



Programme Review Report



Cluster of Study Programmes

Bachelor of Science Honours in Medical Laboratory Science

Bachelor of Science Honours in Nursing

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Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

University of Ruhuna

Site visit Dates: 13th - 14th December 2022



Review Panel: Prof. Prasad M. Jayaweera (Chair)
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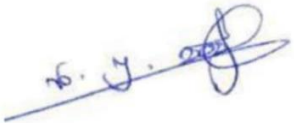
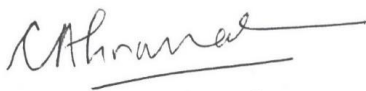
The Quality Assurance Council
University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka

University : University of Ruhuna

Faculty : Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

Programme : Bachelor of Science Honours in Medical Laboratory Science
Bachelor of Science Honours in Nursing
Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours

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Section 1: Introduction to Programmes

The University of Ruhuna

University of Ruhuna (UoR) was established in September 1978, as Ruhuna University College and was upgraded to a fully-fledged University in February 1984. UoR currently constitutes ten Faculties, namely Agriculture, Allied Health Sciences, Engineering, Fisheries and Marine Sciences & Technology, Humanities & Social Sciences, Management & Finance, Medicine, Science, Technology, and Graduate Studies. UoR is one of the leading research University in Sri Lanka. In the year 2020, the undergraduate population of UoR reached 8336.

1.

The vision of the University

“To be the prime intellectual thrust of the nation”

The mission of the University

“To advance knowledge and skills through teaching, research and services to serve the society”

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

The Allied Health Sciences (AHS) Degree Programme was initiated as the Paramedical Degree Programme under the Faculty of Medicine (FoM), UoR to provide undergraduate studies in nursing and paramedical sciences. This was initiated by appointing the first two committees to develop curricula for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Degree programmes in 2001 and 2007, respectively. UoR has identified long stood need for such undergraduate degree programmes for several decades in the health sector of the country, with the increasing demand of highly trained professionals to cope with the trends in the modern healthcare system. MLS and Nursing degree programmes commenced in the year 2008. The Inauguration of the paramedical degree programme was held on 20th October 2008 with the enrollment of 19 MLS and 37 Nursing undergraduates as the first batch. The Paramedical Degree Programme was re-named as the AHS Degree Programme in the year 2009. In 2010, Bachelor of Pharmacy degree programme was initiated with the enrolment of 11 undergraduates. All degree programmes were initiated as four-year degree programmes

(120 credits) with the aim of producing professional graduates suitable for employment nationally and internationally.

AHS Degree programme has gone through a turbulent time initially as Government Medical Officers Association objected four-year degree for healthcare workers in Sri Lanka and did not grant permission for clinical training facilities for undergraduates in Government Hospitals. Therefore, the degree programmes have been compelled to be converted to three-year degree programmes (with 90 credits) in 2010. However, through a fundamental rights case filed in the Supreme Court against the failure to grant clinical training facilities to the AHS undergraduates, the Supreme Court upheld the rights of universities to conduct four-year health care degree programmes comprising 120 credits. With this court decision, Degree Programmes re-obtained the right to conduct four-year degree programmes for all disciplines.

Four batches of MLS and Nursing graduates and 2 batches of Pharmacy graduates were passed out from the AHS degree programme under the FoM.

Subsequently, in September 2017, the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (FAHS) was established in UoR as its 10th Faculty marking a major milestone with three Departments namely MLS, Nursing and Pharmacy aiming to further improve the quality of healthcare services in the country and the educational programmes as a Faculty to achieve national and international standards.

The vision of the faculty:

"To be the best Allied Health Science education institution in the country"

The mission of the faculty:

"To provide educational opportunities for all pursuing higher education in allied health sciences, to produce good quality technically competent health care professionals to the country, to achieve sustainable development goals through alignment of educational programmes, to economic and health policies of the country".

It has been able to accommodate an increased intake of students annually, reaching the annual intake of 155 undergraduates for three-degree programmes (25 for MLS, 100 for Nursing, 30 for Pharmacy) in 2020. In 2021, the annual FAHS' intake has further been increased to 300 undergraduates for all three-degree programmes (50 for MLS, 200 for Nursing, 50 for Pharmacy).

The first batch of AHS undergraduates graduated from UoR in 2013 and since then nearly 115 MLS graduates, 239 Nursing graduates (8 batches) and 79 Pharmacy graduates (6 batches) have been produced by the faculty with high rate of employability.

Being the youngest faculty of UoR, the team members of the FAHS including academic and non-academic staff are committed to enhance it to a fully-fledged Health Science Educational Institute within a few years with the utmost support of main campus, members and experts of the extended Faculty, University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Higher Education and the political authorities of the country under the new policies of the Government of Sri Lanka.

