



Program Review Report
Program Reviews - 2018
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours)
(specializing in Music, Dance or Art & Design)
Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts
University of Jaffna
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Table of Contents

Section 1 - Brief Introduction to the Programme	04
Section 2 - Review team's Observations on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)	07
Section 3 - A Brief Description of the Review Process	08
Section 4 - Overview of the Institute's Approach to Quality and Standards	10
Section 5 - Judgment on the Eight Criteria of the Programme Review	
Criterion 1: Programme Management	
Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources	
Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development	
Criterion 4: Course Design and Development	
Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning	
Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	
Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards	
Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices	
Section 6 - Grading of Overall Performance of the Programme	18
Section 7 - Commendations and Recommendations	21
Section 8 - Summary	25

Section 1 - Brief Introduction to the Programme

Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts

Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts (RAFA) was established in 1960 in Chunnakam, Jaffna to promote education in Tamil classical music and dance. In 1974, with the establishment of the Jaffna Campus of the University of Sri Lanka, the RAFA was absorbed into the university system. In 1975, the RAFA became an integral part of Faculty of Arts. In 1992, the Department of Performing Arts was established and all academic activities of RAFA were brought under this department. Special degree programmes in Music, Dance (Bharatanatyam) and Carnatic music were introduced in 1993.

In 1996, the Department of Performing Arts was bifurcated into two departments, namely, the Department of Music and Department of Dance. In the Department of Music, five disciplines, namely Carnatic Music (Vocal), Pannisai, Violin, Veena and Miruthangam are taught for the study programme, and the degrees offered are titled as Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music (Vocal / Violin / Veena / Miruthangam and Pannisai), with appropriate labeling to indicate the field of specialization. The Department of Dance offers a study programme in Bharatanatyam titled as the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance), with appropriate labeling to indicate the field of specialization.

In 1999, the Department of Dance commenced another study programme in the disciplines of Art and Design, and in 2011, this study programme was bifurcated into two streams leading to specialization in sub-disciplines of painting and sculpture, and accordingly the degree awarded are titled as Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art and Design – Painting) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art and Design – Sculpture), with appropriate labeling to indicate the field of specialization.

Academic Staff

RAFA has a relatively young academic staff, and the majority of them are graduates of the same institute. They have secured their postgraduate qualifications, mostly from India. Table 1.1 summarizes the academic qualifications and their designations at the RAFA.

Table 1.1 Summary of the academic staff qualifications and designations at the RAFA

Department	Academic Qualifications			Designation			Female /Male ratio
	Ph.D.	M.Phil. /M.A	B.FA.	Senior Lect. I & II	Lecturer	Asst. Lec./ Instructor	
Music	2	6	8	6	9	1	9:7
Dance	3	8	-	5	3	2	9:2
Art & Design	-	3	6	2	1	3	0:6
Total	5	17	14	13	13	6	-

Students

According to the UGC, the proposed intake for RAFA in 2017/2018 was 210 students - 100 of them were for the Music programme, 75 of them were for Dance programme while 35 of them were for Art & Design programme. Minimum entry qualification to enter is 2 S passes with a C pass for the subject that the student wishes to follow from the GCE A/L examination. In addition, the prospective students have to qualify through an aptitude and/or practical tests conducted by RAFA. Medium of instructions for all the degree programmes conducted by RAFA is Tamil. Table 1.2 summarizes the UGC allocation and the recent student intakes to the RAFA.

Table 1.2 Student Intakes for Study Programmes offered by RAFA

Year	Dance	Music	Art & Design	Total
UGC allocation	75	100	35	210
2016/2017	71	92	33	196
2015/2016	68	55	31	154
2014/2015	70	66	28	164
2013/2014	66	75	27	168
2012/2013	68	89	28	185

RAFA facilities

RAFA is located at Maruthanarmadam near Chennakam, about 8 km away from the main Campus, and it has basic facilities to conduct the three-degree programmes, such as lecture halls, auditorium, library, cafeteria, student hostels, etc. Main campus provides other facilities including student support services and sports and recreational facilities.

Although, the RAFA is a part of the University of Jaffna, surprisingly it is not included in the current version of the organogram of the University.

Section 2 - Review Team's Observations on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

Self-evaluation report (SER) of the study programmes was indeed very poorly prepared. It failed to adhere to guidelines prescribed by the “Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions”. Further, it did not even provide basic information on staff, students and the facilities.

