



## **PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT**

**Bachelor of Science Honours in Export Agriculture**

**Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture**

**Uva Wellassa University**

**11-14 November 2019**



**Review Panel: Prof. Sunil Jayakody  
Dr. Indrani Withanawasam  
Dr. Pushpa Malkanthi**

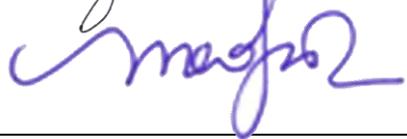
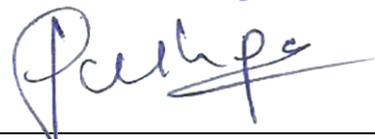
**The Quality Assurance Council  
University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka**

University: UvaWellassa University

Faculty: Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture

Program: Export Agriculture

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## Chapter 1. Introduction to the Program

This report presents the findings of the program review (PR) conducted at the Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture (FASEA), UvaWellassa University of Sri Lanka, from 11th to 14th of November 2019 under the guidance of Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka (UGC).

The Department of Export Agriculture is one of the two pioneering departments in Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture. The Export Agriculture Degree Program (EAG) is a unique and specialized four-year degree program in the Sri Lankan University system. It expects to deliver specialized knowledge and skills in relation to export oriented agricultural production and processing as well as on agricultural entrepreneurship highly focusing on the value addition in agricultural resources in Sri Lanka. Annual intake was 60 students prior to 2018 and it was increased up to 65 from 2018 onwards. The entry requirement is G.C.E (A/L) qualified with minimum "S" grade in Biology and Chemistry and the third subject from Agricultural Science, Higher Mathematics, Mathematics, Combined Mathematics and Physics.

Department of Export Agriculture offers three areas of specialization within the degree program. The number of students registered at present (current student number) in the Export Agriculture program is 210. The breakdown is as follows:

	Enrolled Number	Current Number
2019 (Level 1)	61	60
2018 (Level 2)	60	55
2017 (Level 3)	44	42
2016 (Level 4)	53	53

As per the design of the degree program, during the first two years, courses are mainly designed to provide Essential Skills Development (ESD) and Broad General Education (BGE) and subject fundamentals. In the third year, students are allowed to select a specialization under three fields –Agricultural Production Technology, Food Processing Technology or Entrepreneurial Agriculture. Course modules of the degree program is mostly conducted by the staff of the Department of Export Agriculture. However, there is a small contribution from the Department of Animal Science (less than 10 %).For providing hands-on experience, the degree program is enriched with field training, industrial training and research projects. Although it is planned to provide an advanced knowledge through Industrial training and research projects, industrial training period is limited to two months.

This program has been offered for the last 13 years, starting from the first intake of students in 2006. The current program review has been an opportunity for both internal and external parties to look at the program critically and think about the future shape of the program.

The FASEA includes 66 permanent academic staff members, comprising of 4 Professors, 20 Senior Lecturers, and 42 Lecturers. The teaching panel of the Export Agriculture Degree Program includes 4 professors, 3 Senior Lecturers (Grade I), 16 Senior Lecturers (Grade II), 3 Lecturers and 22 Probationary Lecturers. In addition to these permanent academic positions, the team observed that there are several Temporary Lecturers (6) and Demonstrators (7) contributing significantly to facilitate academic activities.

Among the academic staff members, 42% possess PhD qualifications earned locally or from foreign universities. This is the second time the degree programme has been reviewed; the faculty has undergone a subject review earlier.

The Department of English Language Teaching (DELT/ ELTU), which belongs to the Faculty of Management, delivers English language courses for all students of the University. At the time of the review, some well experienced staff members of DELT/ ELTU were out of the country engaged in their post graduate studies and a few young staff members were covering up duties.

The Department of Export Agriculture has 16 laboratories covering 16 disciplines - Food Science, Tea Product Development, GIS and Remote Sensing, Horticulture, Advanced Microbiology, Crop Production, Plant Physiology, Spice Technology, Biotechnology, Palm Technology, Tea Processing, In-vitro Propagation, Latex Technology, Agriculture Systems Development, Agricultural Chemistry and Soil and Water.

To successfully complete the degree, undergraduates are required to fulfill a minimum of 120 credits (compulsory) during the four-year period.

There are common computer laboratories in UWU for sharing the facilities among students of all degree programmes of all faculties. There are three lecture halls to conduct lectures for EAG undergraduates.

Vice Chancellor in his opening remarks stated that the current review is an opportunity for them to rethink and restructure the degree program, considering constructive suggestions to become the center of excellence in value addition to the national resource base, as stated in the vision statement.

## Chapter 2. Review Team's Observations on the Self Evaluation Report

Following the guidance received from the QAC and the UGC, the UWU/FASEA has prepared its Internal Quality Enhancement Policy Framework (IQEPF) and the University Council has approved it in the year 2016. The IQEPF provides all necessary legal provisions to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) for the university and an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) for each faculty. The SER was prepared by a team appointed by the Faculty Board of the FASEA, and the team had adopted a participatory and inclusive approach in compiling the SER. However, the SER show few shortcomings- failure to provide evidence to support some claims, citing the same documents as evidence for several claims, failure to capture some deficiencies and shortcomings by the SWOT analysis, contextual and few typographical errors, etc.

