



PROGRAMME REVIEW REPORT

Bachelor of Science Honours in Agricultural Sciences and Management

Degree Programme

Faculty of Agricultural Sciences

Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

3rd – 6th February 2020



Review Team: **Prof. P. A. Weerasinghe**
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Quality Assurance Council
University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka

University: Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

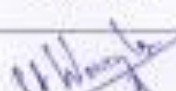
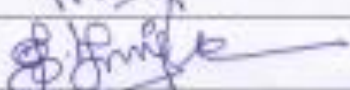

Faculty: Faculty of Agricultural Sciences

Program: BSc (Hons) Agricultural Sciences & Management

Review Panel: Senior Prof. P. A. Weerasinghe (Chair)

Prof. G. Y. Jayasinghe

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Date: 6th February 2020.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Programme

1.1 Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

The Sabaragamuwa Affiliated University College (SAUC) was formed affiliated to the University of Sri Jayawardenepura and was established at Belihulouya in the Sabaragamuwa Province on 20th November 1991, under the Sabaragamuwa Province Affiliated University College Ordinance No. 14 of 1992. Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL) was later established under the Universities Act Number 16 of 1978 by the Government of Sri Lanka on 7th November 1995 and was officially inaugurated on 02nd February 1996. Currently, it consists of eight faculties namely; Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (FAS), Faculty of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Geomatics, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Management Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences & Languages, Faculty of Technology and Faculty of Medicine.

1.2 Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (FAS)

FAS was first located in Rahangala and subsequently it was relocated in Belihulouya in March 2001. FAS offers a four-year degree programme under three departments namely, the Department of Agribusiness Management (DAB), Department of Export Agriculture (DEA) and Department of Livestock Production (DLP). The degree programme is named as Bachelor of Science Honours in Agricultural Sciences and Management [BScHons (Agric Sc and Mgt)]. Undergraduates follow a core module during the first two years and specialize in a module of their choice during the third and fourth years. In the new curriculum the core module consists of 71 credits and the specialization module consists of 59 credits, thus totaling to 130 credits that must be completed for graduation. However, in the previous curriculum the core module consisted of 66 credits and the specialization module consisted of 60 credits, thus totaling to 126 credits. In both curricula, students should complete 15-weeks of Industrial Training and a Research in the second semester of the fourth year for which eight credits have been allocated. The medium of instruction of the study programme is English.

1.3 Academic Departments

Department of Agribusiness Management (DAB)

DAB was established in 1996 that offers one academic module named Agribusiness Management (ABM). The department consists of 14 academic (permanent & temporary) and 04 non-academic staff members. DAB introduced Food Business Management (FBM) Degree Program in 2017, the first of its kind in the University system in Sri Lanka, which is also offered as an external degree and a diploma programmes in ABM.

Department of Export Agriculture (DEA)

DEA is one of the first departments established at the inception of FAS in SUSL. With the new curriculum, the DEA offers three specialization areas from the third year as Agri-environmental Resource Management, Crop Improvement and Plant Protection, and Crop Production Technology. In the old curriculum department offered Commercial Horticulture and Plantation Management specialization areas. Currently, the Department consists of 20 academics (permanent and temporary) and 09 non-academic staff members.

Department of Livestock Production (DLP)

DLP offers 02 academic modules as Animal Bio-resource Technology & Management and Aquatic Bio-resource Technology & Management in the new curriculum and one specialization module in the old curriculum. Currently, the Department consists of 16 academic (permanent and temporary) and 6 non-academic staff members

1.4 Programme of Study

The Faculty of Agricultural Sciences awards the Bachelor of Science Honours in Agricultural Sciences and Management degree. The degree is placed at level 6 in the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework. The total credit number is 130 in the new curriculum. In the core programme students should cover 71 credits during first four semesters and the balance 59 credits are followed from the 3rd year which includes a specialization programme. In the second year, students go through the farm practice course. In the old curriculum, the core program consisted of 66 credits and the specialization program consisted of 60 credits thus totaling to 126 credits that to be earned for graduation. In the last semester, 5 credits were allocated for research and 3 credits for industrial training. In the new curriculum, the fourth year is allocated for industrial training and research project.

1.5 Student Enrolment

Numbers of students of the Faculty during the past 5 years are given in Table 1.1

Table 1. 1: Numbers of students of the Faculty/Programme, since 2013

Academic Year	No. of Students Enrolled	Male	Female
2013/2014	78	22	56
2014/2015	87	30	57
2015/ 2016	65	12	53
2016/2017	105	32	73
2017/2018	96	24	72

Section 2: Observations on the Self-Evaluation Report

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) has been prepared according to the guidelines provided in the Programme Review Manual (PRM), using the participatory approach of almost all members of the faculty. The evidence has been presented alongside the standards and the criteria as shown in the template provided.

