



# PROGRAM REVIEW 2017

University of Ruhuna

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

General Degree

**Final Report – 10.12.2017**

# **PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT**

## **General Arts Degree Program**

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**University of Ruhuna**

**Site Visit from 2<sup>nd</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

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**Programme Review Report – General Arts Degree Program Faculty of HSS –  
University of Ruhuna From 2<sup>nd</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**1. A Brief Introduction to the Faculty and the Program**

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences is one of the oldest Faculties established in 1978 with the setting-up of the Ruhuna University College at Meddawatta, Matara. Until the University College was upgraded to a full-fledged University on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1984, the Faculty was affiliated to the University of Colombo. In 1985, the Faculty of Social Sciences, along with the Faculty of Science, was shifted to Wellamadama Campus, which was designed under the guidance of the world-famous architect, Geoffrey Bawa. This is the only University which was constructed on a sound architectural plan utilizing government funds.

Being the largest Faculty of the University, it strives “to be a center of academic and scientific excellence of the nation” through ‘developing honest and productive citizens, articulating and promoting interaction with society at large with a view to contributing towards the development of the nation, and instituting a mechanism for partnership programs developed with the aim of improving resources’ ( Student Handbook, page 15).

The total staff strength of the Faculty is 164 (Table 1), including both academic (97) and non-academic / academic support staff (69), and they are distributed in eight Departments and two centers (Table 2). In addition, the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU), the Information Technology Unit (ITU), the Centre for Conflict Studies (CCS), the Cultural Centre (CC), the Centre for Modern Languages and Civilization (CMLC), and the Distance and Continuing Education Unit (DCEU) provide support for the students enrolled in the programs of study.

Table 1: Academic, Academic Support and Non-academic Staff of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Dept	Prof.	Senior Lecturer I / II	Lect.	Lecturer (prob)	Temp. Lecturer	Comp. Instruct.	Temp. Demo/ Tutor	Non-Academic
Deans Office*		01					02	12
Economics	-----	11	01	02	01	01	02	06
Eng. & Linguistics	01	02						
Geography	02	10	01	01	02	01	01	05
History & Archeology	01	11			01		01	03
Pali & Bud. Studies	01	09	01	02	02		04	02
Public Policy		05		01				
Sinhala	03	06	02	03	01		03	03
Sociology	01	09		01	01		03	02
ELTU		02		04		02		
IT unit						02	04	02
Total	10	66	05	14	08	06	20	35

SAR\* = 01

Table 2: Departments and Disciplines of the Faculty of HSS

Departments	Disciplines
Economics	Economics, Social Statistics
English and Linguistics	English
Geography	Geography
History and Archaeology	History, Archaeology
Pali and Buddhist Studies	Pali, Buddhist Culture, Buddhist Philosophy
Public Policy	Political Science
Sinhala	Sinhala
Sociology	Sociology
Under Dean	ICT, Tourism Studies

The total student population of the Faculty is 2000 whereas the annual intake is around 500. Nearly 251 students were enrolled in the General Degree program in 2015/16 academic year (Table 3). The students enrolled in the program are supported by a wide range of resources owned by the Faculty and the University to provide a safe, healthy and high quality life during their stay in the University.

Table 3- Student Enrolment in the General Degree Program

Academic year	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Total enrolment	460	407	624	417	478	489
Students in the General Degree Program	195	153	279	151	189	251

## 2. The Curricula of the B.A. General Degree Program

To obtain the B.A. General Degree the total number of credits to be completed by a student is 114 (Table 4 ). There are 13 main courses offered out of which three must be continued from level 1000. In addition, students must complete five compulsory English Foundation courses and three compulsory ICT courses. Further, they must follow two supplementary courses namely Development of Language Skills (SUP 12513) and Development of Soft Skills (SUP 32513/ SUP 32613) and two optional courses out of Basic Mathematics (SUP 11513), Research Methods (SUP 11523), Adolescents and Reproductive Health (SUP 22523 / SUP 22623), and Physical Fitness and Management of Health (SUP 22533 / SUP 22633).