The SER was prepared under the purview of IQAC of FASEA by a ten-member team headed by Prof. H.M.S.K. Herath. Eight different teams were appointed to write eight different criteria of Section 3 of the SER. Section writing was headed by Dr. M.G.P.P. Mahindaratne (Programme Management); Dr. R.A.P.I.S Dharmadasa (Human and Physical Resources); W.A.J.P. Wijesinghe (Programme Design and Development); Dr. L.M.H.R. Alwis (Course Module Design and Development); Dr. S.R.W.M.C.J.K. Ranawana (Teaching and Learning), Dr. K.G. Premathilake and Dr. G.A.A.R. Perera (Learning Environment/ Student Support and Progression); Ms. N.S. Withanage (Student Assessment and Awards) and Dr. A.M.W.K. Senevirathne (Innovative and Healthy Practices) under the supervision of the Dean and the coordinator of IQAC of FASEA. As highlighted in Appendix 2 of the SER, a Steering Committee has been established for the preparation of the SER in this second round of the quality assurance review process. The Steering Committee chaired by the Dean has met several times to observe the progress of the task. The entire process of preparation of the SER has followed the milestones scheduled by the Chairman (Dean/FASEA) of the Steering Committee. The milestones scheduled are listed in Table 3.1

**Table 3.1: Key Milestones Scheduled by the Steering Committee**

S.N	Milestones	Date/Duration.	Participants/ Responsible person
1	Appointing a Chairmen	21 March 2018	FB members
2	Appointing team leaders and team members	10 May 2018	FB members
3	Amending the teams	04 Dec. 2018	FB members
4	Initiation meeting with staff members	05 Sept. 2018	Academic staff members of the Department
5	Meeting with all relevant stakeholders for developing the SER	02 Nov. 2018	All relevant stake holders
6	Awareness workshop for SER writing and SWOT analysis by	27 Nov. 2018	All faculty staff

	VC, UWU.		
7	Progress meeting	06 Dec. 2018	All academic and other relevant members
8	Attending to the workshop for SER writers and Program Review conducted by the UGC.	22 Jan. 2019	Chairman / SER writing and five team leaders
9	Meeting with the team leaders	24 Jan. 2019	Chairman, all team leaders, HOD-Department of Export Agriculture
10	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor- Progress Review	30 Jan. 2019	All faculty staff
11	Progress review meeting	01 March 2019	All academic staff members – Department of Export Agriculture
12	Meeting for scrutinizing the SER	12, 13, 18, 19 March 2019	Chairman, All team leaders, HOD-Department of Export Agriculture
13	Finalizing the SER	04 April 2019	All EAG staff members
14	Submission of the SER	08 April 2019	Chairman/SER, Head /Department of Export Agriculture and Dean/ FASEA

The review panel observes that the leadership given by the Dean to complete the SER, is remarkable. As highlighted in Chapter 1, following the desk review, the review panel met at the pre-site visit meeting at the UGC and identified gaps and weak areas of the SER that need to be probed during the site visit.

### Chapter 3. Description of the review process

The review process was focused on evaluating the quality of students' learning experience, where the responsibility of maintaining quality and standards lies with the program managers of the institution. The PR process was conducted according to the guidelines given in the *Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions*, published by the UGC in July 2015. The Export Agriculture degree programme (EAG) submitted a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) that consists of an introduction, the process of writing SER, and a self-assessment on eight criteria, namely; program management, human and physical resources, program design and development, course design and development, teaching and learning environment, student support and progression and student assessment and awards. The quality of the study program was reviewed based on the evidence provided in the SER and ground realities witnessed by various means by the PR review panel during the site visit. As an essential part of the review process, the review panel members reviewed the SER thoroughly and sent their desk review results, including the marks given for each criterion, to the Director/QAC on an individual basis. It was a transparent process, and the members met at the UGC to synthesize each reviewer's facts and findings. Then, the review panel visited the Department of Export Agriculture in the FASEA from 11th to 14th November, 2019 to physically verify the contents given in the SER. The agenda of the four-day visit was prepared by the Chairman of the review panel, consulting the review panel members and the coordinator appointed by the FASEA of the UWU. Comments were taken from the review members on the agenda of the review program. A tentative work program was circulated among the review team members and relevant authorities of the UWU and the final site visit program schedule prepared is attached (Appendix I). The evaluation of eight criteria was based on:

- Meetings held with staff (people met during the visit) of the University (Appendix 2)
- Observation of physical facilities available at the Department of Export Agriculture.
- Observation of other facilities available at the University.
- A discussion with SER writing team
- Reviewing research publications and available documents at the Department and
- Reviewing all documentary evidence furnished related to the SER, allowing the reviewers to further clarify certain points at the ground level.

Each of the eight-fold criteria was judged as very good, good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory, based on qualities such as transparency, strengths, good practices, and weaknesses. On the final day of the visit, the review panel briefed the findings to the Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty, Heads of departments and academic staff members, to conclude the review process.

