



PROGRAM REVIEW 2017

Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Cluster - 2

PROGRAMME REVIEW REPORT

ON

B.A. (Sp) IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

B.A. (Sp) IN ECONOMICS

(CLUSTER 2)

THE FACULTY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES,

RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

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SECTION 1

Brief Introduction of the programme

The Rajarata University of Sri Lanka was established in 1995. The University has five Faculties. The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities is one of the faculties and has been functioning from 1995. Presently the Faculty has a student population of around 1300 and its annual intake is about 360. The faculty has five departments, of which two are the Department of Social Sciences and the Department of Environmental Management. The Department of Social Sciences was established in 1996 and the Department of Environmental Management was established in 2015. These departments offer both general and special degree programmes. The Faculty offers five special degree programmes; the BA (Special) Degree in Economics and the BA (Special) Degree in Environmental Management are two of them. While the BA (Special) Degree in Economics is offered by the Department of Social Sciences, the BA (Special) Degree in Environmental Management is offered by the Department of Environmental Management.

Currently 34 students are following the BA (Special) Degree in Economics and 27 students are following the BA (Special) Degree in Environmental Management. There are 49 academic staff members involving in teaching, research and disseminating knowledge at the Faculty, and of them, there is 1 Senior Professor, 1 Professor, 22 Senior Lecturers, 6 Lecturers and 8 temporary Lecturers. Further, 12 academic staff members have earned PhD qualifications and majority of the rest of the academics have post graduate educational qualifications in their respective fields.

The total number of credits required for the BA (Special) Degree in Economics and the BA (Special) Degree in Environmental Management is 120 and the maximum is 128. An inter-university level and inter-faculty level resource sharing system could be seen in conducting lectures and usage of lab facilities. Both degree programs provide students the opportunities to make choices among the subjects. These choices can only be made in the final year of the study program. This facilitates students to specialize in a particular branch of the subject.

With respect to the learning resource system, the Library Network holds over 30,000 titles of books and about 300 journal titles (foreign and local). These resources are available in both print and electronic formats. Services of the Library include lending facilities, reference facilities, interlibrary loan systems, current awareness programs, Information Literacy programs, workshops and library website maintenance. Useful links for online resources are also provided through the library website. The library catalogues can be seen through the Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs.). The University Institutional Repository is maintained by the Library. The ELTU facilitates English learning with an English Language laboratory which is equipped with 23 computers with English language learning software facilities. In addition to that IELTS Corner was also established to assist students.

With regard to the computer laboratory, a Data Analysis Unit has been established at the Department of Economics to support the students' analytical skills in the field. Ten computers have been located in the lab and modern statistical software, such as STATA, EViews, SPSS, etc.

has been installed on all computers. Further, an Econometric Laboratory has also been established at the same location, and students utilize the same resources to improve practical applications of theoretical knowledge in econometrics.

Further, the laboratory of Environmental Management was established under the umbrella of the Department of Environmental Management. The laboratory of Environmental Management is utilized by the students to improve the practical application of theoretical knowledge in Environmental Management. A total of 50 personal computers are available in this laboratory.

There was a subject review which took place in 2010. There was no evidence on how the Faculty responded to the recommendations made at the previous subject reviews.

SECTION 2

Review team's Observation on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The QA coordinator of the faculty had assigned tasks to eight groups to collect the relevant evidence for the 8 criteria specified. The QA coordinator had appointed one person in charge and a few academic members for each group, who were responsible for collecting evidence for the criteria assigned to them. He/she had also constantly monitored the process of collecting evidence and discussed the progress, calling for meetings with all the team members regularly. The Dean of the Faculty, on the recommendation of the QA Coordinator, had issued appointment letters with TOR to the members, stating the roles, responsibilities and the time frame for accomplishment of activities. However, the team observed that the involvement of senior academics was not enough in the process of writing the SER. Academic members of the faculty were aware of the program review manual and the methodology of the review process. The Dean of the Faculty, the QA coordinator, and a few selected faculty members had attended this workshop, which gave them the opportunity to become familiar with the procedure of a program review, including writing SER, the format of the SER and its methodology, and the program review process. Just after attending the workshop at the UGC, as mentioned above, Dean and QA coordinator had called for an immediate meeting with the academic staff members. In this meeting, the Dean, the QA coordinator of the faculty, and the academics who had participated in the said workshop had explained about the PR Manual and the procedures of writing the SER. The Dean had called for meetings occasionally to discuss the progress of the program review process and the SER writing, and had provided the necessary instructions. Sometimes the writing team had discussions with Director of the QA Cell of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.