Dr. R. K. Mutucumarana was appointed as the Faculty Coordinator in the Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC). Prof. R.P. Mahaliyanaarachchi was appointed as overall Coordinator of writing the SER of the BSc Hons (Agric Sc and Mgt) degree programme. FQAC organized workshops on the writing of SER, conducted by eminent resource persons in QA. A series of stakeholders' meetings were held to aware faculty members; students, prospective employers, non-academics and alumni, and got feedbacks on SER writing. Furthermore, the review team noticed that almost all the members of the Faculty contributed to the development of SER.

The SER was prepared for the reviewing of BSc Hons (Agric Sc and Mgt) degree programme of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. SER was prepared in four sections; Section 1-Introduction to the study programmes, Section 2-Process of preparing the SER, Section 3-Compliance with the Criteria & Standards, and Section 4-Summary.

The introductory section gives an overview of the faculty and explains the programmes of studies. The review team observed that the programme reflects the mission, goals and objectives set out in the cooperate plan of the University. The length of the report was appropriate and has been prepared following the standards of formatting recommended in the manual. In Section one, each programme presented their student numbers and the number of academic, academic support and non-academic staff details. Brief profiles of academic staff were also presented as delineated in the PR manual.

In Section two, the process of preparing the SER is explained and contains the relevant information of the process followed to prepare this SER.

The review team noted that in Section three; "Compliance with the Criteria and Standard", which is the main section of the programme review, too has been prepared following the given format in the PR review manual. List of documentary evidence to support each claim of compliance in many standards were supportive. However, across some standards, some of the documentary evidence seemed irrelevant and insufficient to support those standards.

The last section summarized the SER report, with annexures attached at the end of the SER. The analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) is supplemented as an

annexure at the end of the SER, but the process adopted in preparing the SWOT was not clearly mentioned.

It was noticed that recommendations of the previous Subject Reviews and the actions taken to rectify the weaknesses were not mentioned in the SER.

It was mentioned that there were follow up sessions to monitor the progress of SER and the drafted SER was discussed in the presence of eight team members, including the Dean of the Faculty, Heads of all the Departments, Academic staff and Administrative staff of the Faculty.

Section 3:A Brief Description of the Review Process

Process of preparation by the review team

Reviewers met for the pre-review meeting after a thorough individual desk-evaluation of the SER with notes on additional information required, clarifications and tentative outcomes of the desk evaluation. Individual desk review report was submitted to the Director of the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) at the UGC one and half months after the pre-review meeting.

The Review Chair interacted with the Dean of the Faculty. The agenda of the four-day site visit was prepared by the Review Chair with the agreement of the review members for the reference of the Dean. The Dean of the Faculty arranged all the required facilities for the planned four-day visit.

Program review site visit

Three member review team gathered at the Water Garden Hotel, Belihuloya on 2nd February 2020 evening and revisited the plan. The review team successfully completed the site visit from 3rd February 8.30 am to 6th February 2.30 p.m., as per the schedule.

During the visit, the review team physically verified the contents of the SER with meetings and physical observations made as per the schedule of the site visit (Annexure 1). In evaluating the eight identified criteria, the review team has paid special attention to following;

- SER prepared by the faculty
- Information gathered from the meetings held with all staff categories and other relevant parties, as per the schedule.
- Information gathered from the observations made of physical facilities.
- Reviewing and analyzing the documentary evidence prepared by the faculty, under the eight criteria.
- Observations of the two teaching sessions and one practical session.
- Clarifications provided during discussions with the SER writing team.

The first meeting was held with the IQAU Director and the FQAC coordinator at the IQAU Office. Subsequent to this, the review team met the Vice Chancellor with the Dean of the Faculty, IQAU Director and FQAC coordinator of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences. Summary of other meetings held during the site visit are given in Table 3.1.

Discussions ensued in each meeting were satisfactory and the review team was able to gather many valuable information for a successful review. All meetings indicated that stakeholders such as academic staff, non-academic staff, students, alumni and outside stakeholders were satisfied with the

degree programme and the faculty in general. The students were of the view that the faculty has limited Wi-Fi facilities. And the alumni members had a very good impression of the faculty.

The review team observed two teaching sessions, which were only partially satisfactory on the way of delivery. One of the practical-session attended by the review team did not have the lecturer in-charge in attendance. Instead, this was conducted by the Demonstrators themselves.

Review team was of the opinion that various facilities and Centre that have been observed are in a satisfactory state considering the financial constraints faced by the state Universities in general. However, there is room for improvement. The AHEAD grants secured by the faculty could be utilized for such improvements.

As provided in the SER, the review team scrutinized all the documents made available to them, for verifying the evidence. The team made use of the cordial assistance extended by the SER writing team in the scrutiny of documents. During the process, some of the missing but important documents were obtained on request. It is relevant here to mention that the evidences provided were not organized in a user friendly manner in criteria from 1 to 7, i.e. no tagging or not properly highlighting the important sections, etc. In addition, many irrelevant documents have been appended under criteria from 1 to 7. Reviewers could not find most evidences for the past 3 years as required by the QAC and also many surveys have been conducted, only very recently. Therefore, those survey results could not be used for the improvement of the present curriculum. Such, not-so-user-friendly manner in organizing documents and the inclusion of irrelevant documents lead the review team to spend long hours at the faculty and work till very late in the night at the hotel in discussing the criteria. This resulted in this review process becoming a very tedious task.

