witnessed such group /corporative learning and to mention as a good example was the multimedia assisted dance /theater classes. The individual level teaching and learning endeavors are also very impressive especially in the music and visual art zones. Students engagement in self-learning was also witnessed and appreciated by the review team.

University provides adequate IT facilities and services to all the students in three undergraduate faculties and established free-Wi-Fi zones for the use of teachers and students. Resource materials placed at the main library and branch libraries are available for all teachers and students. The Library and IT Center conduct induction and user education programmes to generate awareness with regard to effective use of such resources. University library also has set up an e-portal to access a large corpus of publications in local and foreign collections. Library has established and operate a Library Information Management System. Use of LMS facilities, should to be promoted among all departments and academics.

Since the University is having many experienced academics with research and creative activities, students are fortunate to participate in such activities of exhibitions, performances, academic symbolisms and other publications. These opportunities must be formalized to ensure wider participation of students. Students are encouraged to produced cultural and aesthetic artifacts especially in the field of visual and performing arts. In this respect, the review team noted the creative audio-visual productions of the students as well as the staff.

Assessment of quality of teaching has not been carried out. Although student feedback is obtained by few Departments, the outcome of such feedback has not been properly used. University recognizes the value of creative and innovative approaches in teaching, but no progressive step has been taken institutionalize a teacher appraisal system to reward the staff who excel.

5.4 Criterion 4: Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression

The UVPA was established to disseminate knowledge and skills in the fields of visual and performing arts while developing and refining art, culture and research to achieve excellence regionally. University composed of four faculties; Faculties of Dance & Drama, Music,

Visual Arts and Postgraduate Studies. Twenty-two academic departments were established to cater the demands of different areas of visual and performing arts. Unfortunately, the administrative structure was invisible and the power and authority of university administration appears be concentrated with few key people. Student feedback surveys were conducted in few faculties and not administered across all faculties in regular manner. Results of the student's feedback surveys were unavailable. Institutional mechanism, such as 'Student-help' desks are not available and such an arrangement could certainly facilitate healthy interaction between the students and university management. Academic as well as administrative staff have taken several steps to minimize ' ragging'. Nonetheless, most of them were unaware on UGC online facility available to lodge complaints on ragging. Further, student counselors are trying hard to deal with issues of the students. Student counselors nevertheless needs more resources, particularly a designated office place for operating counseling services.

Poor welfare facilities and services may affect the wellbeing of the student community. Student canteens were operating sub-optimally and the services and food were not meeting even the minimum standards. The conditions prevailing in students hostels were not favourable for academic pursuits and may hinder ability and enthusiasm of students for engaging in learning. Ambulance vehicle was not in service and such service is essential for the students engaging with lengthy practical sessions. Majority of the students were from rural areas and high living cost of the capital city has exerted extra burden on students. University and its well-wishers need to identify the marginalized students and arrange extra support for their education and living. MIS was currently unavailable and establishment of the system will facilitate the management of such issues. Availability of electronic data bases at the medical center, IT center, student counselling unit, and general administration are important for streamlining and improving efficiency of internal management.

Student's handbooks are useful instruments to facilitate students transition from 'school' to university. Only few faculties were made effort to develop proper student handbooks. The exiting student's handbooks need to be revised and essential information as regard to the faculty structure, administration, facilities, study programmes and courses, assessments and awards, students' codes of practices, disciplinary procedures, etc., should be incorporated. Course specifications were absent and very few available ones were not compatible with the guidelines prescribed by the of QACC of the UGC. Students were unaware on course content as properly designed course specifications were not distributed to students. All faculties need

to take immediate actions to develop detailed course specifications in line with the QACC prescribed guidelines and make available them to students at the commencement of semesters/courses. This will certainly help to enhance the present learning system. Unavailability of information dissemination mechanism for both student and staff was common grievance aired by many. Further, information on available student resources, facilities, scholarships, etc., was minimally shared among the community. Large visiting staff is common in UVFA, but job descriptions for such visiting personnel were not available.

Location of the University has its own pluses and minuses. Limited space is common constraint of the institution and serious issues are noted in maintenance, cleaning, storage of music instruments and chemicals, etc. Invisible role of career guidance unit was recognized and administration need to take immediate measures to give the life to the unit. Differently-abled student and staff members were present in the system. Unfortunately, no policy documents on differently-abled staff/students were available; their needs were unidentified, appropriate infrastructure facilities, except the elevators with supportive arrangements, were not available.

Library facilities are essential to foster teaching and learning. Location of the library hinders the use of facilities by both staff and students. Records of library usage were poor. Essential measures need to be developed to attract the readers. Library opening hours need be adjusted according to the needs of students. Library-based assessment strategies may encourage and enhance student's usage of library facilities.

Though academic counselors and mentors are essential facilitators of a learning system, the current system was not able to appoint the capable people for the service. Guidance and directions from mentors and counselors will help students to prepare themselves by acquiring required talents and matching them with the job market requirements.

