



# PROGRAM REVIEW 2017

University of Jaffna  
Faculty of Arts  
Religious and Culture

# ***Report of the Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes***

## ***University of Jaffna***

### ***BA (Honours) Degree Programmes – Drama & Theatre Arts, Fine Arts,***

### ***Hindu Civilization, Hindu Philosophy, Philosophy and***

### ***Christian and Islamic Civilizations***

***15 – 17 November 2017***

#### ***Section 1: Brief Introduction to the Programme***

Rooted in the cultural ethos of the Northern Province, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Jaffna (UoJ) has made a significant academic contribution in the course of the last 43 years (1974 – 2017). It has adopted dynamic policies for quality education and focuses on contemporary approaches towards teaching, learning and research activities. It is located in the main campus of the UoJ. Earlier known as the Faculty of Humanities consisting of four departments, namely, Tamil, Sinhala, Hindu Civilization and History, it became the Faculty of Arts in 1981 incorporating six other new departments, namely, Departments of Economics, Geography, Islamic Civilization, Sanskrit, Philosophy and Languages and the Unit of Cultural Studies. In 1980, the Department of Education was established with facilities for Post Graduate Studies offering a Post Graduate Diploma, a Master's Degree and a Doctoral Degree. After 1983, the Institute of Indigenous Medicine, which was affiliated to the University of Colombo, was transferred to the UoJ as a department under the Faculty of Arts (1984 to 1998). Languages and Cultural Studies Unit became the Department of Linguistics and English, and the Department of Christian and Islamic Civilizations. A Centre for Teaching English as a Second Language was also established during this period. The Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts, which was taken over by the UoJ on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1975, functions with Departments of Music and Dance. The Academy provides degree courses in music, Pannisai, Veena, Violin, Miruthangam, Dance, and Art & Design.

The subject areas of political science and sociology were taught in the Department of Economics which became independent departments called Department of Political Science and Department of Sociology in 1998. The Department of Law was established in May 2005 as a Department of

the Faculty of Arts. The Faculty of Arts was further expanded by the introduction of new disciplines such as Psychology, Art and Design, Planning, Home Economics, Hindu Philosophy, Archaeology, Anthropology, Media Studies and Translation Stud. disciplines such as Psychology, Art and Design, Planning, Home Economics, Hindu Philosophy, Archaeology, Anthropology, Media Studies and Translation Studies.

The Faculty of Arts accommodates the majority of students who enter the UoJ. It offers a full range of Social Science and Humanities degree programmes as well as Fine Arts subjects. At present, the faculty is served by 137 academic staff members - two Senior Professors, nine Professors, five Associate Professors, 71 Senior Lecturers and 43 Probationary Lecturers. More than 42% of the senior staff hold local or foreign PhDs and 42% constitute women. The Faculty conducts Post-Graduate Diploma, M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. programmes. At the moment 15 departments offer General Degree & Special Degree Programmes covering 29 principal subjects, namely, B.A. (Special), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) and LL.B. Degrees.

The cluster (Humanities II – Religion and Culture) consisted of six B.A. (Special) Degree Programmes in Hindu civilization, Hindu Philosophy (Saiva Siddhanta), Philosophy, Fine Arts, Drama & Theatre Arts and Christian Civilization and Islamic Civilization. Under these subject areas, there are also B.A. (General) Degrees as well as Post-Graduate Degrees.

Out of the 16 departments of the faculty, 14 were reviewed by the QAA panels of the Subject Review conducted by the UGC between 2005 and 2010, and they have incorporated the improvements such as syllabus revisions and methods of evaluation.