## Chapter 4. Overview of the Faculty's Approach to Quality and Standards

The team observed that the overall approach of the faculty on quality assurance and management is on par with the expected standards. The IQAU at University level was established in 2013 and subsequently, the IQACs were established in all faculties in 2016. The IQACs are expected to liaise with the IQAU of the University and engage in quality enhancement activities as an enduring and ongoing process. The Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture has demonstrated its commitment towards quality enhancement by fostering the adoption of prescribed best practices and achieving respective standards in all spheres of its activities. A considerable amount of research is undertaken by the Faculty but limited experienced senior staff members (Academic Grades) and limited physical resources are acting as impediments to achieve more. A Research Policy document explaining the vision of the UWU on research is available and has to be commended. Community and industry collaborations could be further strengthened for better achievements. Further, the establishment of an effective appraisal and reward system may encourage more academics to excel in their respective research areas.

Existing undergraduate research activities, industrial training / internship, and other self-centered learning strategies are commendable. Number of research publications without the financial support of the University has gone up from 19 in 2014 to 73 in 2019. More hands-on experience should be given to the students by having an agricultural farm closer to the Faculty and extending the duration of the Industrial training. Reviewers felt that more effective student-centered learning strategies should be incorporated.

All study programmes adopt student-friendly administrative, academic and technical support systems that ensure a conducive and caring environment. Student prospectus/ hand book is made available to all students at the time of registration (or during the first week of registration), and it includes all the necessary information on academic programmes and respective courses as well as rules and regulations governing administration of academic programmes and examination procedures. The student handbook printed in 2019 is more comprehensive and provides all information needed by students.

Department of Export Agriculture has taken positive steps such as incorporating internship training component into the degree program, field studies and undergraduate research symposia. Further, appraisal of teachers by students and peers is also being practiced. All these initiatives have undoubtedly helped to enhance quality and standards of the degree program. However, these mechanisms can further be improved so as to reach even higher standards of quality in the academic programmes and allied activities.

There is a central library to cater to the needs of the students and the staff. Administration/ Finance and Library has already set up internal quality assurance cells and exhibited their commitment and awareness in quality enhancement and excellence.

The DELT/ ELTU offers tailor-made English courses. Career Guidance Unit (CGU) and the University Business Linkage (UBL) conduct workshops, trainings and career fairs, job fairs with industrial training providers and job providers to enhance students' soft skills, capabilities and positive attitudes to become entrepreneurial managers.

Number of activities are arranged by the FASEA in collaboration with other Faculties to promote active academic and social interactions. However, student participation at regional/national level events (both academic and extracurricular) need to be improved.

The review team is of the view that the senior management of the FASEA is fully committed to improve the quality of the export agriculture degree program. Senior staff of the degree program have been able to convince their staff members that quality-related matters are important in achieving excellence. Department has taken action to participate their representatives for SER preparation and related activities.

At the last PR held in 2013, EAG received the Grade "Excellent" for five areas (Curriculum design; Content and Review; Teaching and Learning methods; Assessment methods; Quality of Students, including student progress and Achievements and Generic Skills Development); "Good" for two areas (Academic Guidance and Counseling and Extent and Use of Student Feedback) and "Unsatisfactory" for two Areas (Peer Observation and Postgraduate Studies). Some positive steps have been taken by the Faculty to address the comments given in the last Program Review.

The Faculty's attempt to promote student and staff engagement in a considerable number of co-curricular activities could be commended. The reviewers are confident that the Faculty could continue on these lines establishing a quality culture within the Faculty.

## Chapter 5. Judgment on the Eight Criteria of Program Review

The review team's judgment on the level of attainment of quality by the study program under each of the eight criteria is described below.

### Criterion 1. Program Management

The Faculty holds an appropriate organizational structure and is developing it towards effective governance and management of its core functions. A draft of the updated university strategic plan up to 2021 is available along with the Faculty Activity Plan even though the existing one is up to 2018.

The Faculty adopts a participatory approach in its governance and management to a satisfactory level. It is evident from the minutes of Faculty Board meetings and Canteen Committee meetings that student representatives are incorporated in the Faculty Board and Canteen Committee.

The reviewers were able to observe satisfactory evidence (program schedules, handouts and feedback forms) related to the conduct of the orientation program for new entrants. The Faculty has developed a comprehensive student handbook that includes useful information, such as information on all academic programs, by-laws, facilities and services, code of conduct and student charter. Although a printed study program prospectus is available, discussion with student representatives revealed that it has not reached the students (around 50%) on time.

The study program lacks policy, strategy and action plan aiming at differently abled students.

Discussion with the students revealed that though an annual academic calendar is prepared, it is not always adhered to enable the students to complete the degree program on time. Considerable percentage of student representatives rejected that idea and the review team arrived at an "open decision".

Use of ICT for program management was evident.

Presently, the Faculty possesses a performance appraisal mechanism for rewarding best performing academics but it has to be further strengthened.

An Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in the Faculty exists (letters of appointment of members and minutes of the IQAC meetings) and adopts the relevant UGC guidelines.

Curriculum Development Committee has to meet in a timely manner and take decisions and approvals for monitoring implementation of the revised curriculum.

The review team observed MoUs of collaborative partnerships with external organizations for collaborative work (for field trainings) but it has to be further strengthened to the level of incorporating student and staff exchange programmes.

The student support mechanism is operating satisfactorily with the assistance of student counselors/ proctor, Medical Centre and Physical Education Unit, but a small percentage of the student representatives were uncertain about these services. Cultural and aesthetic activities of students are promoted to a satisfactory level during the past three-year period. Students those who are not provided with residential facilities face problems as finding places closer to the University and in Badulla town area is expensive.