Records were unavailable on student admission, progression, drop outs and graduation data. Regular graduate employability and feedback surveys were unavailable in the current system. Regular monitoring system as well as data management system will facilitate the proper decision-making process. Student satisfaction surveys, programme evaluation surveys, tracer studies, etc., will add flavor to the existing management system.

5.5 Criterion 5: Student Assessment and Awards

Assessment and awards of university students must be done in explicit, fair, and transparent manner while ensuring confidentiality and integrity. It appears that the UVPA has not given enough attention to this aspect. Examination guidelines and procedures were not available for scrutiny of the review team. Sample model answers/assessment schemes for theory and practical exams were unavailable. Further, in-course assessment records were not available and student/staff feedback on assessment criteria were not found.

Available students' handbook/study programme prospectuses were incomplete. This is essential to bridge the students and degree programme. Moreover, student assessment records, especially practical exams were not found. Students were unaware of evaluation criteria and the basis of allocation of marks. Student assessment management is an important and compulsory for any degree programme which will ensure the credibility of the process and the institution. Assessment system needs improvements to ensure accuracy, transparency and fairness. Discussions with student representatives revealed that, subjective and unethical evaluation of practical exams badly affected the credibility examination process.

Role of staff development staff development center is key to promote adoption of best practices in study programme management. UVPA with its large number of visiting and young energetic staff need the support of staff development center to sharpen their talents and skills. Review team was not able to find evidences in this regard; SDC records on past, present and future training programmes were not available.

Timely releasing of the examination and assessment results is an important administrative responsibility of any higher education institute. UVPA has already taken measures to avoid delays but the system essentially needs to develop mechanism to overcome the delays. Students were seriously concerned on procedures in place to maintain the confidentiality and accuracy of assessment records, timely release the results and documents with evidence of adoption of the policy. Lengthy examination process, delays in releasing results have badly affected the students moral and enthusiasm in learning and the student's future career expectations and aspirations..

Policy and regulations on credit transfers are not available at UVPA and having such approved policy and guidelines for recognition of prior learning/qualifications will certainly help to attract key talents.

5.6 Criterion 6: Strength and Quality of Staff

The academic staff of the University is blessed with a couple of well reputed artists in various spheres of disciplines it offers. This capacity is further strengthened by a handpicked visiting staff with relevant qualifications and talents. However due to the diversification into specialization areas very early in the programme, only a few students are receiving the benefits of such staff. The team observed very small class sizes. This also limits the number of staff cadre positions. The University had initiated a process of requesting the higher authorities to amend the staff: student ratio to a more appropriate level. However, the enthusiasm of reaching this goal apparently has diminished during the course of time. This ratio needs not be comparable with other study programmes in other universities, considering the unique nature of the study programmes. This ratio may even vary among the different Faculties. The University needs to draw up a long-term recruitment plan based on an appropriate human resource development plan along with a plan to increase student intake. The University shows great potential for increasing student intake, which would ideally be coupled with broadening the foundation programme before streaming into specialization, in order to maximize the utilization of potential of the staff.

Although there is no structured system of mentoring of newly recruited staff by senior staff, it appears that the junior staff is picking up their duties, responsibilities and roles, by working together with the senior staff. Question paper moderation and second marking of answer scripts help the staff to improve the ability to prepare question papers and marking of answer scripts. Holding question paper scrutiny boards at Departmental level is a very good learning experience for staff, in addition to improving the quality of the papers.

The SDC is performing well and assists the staff on their career development. The training programmes, seminars and workshops organized by the SDC have addressed all categories of the staff. The student feedback, when done properly, is an effective tool in improving the quality of staff. Although the student feedback is obtained, evidence is lacking to show that these data are appropriately analyzed and utilized for the betterment of the teaching learning activities. Another very important aspect in continuous quality improvement of the teachers is the peer observation. Surprisingly, that practice has not been internalized yet in the University.

In today's context OBE and SCL are inseparable from teaching learning activities in any academic institution. The nature of the study programmes in the University demands the SCL activities and such activities are being employed to some extent. However, a significant number of staff members is either unaware or not interested in OBE-SCL approach. Nonetheless, the authorities are moving towards the right direction by transforming the curricula of study programmes following the principles of OBE and SCL.

The accountability of the academic staff is demonstrated by calculation of workload of individual staff. While appreciating the University's commitment to promote accountability of academic staff, it needs to be noted that the system adopted is not in accordance with 'Ethics and Academic Accountability for Academic Staff in the Sri Lankan University System' prepared by Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka. It may be advisable to obtain guidance from a person who is well conversant with this system in order to draw policy document in this connection.

The administrative staff of the University is well experienced and is committed to the job. Job descriptions are given all categories of the non-academic staff when they are recruited. It is noted as a good practice. However, it was not clear whether the job descriptions of the new post are communicated to the employee when she/he is promoted or when transferred another branch/ section.