Each criterion was evaluated/observed by two members of the review panel and scores were assigned after thorough discussion by the entire review team taking into consideration; the stakeholder meetings, observations of infrastructure facilities and observation of documents. As requested by one member of the SER writing team, a whole set of new evidences related to the criterion 2 had to be re-observed by the review team.

It is fair to mention here, that the faculty staff participated with so much enthusiasm in the review process. Specially, the participation of the Dean of the Faculty and the Senior Professors during the site visit is highly appreciated. The review team extends its compliments for all the support extended by the SER writing team, FQAC Coordinator and the secretary to the PR committee in positive manner specially for requests made by the review team for further information and documentation.

The wrap-up meeting was conducted through a Power Point presentation in the presence of the Acting Dean. During this session the reviewers conveyed their key findings to the Faculty members providing adequate time for them to make their observations and comments. A very productive discussion on improving the quality of the degree programme was accomplished and the faculty members gave their feedback on the key findings. In concluding, the review team

expressed satisfaction for the arrangements and the hospitality afforded by the Dean of the Faculty, FQAC and SER writing team.

Table 3.1 Meetings held during the site visit and the associated numbers of participants

S. N.	Scheduled Meetings	Venue	No. of Participants
1.	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor	VC's Office	04
2.	IQAU Director & FQAC Coordinator	IQAU Office	03
3.	Dean's Presentation	Board Room, FoA	12
4.	Meeting with Academic Staff	Board Room, FoA	18
5.	Meeting with Temporary Academic Staff	Board Room, FoA	17
6.	Meeting with Administrative Staff	Board Room, FoA	02
7.	Meeting with Senior Assistant Librarian	Faculty Library	09
8.	Meeting with Counsellors	Board Room, FoA	08
9.	Meeting with Directors of Centres/Units/Cells	Board Room, FoA	04
10.	Meeting with Students	Board Room, FoA	39
11.	Meeting with Non-academic Staff	Board Room, FoA	21
12.	Meeting with Research Committee	Board Room, FoA	06
13.	Meeting with Technical Officers	Board Room, FoA	05
14.	Meeting with Alumni	Board Room, FoA	14
15.	Meeting with External Stakeholders	Board Room, FoA	11

16.	Meeting with ELTU Staff	Board Room, FoA	01
17	Meeting with Director, Physical Education	Physical Education Unit	01
18.	Wrap-up Meeting	Board Room, FoA	14

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

Prof. JMCK Jayawardana is performing as the Director of the IQAU of the University. The Management Committee is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, which is constituted as per the guidelines issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Faculty level quality assurance activities are managed by the Faculty Quality Assurance Committees of the Faculty Quality Assurance Cell, established as per the QA by-laws.

The IQAU has conducted a series of workshops that are helpful on different academic scopes in introducing quality assurance. In order to improve the levels of the quality of different Faculties, all the Faculty Quality Assurance Cells (FQACs) should take the responsibility of implementing above policies. The Director has been regularly preparing and providing monthly activity reports to the Vice Chancellor.

The review team was of the view that the faculty coordinator Dr. Ruvini K. Mutucumarana has been offering a satisfactory service to improve the quality of learning-teaching environment in the University. Faculty quality assurance activities are conducted at the expected standards. Faculty has initiated many internal monitoring activities in the recent past. That is a good sign of the improvements of the quality standards in the faculty. Faculty has a well-qualified and experienced academic staff to further strengthen the academic programme more effectively. All the academic staff have undergone the Certificate of Teaching in Higher Education programme, which is conducted by the Staff Development Centre (SDC). Name of the degree programme has also been changed according to the SLQF guidelines. The activities of QA have been identified as a compulsory agenda item of the Faculty Board meeting.

The students are given study guides or course outlines of the course units offered during the semester at its beginning. The academic members of the faculty have been trained on how to write course descriptions, modules or units but constructive alignments are yet to be done. A peer review process has also been introduced in the faculty, but its effective utilization to enhance the curriculum is yet to be instigated. In addition, course evaluation process has not been implemented.

The faculty has already initiated revising their syllabi, incorporating the details such as, new assessment methods, making learning outcomes, prerequisites and the attributes of graduates. There has already been one recent stakeholder meeting. However, attention is needed to improve the mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) (according to SLQF) together with the developing of course profiles.