Table 4 : Minimum Courses to be studied to get B.A. General Degree

Courses	Units	Credits
Core courses of main subjects	18	54
Optional courses related to main subjects	6	18
Optional subjects related to other courses	2	6
Supplementary courses (compulsory)	2	6
Supplementary courses (Optional)	2	6
Foundation courses (compulsory)	8	24
Total	38	114

Source – Student Handbook 2016/2017

### **3. Review Team's Observations on the SER**

The Quality Assurance Process of the Faculty of HSS was conducted by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) established in September 2015. There were nine members appointed to the SER writing team including the convener and each one was responsible for developing one criteria. It was reported in the SER that the members had participated in SER writing workshops held at the UGC. Further, it was reported that an awareness program was conducted to SER writing committee on how to respond to each stand in all criteria. The finalization of the SER was done in consultation with the Vice Chancellor, Director/ IQAU, Dean/FHSS, Heads of the Departments, Faculty Board members and the Internal Review Panel.

The SER was presented according to the guidelines given in the Program Review Manual. In the SER, the main consideration was given to the Faculty but not to the program under review. The curriculum of the program, how each Department / Unit contributes to the program, how strengths and weaknesses of each Department affect the program were not presented in the SER. The strengths were written in more general terms though the weaknesses highlighted in the SWOT analyses were directly relevant to the General Degree program, and the impact of those weaknesses was visible to the review team during the site visit. Further, inadequate co-ordination and lack of understanding in preparation of SER was observed by the Review Team. There was a separate section in the SER to explain the actions taken by the FHSS on previous Institutional Review recommendations.

### **4. Brief Description of the Review Process**

Team members completed the desk review and submitted the overall evaluation on the eight criteria of the study program to the Director / QAAC of the UGC. Similarly, a tentative program for the site visit was prepared according to the guidelines provided by the QAAC Director and after several communications with the Dean / FHSS the program was finalized. However, a few adjustments were made according to the requirements of both parties during the site visit. The review team completed meetings with all required parties and visited all the facilities except the hostels. The teaching-learning sessions of the General Degree Program could not be observed as planned because the students following it were on study leave during the site visit. Further, the students who were available on campus during the site visit were associated with the special degree program only. Therefore, except the indirect information collected from the student group the real student opinion on the General Degree Program could not be obtained.

All the evidence collected by the Faculty staff in line with the SER had been checked by the review team during the site visit. The team did not entertain new evidence presented by the Faculty after the compilation of the SER.

The Review Team was fully satisfied with the logistics and other arrangements made by the Faculty to conduct the review visit in an effective manner. The commitment shown by the newly appointed Dean, Heads of Departments, Academic Staff and other staff towards the review process is highly commendable.

## **5. Overview of the Faculty Approach to Quality and Standards**

During the site visit, Review Team observed that the Vice Chancellor and Director/IQAU of the University are playing a pivotal role in implementing and monitoring the quality assurance

mechanism at the University. The Faculty has an Internal Quality Assurance Cell that works in liaison with the University IQA Unit. Internal quality assurance has been taken seriously by most of the staff members under the guidance of IQAU Director.

The Faculty has taken into consideration the SLQF and SBS as reference points. Further, a series of workshops and seminars have been conducted for internal academics to develop skills in writing Intended Learning Outcomes and aligning them with student centered teaching methods and assessment strategies. Some steps were taken by the Faculty to ensure participation of external subject experts in the development of the program. However, program level ILOs are not clearly mapped with the graduate profile for specializations considering the subject attributes in Graduate profile. CI forms which provide summary of the outcomes, content, teaching methods and references are available only in some Departments. Promoting research activities among academic staff and students is a positive feature adopted by the University and Faculty. It is with pride they have revealed that their University had become the number one University in the country in 2016 in research, by having 2 researchers out of the top 5 researchers in the University system.

The Institutional Review had recommended that they explore the possibility of incorporating an LMS into the teaching-learning process. Even under this program review, the team observed a limited use of the LMS, which is not up to the expected level in some Departments. It was further revealed that only some Departments maintain partnerships with national and international universities / organizations for academic and research collaborations.

The student-centered teaching methods such as tutorials, small group discussions, presentations, peer learning, and experiential and cooperative learning are difficult to apply for large student numbers. This situation directly affects the quality of the teaching-learning process of the General Degree Program.

Student absenteeism in teaching-learning sessions is becoming a common factor which might negatively affect the quality of the graduates produced. Further, the prevailing negative attitude towards Arts graduates can be identified as a threat to finding employment opportunities for graduates of the General Degree Program.