It is a good practice for an institution to recognize/ reward the employees who perform better than the rest. This kind of activity is considered as an incentive to good workers and an encouragement to others who can also do a better job. The appraisal of the job is limited to the annual salary increment. However, the University adopts a procedure to inform the employees if they have a weak area in performing duties, with a view of rectifying the weakness. Nevertheless, there was no evidence for follow up. The academic staff is encouraged to engage in research by providing funds for publication.

An extremely important feature that is necessary for the smooth functioning of the University is the grievance redress mechanism. This is lacking in the University, and the effect of this is seen by the complaints/ petitions made to the higher authorities outside University.

5.7 Criteria 7: Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization

UVPA has taken several steps to venture into the provision of postgraduate courses and to introduce a research culture. Establishment of the Faculty of Graduate Studies in 2015 demonstrates the institution's commitment to enhance research and postgraduate studies. There has been an increase in the number of postgraduate students over the years

Funding has been made available to support academic staff to attend international conferences to present their research findings and to gain international exposure, but these opportunities had not been utilized much.

In order to fulfill their social responsibility, the universities are expected to lead the way in innovations and creative activities, and in an increasingly market oriented society they are also expected to get involved in commercializing the promising innovations and creative activities. Departments such as the Department of Textiles and Wearable Art in the Faculty of Visual Arts encourage their students to develop innovative products that have the potential to succeed commercially.

5.8 Criteria 8: Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach

By the nature of their specialty in visual and performing arts, many academics of the UVPA are well known household names in Sri Lanka. Some of the day-to-day activities of these eminent persons may not be considered as outreach activities in the conventional sense, but have the same effect as those of conventional outreach activities. They influence the cultural development of the whole country and enrich our culture.

The individual level involvement cultural and aesthetic pursuits is appreciable. Nonetheless, it is desirable to make such involvement as more formalized and collective endeavors with the ownership of the University. It will be of great benefit to the community, if as many academics and students get involved in outreach activities, and it is in fact the real vision behind the University.

5.9 Criterion 9: Distance Education

The UVPA has established a Centre for Open and Distance Learning (CODL) in 2011 at a rented place at Piliyandala and two Diplomas programmes in *Kathak-Dance* and *Bharatha Natyam* on open and distance made were introduced in 2011.   Two more diploma programmes on Television and Cinema and Dance and Theatre were introduced in 2012. As the fifth programme, Indigenous Dance was initiated in 2014. From 2013/2014 academic year, a total number of 157 students have been enrolled for the diploma programmes. Out of this only 50 have completed their programmes and 27 are to be received their postgraduate diploma in December 2017, implying that nearly 50% of the students are yet to complete their programme.

There are many problems faced by these programmes as at present. There is no adequate application received for the Diploma Programme in TV and Cinema. The demand for Dance and Theatre has also decreased, perhaps due to the availability of a similar programmes offered by the University of Kelaniya. However, the demand for Diploma in Dance is increasing. The CODL needs to be aware of these developments and take appropriate measures to ensure that its Diploma Programmes becomes sustainable in the long run.

The Bachelor's Degree in Performing Arts (External) General is the only degree programme offered by the CODL and has taken three batches of students from 2011/2012 academic year. Out of 305 students in the first batch, 123 have completed the degrees and 96 are expected to get their degree in December 2017. A total of 466 students have been enrolled in 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 academic years, and 157 and 157 had completed their programmes, respectively. The admissions into the external degree programmes was suspended since the academic year 2014/15 due to protests made by internal students.

The premises at the Piliyandala was closed subsequently, and the CODL programme has now shifted to Kohuwala premises where facilities are less than adequate compared to the main University at Gilford Crescent and Horton Place.

The review team is pleased with the initiatives taken by the restructuring committee of the CODL in addressing the above issues. A senate paper, prepared by the restructuring committee of the CODL and forwarded by the Acting Director of the CODL on 03/07/2017,

has following features which would help to resolve the existing issues and strengthen the programmes offered by the CODL.

i) Alighting the One-year Diploma, Two-year Higher Diploma and General Degree Programme with SLQF level III, IV and V, respectively.

ii) Follow the admission criteria as specified by the UGC Circular 932 in enrolling students to external degree programmes.

iii) Registration of external institutions and the qualification of teachers of such institutions by the University of VAPA.

The information with regard to curriculum, how it is delivered and assessed is not available in detail. Therefore, it is mandatory to develop the curriculum in detail which should include, graduate profile, programme outcomes, programme structure or curriculum layout, courses offered and course specifications that should include course aims, ILOs, teaching and learning methods assessment strategies, references/recommended readings, etc. The lack of clarity in these aspects leaves rooms for conflicts between various groups and creates suspicion as to how an external graduate could complete a degree with a period less than of a full-time internal graduate, where both should attain the same level of learning. The involvement of external stakeholders, with adequate documentation of the process, becomes very important in the development of curriculum and provides the required legitimacy to the external programmes offered by the CODL.