Humanities II - Religion and Culture			Drama & Theatre	Fine Arts	Hindu Civilization	Hindu Philosophy	Philosophy	Christian Civilization
The number of students enrolled in each of the subject areas under review	2012		24	22	34	20	47	29
	2013		25	16	32	4	27	27
	2014		28	16	20	5	31	14
	2015		29	20	28	10	29	27
	2016		33	24	36	17	38	27
The profile and the number of academic, non-academic and support staff serving the departments offering the degree programmes under review	Academic	Professor/Associate Professor		1	2		2	1
		Senior Lecturer Gr I	1	1	4			1
		Senior Lecturer Gr II	2	1	1		1	
		Lecturer				1		
		Lecturer (Probationary)	4	2	1	1	1	3
	Non Academic	CAA	1	1		1	1	3
		Clerk			1			
		Technical office						
		Lab Attendant						
		Labourer	1					1

## ***Section 2: Review Team's Observations on the Self-Evaluation Report***

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) was carefully prepared separating documents common to the six programmes under review and those specific to each programme. The SWOT analysis included 'good practices' as well as 'weaknesses'. It was brief and did not include a comprehensive analysis, nonetheless it was an objective report of the present state of the faculty. Those involved in preparing the SER had lined up most of the documents available including the Corporate Plan. It was observed that the programmes are planned and conducted according to the guidelines of the SLQF as well as in line with the vision, mission and objectives of the UoJ and those of the faculty, to the best of their ability and within the limits of available resources. Much work has been done though there is room for improvement.

The preparation of SER had been done in several steps. The preparatory work had begun with eight staff members working on the eight criteria and subsequently sub-committees consisting of six members had been appointed to continue the work. Finally five lecturers had been appointed to proceed with writing according to the instructions laid down in the manual.

The recommendations of the last Subject Review done in 2010 included (i) awarding 60% of the marks for the end-of-semester examinations and 40% for assignments etc., (ii) strengthening peer observation procedures, (iii) streamlining student feedback system, and (iv) encouraging international training. Among these the marks system has been rethought in subsequent syllabus revisions, the student feedback system has been improved but peer reviews still need to be done systematically, and junior staff still require training in high ranking international universities.

### ***Section 3: A Brief Description of the Review Process***

The review team comprised Prof. Shirley Wijesinghe (Professor, University of Kelaniya), Prof. V. Maheswaran (Professor, University of Peradeniya), Dr. Erandathie Lokupitiya (Senior Lecturer, University of Colombo) and Dr. Inoka Uluwaduge (Senior Lecturer, University of Sri Jayewardenepura). Prof. Wijesinghe served as the chairperson of the review team.

The review process of the Faculty of Arts - Humanities II was conducted from 15 -17 November 2017. During the review, the team stayed at Tilco City Hotel, Jaffna.

The review visit began with a moment of welcome by the Dean, Faculty of Arts, after which the team met the Coordinator, Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC), who was also serving as the Acting Director, Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU). She provided a summary of the work done by the IQAU to improve the quality of the Degree Programmes under purview. In addition, she mentioned that the University of Jaffna is one of the two universities which had undergone the COLRIM review recently, the other being the Open University of Sri Lanka.

After a lively discussion with the Coordinator, FQAC, the review team stretched into the next item in the agenda, which was a meeting with the Vice Chancellor, who spoke enthusiastically about the campus and the faculty.

The next meeting was with the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, who was extremely energetic, enthusiastic, and articulate about nearly every aspect of his faculty after which a meeting was held with the Heads of the Departments. After meeting the Heads, the review team met with the academic staff. Dr. T. Sanathan, Head of the Department of Fine Arts briefly presented the SER writing process.

Some academic members spoke about challenges faced by graduates in the job market, as some of the vacancies which should be filled by those qualified in a particular subject area are filled by others who possess degrees irrelevant to the particular employment. The reviewers suggested that some of the lectures be conducted in English to compete with the international job market. In response, the Head of the Department of Fine Arts said that they have already started delivering some of the lectures in English, as they were also aware of the situation. During the discussion that followed the reviewers also had important questions to ask for which the Dean and the staff members provided confident and elaborate answers. The Dean and the faculty members talked at length about student ragging. Furthermore, they added that despite several mechanisms in place, the university had failed to stop this tradition.