A systematic program for Student Welfare has been in operation under the Director, Student Welfare. The activities of the Faculty and the management of the Halls of Residence too have been organized taking safety and health of the students into consideration.

## **6. Judgement on the Eight Criteria of Program Review**

### **Criterion 1: Program Management**

The organizational structure and governance system of the Faculty are in compliance with the acts, ordinances and regulations of the Sri Lankan government. The Faculty action plan is aligned with the University Strategic Plan and strategies are in place to monitor progress continuously. The management procedures of the Faculty are in line with the Institutional Standard Operational Procedures. A participatory approach is practiced up to a certain extent to accommodate the viewpoints of students and other stakeholders. The course specifications, learning resources and student support services, rights and responsibilities of students, disciplinary procedures, etc are compiled in a Student Handbook which is distributed among all the students after registration. The University approved Code of Conduct / Student Charter is distributed among students and adherence to the Code of Conduct is monitored. A one week orientation program is also conducted to familiarize the students with the Departments and the program, policies, and procedures of the University, and the facilities available for them during their University life.

The Faculty Quality Assurance Cell established with representation from all Departments is functioning under the IQAU Director of the University. The Faculty has a policy to accommodate differently abled students though currently there are no such students registered in the General Degree Program. Even though the program has a large number

of female students , the Faculty adopts measures to ensure gender quality and equity and adheres to the policy of zero tolerance to ragging.

There is no central database available in the University. Different data systems are maintained in the Faculty Office, Course Unit Office, Examination Branch and Welfare Office for different purposes. The use of ICT facilities for program management and teaching and learning is limited. The responsibilities and obligations of all categories of staff including visiting staff are listed to avoid overlapping and to facilitate the smooth functioning of the program.

It was evident that the Departments face difficulties in finalizing time tables of the General Degree Program and finding well-resourced lecture halls for the conduct of teaching-learning activities. The overlapping of activities and clashes in the time tables are common incidents as reported by the members of the student union. Further, releasing results of the program according to the set targets is a critical issue faced by the Faculty, which might lead to increase student dissatisfaction towards the program.

Overall, Program Management is at a satisfactory level in the General Degree program of University of Ruhuna. Out of the total score allocated (27 standards x 3 points: maximum 81) 74 points were earned, which equals to 137.0 (out of 150).

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

The Faculty is blessed with an adequate number of qualified (Ph.D, M.Phil, M.A.) and experienced staff who are committed towards the program activities. Procedures are in place to encourage academic staff to participate in training programs, short courses, seminars and workshops conducted locally and internationally. The staff seemed to have benefitted from the training workshops conducted by the external experts on Outcome-based Education, Student Centered Learning Approaches, and Intended Learning Outcomes. The writing of the SER had also expanded opportunities for young staff to become familiar with the quality assurance mechanism of the institution. The university allocates funds for academic research through which the scholars get opportunities to present their research findings in conferences and publish articles in journals. Completion of SDC programs is a mandatory requirement for probationary lectures to get confirmation in the post and to be considered for promotion. However, there is no documentary evidence provided on the policy and no mechanism adopted to monitor the impact of CPD programs on staff members and to take remedial action as necessary.

Academic support staff and non-academic staff have limited opportunities to update themselves in their specialization areas. Interestingly, the close relationship maintained between the academic and other categories of staff functions as a facilitating factor for the

implementation of the program. However, the physical facilities allocated to the teaching-learning sessions of the program and program administration need to be improved to expand student centered learning opportunities and avoid clashes in the timetables. No specialized training opportunities, such as internship training and field training, are provided for students following the General Degree Program.

Through the evidence provided, availability of a mentoring mechanism or any other procedure adopted to guide students in their learning activities could not be identified. The ELTU conducts English for Academic Purposes as a compulsory course at level 1000, 2000 and 3000 for all the undergraduates with the support of visiting instructors. Both human and physical facilities must be further improved in the ELTU to provide a satisfactory service for students. The students following the Special Degree Program are better off by having access to mini-libraries and mini-labs of the Departments but the students following the General Degree Program are treated differently. The main library holds a variety of books, journals and other learning material for students' use along with facilities for inter-library loans and photocopying. Large lecture halls with limited facilities limit application of student-centered learning methods. In addition, students (*i.e.*, the student union) had complained about the limited ICT facilities (including WiFi facilities at the main library, IT Labs and other places) available in the Faculty and the University, which limit the application of ICT for their learning. The recently introduced soft-skills program (3 credits) is not functioning up to the expected level. The Career Guidance Unit conducts various programs to make the students ready for the demands arising from the job market.