The report in general has followed all the guidelines for preparation of the SER, with four necessary sections. The report has an Introduction to the study programme, giving an overview of the Faculty and the programme of study. The report also contains a SWOT analysis. As this is the first review of the programme, the report did not describe any changes. The SER clearly describes

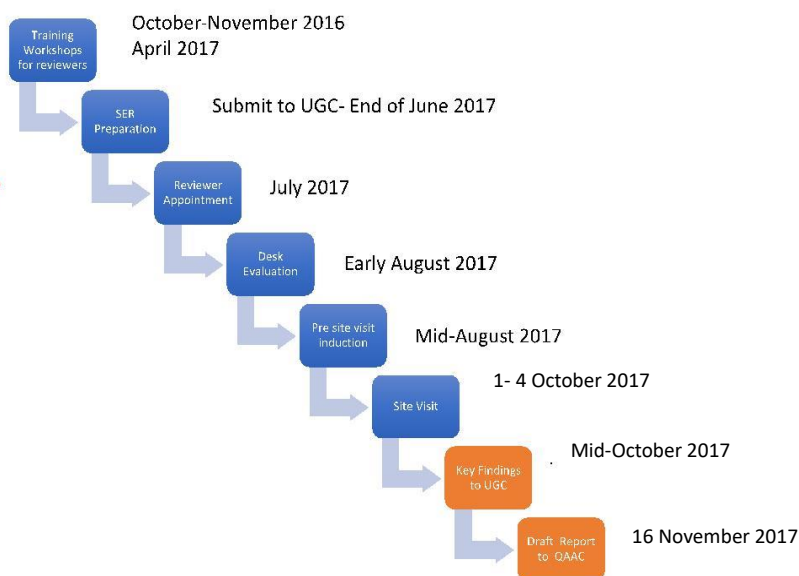
the process of preparation with necessary components. Section 4 of the report is structured as eight sub-sections covering the eight criteria, in the same order as prescribed in the manual. The report has used the template given in the manual. The table gives the serial number of the standard, claims of compliance, documentary evidence to support each such claim, and codes of the evidence used. Also, a summary statement on how the programme has met the Standards of the respective Criterion is made. A summary is given at the end of every Criterion. This summary also reflects the degree to which the faculty/department has internalized the best practices given in the manual, and the internal monitoring mechanism the IQAC used for continuous quality enhancement. The length of the report is fairly good. It is self-explanatory and readily understandable. It is prepared in alignment with the standards formatting recommended in the manual.

SECTION 3

A brief description of the Review Process

Desk Evaluation

Overview of PR Process



Desk Evaluation

Reviewers were assigned 5 weeks for desk evaluation. Final remarks/grades of the desk evaluation were discussed at the pre-site visit meeting among the team members at the UGC. Further clarification on submitted evidence were selected at the pre-site visit meeting. A schedule was prepared for 3-day site visit in collaboration with the Dean of the Faculty concerned.

Site Visit-Day 1

Site visit commenced on 1st October 2017 and the review process commenced on 2nd October 2017 as per the schedule attached in Annexure 1.

Director IQAU:

The stakeholders meetings started on 8.00 am, with the introduction of the review team to the Director/IQAU, Prof. Sanath Hettiarachchi. Monthly meetings are being conducted by the Director. He produced some of the minutes of meetings and activities carried out by his Unit. Monthly progress is presented at the Senate. The IQAU coordinated three program reviews at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, and provided necessary knowledge and other facilitates to the FQAC of Faculty by means of organizing workshops. There was no hard evidence regarding the functioning of the FQAC.

Dean of the Faculty

The meeting was started by a general introduction of the Review team to the Dean. The Dean explained the overall process of the program reviews and the contribution of the staff. He further pointed out the faculty scenarios, particularly the limitations and inadequate participation of the staff. He added that the annual intake of the faculty is 400, and the medium of instruction of the first year was Sinhala, and from the second year English. The physical infrastructure facilities of the faculty are satisfactory except the space problem. Human resources are satisfactory but there are no professors in these two departments under review. The Faculty provides industrial training only for general degree students, not for the special degree programs. Basic IT skills, mathematics and English are being taught to the all students.