In the afternoon, the review team examined the evidence indicated in the SER. The documents were kept systematically and it was commendable that all departments and relevant degree programmes had been maintaining the documents referred to in the SER. All academic members assigned for the task were very well prepared. The Fine Arts programme possessed many additional documents as proof of their quality work (in addition to the common documents). Dr. T. Sanathan of the Department of Fine Arts deserves mention for his significant contribution to achieve quality in the Fine Arts programme.

The meeting with administrative officers revealed that the administrative work is well-planned. The discussions with the students of the relevant degree Programmes unveiled that most of the students are satisfied with the degree programmes being pursued. But the students following the Drama & Theatre (Special) Degree Programme reported that the infra-structure facilities for the practical training needs vast improvement. The issue of ragging was seriously discussed with the students, and the majority of the students were for ragging though it is a tough experience.

On the following day reviewers visited all the departments delivering the Degree Programmes to observe the facilities and teaching learning process. The team observed several practical classes and lecture sessions and appreciated the enthusiastic teaching sessions conducted by the staff members. With minimum facilities the effort taken by a senior lecturer on a voice training practical class was commendable. The discussions with the academic staff revealed that theatre facilities with sound proofing and lighting system is not provided for teaching. The classroom cleanliness called for greater attention, a cleaner classroom environment needs to be maintained.

The review panel visited the Gender Equality and Equity Centre, Staff Development Centre, Health Centre, and Hostels, and discussed the services provided by each unit. The team also noted that hostel facilities are provided to a large number of students. The library with an up-to-date collection of books and reading materials provides a user friendly environment. However the team could not observe the Career Guidance Unit and therefore was not in a position to evaluate its performance.

A meeting with the non-academic staff was also held and the main issue discussed was the inadequacy of the non-academic staff personnel.

The final wrap up meeting took place as the last item of the agenda of the review visit on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November with the Dean of the Faculty and the staff members of the relevant degree programmes. Several issues were highlighted by the review team. One such problem brought to Dean's attention was funding co-curricular/research activities of the final year students. The Dean

explained that he was not informed by any member of the staff and on request some kind of financial assistant could be provided. (The time table is annexed).

The review team is thankful to the Dean of the Faculty, Heads and the academic members of the relevant degree programmes and also to non-academic staff for the cooperation extended and hospitality shown throughout the review process.



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

The University of Jaffna has ten faculties, including the Faculty of Arts. The total student population in the university is 7500. The quality assurance aspects of the university and its programmes have been evaluated so far by several review teams, including the institutional review carried out in 2011 (IR-2011), the subject review of 2012 (SR-2012), and the review by the Commonwealth of Learning- Review and Implementation Model (COLRIM) of 2013. In addition, a subject review of Fine Arts had been carried out in 2009.

The IQAU of the University was established in 2015, a quality assurance policy framework and by laws have been developed and have received the approval from the Senate and the Council of the university. Based on a recommendation by the IR of 2011, faculty level internal quality assurance cells and by laws have been developed. Currently FQACs exist and Prof. (Mrs) S. Ramesh serves as the Coordinator of the FQAC in the Arts Faculty. IQAU has facilitated the preparation of the SER with the support of the FQAC and the academic members of the faculty. The recommendations of the reviews so far done with the intention of improving the quality of education at the university have been given serious consideration, with maximum efforts to address those recommendations through the approval of the Senate and the Council.

The self-review prepared by the University of Jaffna for COLRIM in 2013 (COLRIM- 2013) has been 'COLRIM verified', by the external review team who evaluated the self-review. The COLRIM verification has confirmed that "the institution is willing and able to do a factual evidence-based analysis of its performance, identify issues to be addressed and make plans to do so." According to the verification given by the COLRIM team, an institute verified by COLRIM has the capacity to respond to a changing environment and to strive to meet stakeholders' needs and expectations. According to the Acting Director of IQAU, the university has already taken steps to address the recommendations given by the CR 2013.