Quality assurance activities of the RAFA were handled by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts up until the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of RAFA was established on 3rd August 2017. Subsequent to that, on 16th August 2017, the Dean appointed a team for the preparation of the SER, which included 3 members of the Music programme, 4 members from the Dance programme, 1 member from the Art & Design programme along with 4 members from the Faculty of Arts.

Review team noted that the University has a well-established Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQUA) with formal links with all faculties. Further, the review team was impressed with the activities carried out by the unit, as presented to them by the IQUA Director. Despite RAFA being an integral part of the Faculty of Arts, the RAFA has failed to prepare the SER in satisfactory manner.

At the briefing to the review team, it was noted that the SER preparation did not materialize as expected by the IQUA. In January 2018, the SER writing team had the opportunity to attend a workshop conducted at the UGC. Despite having a briefing by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the UGC (QAAC/UGC), the SER team failed to come up with a satisfactory document. According to RAFA, they were compelled to submit the incomplete document so as to meet the strict deadline imposed by the QAAC/UGC.

UGC has given four weeks for the individual members of the review team to assess the document. Review team was of the view that the SER writing team had no clear understanding of the task assigned to them. At the desk evaluation of SER, all the four members of the review team have assigned poor grades for all three study programmes.

As the evidence collected by the RAFA academics for the review process was not arranged in appropriate format and order, the review team made suggestions to the RAFA academics to re-submit the documentary evidence in an acceptable manner. With the instructions of the review team, the SER writing team had reorganized the evidence documents in appropriate order and filed into different folders, except the common files provided by the Faculty of Arts which were presented in the correct format and order.

Section 3: Brief description of the Review Process

Review team received no responses from the Dean of Faculty of Arts, despite sending several e-mail correspondences on the tentative time table prepared for the site visit. Finally, just prior to the site visit, with the intervention of the Director of QAAC/UGC, the reviewers got the comments on the tentative time table prepared for the site visit. Review team would like to express their displeasure on the negligence by the relevant authorities of University of Jaffna, particularly by the Dean of Faculty of Arts.

Review team went through the desk evaluation of the SER individually, and met at the pre-site visit meeting at the UGC to compare their evaluations. Only three reviewers were present at the meeting as the 4th member was on an overseas visit. All four reviewers had similar views about the performance of three study programmes as explained under eight criteria and corresponding standards, and assigned similar grades for respective criteria and overall grades for the three study programmes.

The site-visit was held during the period of 1st to 4th of October 2018. The review team had meetings with the Vice Chancellor and Dean of Faculty of Arts, and received briefings from Director of IQUA, Coordinator of IQAC and Senior Assistant Registrar of Faculty of Arts. All of them have extended their support in coordinating the activities at the University and RAFA during the site visit.

At the RAFA, review team was briefed by the SER writing team on quality assurance initiatives undertaken, and difficulties that they have encountered in the preparation of the SER. Review team was of the view that the RAFA academics were not familiar with the quality assurance concept, principles and methods. Though they had been briefed by the QAAC, and perhaps through staff development training programmes, it appears that the academic staff had difficulties in following such briefings and trainings programmes due to their language difficulties. Further, they were very conventional, and appeared to be reluctant to embrace new trends in higher education. For example, they were of the opinion that their role needs to be confined to teaching the subject matter only.

Review team had a lengthy discussion with the students, and students seem to be content with the academic programmes. Nonetheless, they complained about the shortcomings of infrastructure facilities and learning resources provided. They expressed their concern on the transport facilities provided by the RAFA to participate in educational activities at the main campus and the condition of their musical equipment. It appears that the students are eager to learn ICT-based applications and use ICT facilities, and also looking forward for the opportunities to acquire soft skills. Students expressed their fear regarding impending autonomy

from the Faculty of Arts, merely because they thought they would lose their identity as the students of the University of Jaffna. The review team also felt that students were not happy with their assessment processes.

Review team also had a discussion with the SAR of Faculty of Arts, AR of RAFA and the supporting staff of RAFA. Their concerns were mainly on the lack facilities and opportunities for in-service training. Review team visited all the teaching facilities and observed a few practical and lecture-discussion sessions in music, dance and fine arts. It was noted that their music and dancing activities were conducted in separate small buildings, and such activities appear to interfere with activities in neighbouring buildings. It was further noted that the available facilities at RAFA were not optimally used for teaching purposes.

Review team also visited facilities at the main campus which included library, student welfare and sports grounds. Review team went through all the documentary evidences and asked additional information which was relevant to the review process. Documentary evidences were not arranged properly, but nonetheless, the staff at RAFA assisted the review team to complete the review process successfully.