Heads of Departments (HoD)

The initial communications of PR process were notified to the departments in January 2017. They explained the process of SER preparation. According to the HoDs all the staff members of the departments, including probationary lecturers, contributed to the SER and site visit arrangements. They further explained that the Department of Social Sciences offered three disciplines and the Department of Environmental Management one discipline, to both general and special degree students. They also indicated that the IQAC is not functioning properly, with no physical space provided for it. Regularly, every month, they conduct department meetings, and minutes are forwarded to the Faculty Board. Feedback is obtained at the end of every semester, but no peer review. The curricula of both departments have not been revised for a long time. The last revision was held in 1998, however, some initial preparation is being made, with inadequate support from

the staff. The Head of the ELTU met the Team members and mentioned that 12 credits of English courses are being taught to the students.

Academic Staff

They explained the task forces that completed the SER and its overall coordination. Some of them stated that they did not have previous experience to conduct a program review. This is a first time activity for most of the academics. The team observed that Junior and temporary academic staff contributed more significantly to the process of SER writing than senior academics. They put forward some of the difficulties in SER writing, particularly limitation of time, difficulty in finding evidence (even though they did), and lack of experience. A subject review was conducted in 2010 but no one was well aware of it, and there was no report available either in the departments or in the office of the Dean. They all emphasized that human and physical resources were not adequate. However, there are some quality enhancement activities being carried out with the support of the academics and students, such as faculty level journals (Rajarata journal of social sciences, Samothanam).

Meeting with Vice Chancellor

The meeting started with a general introduction of Review team to the VC. The Dean, the Director of the IQAU and the Heads of the departments were also present at this meeting. The Vice Chancellor strongly emphasized the importance of quality culture in HEIs and has developed self-motivation in the inculcation of quality culture within the University of Rajarata. He emphasized his fullest support to our site visit activities. He further said that Rajarata University is adopting the zero level ragging policy.

Administration Staff

The Assistant Registrar and Assistant Bursar were present at the meeting. The AR explained the procedure of maintaining student records confidentially in the office. In addition to the routine office administration, the AR is handling the examination results (calculation of GPA and finalising) with one computer applications assistant. They both mentioned that the human and physical resources are not sufficient to carry out the routine duties of the faculty as well as examination matters.

Examining Documentary Evidence

This process was started at 2 pm of the first day of the site visit. All the documents were kept in a separate room and systematically and logically arranged. The team member divided into two pairs, and checked the documents.

The first day of the site visit ended at 4.30 pm.

Site Visit-Day 2

Technical Staff

Five Technical officers were present. They explained the difficulties of having only a few technical staff for the entire faculty. Some departments are lacking technical staff even for

supporting academic matters in lecture theatres and labs. The computer lab is operating with temporary technical staff. Permanent staff have to be appointed for the computer lab.

Academic Support Staff

They were aware of the review team's visit and the SER. They have assisted the academic staff in document preparation. According to the duties assigned to them, they are the people responsible for marking attendance of the students and assisting in staff development programmes. They also assist in typing course synopses. They are responsible for typing exam papers given by the academic staff, and some academic staff do not give the examination paper in time, thereby creating undue pressure on them to get the paper typed in time, and get it ready for the examination. Further they are also involved in the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (external degree). There is no cadre allocated for this programme, therefore the same academic support staff has to work on the PG Diploma also.

Meeting with Deputy Proctor and Student Counselors

The review panel met the deputy proctor, the chief student counselor, and other student counselors. The chief and student counselors are involved in first year students' welfare and try to help them in all academic and personal matters. However due to the space problem existing in the faculty, they do not have a separate office/room to discuss confidential matters during the counseling process. They also accepted that even though there is no ragging, the review panel noticed a dress code difference among first year students. The review team advised to remove all sorts of ragging, whether mild or severe, and maintain zero tolerance.

Meeting with students

The specialization groups, gender, and different levels of the programmes were fairly represented in the meeting with students. A separate discussion was had with four members from the student union. They have active societies and cultural events. Students are well aware of assessments. There is evidence of student centered teaching and learning for some courses in all the specializations

They complained about the inadequate physical resources. Student evaluation is generally conducting but the incorporation of feedback in teaching for further improvement is not clear to them. The lack of internship arrangements from the University is another negative point for them, in obtaining some real-life experience. Some contents of the courses are not covered due to time limitation. Therefore the students are facing difficulties in subsequent semesters. Student selection for the special degree program is not fully transparent because of the long delay in releasing the results of the first semester/year examinations.