Section 5: Judgment on the Eight Criteria of Programme Review

5.1 Criterion 1: Programme Management

The criterion 1 consists of 27 standards. Out of the twenty-seven standards; 33.33% are at good adoption, 48.15% are at adequate adoption and 18.51% are at barely adequate adoption levels, of the criterion 1. The total score of the criterion 1 is 107 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 1 are as follows;

Strengths:

- The Faculty Board meetings are conducted regularly in order to have smooth administrative functioning of the faculty.
- Heads and Coordinators' meetings are conducted regularly with the participation of students for the further deliberations of academic matters.
- Internal and External audit records have been maintained properly.
- LMS installed in the faculty for academic purposes.
- Student counsellors and mentors are appointed in the faculty to deal with student matters.
- University staff appraisal system introduced for annual research award and to select best academics of the University.
- Established collaborative partnerships with national and international agencies by the Academic staff of the faculty.
- University/ Faculty offer comprehensive orientation programme for new intake.
- Provision of Student Handbook for students at the beginning of the academic programmes.
- University provides good healthcare services to students.
- Faculty takes adequate measures to prevent ragging.

Weaknesses:

- Faculty Action Plan was not evident for all past 3 years.
- No Action Plan monitoring committee has been appointed and no mechanisms adopted to monitor the Faculty Annual Action Plan.
- No faculty by-laws, no ToRs for the faculty's standing and Ad-hoc committee.

- No report was available to indicate that previous subject review recommendations have been adopted.
- Very few Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) were evident.
- All staff are not following LMS in learning teaching process and only a limited use of LMS was seen for teaching and assignments.
- Limited Wi-Fi facilities in the faculty and student residences for active use of LMS.
- Assigned duty lists have not been authorized and they have not been given to all categories of staff.
- Code of conduct, not made for all categories of staff.
- Evidence of issuing code of conduct/student charter to all incoming students was not found.
- Exit point at different levels or fallback option/s were not defined in the present curriculum.
- Insufficient evidence of industry stakeholders', employers', alumni and students' contributions during the curriculum revision.
- Management Information System was not evident though it was mentioned in the SER.

5.2 Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources

The criterion 2 consists of 12 standards. Out of the twelve standards; 41.66% are at good adoption, 50% are at adequate adoption and 8.33% are at barely adequate adoption levels of the criterion 2. The total score of the criterion 2 is 78 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 2 are as follows;

Strengths:

- Well qualified academic staff to conduct the academic programme.
- All academic members have completed the Certificate of Teaching in Higher Education programme as per the UGC circular.
- Considerable number of staff of the faculty hold key positions in the University administration.
- Infrastructure facilities in the faculty are satisfactory when considering the limited financial resources.
- Faculty delivers English Language through six semesters.
- Faculty encourages student harmony and cohesion by promoting multicultural programmes.

Weaknesses:

- Human resource development policy and plans were not evident.
- Lack of adequate training on Student Centered Learning, provided for the academic staff.
- Teacher evaluation criteria are not in keeping with Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) or Student-Centered Learning (SCL) methods.
- Only one academic staff member to deliver English Language for the entire faculty.
- Insufficient evidence on how different types of soft skills are embedded in the curriculum.

5.3 Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development

The criterion 3 consists of 24 standards. Out of the twenty-four standards; 12.5% are at good adoption, 75% are at adequate adoption, and 12.5% are at barely adequate adoption levels of the criterion 3. The total score of the criterion 3 is 98 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 3 are as follows;

Strengths:

- Faculty/Institute ensures that appropriate ILOs are clearly identified for work-based placement/Industrial Training/Internship and informs students of their specific responsibilities relating to above.
- The curriculum includes sustainability practices, social and business ethics, culture and social diversity factors for teaching and learning among students.
- The curriculum of the programme encourages the development of intellectual capacity of students by providing numerical, analytical, IT and communication skills.
- The Faculty FQAC initiated internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development, and approval processes in the recent past.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of policy documents on curriculum planning and development (no proper inception report).
- Not enough evidence on the curriculum development process of the existing degree program, which had been designed in 2016.
- Lack of concern to use the expertise knowledge of the national bodies in fine-tuning the curriculum to meet the standards of the key thematic areas of the curriculum.
- Need for the PLO and ILO mapping to be formulated to give a holistic view of the programme.

- Need of the programme design to comply with the SLQF and SBS.
- Need to introduce the outcome-based performance indicators in monitoring programme advancement.
- Use of stakeholder feedbacks for course improvements and ongoing program improvements is not sufficient.
- Supplementary courses in the existing curriculum are weak in enriching generic skills of students.
- Proper mechanism should be adopted in monitoring program outcomes.

5.4 Criterion 4: Course/Module Design and Development

The criterion 4 consists of 19 standards. Out of the nineteen standards; 26.31% are at good adoption, 57.89% are at adequate adoption, and 15.7% are at barely adequate adoption levels of the criterion 4. The total score of the criterion 4 is 105 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 4 are as follows;

Strengths:

- Course content with adequate breadth, depth and balance.
- The staff involved in instructional design and developments have been trained for such purposes and undergo regular training, even though university SDC and all staff have completed the CTHE programme.
- The content appropriateness, effectiveness of teaching, student learning outcomes that are initiated to measure through student feedback and peer evaluations.