Currently the PR for the Arts Faculty is ongoing. An IR and another PR for certain other specific programmes including Law, Commerce and Business Studies, etc., have been planned for 2018. The IQAU has already been preparing for the IR to be conducted in 2018, while monitoring the implementation of recommendations of the IR-2011, SR-2012, and COLRIM-2013. Seminars and workshops have been conducted by the IQAU to create awareness about quality assurance.

Although IQAU office was inaugurated in 2015, it had begun functioning only in June 2017. The mobilizing of the staff and students towards a quality framework, especially in the Faculty of Arts, where the primary medium of instruction has been Tamil, has been a challenge; in addition,

the implementation of the recommendations by the review teams has been a challenge, especially due to lack of cadre and delays in new appointments.

In maintaining the quality of education, the Faculty of Arts has taken steps to revise its syllabi to incorporate learning outcomes, and course objectives, etc., although moving to SLQF has been a slow process. The Subject Benchmark Statements published by the UGC for different disciplines have hardly been considered due to the structure and the course contents under different disciplines. However, certain programmes have been following other relevant international SBS's from UK and USA, etc., considering the practical aspects of implementation. The dedication of the faculty to establish a student-centered teaching and learning environment was obvious during the visit of the review team. International collaboration has been established by a few programmes and others need to establish such links to assure quality.

## ***Section 5: Judgement on the Eight Criteria of the Programme Review***

### ***5.1: Programme Management***

The faculty functions efficiently in managing the degree programmes under review. The financial management is done by a central body though the faculty wishes that the financial procedures be decentralized for greater efficacy. The annual academic calendar is followed carefully though perturbed by negative student activism. A faculty handbook consisting of learning resources, student support services etc., has been distributed among students.

Certain degree programmes under review have posted their syllabi in the university website though many have not, and in certain subject areas, the syllabus is given to students on piecemeal basis. The faculty website is up-to-date and provides a significant volume of information. An induction programme for all new entrants is conducted at the beginning of every academic year, and a student code of conduct is given. The student records including examination details are securely maintained. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is being used in teaching and learning in certain lessons – some lecturers have taken greater interest in this mode and others less.

There is no Computer Assisted Learning (something similar to Moodle) in place.

A list of duties and work norms have been given to non-academic, technical and support sectors, but not to the academic staff except the UGC circular on the teaching load; an appraisal system for the academic staff is not in place. The Quality Assurance Cell of the faculty has worked laboriously to prepare the programme review. There was interest and excellent support by the Dean of the Faculty, the Heads of Departments, the senior and junior academic staff and the Deputy Registrar. The stakeholder feedbacks have not been sufficiently considered in designing most of the curricula and certain curricula have not been planned *en bloc* but received approval level after level in a sequence. This may disturb the ‘centre of gravity’ of a particular degree programme. Though some degree programmes have adopted Subject Benchmarks others need to work on this area with greater care. Once a curriculum is in place, the programme is not altered (except recent bibliographical information) till the students who began the degree programme under the given curriculum complete their degree. Student feedback is properly done though there is no overall standard tool for the exercise. The peer review process needs to be improved. Among the degree programmes under review, three have been extensively engaged with other national partners and one degree programme with foreign bodies. The international collaboration

is minimal and there is no MOU in place with international universities. The student counselling and health care systems are functioning well, yet there is no mechanism for academic counselling except for informal guidance. The by-laws pertaining to examinations and student discipline as well as guidelines for student unions are in place. There are students who are victims of the civil war and who need special assistance. The faculty is doing its best to cater to these students, but there are no lifts to facilitate their movement in multi-storied buildings. The Gender Equality and Equity Centre has been newly established to facilitate gender based activities. Although there is a code of conduct given to students, the practice of ragging continues and the students reported that there is also man-handling. The staff is unable to curb this trend without the support of the student body.