Student participation is evident in various cultural and religious activities organized by the student union, Cultural Centre and the Department of Physical Education. However, it seems that the academic workload of the program does not allow them to engage in those activities to their full potential.

Overall, Human and Physical Resources are at a moderate level in the General Degree program of University of Ruhuna. Out of the total score allocated (12 standards x 3 points: maximum 36) only 24 points were earned, which equals to 66.7 (out of 100).

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

A major curriculum review was undertaken by the Faculty from 2014 to 2016 in consultation with some external experts to align the program with the SLQF standards and to develop and map the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the courses with the program outcomes. In line with this review, English and IT courses are made compulsory for the General Degree Program. However, limited participation of stakeholders (only

subject experts were used) in the planning, designing and development stages was observable through the documents provided. Further, there was no evidence to support the connection between the graduate profile and learning outcomes of the program. The program level ILOs are not clearly mapped with the graduate profile for specializations considering the subject attributes in the Graduate profile. Interestingly, some courses have reasonably defined outcome based performance indicators, which might be a result of constant efforts by the Faculty to increase awareness of staff members regarding Outcome Based Education. However, it was evident that variations exist among the Departments.

The Faculty has established an IQAC to ensure that the degree program complies with SLQF and SBS. It tries to maintain its policy on curriculum development through a well-structured approval process, and the majority of course units are reviewed by external reviewers before implementation. The Faculty uses a Senate-approved template for course modules, which provides necessary information about each course to undergraduates. Further, the program consists of different types of course units (*i.e.*, core, optional, foundation, supplementary, and non-credit), and these course units are somewhat consistent with the University and Faculty missions, and national needs. A limited integration of vocational, professional, semi-professional, and inter-disciplinary courses aimed at developing generic and practical skills is observable in the curriculum. Further, the students do not have much opportunity to engage in collaborative, cooperative or experiential learning through completion of a project or internship training. Further steps need to be taken by the authorities to monitor, evaluate, review and improve the program / course design according to the demands arising from the rapidly changing world. Issues of gender, ethnicity, social justice, and ethical values are integrated into some courses offered in the program.

The curriculum of the General Degree Program creates somewhat limited demands on the students for practicing intellectual challenge, skills and knowledge, conceptualization, and autonomy. Further, the program allows a limited choice of core courses (9 disciplines) and optional courses for students according to the selected area of study. Even with those limitations, the academic standard of the program cannot be undervalued with respect to the degree awarded and the benchmark qualifications, as they are aligned with the SBS and SLQF.

The Faculty was unable to provide documentary evidence (in the SER) to support that the approval for the General Degree Program was given after considering design principles, academic standards and appropriateness of the learning opportunities available, etc. Other than group activities, integration of self-directed learning, collaborative learning, creative and critical thinking, or life-long learning were somewhat limited.

CI forms in some courses with limited information were provided as evidence for the alignment of ILOs with course content, teaching methods and assessment strategies. The Faculty does not have a formal mechanism to obtain the views of current students or passed-out students about the relevance and effectiveness of the program and their satisfaction with the program. Yet, no evidence was provided for using such information for continuous improvement of the program. Information on two tracer studies was provided as evidence for student destination surveys. According to those surveys, most students following the General Degree Programs were unemployed even one year after program completion. Even though differently abled students are not registered in the program, the evidence provided showed that some procedures have been adopted to provide the support needed in the examinations.

Overall, the Program Design and Development process is not at a satisfactory level in the General Degree program. Out of the total scores allocated (24 standards x 3 points: maximum 72) only 32 points were earned, which equals to 66.7 (out of 150).

#### **Criterion 4: Course Module Design and Development**

The students following the General Degree Program are given the opportunity to select the courses at the 2000 and 3000 levels from among 9 disciplines. Course module design and development has been done by a team of internal subject experts. Those courses have course specifications including credit values, ILOs, content, teaching and assessment strategies and learning resources in a very concise form. They are designed in compliance with SLQF and reflect the expectations of the SBS requirements of statutory or regulatory bodies.