The review team had an opportunity go through some of the e-learning materials developed by the CODL through a grant provided to the University by the HETC/EDP Project. This achievement is commendable and should be supported to make more learning materials available to both internal and external students. The library and class room facilities available for the external students at the Kohuwala premises are also good. The review team could not observe other facilities, such as internet, equipment etc. required for learning. The canteen facilities are well below the expected level. The review team could not meet external students to get their feedback.

The administrative and support staff led by a Senior Assistant Register is responsible for day to day management of the CODL. However, it is important for the University to take appropriate steps without further delay to resolve the issues faced by the CODL.

Appointment of a Director along with institutionalizing a suitable institutional arrangement (such as Board of Management, Boards of Studies, Programme Directors, course coordinators, etc.) is a high priority item in the action plan in this regard.

5.10 Criterion 10 – Quality Assurance

The review team noted that the UVPA has recognized the importance of adopting the concept of quality assurance (QA) within the University and initiated the process with an appointment of a Director for internal quality assurance as early as 2011. Subsequently, the IQAU at UVPA was formally established in response to the UGC Circular of May 2015. Since then two Management Committee meeting of the IQAU were held. Along with the IQAU, an Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) for the three faculties of the UVPA were established on the request of the Director of IQAU in 2016. Some initiatives taken to improve the quality of academic programmes were reported at Faculty Boards and the Senate. To internalize the QA activities within the University, QA has been incorporated in to the Strategic Plans of 2013- 2017 and 2014- 2018. The IQUA has begun the process of drafting the QA Policy with the appointment of a drafting committee at a Senate level in May 2017. In addition, the IQAU is to develop and adopt by-laws for the IQA system.

In order to facilitate the activities of IQAU, an office facility was opened at the Kohuwala premises on 4th April 2017. However, this unit has only a room, furniture, equipment but without any support staff. Moreover, academic staff members appointed as the Director of the IQAU is from the Faculty of Visual Arts, located at Horton Place, and such arrangement is not certainly conducive for effective functioning internal quality assurance system.

Even with these functional constraints, the IQAU has taken initiatives to introduce many activities with regard to QA. From 2013 to 2017, the IQAU has attempted to create awareness among all academic staff and administrators about the prescribed best practices and quality standards by organizing workshops, seminars and awareness programmes.

Review team noted that the UVPA has undergone several external reviews during past few years; two institutional reviews, one in 2009 and the second in 2014 and few programme reviews, i.e. BVA, BPA in Music and BPA in Dance and Drama. Following those reviews, the University has taken some initiatives to internalize quality culture in all its activities. Based on the recommendations provided in the Institutional Review Report in 2014, the UVPA has taken actions to improve the quality by, i) completing the document of Code of Ethics and Academic Accountability in 2015, ii) making the arrangements to represent IQAU at the Appeal Board since 2017, and, iii) establishing norms on workloads assigned for Probationary Lecturers in order to allow them to get involved in post-graduate programmes. Furthermore, the IQAU has supported the Faculties of UVPA to review their academic programmes according to the QAAC guidelines prescribed for curricula design and development. For example, in 2017, the IQAU has reviewed Distance Learning Programme in Dance at the Centre of Distance Learning (CODL) at the UVPA.

The IQAU has also provided its services to the Unit of Information Technology (UIT) by reviewing IT programme in 2017. IQAU has also been active in providing consultation to the Faculty of Music (FMU) and English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) to develop ILOs in the courses offered by the FMU and ELTU, respectively. IQAU has also conducted awareness programmes for academic staff at the UVPA on student-centered learning (SCL) and has encouraged all faculties to include English medium modules into the existing curricula.

Having gone through the two previous reports of the internal review, and based on the discussions with various stakeholders, the review team realized the enormity of the task in fully internalizing the QA process at the UVPA. The QA policies and by-laws for the IQAU and IQAC of the UPVA need to be completed and approved by the Senate and the Council as a priority activity. This could be easily accomplished by going through the policies and by-laws of other universities and adjusting them to reflect the functions and aspirations of the UPVA. A wider consultation with the academic, administrative staff as well as with the external stakeholders is important in this process. It is essential that the IQAU office should be located within the main administrative building or at a close proximity as found in many other universities to facilitate the activities of the IQAU. This office should be fully supported with equipment, support staff and other facilities. Though, the coordinators have been appointed to the IQACs, it is important to get them functional as soon as possible.