### ***5.2: Human and Physical Resources***

There is an energetic young promising staff dedicated to the delivery of academic programmes and research. But the existing number of staff is insufficient. There are very few who hold degrees

from high ranking international universities/higher education institutions. The number of professors are insufficient. The staff has been engaged in research and publications, but they should be encouraged to publish in international indexed or referred journals. An induction programme for the newly recruited staff is being conducted.

The departments delivering the degree programmes under review are maximizing the available infra-structure resources. But all classrooms and other spaces used for research in the different departments by the staff needs refurbishing.

Some degree programmes are engaging their students in compulsory field work and this needs to be adopted by the other degree programmes as well. The outcome based learning (OBE) and student-centered learning is being done by most of the lecturers.

The library facilities are up to date with print and electronic forms. The staff ensures also the availability of the library resources, and facilitates the access to other specialized libraries in Jaffna. English Language Teaching is assured by the compulsory courses integrated into the curriculum and ‘soft skills’ and ‘life skills’ training is also integrated into the curriculum.

All degree programmes under review had conducted multicultural programees and some departments have organized seminars to promote ethnic cohesion.

### ***5.3: Programme Design and Development***

The faculty has given priority to regular curriculum revisions, latest being the COLRIM; the SLQF guidelines are followed. Some programmes are quite weak in seeking the views of stakeholders (Christian civilization and Dram & Theatre Arts) while others had such inputs. The department of Fine Arts demonstrates high quality in the area of programme design and development such as curriculum design, management and revision and the stake holder consultations have been considered. It is striving hard to achieve international standards.

None of the programmes have worked out the fall back options or the early exit points. The students will use those options if they are available only. Only some programmes have incorporated fieldwork in their curricula. The internships are well organized by Fine Arts. The other programmes need to be innovative in securing internships wherever possible. Although there were differently abled students, a resource center was not available to facilitate the needs of those students.

### ***5.4: Course/Module Design and Development***

The programmes under review have developed the curricula in consultation with internal expertise; the curricula of Fine Arts has received external expertise as well. Professional satisfaction surveys and documentary (though rudimentary) evidence on student destination after graduation was available for the Fine Arts programme.

The relevant course specifications have been made available to students by all programmes under review. The elective courses/ modules were not available in Drama & Theater Arts curriculum. The handbook/prospectus given to students is very attractively designed and includes basic information about the courses. Some programmes give detailed information about the modules.

Student centered teaching methods are utilized by all programmes; independent research projects undertaken by students are impressive, and a considerable effort has gone into planning those projects. It is commendable that the Fine Arts programme displays student performances in the small Art Gallery of the department. It was noted that the final year projects of Drama & Theatre Arts are self-funded by students themselves and this is unaffordable for some.

The evaluation of all course units are done with the completion of the teaching process often at the end of each semester. The staff has received required training regarding curriculum, teaching and learning processes.

### ***5.5: Teaching and Learning***

Teaching and learning strategies are in accordance with the university cooperate plan and faculty action plan. The faculty issues student handbooks at the beginning of the study programmes and time tables at the beginning of each academic year. The Peer Review Reports are not available for some study programmes, but external examiners' reports are available. The programmes followed by differently abled students are taken care of except for the fact that lifts not available for easy movement of the differently abled students in multi-storied buildings.

The use of LMS was not available to facilitate teaching and learning. Most of the staff members were engaged in research activities and a considerable number of lecturers had participated in local

research conferences and a few have attended conferences overseas. Some degree programmes have made self-learning and collaborative learning compulsory integrated into the curriculum. Students following the special degree programmes under review write a thesis in the final year which calls for multiple research skills. Some degree programmes have encouraged the publication of student research. The student satisfaction reports are rather inadequate except for one degree programme. The workload has been equally distributed, but some are overworked due to multiple assignments involving a large number of students.