University approved course design templates used by the Departments help to reduce the variations in the courses offered by the Departments. Yet, the needs of the differently abled students must be considered in course design and development by employing appropriate teaching and learning strategies to make the delivery of the course as inclusive as possible.

In some courses, content, learning activities and assessments are aligned with outcomes of the course and program and they provide intellectual enhancement and soft skills, integrated with fieldwork. However, in most courses, integrations of self-directed learning, collaborative learning, and practice of creative and critical thinking and life-long learning are somewhat limited. Further, some courses are designed traditionally without addressing the issues in the job market. Students (*i.e.*, the Student Union) claim that the faculty has given more weightage towards theoretical courses, than practically oriented course. It is not clearly evident whether appropriate media and technology have been

incorporated sufficiently into the course design and delivery. Further, there is no proper mechanism in place to assess the suitability of content, delivery, and assessment and no proper evidence provided for using such information for further improvement of the program.

Overall, the Course / Module Design and Development process is at a moderately satisfactory level in the General Degree program. Out of the total score allocated (19 standards x 3 points: maximum 57) 35 points were earned, which is equivalent to 92.1 (out of 150).

### **Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning strategies**

The teaching and learning strategies of the program are consistent with the Faculty mission. There is evidence for preparation and distribution of time tables and CI forms among students and teachers. According to students, those time tables change frequently. Course specifications are elaborated in the Faculty Board / Senate approved procedure with the aid of C1 forms, which are distributed to students in a timely manner, but no evidence is available on the use of blended learning as a way of maximizing student engagement with the program. Further, the constructive alignment between teaching-learning strategies, assessments, and learning outcomes is not apparent through the evidence provided. Further, CI forms give detailed information about the method of delivery in some courses only (Sociology). Consideration of differently abled students is done only with respect to examinations. No information is provided on teaching-learning strategies adopted for them.

Clashes in time tables, overlapping of activities and limited facilities in lecture halls are common problems faced by teachers and students. There was some evidence of adaptation of internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the course design and development by IQAC. Yet, no standard procedures are available to get student feedback and peer evaluations on the teaching-learning process.

Research is considered as a prime function of teachers and evidence is provided to prove their engagement in research activities. Only verbal information is provided on the integration of research findings to improve their teaching-learning process. Students are also encouraged under the guidance of academic members to contribute to scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge. Student population of the program is biased towards females (nearly 75%) leaving no room for gender discrimination.

Modified lecture rooms and mini computer labs are confined to the students of the Special Degree Program there by placing the students of the General Degree program in

large lecture halls with very limited facilities (no multi-media, sound systems etc.). Teacher directed methods are prominent in the teaching-learning process and no evidence was provided on monitoring of teaching-learning strategies for their appropriateness and effectiveness. Peer evaluation is one of the strategies to be applied by the senior academics to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process of junior academics. The application of study groups as a teaching-learning strategy is somewhat limited among academics in the Faculty. Further, due to the large number of students enrolled in the program, lecturers have limited opportunities to apply participatory learning strategies such as small-group discussions, presentations, tutorial, field visits, etc. Only some Departments (e.g., Geography) use technology in the teaching-learning process, regardless of the effort taken for training staff and students on ICT.

The LMS is introduced to teachers and students through training workshops. However, continuous application of the LMS by staff and students for teaching and learning purposes is not evident. Wi-fi zones have been introduced with very limited access to students following the General Degree Program.

Overall, Teaching and Learning Strategies are in a relatively satisfactory status in the General Degree program. Out of the total score allocated (19 standards x 3 points: maximum 57) 43 points were earned, which is equivalent to 113.2 (out of 150) .

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

The program takes into consideration the SLQF and Subject Benchmark Statements as reference points. The content, teaching-learning methods and assessment strategies of some courses are in line with the Outcome Based Education and Student-Centered Methodologies. Further, such developments might lead to provide a student friendly, collaborative and cooperative learning environment for students in relation to only some courses in the program.