The entry point to internalize the quality culture in academic pursuits commences with the development of study programme curricula by adopting prescribed practices and guidelines such as SLQF, SBBs and OBE-SCL concept and approach. It was pointed out, in the SER as well during the discussions with various stakeholders, that a majority of senior academic staff members have failed to appreciate the value of "*formalizing*" teaching, learning and assessment practices in UVPA in consistent with the accepted norms and national and international standards. Therefore, it is important to make highest bodies of academic administration to be more aware of the importance of curricula reforms. It is encouraging to note that the relatively young academic staff members have a desire to formalize the teaching and learning process, including assessment with the use of more formalized marking schemes such as assessment rubrics. Therefore, the strategy would be to continue with the training programme on QA related activities including the training on application modern educational technologies in programme design and development and delivery. Such continuous efforts will definitely create an awareness and appreciation, and also will certainly help to build in-house capacity and acceptance to undertake curricula reforms, adopting modern teaching and learning and assessment methods. This along with other institutional reforms in par with the prescribed best practices and quality standards will no doubt will help to improve the quality and standards of the study programmes offered by the UVPA to international standards. Considering the nature of the degree programmes offered by the only University identified for visual and performing arts in Sri Lanka, the UVPA has a responsibility to set the standards for similar programmes offered by other universities of Sri Lanka.

Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance of Quality

In accordance with the guidelines prescribed in the IR Manual of the QAAC, the review panel graded the all standards of 10 criteria, and the raw criterion-wise scores, weighted minimum scores required by each criterion and the actual criterion-wise scores are given in the Table below.

Table 6.1: Overall Performance of the Institution

No.	Assessment Criteria	Raw Criterion-wise Score	Weighted Minimum Score*	Actual Criteria-wise Score
1	Governance and Management	64/87	90	132.4/180
2	Curriculum Design and Development	18/45	60	48.0/120**
3	Teaching and Learning	20/30	50	66.7/100
4	Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression	27/42	40	51.4/80
5	Student Assessment and Awards	28/45	50	62.2/100
6	Strength and Quality of Staff	23/33	50	69.7/100
7	Postgraduate studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization	50/75	50	67.7.0/100
8	Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach	09/18	30	30.0/60
9	Distance Education	21/39	20	21.5/40
10	Quality Assurance	11/21	60	62.9/120
Total Score in a 1000-point scale				609.1
Total Score as a Percentage				60.1
Letter Grade Awarded				C
Performance Descriptor				Satisfactory
Interpretation of Descriptor				
Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of an academic institution; definitely requires improvement				

* 50% of the maximum weighted score

* except Criteria 2, all other 9 criteria secured more that the minimum required score

Accordingly, based on the overall performance score of 60.1%, with 9 out of 10 criteria securing more than the required minimum weighted score, it is recommended to award the Grade of 'C' and performance descriptor of 'satisfactory' for the University of Visual and Performing Arts which is interpreted as "*Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of an academic institution; definitely requires improvement*".

Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations

7.1 Criterion 1: Governance and Management

Commendations

i) University is goverened and managed in compliance with the rules and regulations, and porocedures prescribed through relevant Acts, Establishments Codes and Circulars.

ii) University discision making process is made partaicipatry, and facilitaed through appointment of ad-hoc committees which are functioning with clearly identified TORs.

iii) Strategic Plan Management Committee has been formed for monitoring the progress of implementation of the planned activities.

iv) Internal auditing system is in place.

v) SDC conducts programmes covering all sectors of employees.

vi) Job descriptions are given to all non-academic staff.

vii) Calculation of student contact hours has been done.

viii) Disciplinary actions are taken against students for misconduct.

Recommendations

i) University needs to institutionalize many of governing procedures and practices through regulations, by-laws, and guidelines prescribed by the Council.

ii) Develop a long-term Mater Plan and align the goals and objectives short-term Corporate/Strategic Plans with those of the Mater Plan.

iii) Develop and adopt Manuals for academic and adaministrriave procedures (i.e. University Calendar and Manual of SOPs) to ensure legitimacy, consistancy and transprancy in all academic and administrtative procedures.

iv) Develop and adopt action plans in line with the goals and objectives of the Corporate Plan for all Units (i.e. faculties, administrative divisions centers and units) so as to ensure the attainment goals and objectives identified in the Corporate Plan and also to ensure effective and equitable use of budgetary allocations.

v) Vision and mission statements need to be properly defined without any further delay.

vi) Construct a generic graduate profile for the university and study programme-specific graduate profiles for respective degree programmes by considering the University

vision and mission, SLQF guidelines, Subject Benchmark Statements and labour market inputs, as appropriate.

vii) Prepare a comprehensive long-term human resources development plan and implement measures to develop human resources capacity as planned.

viii) Organogram needs to be revised regularly to ensure depiction of up to date institutional structure and linkages.

ix) Allocation of funds needs to be based on needs and planned / proposed activities.

x) Take steps to capitalize on the University's ability to generate funds and utilize the money generated for internal capacity building.

xi) Institutionalize a mechanism to conduct surveys and tracer studies on student satisfactions surveys, employer satisfaction surveys, employability studies, etc. And utilize the information generated through such studies for further improvement of quality and standards of academic programmes, teaching and learning facilities, common amenities, etc.