The wrap up meeting was held at the Faculty of Arts in the presence of the Dean, SAR, Coordinator of IQAC, Heads of the Departments and some academics of RAFA. At the wrap up meeting, chairperson of the review team gave a briefing on the strengths and weaknesses of the academic programmes.

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

Quality assurance concept and guidelines prescribed by the “Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions”, are relatively new to the RAFA staff. They assume that they adhere to good teaching practices that they have inherited, adopted and practiced since the inception of RAFA. With respect to governance and management, RAFA adheres to administrative and financial regulations of the University of Jaffna. Nonetheless, RAFA has attempted different mechanisms including an appointing management committee comprising the senior academics from other faculties to advice on management aspects. Though, the quality assurance responsibility relies on the academics of RAFA, their links with the IQAU of the University appear to be very weak.

The review team felt that the RAFA has the capacity to improve its quality enhancement and assurance activities. Review team suggests that several tailor-made training programmes on quality enhancement and assurance aspects are conducted to create a greater awareness and enthusiasm on the concept of quality among RAFA staff. Review team is of the view that the RAFA academics must be given intensive training on the best practices in academic programme design, development and delivery. Further, the review team strongly encourages the young academics to strengthen their knowledge and skills in application of modern educational technologies such as outcome-based education and student-centred teaching-learning, and assessments and apply the knowledge and skills gained through such training to improve the quality and standards of current and future education programmes and allied activities.

Section 5: Judgment on the Eight Criteria of the Programme Review

Criterion 1 - Programme management

RAFA is an integral part of the University of Jaffna, and it is currently placed under the purview of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. It is served by a relatively young and dedicated academic staff who appear to have sufficient knowledge on the subject matter. Three Heads of Departments appointed from among the staff looks after the academic activities, and the quality assurance aspects are looked after by a relatively inexperienced group. Participatory approach appears to have been adopted in decision making process, and all academics are made aware of their responsibilities in implementing the academic programmes. Though the quality assurance has been made as an integral component of the University and Faculty, its adoption and acceptance by the faculty of the RAFA are very feeble.

In the past, RAFA was mentioned in the students' handbook of the Faculty of Arts, and currently, the students are not provided with an updated handbook providing information on the University, Faculty and RAFA, and also on rules and regulations, study programmes, learner support services and facilities available. RAFA needs to update the student handbook and establish a website to educate the people about its functions and study programmes. Nonetheless, the students are very enthusiastic about the educational experiences that they receive, and they are very proud about their academic staff and study programmes.

Faculty appears to have established several international partnerships. However, the review team is of the view that this is an area that needs to be strengthened further to attain higher standards. It was observed that enhanced partnerships and national and international collaborations could significantly improve the opportunities available for students and staff. Improved academic mentoring and student counselling system could further facilitate the school to university transition. Student community entering the RAFA cannot be viewed as a homogenous population as they come from different socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Therefore, those who need additional support in adjusting to a new life should be supported by providing additional by way of mentoring and counselling.

In addition, measures taken to address gender-based violence, especially in view of ragging related incidents, measures taken for security and safety of the students, and in improving the involvement of students in cultural, leisure and sports activities, are considered as areas to be further strengthened.

Criterion 2 – Human and Physical Resources

As regard to the human resource profile of the RAFA, an obvious drawback prevails in the quantity and quality of the academic staff. Nevertheless, the RAFA has been able to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of its curriculum, and win the hearts of the students. Relatively young and less qualified academic staff, nevertheless deserves opportunities to strengthen their academic knowledge, skills and research skills. Currently, academic staff adopts student-centred teaching-learning in practical classes, but the lectures are delivered mostly in highly teacher-centred mode with minimal use of modern teaching aids. Use of ICT facilities and tools is minimal and in some instances, the lecturers resort to reading out lecture notes.

It was found that the staff of the RAFA has few opportunities to obtain postgraduate qualifications, and most often, they are confined to local and Indian institutes for their postgraduate education. Nature of their subject matter may restrict the opportunities for higher studies in other foreign soils, but the lack of exposure to advance country settings may hinder their progressive development. It is suggested to create opportunities to engage in continuous professional development programmes to sharpen their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the lack of senior administrative staff at RAFA also hinders its progressive improvement.