Table 1.1: Number of students in Faculty/programme at present- breakdown in years

Degree programme	1st year 2020/2021 2022	1st year 2019/2020 2021	2nd year (2018/2019) 2020	3rd year (2017/2018) 2018/2019	4th year (2016/2017) (Almost completed) 2017/2018
MLS	49	47	25	22	26
Nursing	168	147	72	52	54
Pharmacy	52	51	30	28	28
Total	269	245	127	102	108

Table 1.2: Maximum number of students enrolled in the last four years

Degree programme	1st year 2020/2021 2022	1st year 2019/2020 2021	2nd year (2018/2019) 2020	3rd year (2017/2018) 2019	4th year (2016/2017) (Almost completed) 2018
MLS	49	48	25	25	26
Nursing	168	147	84	59	57
Pharmacy	52	51	30	30	28
Total	269	246	139	114	111

Table 1.3: Numbers graduated from the programme over the past five years

Degree programme	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
MLS	22	25	14	17	16	18
Nursing	37	62	16	24	36	30
Pharmacy	19	15	13	08	23	05
Total	78	102	43	49	75	53

Work force of the faculty

A total of 80 academic, academic supportive, and non-academic staff members are employed at the FAHS.

	Administrative office	Departments			Library	Total
		MLS	Nursing	Pharmacy		
Administrative officers						
Dean	01					01
Assistant Registrar	01					01
Assistant Bursar	01					01
Senior Assistant Librarian	-	-	-	-	01	01
Academic staff						
Professors		-	01 (Dean)	-		01
Senior Lecturers (Gr I)		02	-	02		04
Senior Lecturers (Gr II)		01	07	04		12
Lecturers		-	01	-		01
Probationary Lecturers		08	03	05		16
Temporary Assistant Lecturers		-	02	-		02
Temporary Demonstrators		04	01	04		09
Non-academic staff						
Technical Officers (Staff Grade I)		-	-	01		01
Technical Officers (Grade II)		01	02	01		04
Technical Officers (on contract)		02	-	-		02
Management Assistants	03	01	01	01		06
Book Keepers	01	-	-	-		01
Lab Attendants	-	02	01	01		04
Library Information Assistants	-	-	-	-	03	03
Work Aids	03	02	02	02	01	10
Library attendant	-	-	-	-	01	01
Total						80

Section 2: Observations of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

On the request of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council, UGC in February 2020, the Faculty agreed to compile a clustered Self-Evaluation Report (SER) for all the three Degree programmes for the period from 2016-2020 and prepare for the PR in 2021. Different committees were appointed to expedite the process of PR and to submit the SER by 30th June 2021. The following actions tabulated were adopted by the FAHS for the preparation PR and submission of SER.

Stage	Step	Description	Remarks
Planning	1	Dean announced about the PR process at Board of Faculty of FAHS (FB) and asked Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) to prepare an action plan.	1 meeting (February 2020)
	2	IQAC prepared an action plan, time schedule and suggested committees to be appointed.	1 meeting (April 2020)
	3	FB appointed following committees with clear duties and responsibilities (Annexure 5) 1. Eight Criteria-wise Arrangement Committees (CAC) - from each department 2. SER Writing Committee (SER WC) – a senior academic member was appointed as the chairperson 3. SER Advisory Committee (SER AC) – comprised of Heads of Departments and senior academics of the faculty 4. Technical Support Team (TST) – comprised of AR, Librarian, Technical staff and Demonstrators	1 meeting (May 2020)
	4	Student representatives of each batch of three Departments were briefed about the PR process.	1 meeting (May 2020)

Training	5	Three senior academics from other faculties who were involved in SER writing and PR evaluation were invited to conduct half-day awareness workshops on Preparation for PR, Coding of evidences, SWOT analysis, and SER writing for all academic and non-academic staff of the FAHS.	3 meetings (2019 - 2020)
	6	One senior academic participated for "Reviewer training workshop" conducted by UGC and other academics participated as observers.	1 meeting (June 2020)
Collection of Evidence and Writing of SER	7	IQAC introduced the eight criteria, best practices, and standards for the PR	1 meeting (June 2020)
	8	IQAC members introduced the coding and filling system of FAHS	1 meeting (2019-2020)
	9	CAC teams and SER WC met regularly, listed and identified the necessary evidence to be collected, and SER was written while collecting the evidences.	32 meetings (June – November 2020)
	10	SER WC, CAC, and IQAC met and reviewed evidences collected by each CAC team	2 meetings (December 2020)
Reviewing Improving	12	SER AC reviewed the draft SER and suggested recommendations to improve.	6 meetings (January 2021)
	13	The draft was forwarded to the IQAC and FB and approved.	2 meetings (February 2021)
	14	The draft was submitted to CQA for internal review by a Senate appointed internal review team.	1 meeting (March 2021)
	15	Internal reviewers' comments were included, proof read and final SER was prepared with the agreement of IQAC, Heads of Departments and Dean	5 meetings (May – June 2021)
Submission	16	Finalized SER was submitted to IQAC, FB and CQA and approved.	3 meetings (June 2021)
	17	SER is to be submitted to UGC through official channel	30 th June 2021

Section 3: Description of Review Process

The review team was appointed by the QAAC of UGC in consultation with the Faculty of Allied Health Science, University of Ruhuna, in accordance with the procedure for reviewing undergraduate degree programmes as outlined in the Programme Review Manual of the UGC. The review team consisted of four senior academics with relevant training and three medical/health subject domain experts. The QAAC sent soft copies of the SER and the MS Excel template for programme review (PR Scoring Sheet) to the reviewers after appointing the team. Each reviewer independently conducted the Desk Evaluation based on the claims and evidence listed in the SER. After the development and implementation of the Programme Evaluation Management System for programme review by the QAAC, each reviewer subsequently also entered their scores into the system. The team observed that the results of their independent evaluations were consistent (no significant deviations) subject to site visit and observing the actual evidence.