As a result, students are penalized when selecting their desired specializations. The students pointed out the reasons for the higher unemployment rate among Social Science and Humanities graduates. This is because of the gaps in the needs of the current job market and the degrees, mainly due to

- Old curricula (some programmes nearly 10 years old)
- No continuous updating of the courses.
- Lack of innovation in course content, teaching and learning
- Lack of practical approaches in courses
- Inadequate industrial exposure via internships
- Other universities offer science-based programmes in Environmental Management, and those graduates are preferred over the RUSL graduates.

Examining Documentary Evidence

This process continued from 2.00 pm of the second day and ended around 5.00 pm.

Site Visit-Day 3

Observing Teaching sessions

The review process started on 3rd day with observing the teaching process. The team had the opportunities to visit teaching sessions of Environmental Management and Economics. The team was unable to observe any student-centered teaching session during site visit. One class is offered within the lab, which is more compact and not a proper facility to conduct lectures. Another teaching session was in the class room with a smart board.

Observing the Facilities relevant to the programme

- Department of Economics and Department of Environmental Management

The review team visited the Departments. The Departments have a severe space problem, and 2 or 3 lecturers occupy a small room. HODs explained the problems faced in offering laboratory facilities and lecture rooms due to the space problems. The staff of both departments have been involved at a satisfactory level in outside collaboration and social work and research. The departments have engaged in environmentally friendly activities too, to train the students.

- Library

There is a library orientation programme for the new intakes. The following good points were observed: availability of compliant box, and the complaints being analyzed in a timely manner and responded to.

The results of library usage by students and staff are displayed monthly. A Wi-Fi facility is available for users. A student discussion facility is available.

- GIS Lab

23 Computers are available in the lab, which is air conditioned and properly maintained. Student attendance is monitored and recorded. However, no single computer is having licensed GIS software. We suggested keeping open source software like ILWIS, QGIS, etc., instead of keeping cracked versions.

During the facility visit we observed the following facilities also:

- Staff Development Centre: sufficient space and satisfactory.
- Canteen: The students are satisfied with the meals provided by the canteen (Ex. Management faculty) and the people who are working there try their best to maintain the quality of the food.
- Students' Hostels: the team visited and inspected the Viharamahadevi girls' hostel and the Dutugamunu boys' hostel. Both hostels accommodate 10 students in a single room (12'x20') with 5 bunk beds. The canteen, drinking water and other facilities are at a satisfactory level.
- Gym, swimming pool and other sports and recreational facilities: newly constructed, and the facilities are sufficient but far away from the hostels (2 km).
- Amaradewa auditorium: use as an auditorium as well as a common lecture hall. There is no proper seating arrangement and the learning environment is not good. The students complained and requested to improve the facilities.
- Examination hall: It is newly built and used to hold the annual convocation.
- Health centre and Ayurveda clinic: The health center has sufficient well trained staff (two nurses, a pharmacist, an attendant, and a labourer) but a part time doctor visit only for a few hours.
- Water purification plant: This is a good step taken by the university to provide drinking water for the university community.

Final Wrap up session

The concluding session started on 3 pm of the third day. All the Academics from the Faculty were presented. The chairperson and other team members briefly explained their observations during the last three days of the site visit, as the part of program review. During the Chairperson's speech, she explained first the strengths of the programs of the cluster and then some of the weakest parts. Finally, she pointed out the some of the recommendations. The 3rd day site visit ended at 4.30 pm.

SECTION 4

Overview of the Faculty's approach to Quality and Standards

The fundamental aim of the internal quality assurance Unit (QAU) is to put in place comprehensive plans, mechanisms, and systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision of all services and activities of the university. The Internal Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the RUSL was located in the Administration building of the university.

The Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC) of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities has been established under the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) of the RUSL. To improve the quality assurance and accreditation in the faculty, the FQAC has implemented an employability survey under the QIG grant and designed the curriculum. The Faculty Board has taken a decision to appoint a consultant for syllabus revision. There is a lack of indications that a curriculum development committee has been established or is functioning in the faculty. Therefore, IQAC should take the necessary immediate actions for internal monitoring of curriculum development, design and review process.