The Faculty adopts and practices University approved by-laws pertaining to examinations and student discipline. The relevant documents and minutes of the Disciplinary Committee were made available to the review team. The measures to ensure gender equity and equality (GEE) amongst staff and students are in practice. The employability survey results revealed around 84% are employed after six months of completing the degree program, which is commendable.

## **Criterion 2. Human and Physical Resources**

The Faculty comprises enriched heritage and deserving staff who perform their duties with limited resources. However, the degree program is heavily dependent on probationary lecturers (around 50%) due to inadequacy of well qualified and experienced senior lecturers. Of the permanent academic staff, 34% are PhD holders.

The Faculty ensures that all newly recruited staff members undergo an induction program conducted by the Staff Development Centre (SDC) of the University even though a policy requiring such action does not exist. The SDC offers in-service, continuing professional development (CPD) programmes to upgrade and enhance the capacity of academic staff. However, the impact of these programmes needs to be monitored carefully. The outcome-based education (OBE) and student-centered learning (SCL) approaches are the two important aspects that have drawn attention recently in the higher education system and SDC of the University which plays a vital role in creating awareness about OBE and SCL among the academic staff by conducting workshops.

In past review reports, it is stated that “field training component is insufficient; need more practical sessions; hands on experience is limited due to lack of farm facilities”. To a certain extent, these statements hold good even under the present situation. As the degree programme is Agriculture related, students need appropriate specialized training facilities, sufficient hands-on experience, farm activities and laboratory work to learn and develop the necessary field skills, which needs further improvement.

The library is well organized. It possesses a collection of 21,000 books along with rare books on Uva Wellassa history, periodicals and access to online journals as stated by the Librarian. According to the Librarian, satisfactory percentage of students utilize the library facilities. As per the discussion with students, the majority agreed that the library is well equipped, networked and holds up to date information needed for their study requirements.

The IT Centre of the Faculty provides adequate opportunities for students to acquire ICT skills. The review team observed that English language teaching is a weak area as several experienced lecturers were out of the country on their higher studies, leaving the teaching on the shoulders of two junior lecturers (at the time of the site visit). The Faculty provides adequate guidance to students in learning and use of English language in their academic work. However, the discussions with the students revealed that many students attend private English classes in Badulla. The review team realized that the language proficiency of the undergraduates of the EAG should be improved.

The core curriculum of the study program ensures to a certain extent that students are provided with adequate training on soft skills. In addition, tailor-made programmes are offered by the Career Guidance Unit (CGU) of the University. The Vice Chancellor of the University is committed to conduct all activities of the University as a “UvaWellassa family”.

### **Criterion 3. Program Design and Development**

Program design and development process of the Faculty of Export Agriculture reflects its own and unique style related to modern university system. It is commendable that the Export Agriculture Degree Program is successful in delivering the course material, while preserving and cherishing the traditional education through its modern existing curricula. Over the past several years, the degree program has commenced the process towards achieving current expectations of higher educational quality and standards.

The faculty practices an Outcome Based Education. Degree programs include a variety of supplementary, cross disciplinary and self-learning courses. Inbuilt collaborative and group work is visible in the curriculum.

Program design is in compliance with the SLQF to a great extent. Program design describes the graduate profile and identifies appropriate ILOs. As revealed in the SER, teaching, learning and assessment process and subject description are fairly well defined.

One of the key elements of best practice in program design is needs analysis. In this respect, it was observed that industry and other stake holders have been consulted to a satisfactory level during program design. Routine monitoring of the study program based on previous recommendations of external reviews has to be adhered.

Gender equity and equality and other social aspects have been considered in an informal manner in the Faculty/ Degree programme. It is noted that the Faculty has no clear policy on differently abled students.

Present program design and development procedures do not provide any fallback options to the students. These gaps should be addressed in the next revision of the degree program.

#### **Criterion 4. Course/Module Design and Development**

Faculty has established a Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) and a Curriculum Revision Committee (CRC) which consists of responsible lecturers and external subject experts. As stated in the SER, the functional nature of the CDC, its operational mechanism and progress are satisfactory.

As per the mission statement of the University, four-year special degree programmes are structured to produce well-rounded, employable graduates. Concerns regarding the fundamentals of each course have been duly considered in the EAG to address the mission statement. Emphasis is given on cultural and historical development, present-day international trends, relevant industry related principles and interdisciplinary activities. Integration of related disciplines in the curriculum is also noteworthy. Curriculum revision was done with the participation of University academics, eminent scientists, subject experts, professionals from agricultural research institutions and industries and passed out students of the EAG. Anyhow, the review team noted that the detailed curriculum of the Faculty of Export Agriculture has been reasonably well developed.

The review team further observed that the course design is satisfactorily aligned with the credit values and learning hours of the SLQF. Course design integrates learning strategies for development of self-directed and collaborative learning, creative and critical thinking and team work. Internal monitoring strategies and processes to evaluate, review and improve course design, development and operationalization needs further strengthening for better achievements.

#### **Criterion 5. Teaching and Learning**

The present-day scope of the teaching and learning process must be student-centered in line with the outcome-based education (OBE) concept and philosophy. The main theoretical underpinning of the outcome-based curriculum is the model of constructive alignment, which is defined as coherence and alignment between the content, intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning strategies and assessment. In this context, it is expected that the external examiner's reports play an important role. In this regard, it is commendable that it is a regular practice in the degree program.