Through collaboration of academic and academic support staff the Faculty tries to ensure a stress-free and a conducive environment for student learning. In collaboration with the student union, student Counsellors try to ensure a ragging free environment for new comers. The induction program of the Faculty integrates presentations of all Departments, main library and some centers of the University to provide a better understanding about the rules and regulations, code of conduct, program content and facilities available for the students. Further, the Faculty obtains support from other centers, such as the Career Guidance Unit and the Cultural Center, to provide training programs to students and takes steps through student counsellors and student unions to improve student discipline and utilization of support services available to students. The General Convocation lists were

made available to confirm the number of students completing the General Degree Program.

Faculty Board meetings and social events provide a platform for student-teacher and student-student interactions. Extra-curricular activities also expand opportunities for students to interact with their peers and society at large. There is little evidence to show that the LMS has been used by teachers and students to facilitate the teaching-learning process. The limited Wi-Fi facilities provided for the students in the General Degree Program are acting as a barrier for self-learning of students. Further, a systematic procedure is not in place to gather feedback from students about the curriculum, teaching-learning, and assessment, and a proper mechanism is not available to check the progression of students in the program. Two tracer studies (2015 & 2017) conducted during the convocation time show that many graduates of the General Degree Program were unemployed. Students' complaints and grievances are entertained by the Faculty though students are not satisfied with the procedure due to the unbearable delays taking place.

Having no procedure established for monitoring student attendance, the Faculty is reluctant to introduce 70%-80 % compulsory attendance in the program.

Overall, Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression are at a moderate level in the General Degree program of University of Ruhuna. Out of the total score allocated (24 standards x 3 points: maximum 72) 49 points were earned, which is equivalent to 68.1 (out of 100).

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

The assessment process of the General Degree Program is mostly aligned with the rules and regulations of the program, examination by-laws of the University and guidelines prescribed by the SLQF. The Faculty designs, approves, monitors, reviews and amends the assessment strategies and awards using accepted procedures. The weightage given to different components of the assessments, such as continuous assessments (40%) and final examination (60%) are specified in the program and course specifications. The examination rules and regulations are communicated to students through the Faculty Handbook. The implementation of examination by-laws has been ensured and misconduct of examinations are seriously dealt with.

Both internal and external examiners are appointed according to their subject specialization for setting, moderation and marking with the approval of the Faculty Board and Senate. The staff involved in student assessments are provided with sufficient

training on by-laws and rules and regulations. In addition, the Faculty adopts various measures to ensure transparency, fairness and consistency in marking of answer scripts. On the other hand, it was evident that regular and appropriate feedback on assignments are not provided to students and gradings for assignments are not displayed on the notice boards on time. According to students (*i.e.*, the Students Union) the completion of many assignments within a short period of time is a critical issue faced by them. Unavailability of fallback options delays the program completion of some students as they must do the exam with the next batch of students. Even though standard procedures are in place to provide opportunities for students to re-sit an assignment test and to apply for re-correction of answer scripts, these processes get delayed unbearably. According to the information collected from students and staff, re-correction of answer scripts had resulted in changing marks and even grades of students, which in turn created delays in releasing their results.

The evidence confirms that the graduation requirements are ensured in the degree certification process and the transcript indicates student attainment in line with the courses followed, grades obtained, GPA value, and the class. However, both staff and students pointed out that the release of results was delayed in recent years due to the large number of students enrolled in the General Degree Program.

Overall, Student Assessment and Awards are at a satisfactory level in the General Degree program of University of Ruhuna. Out of the total score allocated (17 standards x 3 points: maximum 51) 44 points were earned, which is equivalent to 123.5 (out of 150).

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

The IT Unit of the Faculty is equipped with 150 computers to provide services to both academics and students of the FHSS. It conducts courses and workshops to educate staff and students on the use of the internet and LMS/MOODLE and development of ICT related material. Further, it functions as an examination center for IT related courses. Yet, the use of the ICT platform to facilitate multi-mode delivery and student-centered learning, and the use of Open Education Resources as a supplement to teaching and learning by staff are at a low level. Offering the program only in Sinhala Medium also limits the demand for the undergraduates in the job market. As pointed out by students, limited access to Wi-Fi facilities further discourages the application of technology in the learning process. As such, the Faculty should focus on the application of healthy and innovative practices to improve the quality of the teaching-learning process.