The Chairman of the Programme Review Committee and QAC, in consultation with the Dean-FAHS, scheduled one virtual meeting with relevant stakeholders on December 13th, 2022 and one-day site visit from December 14th, 2022. It should be noted that commencement of this review process was delayed due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the turbulent situation in the country in the last couple of years. The schedule for site visits was prepared by FAHS in consultation with the review chair. The schedule was well-organized, allowing the review team to convene on time. All pertinent major authorities and parties and examine all pertinent physical amenities (please attach the site visit schedule Appendix A). Before the site visit, in preparation for the site visit, the review team met online and discussed the results of the desk evaluation in depth and identified specific questions to be clarified during the site visit. Each member of the review panel was assigned duties and responsibilities by the chair. The review panel is grateful to the Vice Chancellor, the Dean, the Heads of Departments, the Chair of the IQAC, and all other officers for facilitating a fruitful on-site evaluation and providing all the necessary data. Appreciation is extended to the entire FAHS' staff for the pleasant arrangements and their courtesy.

The site visit began with a meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Snr. Prof. Sujeewa Amarasena, who is also the founder Dean of the FAHS with a visionary leadership, immense guidance offered to reach the goals and aspirations of FHAS. He enlightened the review panel about the establishment of FAHS with the presence of the Dean of FAS and other officials. He presented his views on three-degree programmes, especially FAHS' evolution and the future. The Chair of IQAC at the University of Ruhuna then explained the quality assurance and management policies and procedures in place. The Dean-FAHS presented an overview of the profile, degree programmes, and enrollment and graduation statistics of FAHS. Thereafter, review panel completed series of meetings also with the SER writing team,

academic staff of FHAS and its' departments, non-academic staff of FAHS and its' departments, and other respective administrative officers as listed in Appendix A. The review panel was impressed by the university's efforts to promote maximum utilization of their (physical/human) resources sharing, acknowledge diversity, and enthusiasm towards the development of the university, faculty, and the departments.

The review team had a hybrid mode meeting (participants joining both in Physically and Virtually) with passed out graduates from FAHS and employers of FAHS graduates and training supervisors of FHAS undergraduates, and other external stakeholders and gathered positive feedback on the degree programmes. There was a meeting with student representatives from all currently enrolled classes physically. Then the other facilities for welfare and other students' support services were observed by the review panel. The panel's observations and the information provided by the respective Dean, Heads, Directors and Coordinators demonstrated their dedication to improving the education and social well-being of the students. During the meeting with the students, they were encouraged to discuss their learning experience and to offer suggestions for improvement.

Prior to the site visit, all documentary evidence had been uploaded to a Document Management System and access was provided through the QAC's Programme Review MIS. Initially, there were some technical issues and DMS' service interruptions in getting access to those provided evidence. However, the reviewers were able to examine the evidence and during the site visit, the panel was also able to examine some documentary evidence. FAHS was also very supportive in providing the documentary evidence. The review panel is extremely pleased with the arrangements made to facilitate an efficient review visit. It is commendable that the DCS is committed to openness, transparency, effective communication, and logistical support.

Section 4: Faculty's Approach to Quality and Standards

The review panel learnt that this is the first Programme Review (PR) that the FAHS is undergoing. However, FAHS' degree programmes have previously been reviewed by the professional accreditation bodies namely CMCC for BSc Hons in MLS degree in year 2016 and SLNC for BSc Hons in Nursing Degree (is in the process). During those reviewing programmes, mainly the necessity for improvements of the physical and human resources have been highlighted. Based on those comments received from the relevant accreditation bodies significant improvements at FAHS have been achieved. With such accreditations, graduates are eligible to obtain registration in SLMC/SLNC.

The University of Ruhuna (UoR) and the FAHS have made significant effort in establishing a quality culture across the university. The review panel observed a positive attitude towards quality assurance and management through established procedures at UoR. The university has a Center for Quality Assurance (CQA) lead by a director and Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) lead by a director, both are well-experienced qualified academic of the university. IQAU liaison with the CQA and co-ordinate the quality assurance activities also within the faculty. The Vice Chancellor and the Dean of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences provide their support, guidance, and encouragement for quality assurance activities. The commitment of the top authorities towards quality is commendable. FAHS and its' departments have well-established procedures for quality assurance in compliance with the policies and guidelines of UGC's QAC. The degree programme complies with the guidelines and requirements stipulated in the SLQF.

Section 5: Judgment on Each of the 8 Criteria

Criterion 1: Programme Management

Strengths:

- The existing organizational structures are adequate for effective governance, management, and execution of FAHS' core functions.
- Academic & some external mentoring, student counselling and related welfare service in place.
- There is a Web-Portal for the faculty with some useful information.
- Adoption of ICT enabled solutions in many operational/functional areas inclusive of Students' Registrations, Provisioning accesses to Library-Services and Virtual Learning Environments are commendable moves.