Weaknesses:

- Curriculum has not been aligned with PLOs.
- Total notional learning hours are higher as per the SLQF guidelines.
- Lack of evidence of course compliance with the SLQF and SBS. Higher number of credits offered than SLQF guidelines (+5 accepted).
- Limited utilization of LMS for teaching and assignments.
- Absence of evidence of progressive course evaluation over last few years after introducing the curriculum.
- Consultation of professional bodies and standards used in course development are not given due consideration.

- Need to include detailed plans of the lessons, lesson ILOs and assessment strategies appropriately in the course profiles of all the subjects.
- Incomplete PLO and ILO mapping with no evidence of a curriculum blueprint.
- Lack of consideration on the needs of differentlyabled students into course design and development, including the delivery of the course, teaching and learning strategies.
- Deficiency of external examiners in the evaluation system of course units. No result verification system is in place

5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

The criterion 5 consists of 19 standards. Out of the nineteen standards; 15.78% are at good adoption, 73.68% are at adequate adoption, and 10.52% are at barely adequate adoption levels of the criterion 5. The total score of the criterion 5 is 105 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 5 are as follows;

Strengths:

- Faculty/Institute provides course specifications and timetables before the commencement of the course.
- Teachers encourage students to contribute to scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge, related to theory and practice that are appropriate to their programmes and the institutional mission.
- Friendly and conducive learning environment/committed and well qualified team of senior staff.
- Prominence given to student presentations.
- Established research culture of the faculty.
- Presence of teaching evaluation by students and peers.
- Release of midterm/continuous and end term resultson time.
- Encouragement given to students to do research and publish their research findings in journals.
- Satisfactory engagement in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Weaknesses:

- Unavailability of faculty action plansfor the last 3 years.
- Absence of any Course evaluation.

- No follow up action taken on teacher evaluation feedback.
- Inadequate evidence of academic staff using technology in teaching; i.e. Google forms, peer evaluation including comments on the methods used, LMS activity reports, innovative activities, group work, case studies, Wi-Fi usage, assignments/plagiarism checks, etc.
- Unavailability of a curriculum mapping and a blueprint.
- Unavailability of academic accountability records; only the documents on work norms and workload of staff were found.
- Course specification files (Master files) elaborating the mode of delivery schedule, evaluation procedure, etc., of theory and practical components have not been developed.
- Poorly linked assessment to the ILOs and the presence of a common weightage for all the course units regardless of the nature of the subject.
- Gender Equity and Equality (GEE) activities have to be better streamlined, probably by establishing a new and own cell at the Faculty.
- Deficiency in incorporation of student feedback in the curriculum revision.
- Lack of a designed scheme to present annual awards for R & D innovations of students.

5.6 Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression

The criterion 6 consists of 24 standards. Out of the twenty-four standards; 33.33% are at good adoption, 58.33% are at adequate adoption, 4.16% are at barely adequate, and 4.16% are at inadequate adoption levels of the criterion 6. The total score of the criterion 6 is 78 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 6 are as follows;

Strengths:

- The functionality of the departments in a conducive and cordial environment with very good relationship with students and the academic staff.
- Well-appreciated communication skills of students.
- The recognition and the facilitation by the faculty of academic interaction among the mentors, Deputy Senior Student Counsellor and students.
- Provision of numerous trainings to students and staff, through internal and external sources.
- Faculty has started the process of implementing policy on Gender Equity and Equality (GEE).
- The policy framework with infrastructure facilities for students with special needs in a developing process.
- Availability of examination By-law, enabling results to be released within a stipulated time period.

Weaknesses:

- Absence of policy on fallback options in the faculty programmes.
- Non-implementation of analyzed student and peer evaluations.
- Evidences were not found on support of alumni in curriculum development process.
- Faculty conducted many workshops and seminars, but the completion reports of the workshops and seminars were not submitted to the Faculty Board.
- Feedback on career guidance workshops and orientation programmes not available.
- Monitoring Committee Reports – Anti ragging committee, Hostel committee, and Welfare committee - are not founded.
- Unavailability of stakeholder feedback on the library usage and ICT usage among the documents.
- Unavailability of an action plan on Centre for Gender Equity and Equality (CGEE). CGEE conducted workshops to the staff of the faculty. The workshop records and feedback of the workshops were not available.
- Evidence of admission to advance progression of studies of the graduates are not available. A tracer study has been done only in one year.

5.7 Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards

The criterion 7 consists of 17 standards. Out of the seventeen standards; 53% are at good adoption, 47% are at adequate adoption levels of the standard. Barely adequate and inadequate levels of the standard were not observed in the criterion 7. The total score of the criterion 7 is 126 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 7 are as follows;

Strengths:

- The assessment strategy is explained to students through course structure and course specification.
- The assessment strategies are aligned with ILOs.
- The weightage, relating to the different components are given in course specification.
- All the examiners are informed about rules and regulations, and examination procedures at SDC training programmes for conducting of examinations.
- Faculty has a developed policy to admit the students with special needs.