RAFA has a very conducive environment favourable for academic and aesthetic pursuits. Basic music equipment available appears to be used optimally. However, it was noted that the storage facilities for music equipment are not at acceptable level. Furthermore, the students highlighted the need for providing sufficient number of the musical equipment and instruments to facilitate their academic pursuits. Water purification plants at the hostels were not working, and the other basic facilities available as library, canteen, hostel and sports certainly deserve immediate attention and improvements. Students are provided with bare minimum facilities at the art gallery, theatre, photography studio, and it is imperative that these facilities need to be developed further to improve the quality of academic training.

Criteria 3: Programme design and development

In general, the scope of a programme of study offered by a higher educational institute is defined as a stand-alone approved curriculum followed by a student, which contributes to a qualification of a degree awarding body. Where a programme is made up of more than one self-contained, formally structured units, those are referred to as courses/modules. Curriculum must be outcome driven and equips students with knowledge, skills and attitudes to succeed in the world of work and for lifelong learning.

When the review team scrutinised all three programmes, it was found that the curricula of three study programmes do conform fully with the above-mentioned standards. There was insufficient

documental evidence to prove that the programme curricula were developed through collaborative and participatory approach by adhering to prescribed best practices. Most of the consultations for the development of curricula were carried through informal conversations. External stakeholder participation was not visible at key stages of programme planning, design and development. Programme design process completely ignored the necessity of the feedback from employers as well as students. Review team couldn't find evidences to assess whether the programmes conform to the mission, goals and objectives of the University and Academy. RAFA has to formulate its own mission, goals and objectives in conformity with the University's mission, goals and objectives. RAFA has to reconsider how to reflect national needs, global trends and current knowledge and practices in their educational offerings.

Programme design in all three study programmes were not fully complied with the SLQF guidelines, and were not guided by the relevant SBSs. Although, in Art and Design programme intended learning outcomes were identified, in practice, particularly at evaluation processes, it appears that these were not adequately considered. There were no fall-back options offered to students enrolled in all three programmes.

There was no evidence to prove whether the RAFA has used graduate profiles of three study programmes as the foundation for developing programme learning outcomes and intended learning outcomes of courses. Further, the programme curriculum does not accommodate supplementary courses such as inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary which are useful for students in broadening their outlook and acquiring life skills. Especially in Dance and Music programmes, students are not offered much choice in course selection. For example, Dance study programme is highly focused only on Barathanatyam discipline.

The academic standards of all three programmes with respect to their awards and qualifications are not in conformity with the SLQF level descriptors. For example, the course on student research and dissertation is not allocated required number of credits. Further, the study programmes haven't clearly defined appropriate measurable process and outcome indicators which are essential to monitor the implementation and evaluation of study programmes.

Curricula of study programmes were approved through Faculty of Arts at the Senate of the University of Jaffna. But it is not clear whether the programme approval decisions were taken after full consideration of the degree of conformity with SLQF guidelines, adherence to QAAC prescribed best practices, curricular and course design principles, appropriateness of the learning opportunities available, etc.

In general, the study programmes offered by RAFA are adopting traditional methods of teaching and training for practical training component, and they are indeed considered as student-centred in modern terms. Music and Dance programmes are highly focused on adhering and preserving cultural roots and traditions. On the other hand, the Art and Design programme appear to

integrate appropriate learning strategies for the development of self-directed learning, collaborative learning, creative, and critical thinking, inter personal communication and teamwork into the courses.

During the visit, the review team, nonetheless found that most of the theory courses are conducted by adopting teacher-centric approach. Nonetheless, few courses appear to adopt interactive student-centric approach, using multimedia facilities. In general, it appears that all three study programmes pay little attention in providing opportunities for soft skill development of students.

RAFA has to develop proper internal quality assurance cells (IQAC). RAFA faculty needs to develop more sense on quality assurance process - concept, philosophy, quality principles, standards and best practices, and quality monitoring tools and methods. There is no evidence that the programmes are monitored routinely to ensure that programmes remain current and valid in the light of developing knowledge in the discipline and practice in application. RAFA does not annually collect and records information on students' satisfaction, destination after graduation, and employers' views on graduates, and therefore, RAFA has no employer and student feedback to the use in continuous improvement of its study programmes.

Criterion 4: Course/ module design and development

Courses are components of a programme of study offered in consistence with the programme objectives to culminate in student attainment of learning outcome of the programme of study.

Although course design and development are expected to be done by respective course teams with the involvement of internal and external subject experts, there were no evidences to prove whether the RAFA has adopted this best practice. It is essential to incorporate current developments in the fields of art and design, music and dance in developing programme and course curricula. Even though, the disciplines covered by three study programmes are very specific to Tamil culture and traditions, and have more specific internal, local cultural roots, these disciplines too could be enriched by national and global developments and influences.