Weaknesses:

- Existing Governance, Management and Academic Procedures could further be streamlined and aligned with relevant standards.
- Aspects such as gender equity & equality and students with special needs could be formalized adhering with available local/global standards.
- There is room for further development & deployment of a fully-fledged and integrated MIS (ERP like) total solution in compliance with UGC recommendations.
- Occupational safety can further be improved and assured in line with national and international recommendations.

Recommendations:

- Adoption and complete adherence with all eleven parts of "Academic Procedures Handbook" and mainly with the Part III: Governance and Management of National Universities are recommended.
- Policies related to gender equity & equality and students with special needs could be formulated covering initial screening at the registration, temporarily disabilities in campus as per UGC recommendations, and needs of differently abled students by considering adoption of global standards such as Types of Spaces and "Accessible" of WBDG.
- Instead of scattered automations of functional & operational areas of the faculty, full-fledged and integrated MIS (ERP like) could be deployed in line with policies such as IT Governance and Management, levels of personnel privileges, computing resources, as per Comm. Circular 02/2013 : IT Governance and Management (IT Policy).

- Occupational safety can further be improved in line with the global standards such as “Occupant Safety and Health” of WBDG and with the National Occupational Safety Policy.
- Complete adoption of all aspects related to HEIs as per Five Goals of UGC’s Strategic Plan is recommended.

Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources

Strengths:

- Committed academics staff with untiring contributions.
- The academics had undergone compulsory induction programme, and mentor academic programme and all academic staff undergo compulsory CCPDH courses at the SDC.
- There is strong evidence to support staff participation in CPD programmes. SDC also conducts CPD workshops on a regular basis for nonacademic staff as well as academics.
- An online lecture hall reservation system is available.

Weaknesses:

- Inadequacy of all required types of physical resources for smooth operations of FAHS was observed.
- Available limited physical resources are situated and functioning in several scattered places; Teaching Hospital Karapitiya, Department of Nursing at the Teaching Hospital Mahamodara, Administrative building at Godakanda, Departments of MLS and Pharmacy at Uluvitike, i.e. FAHS and its academic departments are also in different places.
- Laboratory space is very limited to accommodate the entire batch of students for a practical class. Hence, academic burden is high as same practical to repeat several times for many groups of a batch.
- All categories of human resources are inadequate.
- The number of permanent academic cadre is not adequate for teaching / learning activities for the yearly increase in number of students. But Academic burden is very high.
- Student: teacher ratio is 21:1 though the requirement is 12:1
- The faculty depends on many visiting staff from the Medical Faculty and staff of Ministry of Health for teaching, practical training, research work/ supervision and assessments.
- Cadre has to be increased and vacancies have to be filled. Even non-academic staff, especially technical officers, are limited. eg. Shortage of technical officers for MLS.

- The library is situated in two locations, with a very limited space. The library facilities have to be improved eg. Books, Latest BNF, E- books, periodicals/research journals and photocopying facility. It should open during weekends, especially during the examination period.
- Faculty does not have its own gymnasium, playground etc. and use the facilities in the faculty of medicine.
- Hostel facilities for students are provided in rented houses.

Recommendations:

- Human resources can be further strengthen with respect to Cadre Norms and Ethics-and-Academic-Accountability and with respect to the expertise required in diversities of covered knowledge areas.
- There is an urgent need to increase the physical resources.
- It is recommended to increase the cadre and acquire more qualified academic staff in order to carry out the teaching / learning activities and assessments.
- The cadre must be increased and all vacancies in the non-academic staff posts, especially technical officers in the MLS department, need to be advertised in order to fulfill the teaching and learning activities.
- Cadres of supporting staff must be filled immediately for the effective functioning of the study programmes.
- It is highly advisable to establish a common Basic Sciences Department for Anatomy, Physiology in r all three departments (MLS, PHARM, NURS)
- Library facilities must be improved and should be enriched with more books, periodicals, computers etc.
- It is recommended to have a Healthcare Education Unit with qualified academic staff to improve and to monitor the curriculum.
- Lecture hall bookings are done online but it is done by an academic staff, which is a waste of their precious time and resources. Hence it is recommended to train a Management Assistant for such resource allocations and coordination tasks.
- External trainers (eg: Pharmacists in case of B Pharm) should receive training and accreditation.

Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development

Programmes of studies developed by the FAHS reflect the vision, mission and the goals of the faculty. The faculty offers three professional degrees which are outcome-based and credit-rated according to the common credit scheme of SLQF at Level 6. The graduate profiles of the degree programmes are designed to meet the global demand. ILOs of the degree programmes are realistic and deliverable. There is a considerable overlap in the course contents of the first year between the three-study programmes which is acceptable.

Study programmes endure 12 terms in MLS degree and 8 semesters in other two-degree programmes.

Strengths:

- Programme outcomes are matched to some extent with the graduate profile.
- The present programme is SLQF level 6.
- Three curricula are designed as entry level professional programmes to practice Nursing, MLS and Pharmacy.
- Curricula promote progression throughout the study periods.
- Involvement of local and international academic experts in the development of the curriculum.
- Acceptance of the professional bodies such as Ceylon Medical College Council, Nursing Council and Sri Lanka Medical Council for registration of the graduates.
- Conducted employer surveys to measure employability of graduates.