Review team was impressed with the vibrant teaching-learning sessions, opportunities given to work in groups to promote collaborative learning, lively performances of students and their enthusiastic engagement in learning. Review team too had the opportunity to experience students' innovative creations (taste some value added food products developed through locally available fruits).

Access to present-day education by differently abled students is of prime concern. The review team noted that the Faculty has not given sufficient thought on this line. During our interactions, it was revealed that the degree program cannot accommodate differently

abled students as they cannot participate actively in practical sessions - industrial trainings and other farm activities.

It is expected to have diverse delivery modes to maximize the student engagement in learning at group and individual levels. Innovative teaching and learning give life to the curriculum. Faculty provides adequate IT facilities and services to all the students. Resource materials placed at the library are available to all teachers and students. The library and IT center conduct induction and educational programmes to generate awareness with regard to effective use of such resources. However, it was noted that the use of LMS in teaching, learning and assessment processes is yet to be improved.

Under the present-day outcome-based education, it is necessary to assess the expected shifts from teaching to learning; skills to thinking; content to process; and teacher instruction to student demonstration. In this regard, students' feedback / peer's feedback as well as direct teaching practice observations are important to arrive at the correct path.

In this context, the review team wishes to focus on feedback received from some fourth year students which revealed that the assessment criteria for the evaluation of practical skills of students in some of the course units were not communicated to them in advance. Student representatives highlighted that although 80% attendance for lectures is a must for sitting an examination, it is flexible among some of the lectures. Students wanted to pass the message to the review team that this flexibility is somewhat favor oriented rather than genuine. Faculty/ Degree program should address such issues and ensure the internalization of best practices. In this regard, regular internal monitoring by the IQAC is necessary to foster and promote widespread adoption of best practices.

While appreciating the students' contribution to discovery of knowledge through creative productions, exhibitions and students' research symposia, the review team wishes to underline that it is necessary to encourage intensive engagement of students in research and other innovative and creative activities. Export Agriculture staff of the UWU are provided with University Research Grants and financial support to participate at conferences to present and publish research papers. This has helped the academic staff to uplift the quality of teaching through the knowledge gained, uplift recognition within the scientific community and in promotional prospects.

Distribution of workload among the academic staff is relatively fair. However, the only Department (Department of Export Agriculture) which caters to more than 90% to the technical components of the degree program does not possess an adequate number of well qualified, experienced, permanent academic staff. As a result, probationary lecturers have been compelled to teach a major portion of the course modules.

Although the Faculty/ Degree programme recognizes the value of creative and innovative approaches in teaching and research, few progressive steps have been taken to institutionalize a teacher appraisal system to reward the staff who excel. It is necessary to keep performance data of teachers and to develop an attractive teacher appraisal system.

This will encourage staff engagement in training programmes as well as in curriculum development. It has to be a regular transformational process of the degree programme.

The Degree program has no firm plan to capture and retain foreign students. The SDC of the University arranges peer evaluation workshops and a Certificate Course in Teaching in Higher Education to improve the quality of teaching.

### **Criterion 6. Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression**

FASEA maintains a student friendly academic and administrative support system to ensure a conducive and caring environment for students and staff. Learning environment and student support can be further upgraded through improved delivery systems and appropriate support services. Even with limited facilities, co-curricular activities conducted by the Faculty contribute immensely to social and cultural dimensions of the educational experience. There are number of students societies/ associations / clubs such as the media club, arts club, nature explorer team, sports council, astronomical society, aqua club, animal science society, computer society, entrepreneur's society and UWU agro club to create a lively and healthy learning environment in the University. Student's vigilant committee established in 2015, help to ensure the protection of the newly admitted students. Examination calendar for each semester is prepared in advance, including dates for first and second marking, results board, results finalizing, releasing results etc.

However, there are several weaknesses as well. Infrastructure facilities and support services aimed at students with special needs are inadequate; regular student satisfaction surveys on support services provided are not conducted; fall back options for students who do not complete the degree programme successfully are not available; culture expected by foreign students of many countries is poorly developed within the University and in Badulla area; lack of sufficient space and facilities for student counsellors to discuss various concerns while maintaining the privacy of students is a major concern.

Networking with alumni to assist students academically and professionally is in early stages of development. However, it was noted that the study programme has a much higher potential to establish a strong alumni association if efficiently coordinated by the degree programme. As pointed out by alumni, the degree programme has monitored the students' career - admission, retention, progression, completion, employment and to a certain extent after employment life (encourage them to conduct post graduate studies), which is commendable.

### **Criterion 7. Student Assessment and Awards**

Assessment strategy of student learning is considered as an integral part of the programme design with a clear relation between assessment tasks and the programme outcomes. With regard to the student assessment and awards of the Export Agriculture Programme, ILO's have been fairly well defined. Evaluation is done based on the descriptors of SLQF and SBS.

Paper setting, moderation, first marking and second marking are practiced as per the UGC examination manual. Steps have been taken to obtain Faculty Board and Senate approvals wherever needed. EAG adopts a strategy of allocating 40% of the marks for continuous assessments and 60% for the end semester examinations. SDC and the IQAC arrange programmes to develop the skills of the staff on “Assessment Strategies” to maintain the quality of the degree programme. Assessment procedures and weightage given for components are clearly stated in course specifications and are communicated to the students.