It is indeed imperative that RAFA should incorporate internal as well as external subject experts in curriculum design and development process. It is also noted that programme learning outcomes and course objectives and outcomes were not defined clearly. Although the volume of learning is defined by adopting credit currency system, the teaching and learning hours were not calculated by adopting notional learning hours prescribed by the newer version of SLQF. Further, the credit volume allocated for student research and dissertation component was not in compliance with SLQF standards. Volume of learning for the research and dissertation must be at least 6 credits, and it must be applied uniformly across all three study programmes. It appears

that the programmes and courses are designed according to approved policies and procedures of the Senate for the Faculty of Arts.

Course curriculum is an interaction between aims and objectives, learning outcomes, content, teaching methods, and methods of assessment. RAFA programmes have many issues related to constructive alignment. Traditionally Art and Design, Music, and Dance are practical subjects, and therefore, student-centred learning is inherited. But when these subjects are lifted to the undergraduate level subject, they must be newly designed with incorporation of historical, cultural and theatrical knowledge, and delivered by adopting student-centric teaching strategies enabling the students to engage actively in their own learning.

Course details or specifications must be given to the student at the beginning of each and every course. It appears that RAFA students do not get course information, lesson plans, assessment strategies and criteria, evaluation results, etc., within the intended period of time. Further, the course design and delivery must incorporate appropriate media and technology. Academic staff needs more training in instructional design and development by adopting appropriate media and technology, relevant to their specific fields, and they should strive to improve course contents and delivery by giving a greater focus on achievements of students through regular monitoring and review processes.

Course design also must consider the needs of differently-abled students, wherever applicable. Therefore, RAFA must develop a policy and strategy to cater for differently-abled students.

Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

Generally, teaching and learning strategies must be based on, and aligned with the vision and mission of the University. Teachers must encourage students to engage in and contribute to creative work, relate theory to practice appropriately, and to publish their work in journals, conference, etc. In that sense, the teaching and research activities of RAFA are indeed very poor.

Lesson plans were not available for most of the courses. No evidence was found as regard to obtaining student feedback on courses and conducting peer assessment of teachers. Awareness on application of ICT-based tools in teaching and learning (such as Learning Management System) is relatively low, and even the basic ICT-based tools were not used in teaching/ learning at RAFA. Further, the use of student-centred teaching and outcome-based education practices by the staff were also minimally observed.

Review team could not observe best practices such as recognition of excellence in teaching or academic performance, peer evaluations and student evaluation of courses. Review team strongly suggest that RAFA administration and faculty must take determined efforts to foster adoption of

good practices prescribed, and assist students to excel in their academic activities.

Criterion 6: Learning environment, student support and progression

RAFA offers an orientation programme for the new entrants which is aimed at educating incoming students about the university, academic rules and regulations, disciplinary matters, and on study programmes and related matter - learning resources, student support services and facilities.

It was noted that the academics and students have a good understanding among each other. No evidence was found on having regular departmental meetings. Documentary evidences as regard to many of the activities happening at RAFA were absent, and that deficiency appears to be major drawback for the progress and future existence of RAFA

Students have been encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities, and it was noted that the students were able to bring credit to the University and RAFA in the form of awards in national competitions. RAFA needs to gather information regularly about the satisfaction of students with regard to study programme, teaching and learning methods as well as support services and facilities provided to them. This information should be used as a feedback for the improvement of the curriculum and learner support services and facilities.

Health Centre operates with two doctors on shift basis within normal working hours, and hence no services are available during after-hours. Only one matron, one pharmacist, one technician and two nurses are serving at the Health Centre. Laboratory services are available to do elementary basic tests like blood counts, lipid profile, etc. The services are provided free for students, but nominal fees are charged for the staff as the case with other residential universities. Infra-structure and facilities at the Health Centre should be further expanded to provide better services, considering the increasing number of students entering into the university system.

Monitoring committees for hostels and canteens are available, but whether the management of hostels are regulated by administration was not apparent to the team. However, the existence of such a committee is considered as a positive point. Students are provided with facilities for field trips to enhance student interactions with 'world of work'.

Co-curricular activities were in place; video productions, drama festivals, student's drama staging to foster their performances and enhance student interactions among themselves and with near-by communities were some of the activities noted. Instruments needed for the aesthetic pursuits and performances were not available in adequate numbers. Students appear to face problems in recording their composed music pieces and stage dramas, etc., and, therefore, an efficient system needs to be established for the optimum use and maintenance of available

facilities and instruments.