xii) Design and institutionalize a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS) covering all activities to facilitate information collection/recording, collation, storage, information sharing and retrieval and report generation.

xiii) Develop and implement a comprehensive ICT policy to ensure proper and wider usage of ICT facilities and applications, and data and information security, and also to prevent misuse and mismanagement.

xiv) Develop and adopt Codes of Conduct for students and staff

xv) Institutionalize the applications of work ethics and norms, and workloads across academic staff so as to promote academic accountability.

xvi) Consider increasing the internet bandwidth so as to provide speedy access to internet facilities.

xvii) Design and adopt staff appraisal system to appraise and reward academics and other categories of staff based on their contribution to the University development.

xviii) Commence introducing major reforms into academic programmes in order to produce a well-rounded graduate in visual/ performing arts by giving a strong foundation in the early phase of the programme and through better integration of courses from different departments.

xix) The compartmentalization that exists among departments needs to be greatly relaxed and inter-department course- and resource sharing must be promoted.

xx) Develop and adopt a university-wide policy on internal quality assurance and allied activities.

xxi) Establish a dedicated Unit to foster and coordinate international relations.

xxii) Establish a suitable mechanism to redress staff and student grievances.

xxiii) University needs to institutionalize the UGC prescribed policy and strategies to promote GEE and deter SGBV.

xxiv) Promote the wider application of LMS for teaching and learning.

xxv) Implement measures to ensure the quality and standards of cafeteria services – cleanliness of the facilities, and quality of foods and services.

xxvi) Storage facilities the Faculty of Visual Arts should be immediately reorganized and harmful chemical-based items should be separated to safeguard from any disasters.

7.2 Criterion 2: Curriculum Design and Development

Commendations

i) Within a short time, span, the University has emerged as a leader of educational provisions in visual and performing arts, and produced competent creative artists in diverse fields and disciplines.

Recommendations

i) Conduct an in-depth review of present day curricula of all study programmes with a view to identify new directions for aesthetic education.

ii) Develop and adopt institutional policy on academic development of planning by encompassing the prescribed guidelines by the QAAC; i.e. use of SLQF guidelines, Subject Benchmark Statements, if available, and OBE-SCL concept and approach and modern assessment methods.

iii) Consider incorporating interdisciplinary approach into study programme curricula.

7.3 Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning

Commendations:
i)   Vibrant teaching-learning sessions of individual student-based teaching -learning practices (ISBTL) and studio and practice-based teaching-learning are commendable.

ii) Lively creative performances and enthusiastic student's involvement in creative endeavors are unique.

iii) University interacts with the community and 'world of work' through diverse programmes such as exhibitions, talent shows, and festivals.

Recommendations:

i)   Student-centered learning methodologies of current curricula should be further improved.

ii) Establish and operationalize an institutional mechanism to obtain, analyze and use the stakeholder feedback and opinions for further improvement programme design and development, delivery and assessments.

iii) Design and adopt teacher appraisal/peer review system to improve the quality of teaching.

iv) Take steps to address the issues prevailing at Kohuwala campus.

7.4 Criterion 4: Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression

Commendations
i)   Location of the university provide excellent environment for academic pursuits and external links

ii) Willingness of both staff and students to improve quality management in study programmes.

iii) Steps taken to establish quality improvement system and willingness of the administration to allocate required resources.

Recommendations

i) Bridge the information gap on quality management procedures and practices; conduct awareness programmes for the university community on the need and importance of developing quality management system.

ii) Investigate, plan, acquire and provide essential resources to enhance the quality of earner support system, and student and staff welfare services.

7.5 Criterion 5: Student Assessment and Awards

Commendations

i) Innovative student assessment systems were developed and implemented in several degree programmes.

ii) Willingness of academic staff to adopt develop modern, fair and ethical evaluation systems.

Recommendations

i) Develop and adopt Manual of Examination Procedures covering all aspects pertaining to examination; setting, moderating, marking, collation and compilation of results, timely release of results and storing and preserving records pertaining to examinations.

ii) Develop and adopt examination by-laws including procedures for dealing with examination offences.

iii) Streamline the assessment and examination procedures to ensure accuracy, fairness, transparency and credibility of assessments and examinations.

iv) Update the Student Prospectus by incorporating information on assessment procedures.

v) Train academic staff, including the visiting academics on modern assessment procedures and promote adoption of such procedures across all courses and study programmes.

7.6 Criterion 6: Strength and quality of staff

Commendations

i)   The University obtains services of highly talented and reputed personnel in the academic staff.

ii)   University obtains the services of visiting academic staff with qualifications and talents.

iii) The administrative staff is well experienced and work oriented.

iv)   Weak areas of underperforming nonacademic staff are identified and notified to the respective staff member.

v)   A process to calculate student contact hours of all academic staff is established.

vi)   SDC plays its role in continuing professional development of the staff.

vii) Job descriptions are given to all non-academic staff.

viii) Funds are made available for publication of research.