### ***5.6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression***

Reasonable learning environment is available enabling students to successfully achieve the ILO's. The library facilities are in place but as stated above LMS needs to be introduced. The programmes under review such as Fine Arts and Drama & Theatre Arts demand extended facilities for training, especially for drama practice and such spaces are insufficient given the number of students who are following the programmes. Student counselling is available but supporting needy students in academic issues depends on the Heads of Departments and the teaching staff since there is no academic counselling done formally. Students receive regular training especially at the second level with the commencement of special degree programmes regarding facilities aiding learning and reaching academic excellence by the teaching staff.

Career guidance and physical education facilities are available, ICT learning and English learning are compulsory.

Most degree programmes of the Faculty of Arts have their own libraries with some of the essential text books. At the beginning of the academic year, the faculty conducts an orientation programme for the newly admitted students. The staff members are facilitated by the staff development center to acquire competency in teaching and learning. Tracer surveys had been conducted only by some departments but co-curricular activities such as welcome and going down functions, sports meet, multi-cultural activities, language day, field trip etc. have been well organized. Most of the staff members are cordial and helpful in their dealings with students, and much has been done in this regard by way of discussion classes, arranging events and outreach programmes. Some programmes under review have well organized internships and others need to work hard on this

and make internships curricular. The Fine Arts programme is commendable in regard to the organization of internships. Not many MOUs with other leading academies bodies have been signed. The fallback and credit transfer systems need to be introduced. A mechanism is available to respond to student grievances; regular contacts with alumni are maintained only by some degree programmes.

### ***5.7: Student Assessment and Awards***

Summative and formative student assessment methods are used in student evaluation with a clearly defined weightage of marks common to the university (40 percent for formative and 60 percent for summative assessment) ensuring regular participation of the students in relevant activities. Formative component generally consists of mid-semester examination, tutorials, assignments, and student presentations. However, according to the academics of the faculty, this scheme of allocation is not appropriate for certain disciplines (e.g. Drama & Theatre), and a programme-specific assessment criteria or weightage would suit better.

On the average, the formative assessment component includes the assignments/tutorials, field work, presentations, and mid-semester examination. The student attendance is regularly monitored. In assessing students, both internal examiners and external examiners have been appointed and the answer scripts and marks are moderated according to a pre-determined marking scheme but there is no particular ToR being used for the external examiners. Each examination question counts 100 marks. The result sheets are issued to students at the end of each semester. The students are encouraged by awards and scholarships based on merit. Faculty level best

student award is given each semester, and each department has a memorial scholarship/award as well.

### ***5.8: Innovative and Healthy Practices***

Currently most of the courses are being transformed to SLQF with ILO's and clear objectives, although the need for constructive alignment is a concern. The use of OERs can be seen in almost every degree programme.

As stated above, some programmes under review collaborate with certain local and foreign institutions including universities, however, signing MoUs would promote and provide better opportunities such as student and staff exchange. The support for gender equity and equality has been shown by the recent establishment of the Gender Equality and Equity Center. The

organization of annual conferences and other events with students is commendable. The co-curricular activities including exhibitions and field work targeting the interactions with the community and other learning opportunities have been an important component of every programme.

The outcome based learning (OBE) and student-centered learning are conducted by most of the lecturers, who make extra effort to improve the soft skills and life skills prompting creativity (e.g. theatre projects) and promoting critical and analytical thinking (e.g. debating and finding analytical solutions within classrooms on specific topics).



### ***Section 6: Grading on Overall Performance of the Programme***

No	Criteria	Weighted Minimum Score	Actual Criteria-wise score					
			Hindu Civili.	Hindu Phil.	Phil.	Chr. Civil.	Fine Arts	Drama & Theatre
1	Programme Management	75	111	109	106	111	106	107
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	78	78	81	78	89	72
3	Programme Design and Development	75	100	110	108	108	135	108
4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	129	129	129	132	139	124
5	Teaching and Learning	75	76	76	95	111	113	84
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	65	67	72	72	70	61
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	124	124	124	124	124	124
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	25	25	25	25	29	25
Total on a thousand scale			708	718	739	760	804	705
Overall marks (%)			<b>71</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>71</b>
Grades			B	B	B	B	A	B