Review team suggests implementing an academic advisory/mentoring system to support the students to guide them from their entry until graduation. Groups of students must be assigned respective academic staff members, and these student groups could maintain close interaction with the assigned advisors till their graduation.

Criteria 7: Student Assessment and Awards

Multiple assessment strategies were adopted in the study programmes. Continuous assessments are used in most courses, but most often the results of such assessments are delayed. As a result, the real purpose of doing continuous assessment was not achieved. It is important to reveal the level of achievement at each and every assessment in time. Subjective assessment procedures too were identified with different components. Review team observed commitments from the Heads (Music and Dance), coordinators and members of the staff. Research study and dissertation assessment method also available in some departments but the assessment procedures were not uniform. It was noted that the supervisor has a major contribution to the final grade of the research study which is inappropriate and unfair. Review team suggests reducing the contribution of the supervisor in assessment. Nonetheless, review members noticed that students were happy about their assessment process.

It was noticed that the examination results are displayed on notices boards with their names and index numbers. Revealing the identity along with examination results on a notice board is not a healthy practice, which needs to be reviewed by RAFA authorities.

RAFA has not maintained records and information on retention, progression, completion and graduation rates. Review team encourages use of an appropriate information recording system which is an essential element in quality assurance process.

Even though there were some awards allocated for RAFA students as indicated in the previous handbooks of the Faculty of Arts, no evidence was found for existence of such a rewarding system at present. Establishment of an award system for both the students and staff will enhance their performance in their academic pursuits. Review team suggests that the performance appraisal and rewards system should be revamped and applied on a continuous basis.

Criteria 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices

According to the details provided with respect to physical education, RAFA students have engaged in national and international level sports activities.

RAFA does not have a dedicated centre or unit to promote the use of ICT-based technologies and tools (such as LMS) and facilitate students in having access to new knowledge in fine arts disciplines available in public domain. Review team wishes to propose that RAFA must establish a dedicated computer centre/unit for this purpose.

RAFA does not appear to have formalized linkages with outside organizations. Review team wishes to encourage RAFA to organise some programmes, seminars and workshops in collaboration with outside organisations. Further, it is encouraged to maintain links with neighbouring state and private sector organisations as well.

RAFA has not practised performance appraisal and rewards systems to encourage academics. Review team suggests strengthening research activities by establishing a performance appraisal and reward system.

RAFA does not offer credit transfer and fallback systems. It is suggested to establish a fall back system and credit transfer system for all study programmes.

Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance of the Study Programmes

The assessment made by the review team based on the criteria and standards, and the scoring system prescribed by the “Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions”, on the level of accomplishment of quality and standards of three study programmes, namely,

- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art & Design)
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance), and
- Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music)

are given below.

a) Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art & Design)

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria wise score
01	Programme Management	75	102
02	Human and Physical Resources	50	72
03	Programme Design and Development	75	77
04	Course / Module Design and Development	75	84
05	Teaching and Learning	75	71
06	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	57
07	Student Assessment and Awards	75	100
08	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	15
Study Programme total score on a thousand scale			578
Study Programme score as a percentage			58
Performance Grade			D

Performance Descriptor	Unsatisfactory
Interpretation of Descriptor	
<i>“Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvements in all aspects”.</i>	

Based on the above evaluation made, the review team recommends that the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art & Design) study programme of the Ramanathan Academic of Fine Arts of University of Jaffna is awarded the performance grade of ‘D’, which is interpreted as *“Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in all aspects”*.

b) Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance)

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria wise score
01	Programme Management	75	102
02	Human and Physical Resources	50	72
03	Programme Design and Development	75	77
04	Course / Module Design and Development	75	84
05	Teaching and Learning	75	95
06	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	49
07	Student Assessment and Awards	75	112
08	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	19
Study Programme total score on a thousand scale			610
Study Programme score as a percentage			61
Performance Grade			C

Performance Descriptor	Satisfactory
Interpretation of Descriptor	
<i>“Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvements in several aspects”.</i>	

Based on the above evaluation made, the review team recommends that the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) study programme of the Ramanathan Academic of Fine Arts of University of Jaffna is awarded the performance grade of ‘C’, which is interpreted as *“Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvements in several aspects”.*

c) Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music)

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria wise score
01	Programme Management	75	102
02	Human and Physical Resources	50	72
03	Programme Design and Development	75	75
04	Course / Module Design and Development	75	76
05	Teaching and Learning	75	89
06	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	50
07	Student Assessment and Awards	75	100
08	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	17
Study Programme total score on a thousand scale			581
Study Programme score as a percentage			58
Performance Grade			D

Performance Descriptor	Unsatisfactory
Interpretation of Descriptor	
<i>“Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvements in all aspects”.</i>	

Based on the above evaluation made, the review team recommends that the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music) study programme of the Ramanathan Academic of Fine Arts of University of Jaffna is awarded the performance grade of ‘D’, which is interpreted as *“Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in all aspects”*.

Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations

The following section provides an overview of the study programmes in terms of strengths and weaknesses as identified by the review team. The recommendations made by the review team would certainly be useful in introducing reforms for improving quality and standards of three study programmes.

Criteria 1: Programme Management

Commendations

- ✓ Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts (RAFA) is an integral part of the Faculty of Arts (FoA) of the University of Jaffna (UoJ).
- ✓ RAFA follows the rules, regulations, and procedures and guidelines adopted by the FoA and UoJ.
- ✓ RAFA has made attempts to set up collaboration with local universities and foreign universities (Norway and India).
- ✓ RAFA has dedicated, competent and qualified academic staff.
- ✓ Students are very enthusiastic about their study programmes.

Recommendations

- ✓ RAFA need to design and develop a handbook (i.e. Students Handbook) that contains all relevant information on the institute, study programmes, rules and regulations, student support services and facilities.
- ✓ Students Handbook must be distributed to incoming students at the commencement of their study programmes.
- ✓ RAFA needs to develop its own Website and post the relevant information on regular basis.
- ✓ RAFA must streamline the information and data gathering and document compilation process.
- ✓ RAFA needs to prepare its Action Plan in accordance with Strategic Plan of the UoJ, and execute it meticulously to facilitate progressive improvement in all aspects, including the quality and standards of its study programmes.
- ✓ RAFA must strengthen the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in order to promote internalization of best practices.

Criteria 2: Human and Physical Resources

Commendations

- ✓ Dedicated young academic staff
- ✓ Committed undergraduates who are enthusiastic in their academic pursuits.
- ✓ Conducive environment for teaching and learning.
- ✓ Availability of essential equipment and instruments for practical training components of three study programmes

Recommendations

- ✓ Arrange more continuous professional development programme for the academic staff of RAFA, particularly in areas of outcome-based education and student-centred teaching and learning, curricula and course design and development, teaching and learning, and assessment methods, quality assurance, etc.
- ✓ RAFA must take efforts to increase the cadre of postgraduate-level qualified staff.
- ✓ RAFA must take measures to improve maintenance and storage of equipment and instruments.
- ✓ Common amenities such as ICT facilities, health care services, sports facilities, hostel facilities, and cafeteria services need to be strengthened
- ✓ Library facilities at RAFA must be further strengthened to promote greater utilization by students.
- ✓ Teaching support units such as Art Gallery, Theatre and Photography Studio need to be further strengthened.

Criteria 3: Programme Design and Development

Commendations

- ✓ Inherent traditional approach of student-centred teaching and learning is adopted in imparting practical skills.
- ✓ Study programmes embrace deep rooted culture and traditions, and focus on preserving local culture, traditions and values.

Recommendations

- ✓ Revise the curricula of all three-study programme to align them with SLQF guidelines, and also in compliance with respective Subject Benchmark Statements, if available.

- ✓ Streamline the curriculum design and development, management and review process by appointing a standing committee on curriculum matters with well-defined Terms of Reference.
- ✓ Introduce an internship training component into the curricula of all three study programmes.
- ✓ Adopt student-centred teaching and learning in imparting theory-based aspects/elements of courses/modules.
- ✓ Adopt student-centred teaching and learning approach in programme delivery to promote students' soft skills development.
- ✓ Provide wider range of optional courses in non-core subject areas for students to choose to broaden their outlook.
- ✓ Seek stakeholder participation and inputs in programme and course curricula design and development process.

Criteria 4: Course / Module Design and Development

Commendations

- ✓ Attempts were made to identify and introduce ILOs for study programmes and courses.
- ✓ Course contents and volume of learning are in conformity with the defined credit values.
- ✓ Collaborative learning and team work were visible among the students.