Weaknesses:

- The unavailability of mapping of ILOs.
- There is no feedback from the moderators and second examiners by internally.
- There is/are no external examiner/examiners in the list of examiners.
- Student survey was done but the gathered information not implemented.
- Formative and summative assessment criteria of individual subjects were not available in the handbook.
- No analysis has been done by the faculty of the external supervisor reports received.

5.8 Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices

The criterion 8 consists of 14 standards. Out of the fourteen standards; 57% are at good adoption, 21% are at adequate adoption, 14% are barely adequate, and 7% are at inadequate adoption levels of the criterion 8. The total score of the criterion 8 is 38 out of 1000. The strengths and weaknesses of the criterion 8 are as follows;

Strengths:

- Motivated students for disseminating their research findings in national and International symposia.
- Income generating activities of the faculty,for acquiring benefits to the respective departments.
- Staff research activities in collaboration with national and international agencies.
- Staff engaged in consultancy work in government organizations and NGOs, conducting seminars and workshops to farmers, other organizations and school children.
- Staff received awards for their innovative research work.
- International and national symposia conducted by the faculty, and proceedings are published in journals.

Weakness:

- Absence of a credit transfer system within the Faculty.

Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance

Marks allocated during the evaluation done from February 3 – 6, 2020 for Bachelor of Science Honours in Agricultural Sciences and Management degree programme offered by the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences is given in the table below.

Based on the above marks, the team appointed to evaluate the above programme proposes that the Bachelor of Science Honours in Agricultural Sciences and Management degree programme of the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka to Receive a Grade “B” – Good (73.33%).

Table 6.1: Score given under each criterion for the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences for the BSc Hons(Agricultural Sciences and Management) during the review process in 2020.

Criterion No.	Assessment Criteria	Weighted Minimum Score	Actual Criteria Wise Score
1	Programme Management	75	107
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	78
3	Programme Design and Development	75	98
4	Course/Module Design and Development	75	105
5	Teaching and Learning	75	103
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	78
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	126
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	38
	Total on thousand scale	733	
	Total Score (%)	73.33	

Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

- Staff commitment and dedication towards the achievement of the faculty goals is noteworthy.
- Senior academic staff of the faculty holds key positions in the University Administration.
- More than half the number of academic staff in the faculty are PhD holders.
- Staff is engaged in research activities with the collaboration of national and international agencies.
- Faculty produces an internationally well recognized research journal which is indexed in the 'Web of Science'.
- Social & cultural events, and outbound programmes provide a wider spectrum of opportunities for the students to enhance soft skills such as leadership and social responsibility.
- Infrastructure facilities in the faculty are satisfactory but could be further developed.
- Faculty has a good relationship with the Alumni.
- Examination rules and procedures are issued to the students during the orientation.
- Ragging is kept under control by the joint efforts of academic staff, student counselors, mentors of the faculty and University proctor.
- Cordial personal relationships among students and staff lead to coherence in the campus community assuring higher productivity and uninterrupted, smooth function of the academic activities.

Recommendations:

- Minutes/extracts of the standing and the ad-hoc committees of the Faculty Board and departmental meeting minutes should be tabled at the Faculty Board meetings.
- Action plan monitoring committee should be appointed to monitor the progress of the Faculty's Annual Action Plans.
- Terms of References should be made available for the faculty's standing and ad-hoc committees.
- Faculty should take action to invite industrial stakeholders who are very active and supportive of the curriculum revision and utilize their expertise and feedbacks for improvement of the study programme.

- Curriculum and assessment strategies should be further aligned with the SLQF guidelines and subject benchmarks.
- A Management Information System (MIS) needs to be introduced in the faculty for effective management practices.
- The research component should be recognized independent of the industrial training component in the curriculum.
- As per the feedbacks obtained during the site-visit, allocated time period should be increased for the internship/industrial training component to enhance the practical knowledge and skills of the students.
- Engagement of external examiners should be practiced at least for the majoring courses.
- Feedback reports should be obtained for moderation of examination question papers and on the second marking of the answer scripts, after providing course ILOs and marking schemes to the external/second examiners.
- Student workload should be calculated considering notional hours too and adhered to the SLQF guidelines on student workload.
- Lesson plans/Course specifications need to be developed by breaking topics/subtopics on weekly or hourly basis and by indicating the delivery methods and notional hours, which should be made available to students at the beginning of the semester.
- Fallback options should be introduced in the forthcoming curriculum revision to enable students who do not complete the programme successfully, to exit at a lower level.
- All the feedback forms should be updated, analysis of the feedbacks should be made available to the relevant parties and follow-up actions be taken.
- Student portfolio/e-portfolio should be maintained by indicating students' academic and extracurricular progression for verification at mentoring sessions.
- Formal training should be given to all academic staff to become successful mentors and student counsellors.
- Learning Management System (LMS) should be utilized fully by all academic staff, including course assignments and all other educational purposes.
- Wi-Fi facilities need to be strengthened in the faculty premises and student residential areas that staff/students could use the LMS more effectively.
- Priority should be given to learning English, by appointing more staff to the ELTU.
- Courses listed under the Export Agriculture Department are not on par with export agriculture domain, especially in the core programme. Therefore, it is proposed to rename the Department of "Export Agriculture" with an appropriate name.
- Faculty must analyze the feedbacks received of the programme. It should be placed before the Faculty Board for discussion.
- Monitoring committees such as anti-ragging committee and hostel committee, should be maintained.
- Consultation/ dialog with related industries/institutes needed to be enhanced to update the contents and new applications in the curriculum during the next curricular revision.
- Very clear mapping should be done with Program learning objectives (PLOs) and Course Indented Learning outcomes (ILOs).
- Weightage of continuous assessment and semester assessment needed to be readjusted on the basis of nature of the course unit and required practical component.