The establishment of the Faculty Research Committee to foster the research activities is a factor that will positively contribute to develop a research culture within the Faculty. The

participation of staff in national and international conferences, workshops and training programs is encouraged by the University and evidence of staff publications in journals and magazines was provided. A reward system exists in the University to encourage academic staff to engage in research and outreach activities whereas the Annual Research Conference of the University provides a platform for individual and collaborative research of staff and students. A few MoUs were signed by the University with some international Universities to facilitate student exchange programmes. Projects and industrial attachments / internship training are not available for the students in the General Degree Program. This is an area that Faculty should concentrate on to make the students ready for the job market.

The engagement of staff and students in extra-curricular activities, such as social, cultural, community, and industrial activities, is promoted through different centers established by the Faculty and University. There was evidence of the conduct of literary festivals, art exhibitions, musical shows, debating campaigns, field trips, etc., through which students get opportunities to interact with other ethnic groups and with the community at large. However, the workload of the program does not allow students to participate in these activities to their full capacity.

Overall Innovative and Healthy Practices are at a moderate level in the General Degree program of University of Ruhuna. Out of the total score allocated (14 standards x 3 points: maximum 42) 29 points were earned, which is equivalent to 34.5 (out of 50).

## 7. Grading of Overall Performance of the Program

Table 4- Overall Score of the General Degree Program

Criteria	Minimum Score	Raw Score	Actual Score
1	75	74	<b>137.0</b>
2	50	24	<b>66.7</b>
3	75	32	<b>66.7</b>
4	75	35	<b>92.1</b>
5	75	43	<b>113.2</b>
6	50	49	<b>68.1</b>
7	75	42	<b>123.5</b>
8	25	29	<b>34.5</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>701.7</b>
<b>%</b>			<b>70</b>

Study Program Score expressed as %	Actual criteria with score	Grade	Performance Indicator	Interpretation of Descriptor
<b>70</b>	Equal to more than the minimum weightage scores for six of the eight criteria	<b>B</b>	<b>Good</b>	Satisfactory level of accomplishment of quality expected of a Program of Study: Require improvement in a few aspects

## 8. Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

- Pleasing environment for academic work with very good architecture
- The establishment of IQAC and FQAC at the University of Ruhuna to streamline the quality assurance mechanism
- Academic staff with a strong commitment towards quality assurance mechanism.
- Development of a research culture among academic staff through various mechanisms adopted by the University
- Ragging free environment to facilitate collaboration and co-operation among students
- A major curriculum review held in 2015 to incorporate ILOs and to be in line with the SLQF
- A common course design template adopted by the Faculty to reduce variations among different disciplines
- Facilities available for students through Cultural Center, Center for Modern Languages and Civilization, Centre for Conflict Studies, and Centre for Differently Abled Students.

- Collaboration with local and international institutions for training, research and other activities
- Qualified and experienced staff with high academic caliber and a broad vision.
- Close relationship between academic and non-academic staff creates a facilitating environment at the workplace.

## **Recommendations**

- General Degree program should be conducted in both media: Sinhala and English.
- Strategies should be in place to get the maximum use of the multiple facilities available in the Faculty and University.
- Student exchange programs should be further strengthened by providing financial assistance to students .
- Faculty collaboration with industry should be promoted through organizing workshops, Seminars, lectures etc.
- Internship training should be expanded to students in the General Degree Program to facilitate partnerships between students and other stakeholders
- Use of ICT in the program delivery by teachers should be further facilitated through familiarization and skill development programs. Students also must be encouraged to interact with their teachers for study purposes.
- Curriculum reviews should be taken place at reasonable time intervals to accommodate the needs of the students as well as changes happening in the society.
- Student centered teaching-learning approaches such as self-regulated learning, cooperative and collaborative learning, and critical thinking should be practiced with students in the program.
- Student satisfaction surveys, peer reviews, and graduate output surveys should be conducted and their findings should be used for the quality improvement of the program.
- Students should be provided with regular feedback on continuous assignments as a way of promoting their learning
- Examination results should be released on time to facilitate student progression at different levels.
- Soft skills program must be improved to cater to the student needs as well as the requirements of the job market.
- should match with student needs and the requirements of the job market.
- Application of peer evaluations, student feedback and stakeholder surveys to improve the quality of program delivery
- Students following the General Degree Program should be given a status like students following the Special Degree Program with reference to facilities provided for their learning
- Collaborations with industry to be facilitated through workshops, seminars, consultations, research and internship training.