Recommendations

- ✓ Revise curricula of all courses to ensure compliance with SLQF guidelines, and align course ILOs constructively with programme learning outcomes. Once it is achieved, align the course contents and teaching and learning and assessments methods of courses to realize respective intended learning outcomes.
- ✓ Develop course specifications for all courses based on course curricula, and make them available for students at the commencement of respective courses.
- ✓ Incorporate appropriate media and technology in course design and delivery and assessments.
- ✓ Provide extensive training for academic staff on curricula design and development, adopting outcome-based and student-centred learning (OBE-SCL) approach.

Criteria 5: Teaching and Learning

Commendations

- ✓ Encouragement given to students for engagement in creative and collaborative learning.

- ✓ Fair allocation of work load to staff.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Align teaching and learning approach and methods with the vision and mission of the University.
- ✓ Provide course specifications to the students at the commencement of respective courses.
- ✓ Provide extensive training for academic staff on modern teaching and learning methods.
- ✓ Adopt blended teaching and learning approach by sensible use of variety of delivery methods, learning methods and ICT-based technologies and tools.
- ✓ Develop and adopt key performance indicators (KPIs) for the programmes, and routinely assess the level of achievement against the KPIs, and identify limitations and constraints and introduce corrective measures to overcome such limitations and constraints.
- ✓ Obtain regular feedback from students on courses contents and teaching and learning.
- ✓ Introduce peer evaluation of teachers

Criteria 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression

Commendations

- ✓ Provision of conducive learning environment.
- ✓ Providing an orientation programme for incoming students.

Recommendations

- ✓ Strengthen capacity of administrative, technical and support staff.
- ✓ Strengthen student counselling and mentoring systems.
- ✓ Take steps to address student's grievances expeditiously and effectually.
- ✓ Introduce measures and programmes to promote soft skills development of students
- ✓ Introduce the processes to monitor continuous improvement and progression of students.
- ✓ Establish fall-back options for those who fail to complete the programme successfully, and also for those who wish to exit the programme at lower level.
- ✓ Increase the collaboration with Alumni and seek their inputs for progressive improvements of study programmes and the institute.

Criteria 7: Student Assessment and Awards

Commendations

- ✓ Provision of Student Transcripts with essential information.

- ✓ Assessment procedures are identified for different components – theory and practical components.

Recommendations

- ✓ Review the assessment procedure for student research and dissertation component to balance the weightages given for supervisor and examiner(s).
- ✓ Provide continuous assessment marks in timely manner to students
- ✓ Avoid displaying results with names of students.
- ✓ Commence collecting and compilation of data on retention, progression, completion and graduation rates.
- ✓ Streamline the examination process to process and release results within the stipulated time.

Criteria 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices

Commendations

- ✓ Students engagement in national and international sports and allied activities.

Recommendations

- ✓ Establish a dedicated computer facility within the RAFA.
- ✓ Seek the assistance from University Computer Centre to install a learner management system and train the staff and students on the application of ICT-based tools in teaching and learning and assessments.
- ✓ Implement a credit transfer system.
- ✓ Establish linkage with outside organizations.
- ✓ Introduce an appraisal and reward system to encourage academics to excel in teaching, research and outreach activities.

Section 8: Summary

Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts attached to the Faculty of Arts at the University of Jaffna is a unique academic institute dedicated to preserve the traditional forms of music, art, dance and culture in the region, and endorse them for the future generations. And, it offers three valuable academic study programmes to prospective students. Programmes are conducted in Tamil medium, and the institute provides conducive and inspiring environment for academics and students in their academic pursuits.

In terms of quality assurance aspects, the RAFA is at a preliminary stage. It is indeed reflected in the quality assurance assessment outcomes of three study programmes; only the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance) study programme is awarded the performance grade of 'C', while the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Art & Design) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (Music) study programmes are awarded the performance grade of 'D'. It is imperative that all three-study programmes have to initiate reforms in all aspects, listed under 8 criteria to achieve the expected quality and standards.

Therefore, the higher management of the University must provide special attention to RAFA, and introduce quick and appropriate remedial measures to improve the quality and standards of all academic and allied activities. Academics of RAFA must make determined effort to understand the concept of quality in higher education, and become familiar with the principles and prescribed best practices. They must make persistent efforts to internalize prescribed best practices in their core activities – programme design and development, delivery and assessments, student guidance and support services, research and innovations and outreach activities.

Review team strongly feels the communication gap between the RAFA and the university higher management in quality assurance aspects needs to be addressed immediately. Further, the University needs to improve the basic facilities at RAFA and strengthen the administrative structure and governance and management aspects prior to granting its separation from the main campus. It is indeed conceivable that without aforementioned administrative and academic reforms, the RAFA may become an isolated academy with no improvement.