- Annual allocation for the library should be increased and availability of textbooks to be increased with required number of copies as per the student number.
- Prompt actions to be taken to fill already approved non-academic cadres and expedite the procedure for promotions.
- Include relevant subjects in the new curricular to impart the knowledge and skills in social interactions.
- Alumni interactions and their support can be found, but informally and at a personal level only. Therefore, an Alumni Association should be established to strengthen the staff alumni interaction.

Section 8: Summary

The Programme review of the BSc Hons (Agric Sc and Mgt) has been concluded with a very useful site-visit from 2- 6 February 2020. In accordance with the Programme Review (PR) manual, strengths and weaknesses were identified and measured under the eight criteria given. Preparation of the SER was done by the team of staff members appointed by the Faculty Board, after a series of workshops and meetings. It was noted that some of the evidences have been available for a satisfactory period of time while some of the evidences were lacking at least for a period of three years. Also, some evidences provided were not relevant while some others were missing. Documents were not prepared in a user-friendly manner. Except for these, the faculty was well prepared for the site-visit and the Dean and the staff extended their fullest cooperation.

The judgment of the review of the degree programme was reached based on the assessments of evidence provided against the prescribed best practices and the extent of achievements in the respective standards as detailed under the eight criteria in the PR manual. All the discussions, had with different categories of staff and students, documentary evidences and observation of facilities were used in arriving at the judgment. It was observed by the review team that the programme has its commitments through several good practices to achieve good quality standards.

Human resources of the faculty are commendable, but there is a deficiency on the staff strength in English language teaching. Physical resources are also satisfactory though they need further improvements. Spaces in the faculty building and in new laboratories to demonstrate the new applications in the degree programme need urgent attention to improve the quality and relevance of the programme. At present, some of these practices are undertaken in the Faculty Farm, which is a strength of the faculty.

The curriculum introduced in 2016, was an effort of senior-most staff of the faculty and it transpired that no proper documentation has been done since, in relation to the curricular development. Identifying the lapses and new updates, new revision initiatives have been undertaken and appropriate procedures and documentation have been initiated. In this process, revision of graduate profile, program objectives and course ILOs are being considered, but improvements are needed in the PLO and ILO mapping, together with developing course profile alignments, with assessments and SLQF norms.

Teaching and Learning is quite satisfactory, but LMS applications for some of courses are yet to be implemented. IT incorporation into the programme delivery is insufficient. However, staff commitment to provide a conducive environment for students is to be praised and several strategies are being adopted to have a good rapport with students. Appointing mentors and student counsellors for each year of the programme is one of such strategy.

Present industry and community relations play an important role in the delivery of a good programme, it could be more beneficial if the inputs are absorbed from the industry who use current technologies. Collaborations with foreign Universities, student exchanges and research are given due consideration and the faculty staff is adequately encouraged and supported by the Management.

The review team is of the opinion that to bring this programme to its highest possible standard, it requires some remedial actions; developing of laboratory and other practical facilities, deployment of necessary academic and non-academic cadres and their knowledge updates with changing technologies, increasing the relevant reading materials in the library and access to new knowledge through outreach activities. In view of the foregoing, it is imperative to avert the weaknesses and lapses in order to pave the way to a successful programme and to produce globally employable graduates in its chosen agricultural arena.

The review team's assessment of the level of accomplishment of quality expected of an academic programme, based on the grading of overall performance are indicated in the Table in Section 6, which provides the information on the calculation of the grade. According to the Table in Section 6, each of the 8 criteria did score more than the minimum weighted score. The overall percentage value scored was 73.33%. Therefore, a Grade-B and Good Performance Descriptor is assigned.

The review team acknowledges with no reservation, the cooperation and support by the Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty. Heads of Departments/Centers/Units, Director IQAU, Coordinator FQAC, Secretary PR Committee, all academic and non-academic staff and students of the degree programme, during the programme review period. The team strongly believes that the comments made by them will help in improving the quality of the degree programme.