The FQAC has not been provided with sufficient office space and staff assistance to carry out its duties smoothly. There was a newly appointed coordinator for the FQAC. The review team did not find any documentary evidence, such as action plans, minutes of FQAC meetings, reports of FQAC, and circulars of QA. Therefore, the Faculty does not have any effective internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development, and approval processes. It is suggested to maintain a permanent agenda item on QA in the Faculty Board minutes.

The Faculty or FQAC lacks evidence of internal QA policies and plans, and mechanisms communicated to all staff. However, the young teaching staff understood the importance of QA activities, and they have the capacity to implement measures to remedy weaknesses and pursue quality improvement.

The review team noticed that the commitment and attention towards quality enhancement and excellence of the RUSL should be further enhanced.

SECTION 5

Judgment on the eight criteria of programme review

Criterion 1: Programme management

The faculty has the proper organizational structure for effective management; however there should be a systematic monitoring process in the action plan with new initiatives. Student participation in the Faculty Board is effective and not all the requests are solved positively. A three week orientation program is organized regularly, but the students'/parents' feedback is not implemented effectively to improve the quality of above mentioned programmes. The Handbook is printed on time and distributed at the orientation program to the students; however certain additional information such as disciplinary procedures, welfare procedures, course details, assessment criteria, students' code of conduct, and the student charter are not available in the Handbook. There is no annual programme calendar with deadlines for the semester activities to maintain the smooth functioning of academic and examination matters. The Faculty website is not updated with the Handbook, prospectus, special notes, etc. All the student information is displayed on the notice board. IQAC operates with minimum facilities and there are no regular meetings and minutes. There is a lack of evidence of mechanisms for the implementation of curriculum revision. There are no Faculty and Senate approvals for a course template. There is a lack of evidence of the use of the SLQF and SBS as reference points during the design and development of curriculum. There are initiatives for collaborations with national organizations, but there is no evidence of MOUs signed and the outcome of such MOUs. Senior student counselor and student counselors have been appointed, but there is no office or room allocated for the counseling process, which hampers the the efficiency of that process.

Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources

The Faculty has qualified staff at senior lecturer / lecturer levels (each department has about 6-8 senior lecturers) and competencies are adequate for designing / development and delivery of the academic programme, as well as research and outreach. Staff training at SDC is at a satisfactory level to gain knowledge on their defined roles, duties and competencies required to perform the assigned tasks. However, it was noticed that there is a lack of commitment from the academic staff of both departments regarding deadlines for printing exam papers and releasing marks on time, which has affected the students tremendously. The Assistant Registrar (AR) in the Faculty looks after the collection of exam papers from the academics, and printing, packaging, and delivering them to the exam halls on time. The AR indicated the difficulties in getting examination papers in time from academics. There is no semester programme calendar with all the deadlines for the academic staff to be well-prepared in time to ensure quality in academic program. Therefore, these matters should be strictly monitored by the HODs and the Dean, to meet the academic programme deadlines. The Faculty has

adequate infrastructure facilities such as multimedia projectors, computers, SMART boards etc. for teaching purposes. But space is inadequate in certain locations. Certain lecture halls especially the Amaradeva Auditorium, are not equipped with proper tables and chairs with writing facilities for students. Computers in the ICT laboratories are at a satisfactory level. However, the space is very limited. Computer laboratories are maintained by a casual paid person; therefore a permanent staff member has to be appointed for this purpose. The English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) of the faculty has limited resources and staff. The Career Guidance unit provides adequate services to students on soft and life skills. The Faculty also engaged in several outreach programmes, such as cultural, aesthetic and community level programmes, at satisfactory level.

Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development

The Faculty introduced the B.A. (Sp) in Environmental Management and the B.A. (Sp) in Economics in 1998. Further, there were additional courses introduced to the curriculum from time to time. There was an audit query report in 2014 indicating that there had been no curriculum revision until that time. There was no report on the subject review done in 2010, and suggestions were not incorporated into the curriculum as there has been no curriculum revision done so far. There is no course synopsis for each and every course with notional hours for different activities, and assignment criteria with the marks range for each grade, to be given to the students at the beginning of the semester. There are a few course synopses developed in an *ad hoc* manner. There is no need survey done for the B.A. (Sp) in Environmental Management and the B.A. (Sp) in Economics after 1998. Therefore the employability of the students is a problem, as they have to compete with the B.Sc. (Sp) in Environmental Management offered by other universities. There is no stakeholder participation in the programme design and development. A curriculum matrix is not available. Graduate progression should be transparent and students should be able to know the marks / results of the previous semester before the commencement of the next semester. It was noticed that specialization selection was done even before the releasing of marks of the first year.