The undergraduate Degree Programme B.A. in Fine Arts has obtained ‘A’ grade and Hindu Civilization, Hindu Philosophy, Philosophy, Christian Civilization, Fine Arts,

Drama & Theatre have received 'B' grades. The overall performance of Fine Arts is commendable, but it is important to note that the programme has obtained 80 marks which means there is considerable room to improve to achieve excellence. Furthermore, the marks are rather low in the 8th criterion on 'innovative and healthy practices'. The programmes Hindu Philosophy, Hindu Civilization, and Drama & Theatre Arts need to work substantially to achieve excellence given the number of lacunae in 'Teaching and Learning,' 'Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression,' as well as 'Innovative and Healthy Practices.' The marks given to individual programmes are not merely achievements of the departments as Criterion 1 (Programme Management), most standards of Criterion 2 (Human and Physical Resources), Criterion 6 (Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression), and Criterion 7 (Student Assessment and Awards) are common documents. Hence, it is a combined effort of the Faculty of Arts in general. This is an indication to show that the achievement of excellence cannot be reached solely by the efforts of the academic staff of the programmes, but also the faculty as well as the university in general. The infrastructure improvements depend on the faculty as well as the university and cadres depend on the UGC on which also depend the success of the degree programmes. This in no way diminishes the responsibility of the staff who are the main agents of quality assurance of the degree programmes.

## ***Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations***

### ***Commendations***

1. The quality assurance centre is enthusiastically engaged in improving the quality of the degree programmes.
2. The finances are well managed.
3. The students have been provided with the learning resources such library facilities, internet facilities, and even access to specialized libraries in the peninsula. Most degree programmes of the Faculty of Arts have their own departmental libraries with some of the essential textbooks.
4. ICT and English learning are compulsory for all students.
5. Codes of conduct are in place for non-academic staff as well as students.
6. Regular training is offered to all members of the academic staff.
7. Student counselling and health care are available, and the Gender Equality and Equity Centre has been established to further the gender related work already in place.
8. The commitment of the staff and the fact of maximizing the given resources are commendable.
9. All programmes under review have a considerably long history as well-administered academic programmes, and have produced a number of graduates who have made significant contributions to many fields of expertise. As stated above, the programmes have undergone the COLRIM in 2013 and have been denoted as “COLRIM verified.” Steps have been taken to address the recommendations given by the COLRIM.
10. The national guidelines/ SLQF and other criteria have been taken into consideration designing all degree programmes under review. Most of the programmes offered the possibility (option) of choosing elective courses. The student evaluations have been carried out regularly. Field work (not necessarily curriculum integrated), participation in national seminars in the area of justice, etc., have helped students to gain self-confidence and academic esteem.

11. Co-curricular activities such as welcome and going down functions, sports meets, multi-cultural activities, language day, field trips, etc. have been well organized.
12. The assessment criteria are given to the students at the beginning of each course, and well-defined examination by-laws exist. The examination procedures are well defined with specific components of formative and summative assessment. In many course modules, the assessments have been designed in line with course objectives and ILOs.
13. B.A. (Special) Degree Programme in Fine Arts maintains detailed analyses of examination results (a result based feedback system).
14. Most supporting centres have been established and promotional measures for strengthening student skills and abilities are in place.
15. Students participate in national/international conferences and awards are made for performance.
16. The uniqueness and cultural richness of the programmes with multicultural traits, the student involvement with community activities and the student research involving wider society, enrich the student body.

### ***Recommendations***

1. The classroom infrastructure needs improvement and lifts need to be introduced especially for the benefit of the differently abled to move easily in multi-storey buildings.
2. It was observed that only some degree programmes had posted their syllabi in the website of the university and it is recommended that all degree programmes accomplish this task.
3. The introduction of a Learning Management System (LMS) to facilitate the teaching and learning process is required.
4. Given the fact that academic counselling is done by the teaching staff without any formal structure, it is recommended that a formal structure in this regard be established.