Weaknesses:

- Blueprints can be made more complete to reflect the assessments based on the skills development.
- Alignment of ILOs with SLQF level descriptors is not very clear.
- Although student feedback is collected, how the findings were used for the further development of the curricula is not evident.
- Type of assessments and time schedule are not clearly mentioned in the examination by-laws and not made available to the students in the handbook.
- No fallback mechanism available for BSc Nursing and BPharm.
- The credit transfer system must be more regularized.
- At present no infrastructure facilities to accommodate differently.

Recommendations:

- Better to follow either semester system or term system in all three study programmes.
- Since a considerable amount of similar content is noted in all three programmes in the first year, it is recommended to consider having common modules.
- Analyze the student feedback and make the necessary modifications based on the feedback.

Criterion 4: Course/Module Design and Development

Strengths:

- Course and modules are designed as outcome based.
- There is evidence for adoption of participatory approach in designing and developing the course and module.
- Contribution from the academics of Faculty of Medicine in the design and development is a positive factor.
- Serious attempts have been made to map ILOs and PLOs in the curricula.
- Course and modules are designed to adhere to relevant SLQF levels.
- Definition of credits observed.
- Learning outcomes have been developed for the study programmes.
- Templates are available for the course and module design.
- The formal approval process is adhered in approving the course and modules.

Weaknesses:

- No evidence of subject benchmark being used in the module design and development.
- Courses/modules did not have much scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning, communication, interpersonal and team working skills.
- The faculty did not provide facilities for the needs of differently abled students when the courses were designed.
- Minimal integration of media and technology into the course design and delivery.
- No evidence that the faculty provided prior training and necessary inputs to the staff involved in instructional design and development.
- No evidence of training for the relevant staff to be kept informed of the criteria against which the course proposals/specifications are assessed in the course approval process.
- Minimal provision of physical and human resources for course design, approval, delivery, monitoring and review processes.
- No evidence for regular course evaluation.
- No evidence of internal monitoring mechanisms improving the course content, delivery, and assessment processes.
- No evidence of course evaluation at the end of each course/module has contributed to further improvement of the courses/modules.

Recommendations:

- Modules should incorporate activities which encourage creative thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal and team working skills, such as PBLs, CBDs, etc.
- The curriculum should have provided allowances for differently abled students to equally follow TLAs. Not having a differently abled student up to now should not be used as an excuse.
- Staff involved in the design and development should be trained.
- Creation of Healthcare Education Unit in the faculty which should provide training and facilitation in design and development of the course and modules.
- Increase the physical and human resources as soon as possible.
- Course and modules should be evaluated regularly, and the information to be used to improve the delivery of content, assessment, and the module structure.

Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

FAHS provides an effective teaching and learning environment based on OBE-SCL approach, to produce healthcare professionals in Nursing, Pharmacy and MLS.

The curriculum requirements have been taken into consideration in designing the teaching, learning and assessment strategies, and to some extent aligned with the respective graduate profiles and ILOs. Students are provided with the course specifications before the commencement of the semester/term. A variety of blended teaching/learning techniques are incorporated into the curricula such as group activities, teamwork, research, SCL and collaborative learning to enhance the learning experience. Members of the academic staff use mixed teacher-learner centered teaching methods.

Strengths:

- Support obtained from the Faculty of Medicine with in areas such as academic staff and infrastructure i.e. dissecting rooms, laboratories, library.
- Availability of LMS for teaching and learning activities.
- Regular monitoring of teaching and learning activities by collecting information through student feedback, graduate surveys, and peer evaluations.
- Provides significant emphasis on clinical training in the curricula.
- Encourage collaborative learning through a number of group-activities.
- Provision of opportunities at programme level and faculty level to publish student's research findings.

Weaknesses:

- Physical location of the faculty in 3 sites. .
- Limited library facilities within the FAHS. Although the Medical Library is allowed for these students', the lending is only through the FAHS library.
- Productive utilization of LMS is limited to only a few courses.
- Utilization of Learner centered teaching facility (IT facilities) is extremely low.
- Lack of necessary information in course specifications delivered to the students.
- Limited use of appropriate facilities such as IT, library, sports, etc.
- Feedback from students, graduates and other stakeholders is not well used for further improvements.
- No proper system is established to facilitate differently able students in teaching and learning.
- Less attention on improving socio-emotional skills.
- Increasing the student intake without proper infrastructure and facilities being developed.
- Hospital-based practical training is being affected due to the increased intake in the very junior batch.

Recommendations:

- To complete the new faculty buildings and the faculty to locate in one site..
- Limit the student intake to match the existing facilities.
- Obtain support of the alumni for the development of infrastructure
- Analyze the feedback data of students and other stakeholders and make the necessary improvements.

Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression**Strengths:**

- Students are provided with workplace-based training.
- Availability of career guidance committee
- Good Learning management system.
- Mentors are provided for the students.
- Counselling services available.
- Feedback is regularly obtained.
- Students know the support services.
- Members of Alumni are interested and enthusiastic to contribute to improve the course.