Although many aspects of this criterion have been maintained at a healthy level, the following weaknesses were revealed at the meeting with the student representatives: assessment methods/ criteria of some practical examinations were not revealed to students well in advance and as a result students having repeat subjects were adversely affected due to the last moment examination rush (this has happened in certain years); feedback on assessments and results of examinations are not provided to students in a timely manner. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the above stated lapses in the assessment strategy need to be addressed at the earliest by the Degree Programme.

Commending the excellent research output, patents were received to several staff members of the EAG.

### **Criterion 8. Innovative and Healthy Practices**

Faculty promotes engagement of students and staff in co-curricular activities, such as social, cultural and aesthetic pursuits and it has the potential to widen innovative and healthy practices. Faculty / Degree Programme has entered into several MOUs with Government and private Institutions/farms to send students for field visits/ trainings to develop the hands-on experience. It is recommended that the Degree Programme has to strengthen their MOUs by incorporating exchange of students and staff (MOUs with Universities), established business links and entrepreneurship. Students are given opportunities to raise their issues at the Faculty Board meetings and they have been favourably considered on many occasions.

Centre for GEE is functioning well by arranging workshops for students on currently important topics such as “Sexual and Gender Based Violence”. Student vigilant committee / student guidance and advisory committee has helped specially the new entrants to make their early university life happy.

Faculty needs to address the following weaknesses with respect to innovative and healthy practices: Industrial training period has to be extended and more hands-on experience has to be given through a university-owned farm located in close proximity. The ICT based multi-mode teaching delivery and learning through VLE/LMS is not widely practised; it is recommended that Faculty needs to take steps to ensure usage of ICT by students and staff at a high level. Regular revision of the curriculum and close monitoring of its implementation has to be exercised. The CDC must meet on a regular basis, monitor

implementation of the existing curriculum and carryout curriculum revisions whenever necessary.

### Chapter 6. Grading of Overall Performance of the Program

	Criterion	Weighted minimum score	Actual criterion wise score
1	Programme Management	75	120.4
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	83.3
3	Programme Design and Development	75	122.9
4	Course /Module Design and Development	75	123.7
5	Teaching and Learning	75	113.2
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	83.3
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	123.5
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	40.5
	Total score (Out of 1000)		810.8
	Total score (out of 100)		81.0

The study program under review has attained a high level of quality expected of a program of study and propose improvement to achieve excellence. Thus, the Bachelor of Export Agriculture study program is awarded Grade A.

## Chapter 7. Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

- The Department of Export Agriculture promotes the recruitment of academic staff with wide experience in different subject areas from Government and the private sectors in order to train students to meet the market driven needs of the degree program.
- The degree programme has taken steps in integrating learning strategies for development of self-directed and collaborative learning, creative and critical thinking and teamwork in the course design.
- Strong emphasis is given in developing soft skills of the students by including mandated courses related to soft skills in the curriculum.
- IQAC of the faculty has taken several steps for internal monitoring strategies to improve the standard of the degree program.
- Staff of the degree programme guide the students to facilitate their progression to find employments and to follow advanced courses.
- Final marks of examinations are recorded using both manual and electronic formats unique to UWU and are cross checked by a third person and the HOD before submitting to the examination branch.
- Free Wi-Fi facilities are available to students and staff within the University premises.
- Annual Research Conference is held to present the research findings of students and staff.
- Steps are taken to include course specifications in the student handbook (2019).
- University has taken steps to start academic programmes of all faculties on the single day.
- Promote student and staff engagement in co-curricular activities.
- Student Vigilant Committee was established to ensure the safe teaching-learning environment within the University.
- A short term (six months) research grant (Rs. 50,000.00) system has been established to help researchers and research students.
- Research is given high priority through a research policy and a research committee, providing university research grants to staff members, having short term research grants and holding the annual International Research Conference.
- UWU strictly follows the “Zero Tolerance for Ragging Policy” and established a CGEE to ensure GEE.
- Steps have been taken to address most of the weaknesses pointed out at the last PR.

## Recommendations

- Curriculum should be re-designed with a clear vision of an interdisciplinary approach and concern of a holistic perspective addressing the national needs of the export agriculture sector.
- Stakeholder participation in the curriculum development process must be further widened and ensured.
- Course ILOs, teaching learning strategies and assessment strategies should be developed with constructive alignment and regular monitoring strategies and processes to evaluate, review and improve.
- Farm-based experience should be widened and more hands-on experience given to students.
- The study program must have a solid and well planned research component and engagement of students in research must be further encouraged.
- Use of LMS in teaching, learning and assessment processes must be further strengthened.
- Assessment methods/ criteria and weightage given for the practical course units, should be communicated to the students in advance.
- The Faculty has to implement a mechanism for the students who do not complete the program successfully to exit at a lower level with a diploma or certificate, depending on their level of attainment.
- Review team wishes to highlight the need for developing the staff facilities presently existing for English teaching.
- Facilities of the health center must be improved to support a healthier environment.
- A well-organized counselling room / system has to be established to ensure the privacy of the students.
- Faculty should develop policy and ensure further facilities to admit differently abled students to the degree programme.
- Existing mechanism to obtain feedback from students and peers on the quality of teaching must be ensured.
- Links with passed out students need to be further strengthened targeting potential entrepreneurship.
- Steps have to be taken to acquire a suitable land closer to the university suitable for an agricultural farm without further delay.
- More concern has to be given to attract and retain foreign students.
- Faculty/ Degree programmes should enter into MOUs with International Organizations/ Foreign Universities to exchange students/ staff members (academic and non- academic).
- Administration has to find solutions to provide accommodation to all students within the University premises as accommodation outside is expensive.