Criterion 4: Course/Module Design and development

Course design and development has been carried out from time to time, but there is no faculty course design and approval policy and procedures, nor minutes of a Faculty curriculum development committee (CDC). There is no evidence of course design showing course ILOs aligned with the programme ILOs. The students' feedback is not incorporated into the curriculum design. There are no effective Faculty IQAC monitoring processes to evaluate, review, and improve the course design and development, and course approval. There are no course modules on scientific components to the curriculum of B.A. (Sp) in Environmental Management to enhance knowledge and practical skills, to ensure employability. There is no feedback from students, teaching staff, external and

internal examiners, or designers of the relevant course. It is suggested to use some open source software in the GIS lab, such as ILWIS or QGIS.

Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

The University provides the Corporate/strategic Plan, the Faculty Handbook and mission statement, the Faculty Action Plan, minutes of meetings regarding the action plan, and programme/course specifications. The Faculty provides course specifications and time tables on time; however, based on the students' opinion the time table is not properly implemented. Teachers encouraged collaborative learning in many instances. However, teaching and learning strategies, assessments, and learning outcomes are not closely aligned. Student feedback forms are available. But there is no evidence for the incorporation of student feedback in teaching. The Faculty engaged in research projects, but it would be better to collaborate with the Applied Sciences Faculty to get the science based knowledge for Environmental Management. There is no evidence of teachers engaging students in self-directed learning, collaborative learning, relevant contexts, or use of technologies as instructional aids, while being flexible with regard to individual needs and differences. Teaching-learning strategies should ensure that they are not gender discriminative and abusive. Teaching and learning activities are not monitored routinely for their appropriateness and effectiveness. Teaching-learning strategies do not promote the use of appropriate facilities, amenities, and activities to engage in active/deep learning, academic development, and personal wellbeing. The Faculty does not use a defined set of indicators of excellence in teaching to evaluate the performance of teachers, or identify champions of teaching excellence.

Criterion 6: Programme Learning Environment, Student support and Progression

It was noticed that the Faculty adopts a friendly administrative, academic, and technical support system, that ensure a conducive and caring environment and greater interaction among students and staff. It was also noticed that the Faculty conducts an induction program and provides an effective learning environment through appropriate services and a training programme. Further, the Faculty guides the students to comply with the code of conduct and use employer learner support to take personal control of their development. In addition, the Faculty monitors the student support services, providing ongoing training and specialized learning resources. It was also noticed that the Faculty uses ICT tools to facilitate the students' access to using information effectively. The Faculty provides a satisfactory level of library services. However, it was noticed that it is inconvenient for the students to use this effectively due to the limitation in opening hours and the distance between the Faculty and the Library. It was also noticed that the Faculty provides introductions between mentors, students, guides and senior guides. Further, co-curricular activities such as sports and aesthetic programmes conform to the mission of the Faculty and contribute to the social and cultural dimensions of their educational experience. It

was also noticed that students are equipped with career management skills empowering them to make informed career choices. The Faculty has initiated gender equity and equality to ensure that there is no direct or indirect sex discrimination or harassment. There is no transparent “fall back” option for students. Accommodation facilities are available for all students; however the review team visited the hostels and found that the ventilation was insufficient, and the rooms congested. There is no transition level courses in English to assist the students to enter specialization programmes in the 2nd year after the 1st year, as the 1st year courses are taught in the Sinhala medium. At present the certificate/diploma level courses in English are offered at a high cost; therefore they should be offered at affordable prices.