Annexure 1 - Schedule for the Programme Review Site-Visit

Bachelor of Science Hons(Agricultural Sciences and Management) 3rd to 6th February 2020

Day 1

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 am – 8.45 am	Meeting with the Director – IQAU and Coordinator IQAC	Director – IQAU and Coordinator IQAC
8.45 am – 9.15 am	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor	Vice Chancellor/ Dean, Director – IQAU/ Coordinator – IQAC, Chair – SER Preparation
9.30 am – 11.00 am	Presentation about the Faculty and respective study programs by the Dean of the Faculty, followed by a discussion <i>Working Tea</i>	Dean / Director-IQAU/Coordinator IQAC/ All HODs of the Faculty/ SER Team
11.00 am – 11.30 am	Meeting with academic staff in permanent cadre	Teaching panel of respective programs (excluding HODs) Senate representatives
11.30 am – 12.00 noon	Meeting with temporary academic staff	Temporary Lecturers/Temporary Demonstrators, Tutors
12.00 noon – 12.30 pm	Meeting with Administrative Staff	AR/AB/ Farm Manager
12.30 pm – 1.30 pm	<i>LUNCH</i>	
1.30 pm – 4.00 pm	Document Observation <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team/ SER writers
4.00 pm – 6.30 pm	Open hour for any stakeholder to meet review panel and Document Observation	Review Team

Day 2

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 am – 10.30 am	Observing, Physical facilities	Review Team/ Facilitators
10.30 am – 11.00 am	Observing teaching sessions and facilities <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team
11.00 am – 11.30 am	Meeting with Librarian or Senior Assistant Librarian [Library Visit]	Librarian or Senior Assistant Librarian/ Library Staff
11.30 am -12.00 noon	Meeting with Deputy Proctor/ Counsellors	Deputy Proctor/ Counsellors
12.00 noon -12.45 pm	Meeting with Directors of Centres / Units / Cells	Director SDC/CGU/ Faculty Career Guidance Coordinator/ CGU staff
12.45 pm - 1.30 pm	<i>Lunch</i>	
1.30 pm – 3.00 pm	Meeting with Students	Group of students representative of gender, ethnicity, all levels of study programs
3.00 pm – 6.30 pm	Observing Documentation <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team/ SER writers

Day 3

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 am – 10.30 am	Observing, Physical facilities	Review Team/ Medical Officer/ Director Physical Education/ any other
10.30 am – 11.00 am	Meeting with a cross section of non-academic staff <i>Working Tea</i>	Representative group of non-academic staff
11.00 am -11.30 am	Meeting Research Committee	Chairman / Research committee, faculty research committee coordinator
11.30 am -12.00 noon	Meeting with Technical Officers	All Technical officers
12.00 noon -12.30 pm	Meeting with Alumni	Alumni members – (10-15 nos.)
12.30 pm – 1.00 pm	Meeting with external stakeholders	Group of external stakeholders – 10 nos. (employers, industry, private sector, representatives with link to or involvement with the Faculty)
1.00 pm -2.00 pm	<i>Lunch</i>	
2.00 pm– 5.30 pm	Observing Documentation	Review Team/ SER writers

Day 4

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 am – 9.00 am	English Language Teaching Unit	Members of English Language Teaching Unit
9.00 am – 9.30 am	Observing teaching sessions and facilities	Review Team
9.30 am – 11.00 am	Observing Documentation <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team/ SER writers
11.00 am – 12.00 noon	Private meeting of the Review Team	Review Team
12.00 noon– 1.30 pm	Closing meeting for debriefing	Vice Chancellor (Optional)/ Act. Dean/Director – IQAU/ HODs/ Coordinator – FQAC/Chair & the SER – Team
1.30 pm – 2.00 pm	LUNCH	
2.00 pm	Departure of the Review Team	

Annexure 2: Facilities Observed

1. Faculty crop and livestock farm
2. Meat Science Laboratory
3. Histology Laboratory
4. Reproductive Biology and Animal Biotechnology Laboratory
5. Livestock Production laboratory
6. Audiovisual Unit
7. GEE Cell
8. Biotechnology laboratory
9. Tissue culture Laboratory
10. Chemistry laboratory
11. Microbiology Laboratory
12. Language Laboratory
13. IQAU
14. FQAC
15. Library
16. Computer Unit
17. Medical Centre
18. Career Guidance Unit
19. Hostels
20. Canteen
21. Department Premises
22. Deans' Office
23. Examination Unit
24. Sports Complex
25. Playground
26. Centre for differently Abled students
27. GEE Cell
28. Audiovisual Unit

Annexure 3: Photographic Evidences



Meeting with IQAU Director and FQAC Coordinator



Meeting with the Vice Chancellor



Deans' Presentation



Meeting with the Academic Staff



Library Visit



Meeting with students



Meeting with the Director Physical Education



Meeting with the Director Career Guidance



Observation of Teaching Session



At Farm Polyunnel



Observation of Documents



Meeting with the Alumni