- More encouragement is needed to increase student participation in national level competitions.
- A scheme should be developed to send technical level officers/ technicians for foreign training on a regular basis.

## Chapter 8. Summary

The program review of the BSc (Hons) degree program in Export Agriculture of the Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture of the UvaWellassa University was successfully completed with the site visit held from 11-14 November 2019. The FASEA is located in Badulla provides an excellent environment conducive for academic pursuits, scholarly work, socio- cultural activities, innovative thinking and agricultural research. The present review of the Export Agriculture Degree Program, is the second of its kind after six years. It is evident that there are both strengths and weaknesses with regard to the quality of the study program as measured by the eight review criteria specified in the PR Manual of the QAC. The SER was prepared by a team appointed by the Faculty Board, and the team had adopted a participatory and inclusive approach in compiling the SER. However, the SER had a few shortcomings – failure to provide evidence to support some claims, incompatibility of claims with the evidence provided, citing same documents as evidence for several claims, failure to capture some deficiencies and shortcomings by the SWOT analysis, very few contextual and typographical errors, etc. However, the Faculty was well prepared for the site-visit of the program review. The Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty, Director- IQAU, Coordinator- IQAC, Heads of the two Departments and academic staff members extended their fullest cooperation during the site visit.

- The program review was conducted in accordance with the guidelines prescribed in the PR Manual and judgment on study programmes were reached by making evidence-based assessment of the degree of internalization of prescribed best practices and extent of achievements in respective standards defined under the eight review criteria. The review team observed that the Degree Program is implementing several good practices as described in the Review Manual of the University Grant Commission, Sri Lanka to maintain its quality.
- The on-site review visit consisted of meetings with University and Faculty administration, academic staff members, Heads of the Centers and Units, non-academic staff members and students, evaluation of documentary evidences, visiting the Departments, observation of facilities available for teaching and learning.
- It was evident to the review team that human and physical resources and facilities available are sufficient to conduct the degree program efficiently and effectively. Further strengthening of these facilities will help to reach excellence.
- In general, all academic staff at FASEA are expected to be research-active, with the expected proportion of research effort varying between different levels. It has been frequently stressed throughout this report that the FASEA places an increasing emphasis on research intensity and output.
- The degree programme has several well qualified experienced academic staff members (as the total staff is less in number) competent for designing, development and delivery of academic programmes and are doing a praiseworthy work. Even though the Staff Development Centre (SDC) conducts many programmes to maintain

and upgrade the quality of staff, faculty needs to make an effort to further enhance the quality of teachers (specially the probationary lecturers) by providing them opportunities for exposure to the outside world through foreign participation.

- The classroom sessions observed by the team are very interactive and participatory. Computer facilities in the ICT laboratories are at a satisfactory level. Career guidance unit provides adequate services to students to develop their soft and life skills. Furthermore, the university provides access to well-equipped library facilities with internet access to the students and staff.
- The University has established an IQAU at the University level and IQAC at faculty level in the recent past. The University has strengthened the internal quality assurance policy framework, strategies and an activity plan to support QA activities of the University in all aspects. In this regard, the FASEA has demonstrated a keen interest in institutionalizing quality culture within its all spheres of academic, research and outreach pursuits. Though the Faculty is blessed with a good academic staff, outreach activities including “industry engagement” and providing “hands-on experience” are areas require further strengthening.
- Faculty does not appear to have a research agenda developed in line with the national research and development priorities. Per - officer research output is significantly high, mostly due to high number of “Abstracts” published by staff members.
- SDC of the University arrange programmes for the Continuous Professional Development of the staff members.
- The degree program offered by the FASEA has shown high degree of compliance with best practices prescribed and achieved adequate or good scores for most of the standards listed under eight quality criteria. Based on the overall performance score of 81%, it is recommended to award the Grade of “A” for BSc Honors Degree Programmes in Export Agriculture which is interpreted as “high level of performance of quality expected of a program of study; should move in the future towards excellence”.

The review team wishes to acknowledge the cooperation and support extended by the Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty, Heads of Departments, Heads of the Centers and Units, Director of IQAU, Coordinator of IQAC and all academic and non-academic staff members and students of the Degree Program during the entire process of the program review.

At the end of the review process, the members of the review team felt that although the quality of several aspects of education need to be enhanced in the current study program, the Faculty has taken steps in the right direction to improve the relevance and quality of Export Agriculture degree program.