Weaknesses:

- There is no academic who supervises the overall exams (Director/chairperson of exams).
- Lack of student welfare committee.
- No language unit, no training on second language, English language training not satisfactory (plan is in place to improve).
- No policy for students with disabilities.
- Staff not trained in modern exams technology.
- Library facilities can improve (books, space, lending services, etc.).
- Workplaces (especially hospitals) facilities are limited
- Students spend money for accommodation and food during the distant learning programme.
- Use of IT is limited in learning.
- Trainers in the community and hospital are not trained.
- Progression not monitored.
- Students involved in the University/National level sports activities should be supported in terms of attendance in TLAs, exams, etc.

Recommendations:

- Appointment of an academic to oversee the exam procedures in all 3 Faculties.
- Creation of language unit and incorporation of all the language related activities under this unit.
- Since the graduates will be a healthcare professional in the country, training in the second language is highly recommended.
- Students prefer to speak in their own language- English language courses should focus on communicating in English.
- Policy and implementation of policy to accommodate the needs of students with special needs.
- Policy and implementation of policy to accommodate the curriculum and exam issues faced by the students involved in University/National level of Sports.
- Progression of every student to be monitored.
- Regular training programmes by experts to the trainers in the community and hospital, and certification of them.
- Space should be provided for students in hospitals/wards to change dresses, keep bags and study.
- During distance learning programmes, faculty should arrange accommodation and food without burdening the students.

Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards

Strengths:

- By-laws and relevant guidelines are available regarding examination procedures.
- There is an AR examination in the examination unit, which is situated away from the faculty.
- Exam timetables are planned early and are informed well in advance to the students.
- Two examiners mark answer scripts independently and discrepancy check is also done regularly.
- Pre results board and results board are held before releasing the results.
- All marks of any candidate from the first year to final year can be checked at any one time.
- The transcript contains all necessary details.

Weaknesses:

- Confidentiality declaration for the examiners does not exist in the examinations.
- Conflict of Interest disclosure is not obtained before each examination.
- Marks are entered manually on an excel sheet and checked manually by the AR examination.
- MCQ marking is done manually not electronically and MCQ bank is not available.
- Results are displayed on the notice board only, no electronic copy / LMS – online notification in a separate examination folder.
- Examination results are not released on time within 3 months. (Sometimes results are released just before the next exam which causes inconvenience for the students).
- There is no academic examination coordinator/ director to supervise the process for the faculty.
- Proper item analysis, blueprinting etc. are not followed while making questions.
- Printing of examination papers, packing and storing of question papers are done in the administrative building of the university, which is far away from the examination halls.
- Academics are not trained in assessment process.
- Examination offences are not recorded.
- A fallback option scheme is not in place.
- Physical facilities available to conduct examination matters (Confidential rooms for examination) are limited.

Recommendations:

- Fallback options and policy have to be worked out and implemented.
- A Healthcare Education Unit needs to be established in order to provide training in designing the assessment modalities and conduct examination matter awareness workshops for academic and non-academic staff of the faculty.
- Examination results are displayed on the notice board only with no electronic copy / LMS –online notification in a separate examination folder with separate password for each.
- It is recommended to have an academic (coordinator/ director) to oversee the examination process in the faculty.
- Examination results should be released on time.
- It is necessary to take steps in order to mark MCQ question papers electronically.

Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices**Strengths:**

- The faculty has access to virtual learning environments inclusive of digital library services also with OER.
- Evidence of conducting Research Committee Meetings, Ethical Review Committee, Research Symposia, Research Workshops, and training sessions for academics to enhance their skills in areas such as R&D, innovations, and industry engagement.
- Some evidence of research grants recipients has observed.
- There is evidence of established bilateral foreign research and related collaborations.
- Initiatives have been taken to establish research journal clubs at department level.
- Some evidence of reward systems and support via VC Awards, Faculty Research Grant, etc.
- The study programme contains undergraduate research projects.
- Curricula contain hospital attachments and/or clinical training.
- A few MoUs and collaborations with some external institutions were available.
- Some co-curricular activities have been organized.
- Evidence of appointing external examiners for moderation and second marking.
- Availability of fallback options for MLS degree programme.
- Some provisions are available for lateral entry and cased-based credit transfers.

Weaknesses:

- Inadequacy in promoting and facilitating students and staff engagement in a wide variety of co-curricular activities.

- Scarcity of mechanisms to encourages student participation at events such as international/regional/national level competitions.
- There are no fallback options in Nursing and Pharmacy degree programmes.
- No formalized credit transfer system.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to develop and adopt a formal credit transfer system, also consider systems such as ECTS.
- Provide adequate resources such as physical, financial, and other mechanisms to promote students and staff engagement in a wide variety of co-curricular activities needed to be considered.
- Identification and establishing fruitful linkages with national and international institutions for R&D, Industrial opportunities, etc.
- Existing ICT platforms could further be enhanced and adopted to their fullest potential in respective teaching and learning activity enhancements.

Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance

Table 6.1 : Assessment Criteria and Score

No.	Criteria	Weighted minimum score	Actual criterion-wise score
1	Programme Management	75	98.5
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	60.5
3	Programme Design and Development	75	99
4	Course / Module Design and Development	75	100.5
5	Teaching and Learning	75	103.25
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	63
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	108
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	33.75
	Total score (out of 1000)		666.5
	Total score (out of 100)		66.7

Final Grade:

<i>Study Programme score%</i>	<i>Actual criterion-wise score</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Performance descriptor</i>	<i>Interpretation of descriptor</i>
66.7	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for six of the eight criteria (Table 3.3)	C	Satisfactory	Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects

Overall performance of 1) Bachelor of Science Honours in Medical Laboratory Science, 2) Bachelor of Science Honours in Nursing, and 3) Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours were reviewed through eight criteria consisting of 156 standards. All criteria have gained more than the minimum weighted score requirement. The rounded total score for all eight criteria is ABOVE **66%**, resulting in a **“C” Grade (Satisfactory)**. Accordingly, the programmes meet the expected minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study. However, there is room for further improvements in those aspects as communicated during the site visit as well as highlighted in this report.

Section 7: Commendations and recommendations

The review panel identified several commendable aspects of the degree programmes offered by FAHS of UoR. Some aspects of the programmes where there are spaces for further improvement were also identified. The review panel has made some recommendations to enhance the quality of the programme expecting that those recommendations will be considered as peer suggestions for further improvement towards excellence.

Commendations on Excellence

- Committed and dedicated young academic staff.
- Strong collaborations with the leading teaching hospital in southern Sri Lanka and other health institutions in the region with agreements formalized through MoUs for such collaborations.
- Availability and adoption of IT services (LMS, ZOOM, etc.) to facilitate teaching and learning process are commendable.
- It was evident that facility enhancements are ongoing with a new faculty complex under construction at Pinnaduwa, Galle.
- Arrangements are in place for provision of workplace-based training for students through established relationships with relevant institutions.

Recommendations for Quality Enhancement

- Complete adherence and necessary enhancements in line with all eleven parts of “Academic Procedures Handbook” and mainly with the Part III: Governance and Management of National Universities are recommended.
- Urgent physical facility enhancements (spaces, laboratory facilities, etc.) recommended with sophisticated necessary equipment and in required quantities to cater to the increasing intakes for these programmes.
- It is recommended to acquire and retain required numbers of senior qualified academic staff in respective disciplines and also to comply with respect to Cadre Norms, Ethics-and-Academic-Accountability and the expertise required in diversities of covered knowledge areas.
- Credit transfer system to be further regularized considering systems such as ECTS.
- Complete implementations of both lateral entry and fallback options.
- Full-fledged and integrated MIS (ERP like) is recommended to be deployed in line with policies such as IT Governance and Management, levels of personnel privileges, computing resources, as per Comm. Circular 02/2013: IT Governance and Management (IT Policy).

- Three study programmes and course modules are recommended to further improve and adequate rectifications as per detail comments given in sections 5.3. and 5.4.

Section 8: Summary

The review team observed commitment and dedication of higher authorities of UoR and all staff of FAHS to ensure high relevant quality pertaining to programme management, human and physical resources, programme design and development, course design and development, teaching and learning, learning environment and learner support, student assessment and awards, and healthy and innovative practices. The team is highly satisfied with the FAHS' untiring efforts to continuous improvement of the degree programme. However, some shortcomings were identified in the review and relevant recommendations for further improvement are given in section 5 in detail and also in section 7.

Thus, the cluster consisting of three-degree programmes; Bachelor of Science Honours in Medical Laboratory Science, Bachelor of Science Honours in Nursing, and Bachelor of Pharmacy Honours have earned a "C" grade with an overall score of 66% which means that the study programme is at a satisfactory level of accomplishment of quality. The review team also noted that majority of provision channeling required to achieve high level of quality are out-side the control of FAHS. These include funds for human & physical resource enhancements, etc. However, the review team wishes to acknowledge the contribution of all the staff of FAHS and expects continued support for improvement and then to achieve high quality and standards in these study programmes. The team acknowledges the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ruhuna, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, the Head of the Departments and all the staff for their excellent support and facilitation throughout the review process.

Annexure: Site Visit Schedule



Program Review 2021

B.Sc. Hons MLS, BSc Hons Nursing and B Pharm Hons Degrees (Cluster)

Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna



Day 1

Date: 13th of December 2022

Time: 8.30 am- 4.30 pm

SN	Key Stakeholder meeting with	Time	Via Zoom
1	Vice-Chancellor of UoR, Director/CQA of UoR, Dean FAHS, AR, Chair IQAC, Members of IQAC, Members of SER Writing and Advisory Committee <i>Responsible: Dr. RHMPN Rathnayake (Chair/IQAC)</i>	1 ½ hrs (8.30 to 10.00 am)	https://learn.zoom.us/j/67285444809?pwd=cEVrcVI3a2FWeEZHM0dEZkl0d3l6QT09 Meeting ID: 672 8544 4809 Passcode: d^n0x+kD
2	Dean and Administrative Staff (AR and AB) <i>Responsible: Ms. Nadeeshani Hewage (AR/FAHS)</i>	30 Min (10.00 to 10.30 am)	Same
3	Discussion among the reviewers <i>Responsible: Review team</i>	15 Min (10.30 to 10.45 am)	-
4	Heads of the Departments (each academic program) <i>Responsible: Dr. JAN Sandamali (HoD/MLS)</i>	30 Min (10.45 to 11.15 am)	Same
5	Chairpersons of the Faculty committees <i>Responsible: Dr. Kalani Gunawardene (Chair/CDEC)</i>	30 Min (11.15 to 11.45 am)	Same
6	Academic Staff in the Permanent Cadre <i>Responsible: Dr. Harshini Peiris</i>	30 Min (11.45 to 12.15 pm)	Same