## 9. Summary

The General Arts Degree Program of the Faculty of Humanities of Social Sciences caters to nearly 250 students in each academic year. Academic staff involved in conducting the program are highly qualified and well experienced. A curriculum revision took place in 2014-2015 to introduce substantial changes in line with SLQF, SBS, ILOs and SCL after providing sufficient training to academic staff. Further, the program integrates core courses, optional courses, and supplementary courses but the focus on vocational, semi-vocational, inter-disciplinary, and multi-disciplinary courses is limited. Monitoring of program implementation is done by IQAC and FQAC and progress is reported to Senate and Council. The academic standard of the program with respect to its qualifications and awards is appropriate and aligned with the SLQF.

Academic calendar and timetables are prepared in advance and distributed among staff and students. Freshers are oriented to the requirements of the program, By-laws, Student Charter and services of the University through a well-organized orientation program. CI forms incorporate brief information about the content, teaching-learning process and assessment strategies. Yet, limited alignment is found between learning outcomes of different courses and teaching-learning activities and assessment strategies. The courses have clear specifications including their credit values, course codes, etc., though the workloads of the courses are not specified as direct contact hours, self-learning, laboratory studies, assignments etc. The practice of blended learning and student-centered learning is limited among teachers. Further, limited facilities provided for the teaching-learning process does not promote active and deep learning among students. There is no proper procedure to evaluate the program continuously and to improve it further based on student feedback and peer evaluations. The engagement of teachers in research is promoted by the University, though the General Degree Program does not include a project or an internship training to develop the professional competencies of students.

Assessment of the achievement of learning outcomes by students is transparent and Council approved rules and regulations and examination by-laws are taken into consideration. Further, the evidence confirms that the graduation requirements are ensured in the degree certification process. Innovative and healthy practices are at a moderate level in the program, and needs further improvement.

**Programme Review Report – General Arts Degree Programme**

**Faculty of HSS – University of Ruhuna**

**From 2<sup>nd</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**Team Members and Their Signatures**

**Professor G. Dayalatha Lekamge;** .....

**Ven. Prof. Muwaetagama Ghanananda:** .....

**Dr. Arminda Methsila Perera:** .....

## **10. Appendices**

### **Programme for Site Visit**

**University of Ruhuna, Bachelor of Arts Degree Program**

**Program for Site Visit from 2<sup>nd</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Day: 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2017**

- 8.00-8.45 Meeting with IQAU Director
- 8.45- 9.15 Meeting with the VC/Deputy VC
- 9.15 -9.45 Meeting with the Dean/ Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- 9.45- 10.45 Meeting with Academic Heads of Departments
- 10.45-11.00 Tea Break
- 11.00- 12.00 Meeting with Academic Heads of Departments
- 12.00- 1.00 Lunch
- 1.00-1.45 Visiting Departments
- 1.45-2.15 Meeting with the Programme Co-ordinators and Curriculum Development Team
- 2.15- 2.45 Meeting with Faculty QAC
- 2.45- 3. 30 Meeting with student Union
- 3.15- 6.00 Checking evidence

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Day: 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2017**

- 8.00-10.00: Checking evidence
- 10.00- 10.30: Meeting with Student Counselors
- 10.30- 10.45: Tea
- 10.45- 11.45: Meeting with Technical staff and support staff
- 11.45-1.00: Observing facilities of the Faculty including Center For Modern Languages and Civilization, Cultural Centre, Center for Conflict Studies, , Mini-labs and Mini-Libraries of the Departments
- 1.00- 1.30- Lunch

- 1.30- 3.00 Visit to facilities related to the programmes and meetings with support staff/technical staff (Career Guidance Unit, Libraries, Laboratories, Language  
3.00- 3.15 Tea  
3.15- 3.45 Meeting with Student Union  
2.30- 6.00 Checking Evidence

**3<sup>rd</sup> Day- 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2017**

- 8.00-10.30 Visiting Library, SDC, Information Technology Unit, Department of Physical Education, Distance and Continuing Education Unit, Guidance and Counselling Centre Cafeteria, etc  
10.30-11.00 Meeting with Administrative staff  
11.00- 12.00 Checking evidence  
12.30-1.30 Lunch  
1.30- 2.00 Meeting with IQUA Director  
2.00- 3. 00 Meeting of the Review Team  
3.00- 3.30- Wrap-up meeting