## Appendix 1.Site Visit Schedule

### Day 01 (11.11.2019)

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 AM – 9.00 AM	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor	Vice Chancellor/ Dean, Director – IQAU/ Coordinator – FQAC, Chair – SER Preparation
9.00 AM – 9.30 AM	Meeting with the Director - IQAU	Director – IQAU
9.45 AM – 10.45 AM	Presentation about the Faculty and respective study programs  <i>Working Tea</i>	Dean FMS/ Director-IQAU/Coordinator FQAC/  All HODs of the Faculty/ Cluster Chair and SER Team/ Study program coordinators
10:45 AM -11:45 AM	Meeting with academic staff in permanent cadre (excluding HOD)	Teaching panel of respective programs (excluding HODs) Senate representatives
11:45 AM -12:15 PM	Meeting with temporary academic staff	Temporary Demonstrators, Tutors etc
12:15 PM -1:00 PM	Meeting with Administrative Staff	Registrar/Bursar/SARs/AB/SAB/Work Engineer/DR Examination
1:00 PM -1:30 PM	<i>Lunch</i>	
1:30 PM -2:15 PM	Meeting with Directors of Centres / Units / Cells	All Directors of Centres/ Units/ Cell Coordinators
2:15PM-2:45PM	Meeting with Student Counselors	Senior Student Counselors and student counselors
2:45 PM -4:00 PM	Observing, Physical Facilities  <i>Tea</i>	Review Team/ Facilitators

### Day 2 (12.11.2019)

Time	Activity	Participants
8.30 AM – 9.00 AM	Observing documentation	Review Team/ Facilitators
9.30 AM – 10.30 AM	Observing documentation	Review Team

<b>10.30 AM – 11.00 AM</b>	Observing Documentation	Review team
<b>11.00 AM -11:30 AM</b>	Observing Documentation	Review team
<b>11:30 AM -12:30 AM</b>	Observing Documentation	Review Team
<b>12:30 PM -1:30 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>1:30 PM -4:00 PM</b>	Observing Documentation <b>Working Tea</b>	Review Team
<b>4.00 PM – 5.00 PM</b>	Open hour for any stakeholder to meet review panel  Observing documentation	Review Team

**Day 3. 13.11.2019**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>8.30 AM – 9.00 AM</b>	Meeting with Librarian/ Senior Assistant Librarian	Librarian/ Senior Assistant Librarian/ Library staff
<b>9.00 AM -9.30 AM</b>	Meeting with technical officers	All technical officers
<b>9.30 AM – 10.00 AM</b>	Observing teaching sessions and facilities	Review team
<b>10.00 AM – 10.30 AM</b>	Meeting with Students <b>Working Tea</b>	Group of students (30) representative of gender, ethnicity, level of study programs
<b>10.30 AM – 11.00 AM</b>	Meeting on support for student welfare	Director/Physical Education, University Medical Officer
<b>11:00 PM -11.30 AM</b>	Meeting on research activities	Chairman / Research committee, members of research committee
<b>11:30 PM -12:00 NOON</b>	Meeting with a cross section of academic support staff and non-academic staff	Representative group of academic support staff and non-academic staff (10)
<b>12:00 PM -1:15 PM</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	

<b>1:15 PM -2:15 PM</b>	Meeting with external stakeholders and alumni members  <i>Working Tea</i>	Group of external stakeholders (about 20 employers, industry, private sector, representatives with link to or involvement with the University) and Alumni
<b>2:15 PM -4:00 PM</b>	Observing Documentation	Review Team
<b>4.00 PM – 5.00 PM</b>	Open hour for any stakeholder to meet Review Team	Review Team

**Day 4. 14.11.2019**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>8.30 AM – 900 AM</b>	Meeting with mentors and Career Guidance staff	Coordinator/mentoring and mentors, and Director – Career Guidance
<b>9.00 AM – 9.30 AM</b>	English Teaching Unit	Members of English teaching unit
<b>9.30 AM – 12.30 AM</b>	Observing Documentation  <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team
<b>12:30 PM - 1:30 PM</b>	<i>Lunch</i>	
<b>1:30 PM - 2:00 PM</b>	Private meeting of reviewers and report writing  <i>Working Tea</i>	Review Team
<b>2:00 PM - 3:00 PM</b>	Closing meeting for debriefing	Vice Chancellor/Dean/Director – IQAU/ HODs/ Coordinator – FQAC/Chair & the SER – Team

## Appendix 2. Officers met during the site visit

### **Administrative staff**

Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Bursar(Acting), Deputy Bursar (Reporting), Senior Assistant Registrar (CODL), Senior Assistant Registrar (Student Affairs), Senior Assistant Registrar (Capital Works), Assistant Registrar (Examinations), Assistant Registrar ( Human Resources), Assistant Registrar ( Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture), Assistant Registrar ( Academic Research and Publications), Assistant Registrar ( Library Services), Assistant Registrar (Payments), Assistant Bursar (Salaries), Dean of the FASEA. Heads of Departments.

### **Supporting staff**

Works Engineer, , Director of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU), , Coordinator of the faculty Quality Assurance cell, library staff, Student Counsellor, Director/SDC, Director/CGU, Director/IQAU, Director/ CGEE, Director/CODL, Director/UBL, Director/UWU-ICC, Director / Physical Education, Chairman/ CDC., staff of ELTU, non-academic staff members of different categories, Warden and sub wardens, Procter. Non-academic staff of the technical divisions, Technical officers. Staff of the health center.

### **Academic staff (Export Agriculture Degree Program)**

Senior academic staff excluding heads of departments, Probationary staff, and Temporary staff.

Staff of the English teaching Department

### **Undergraduate students**

Forty students representing four academic years

### **Alumni**

Thirty passed out students representing very early passed out students to recently passed out students.

List of people at met at different meetings is annexed