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7	Assistant Librarian and Library staff <i>Responsible: Ms. Pavithra Mayuri (AL)</i>	30 Min (12.15 pm to 12.45 pm)	Same
8	Discussion among the reviewers <i>Responsible: Review team</i>	1 hr (12.45 pm to 1.45 pm)	-
9	Non-academic Staff – Technical Officers, Management Assistants, Work Aids, Lab Attendants etc. <i>Responsible: Ms. Nadeeshani Hewage (AR/FAHS)</i>	30 Min (1.45 pm to 2.15 pm)	Same
10	Faculty representatives of SDC, CGU, CQA, TTO, Carrier Advisor, SAB member, Physical Training Instructor, Network manager <i>Responsible: Dr. RHMPN Rathnayake (Chair/IQAC)</i>	30 Min (2.15 pm to 2.45 pm)	Same
11	Deputy Proctor/Deputy Senior Student Counselor/Student Counselors <i>Responsible: Dr. BI Wickramarachchi (DSSC)</i>	30 Min (2.45 pm to 3.15 pm)	Same
12	Discussion among the reviewers <i>Responsible: Review team</i>	15 Min (3.15 pm to 3.30 pm)	Same
13	Wardens, sub-wardens (academic, non-academic) and Security Inspector <i>Responsible: Mr. Thilina Abeygunasekara (Warden)</i>	30 Min (3.30 pm to 4.00 pm)	Same
14	Teaching staff of English/FAHS, Coordinator of English <i>Responsible: Ms. VM Pathiraja (Coordinator)</i>	30 Min (4.00 pm to 4.30 pm)	Same

Day 2
Date: 14th of December 2022
Time: 8.30 am- 4.45 pm

SN	Key Stakeholder meeting with	Time	Venue
1	Undergraduate students and representatives from students' societies <i>Responsible: Dr. BI Wickramarachchi (DSSC)</i>	1 Hr (8.30 am to 9.30 am)	Dept of Nursing, Lecture Hall 1
2	Graduates from FAHS (Alumni) and employers of FAHS graduates and training supervisors of FHAS undergraduates <i>Responsible: Dr. RHMPN Rathnayake and Three HoDs</i>	1 Hr (9.30 am to 10.30 am)	<i>Alumni, Employers and Training Supervisors will join either physically or virtually</i> Dept of Nursing, Lecture Hall 1 https://learn.zoom.us/j/67285444809?pwd=cEVrcVI3a2FWeEZHM0dEZkl0d3l6QT09 Meeting ID: 672 8544 4809 Passcode: d^n0x+kD
3	Refreshments <i>Responsible: Ms. SMEB Weeratunga</i>	15 Min (10.30 am to 10.45 am)	Tea Room – Dept of Nursing
4	Site visit – Dept of Nursing, Confidential room and main Library premises <i>Responsible: HoD NUR, AR, AL</i>	45 Min (10.45 am to 11.30 am)	Mahamodara premises
5	Site visit - Administrative Office, Examination unit <i>Responsible: Ms. Nadeeshani Hewage (AR)</i>	30 Min (11.45 am to 12.15 am)	Administrative Office premises

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6	Lunch <i>Responsible: Ms. SMEB Weeratunga</i>	1 Hrs (12.15 pm to 1.15 pm)	Conference Room, Dept of Pharmacy
7	Site visit – Hostels (Boys and Girls) (two reviewers) <i>Responsible: Two wardens (Mr. Thilina Abeygunasekara, Ms Vindya Pathiraja)</i>	30 Min (1.15 am to 1.45 pm)	Hostels
8	Site visit - Hospital (Teaching Hospital Karapitiya) (two reviewers) <i>Responsible: Three HoDs</i>		THK
9	Site visit – Department of Pharmacy, Department of MLS, Mini Computer lab, Library at Uluvitike, Open areas <i>Responsible: HoD/PHA, HoD/MLS, Network Manager, AL</i>	1 Hr (2.00 pm to 3.00 pm)	Uluvitike premises
10	Refreshments/Discussion among reviewers	30 Min 3.00 pm to 3.30 pm	Conference room – Dept of Pharmacy
11	Wrap up session Dean FAHS, AR, AB, AL, SER advisory committee, HoDs, Chair/IQAC, Director/CQA <i>Responsible: Dr. RHMPN Rathnayake (Chair/IQAC)</i>	1 Hr (3.30 pm to 4.30 pm)	Lecture Hall A, Dept of MLS
12	Site visit – Construction site of the new faculty premises <i>Responsible: Works Engineer (If necessary)</i>	30 Min (4.45 pm to 5.00 pm)	New Faculty Premises

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