Recommendations

i)   The proposal of the University to amend the staff: student ratio needs to be developed by stressing on the uniqueness of the study programmes.

ii)   It is most appropriate for the University to draw up a policy on human resources and a long- term human resources development plan alongside with plans to increase student intake.

iii) In considering the efficiency and effectiveness academic staff, the student intake needs to be improved and students should be given a broader foundation before the specializations begin.

iv)   A mechanism to maximize the utilization of human and physical resources needs to be drawn up. Combining courses from different departments to draw less specialized degree programmes would be a solution. Specialization may be achieved at postgraduate level.

v)   More rigorous action is required to fill the vacancies in approved cadre.

vi)   A policy on work norms and academic accountability is urgently required.

vii) Actions aiming at mentoring new recruits by senior staff are essential.

viii) Data/ information gathered by the student feedback have to be used for improving teaching learning activities and other student related matters.

ix)   Staff should be encouraged to acquire competencies in developing curricula adopting OBE-SCL approach.

x)   Establish a mechanism to redress staff grievances.

7.7 Criteria 7: Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation and commercialization

Commendations

i)   Faculty of Graduate Studies was established and several taught courses at masters' level are being offered.

ii)   There is provision for financial support for academics to attend international conferences.

iii)   Some departments have established informal collaboration with other organizations (both local and international) and interactions with 'industry'.

Recommendations

i)   Encourage academics to participate in international research conferences and present their research findings.

ii)   Establish effective mechanisms to monitor the quality of postgraduate study programmes.

iii)   Promote offering postgraduate programmes that will include both course work and research components; i.e. MSc, MPhil and PhD degrees.

iv)   Develop and adopt institutional policy framework which should cover, establishment of an institutional ethics review committee, guidelines for graduate students, ethics on conduct of research, policy on authorship, procedure for dealing, guidelines for supervisors, etc.

7.8 Criteria 8: Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach

Commendations

i)   Engagement by some academics and students in outreach activities.

Recommendations

i) Develop and adopt institutional policy framework to promote the academics' and students' involvement in outreach activities.

ii) All outreach activities should be documented and formalized to ensure that the UVPA gets adequate credit/ recognition for the activities undertaken by the staff and students.

7.9 Criterion 9: Distance Education

Commendations

i) University has taken measures to promote distance education since 2012 in order to offer opportunities for those who are willing to pursue higher education.

ii) Use of LMS to support the learning programme is appreciable.

iii) University has taken initiatives to align the external programmes with SLQF and OBE-SCL guidelines.

Recommendations

i) Continue with the follow up activities to implement the recommendations given by the restructuring committee of the CODL.

ii) Follow the guidelines develop by the QAAC of UGC in developing the detail curricula of diploma and degree programmes with the participation of stakeholders.

iii) Improve the facilities available for external students.

iv) Appoint a Director to CODL, and establish a suitable institutional set up to improve the quality of academic programmes offered through CODL.

7.10 Criterion 10: Quality Assurance

Commendations

i)   University has established institutional mechanism for internal quality assurance; IQAU at the central level and IQACs at three faculties.

ii)   IQAU has facilitated two Internal Reviews and three Programme Reviews.

iii)   Quality assurance has been incorporated in to the Strategic Plans of 2013-2017 and 2014- 2018.

iv)   IQAU has facilitated/conducted several training workshops on QA for the academic and other relevant staff categories.

v)   IQAU has supported the FM, ITC, and ELTU to improve the quality of courses offered by them.

Recommendations

i)   Move the IQAU Office to the main administrative building of the UVPA. This office should be fully supported with equipment, support staff and other facilities.

ii)   Develop and IQA Policy Framework and By-laws for operationalizing the internal quality enhancement through IQAU and IQACs as early as possible.

iii)   In liaison with SDC, continue to conduct training programmes for academic on curricula design and development, and teaching and learning methods, and assessment strategies and techniques.

iv)   Promote adoption of OBE-SCL approach in study programme curricula development and delivery.

v)   In liaison with SDC continue to conduct training programmes for academic and administrative staff on QA activities in order to promote the adoption of best practices prescribed by the QAAC across all spheres of university activities.

vi)   Include QA as a regular agenda item of the Faculty Boards, Senate and the Council.

Section 8: Summary

University of Visual and Performing Arts has a long and cherished history in sustaining aesthetic education and producing competent creative artists. Strength of its heritage as well as the present-day weaknesses are amply revealed by the SER report.