5. A code of conduct needs to be made available to guide the academic staff and the peer review process needs much attention, especially on the part of the Heads of Departments.
6. Providing the staff with international training including encouraging the junior staff to pursue postgraduate qualifications in internationally reputed universities, and publication in indexed journals are recommended.
7. A system of rewarding the performance of the academic staff will be salutary.
8. Since ragging continues and at times to the extent of even manhandling, a greater effort needs to curb ragging, especially manhandling.
9. It is recommended that stakeholder feedback is considered in designing the curricula, and subject benchmarks be adopted by all degree programmes since only some have adopted them.
10. A greater engagement with international universities and signing of MOUs with international academic bodies are recommended.
11. The improvement of infrastructure facilities, such as well-equipped classrooms, needs urgent attention.
12. When developing degree programmes it is important to consult the stakeholders.
13. Fallback options and a credit transfer system need to be introduced.
14. Aligning ILOs with course contents, introducing field work as constitutive of the curriculum, and paying greater attention to career guidance activities and prospective employment possibilities are called for.
15. The following need consideration regarding the Drama & Theater Arts (Special) Degree Programme: the introduction of elective course units, the improvement of theatre facilities, and raising funds required for the final year compulsory production which is rather unaffordable to most students.
16. Tracer surveys need to be conducted annually and internships need to be incorporated into curricula.
17. Student satisfaction evaluations need improvement.
18. Career guidance and physical education facilities are easily accessible to students.

19. It is recommended to reconsider the allocation of weightage for formative and summative assessment, to allow freedom for study programmes to decide on the marks to permit the achievement of greater quality (*e.g.*, the case of Drama and Theater Arts), and to have ToRs for external examiners in place.
20. It is recommended that the programmes under review explore greater possibilities for students to link up with industry, and facilitate exposure to the use of English beyond the confines of the university.

## ***Section 8: Summary***

The cluster *Humanities II – Religion and Culture* included the B.A. (Special) Degree Programmes in Drama & Theatre Arts, Fine Arts, Hindu Civilization, Hindu Philosophy, Philosophy and Christian Civilization, and Islamic Civilization. Four members comprising the review team, one each from the University of Peradeniya, University of Colombo, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, and the University of Kelaniya evaluated the degree programmes.

The SER was compiled according to the Manual of Review and the staff had taken great care to systematically present the documentation at the review visit. An induction programme is organized for the new entrants, providing them with a student guide and a code of conduct, and once the programmes begin the syllabi are made available. Students following some degree programmes were not in possession of the three-year syllabus and reported that they receive the syllabi only annually (piecemeal), and curricula are not posted in the website of the university.

Facilities are available for students such as sports, medical care, and psychological counselling, but there is no structure for academic counselling, which is done informally in the departments. The Gender Equity and Equality Centre has been newly established. The library is well equipped and computer facilities are available at the computer centre.

The Staff Development Centre provides ongoing training to the staff. There is a considerable number of junior staff, who need training and foreign exposure. Not many hold degrees from high ranking foreign universities and this is an issue to be addressed in the future. There is no system of rewarding the performance of the academic staff, and they do not have a code of conduct. The academic staff has maximized the minimum resources available for the benefit of the students. Some degree programmes have shown interest in peer evaluation and others not.

The positive collaboration of the staff had made the evaluation process an experience of growth. The staff are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are interested in improving the quality of their performance for their personal benefit as well as for the benefit of hundreds of students who place their confidence in the Sri Lankan university system for quality learning.

Prof. Shirley Lal Wijesinghe

University of Kelaniya

Prof. V. Maheswaran

University of Peradeniya

Dr. Erandathie Lokupitiya

University of Colombo

Dr. Inoka Uluwaduge

University of Sri Jayewardenepura