Based on the overall performance score of 60.1%, with 9 out of 10 criteria securing more than the required minimum weighted score, it is recommended to award the Grade of 'C' and performance descriptor of 'satisfactory' for the University of Visual and Performing Arts which is interpreted as *"Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of an academic institution; definitely requires improvement".*

Shortcomings in governance and management, inadequacies in planning and plan implementation, failure to adopt modern educational technologies and approaches in study programme design and development and delivery to meet present day higher educational expectations, and inadequacies in internal quality assurance system are identified as other key shortcomings faced by the University. In this context the previous institutional reviews too have highlighted many issues and still the University is in the process of addressing those suggestions.

University needs to regularize and institutionalize many of the governing and administrative procedures through adoption of policies, regulations, by-laws, and guidelines. University also needs to take immediate measures to develop a long-term master plan, and revise the 5-year corporate plan with clear vision, mission, and goals and strategies. One of the key elements of the long-term plan should be the comprehensive long-term human resources development plan.

The UVPA having recognized the importance of institutionalizing an internal quality assurance (IQA) system within the University, has taken steps to establish internal quality assurance unit (IQAU) at the cater and internal quality assurance cells (IQACs) at faculty-level. However, the exiting IQA system is somewhat disjointed functionally as the IQAU Office is presently located away from the main complex, while the Director of IQAU is operating from the main administrative building of the UVPA. Further, the University is yet

to develop IQA policy and by-laws in order to empower the IQA system in internalizing quality culture in every sphere of the university. Therefore, urgent measures must be taken to address the above-mentioned issues and shortcomings in order to strengthen the IQA system. In addition, it is necessary to bridge the information gap on quality management procedures by conducting awareness programmes among academics, administrative staff and other staff categories.

The curricula of all study programmes offered by UVPA must be reformed to comply with the SLQF guidelines, and by giving due references to respective SBSs, if available, and OBE-SCL concept and approaches. Also, the University is encouraged to critically assess the layout or the structure of existing undergraduate curricula with a view to provide strong foundation training during early years of the programme in order to produce a well-rounded graduate in visual and performing arts. Existing tight compartmentalization among departments needs to be greatly relaxed in order to provide a holistic and interdisciplinary flavour into the study programmes. It is recommended to conduct an in-depth review of present day curricula to seek new directions for future of aesthetic education. Moreover, beyond the traditional modes, the curriculum should promote a more constructivist approach to learning. Furthermore, the curricula should also accommodate more interdisciplinary approach in teaching and learning. Attention must be given to previous IR reports, views of the professional experts and stakeholders in this regard.

University has traditionally adopted a very vibrant teaching-learning practices and approaches such as individual student-based teaching and learning practices (ISBTL) and studio- and practice-based teaching and learning practices. Nonetheless, the University encouraged to adopt modern learner-centered teaching and learning methodologies in the delivery of study programmes. Furthermore, the University must take steps to modernize the assessment system in order to make it more objective, accurate, fair, and transparent and also to ensure credibility, confidentiality and integrity of the process.

Study programmes are well supported by high caliber human resources. A mechanism to maximize the utilization of human and physical resources needs to be drawn up. University should develop a suitable teacher appraisal system to reward those who excel in teaching, research and outreach activities.

University needs to pay attention on student welfare and counseling system. Common amenities provided must be further improved, particularly the cleanliness and the quality of food. The student counseling system needs further improvements by providing necessary facilities and training for student counselors.

University should also take measures to establish a proper mechanism to conduct for students' satisfactory surveys, students' feedbacks on individual courses, peer reviews of teachers, employer satisfaction surveys, employability surveys, etc., and analyze feedback/surveys results and utilize the outcomes of such assessments for further improvement of study programmes, individual courses, teaching and learning, and assessments methods and procedures.

University must also pay much attention to career advancement of young recruits into the academic staff. It is important to encourage academics to participate in international research conferences and present their findings. In this context University should address to improve the English language skills of the students as well as the staff. Academics from all departments should be encouraged to get involved in outreach activities.

University should continue with the follow up activities to implement the recommendations given by the restructuring committee of the CODL. Establishing a suitable institutional set up to improve the academic programme is the timely need.

Regarding the physical resources, although the faculties are managing with the existing space, it is necessary to address the needs and shortcomings. Scattered nature of different faculties, centres/units and learning resources is a major constraint of the UVPA.

With reference to the students with special needs, the existing programmes need few structural adjustments to meet the needs of the visually impaired students.

The use of ICT platform by the academics and students must be further encouraged to facilitate multimode teaching and learning, and creative endeavors.

Key reflections were revealed in the final wrap-up meeting with the Vice Chancellor, senior administrative officers and SER team. Participants expressed their willingness and

commitment towards developing the governance and management of the University in compliance with the best practices prescribed by the QAAC of the UGC. Moreover, the review team was impressed with the commitment shown by the higher management of the University towards quality enhancement and assurance. It is indeed a positive sign and with the proper leadership and dedication of the academic community as well as the other stakeholders, the UVPA has the potential to achieve the desired quality and standards of its academic programmes, and attain greater heights in the fields of visual and performing arts.

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