Criterion 7: Students Assessment and Awards

The assessment strategy of student learning is considered an integral part of programme design, but there is no clear relation between assessment tasks and the programme outcomes. The assessment strategy is not aligned to specified qualification or level descriptors of the SLQF and SBS, and the requirements of professional bodies. The Faculty ensures that the weightage pertaining to different components of assessments are listed in the programme/course specifications. The Faculty also ensures that the reports from external examiners are considered by the examination board in finalizing the results, and there was some evidence of external marking. Students are provided with regular, appropriate, and timely feedback on formative assessments to promote effective learning and support their academic development. But there is no evidence of student feedback. Graduation requirements are ensured in the degree certification process. Examination results are documented accurately and not communicated to students within the stipulated time. Even though there are assignments, assessment marks are not given to the students before the final examination. There is no evidence for marking schemes.

Criterion 8: Innovative and healthy Practices

There was no physical evidence of the presence of a VLE/LMS, physical verification of the use of a VLE/LMS, number of courses/documents uploaded into the LMS, or student feedback. Research and Development has to be strengthened, as there are no records of institutional and national recognitions received by academics. Special degree programmes have a research component with the value of six credits. An undergraduate research symposium is conducted regularly to present research findings. The research component carries considerable weightage; therefore, it is suggested to introduce proper evaluation mechanisms. There was no documentary evidence of staff reward schemes for academic and research excellence. Industrial training is essential for special degree programmes at least six months before completing the degree. Therefore the review panel suggested exposing students to industrial training programmes. There was no evidence of a University approved policy and guidelines/by-laws regarding credit transfer, nor evidence

of students making use of this option. There was a lack of information on Faculty Board approved policy and guidelines relating to granting permission to participate in outside competitions at a national and international level, as good practices. No evidence was provided on a University approved policy and guidelines on a fallback option, nor evidence of implementing a fallback option. There is evidence of student and staff engagement in co-curricular activities (Annexure 2).

Table 5.1 summarizes the scores conversion to percentage.

Table 5.1 -Programme of Study Score Conversion to Percentage

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria-wise score
1	Programme Management	75	94.4
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	94.4
3	Programme Design and Development	50	56.2
4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	50.0
5	Teaching and learning	75	81.6
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and progression	50	69.4
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	93.8
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	22.6
	Total on a thousand scale		562.4
	%		56%

SECTION 6

Grading of Overall Performance of the Programme

The programme review of the B.A. (Special) in Environmental Management and the B.A. (Special) in Economics of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (Cluster 2) revealed that the Faculty has maintained above average standards on criterion 1 - Programme Management, Criterion 2 - Human and Physical Resources, Criterion 5 - Teaching and Learning, Criterion 6 - Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression, and criterion 7 - Student Assessment and Awards. However the programme has severe drawbacks in Criterion 3 - Programme Design and Development, Criterion 4 - Course/Module Design and Development, and criterion 8 - Innovative and Healthy Practices. Because the Faculty has not revised the curriculum, the Courses/Modules according to the UGC standards and SLQF criteria have not obtained approval from Faculty and Senate. Curriculum/Course design is the major component which decide the quality of the programme. Further more than 50% of the innovative and healthy practices are not adopted by the Faculty. Therefore the Cluster 2 programme of the faculty is unsatisfactory due to inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study. Therefore it needs improvement in all aspects (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Grading of Overall Performance of a Study Programme

Study Programme Score as a %	Actual Criteria-wise score	Grade	Performance descriptor	Interpretation of descriptor
≥ 80	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for each of all eight criteria	<i>A</i>	<i>Very Good</i>	<i>High level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; should move towards excellence</i>
≥ 70	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for seven of the eight criteria	<i>B</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in a few aspects</i>
≥ 60	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for six of the eight criteria	<i>C</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects</i>

<60	Irrespective of minimum weighted criterion scores.	D	Unsatisfactory	<i>Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study: requires improvement in all aspects</i>
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SECTION 7

Commendations and Recommendations

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences offers the B.A. (Special) in Environmental Management and the B.A. (Special) in Economics in the English medium after the first year in Sinhala medium. Offering the degree programme in English is highly commended as it will pave the way for employability in the private sector. However the programme curriculum has not been revised since 1998, even though there were inclusions of new courses to the curriculum from time to time. Proper curriculum revision according to the SLQF standard is of prime importance. There is a qualified team of academic staff in each department. Therefore a proper systematic curriculum revision could be done, with the participation of stakeholders and external resource persons. Therefore the Faculty has to concentrate on programme design and development along with Course/Module design and development and the necessary approval should be sought from the Faculty and Senate. Further the Faculty has carried out activities related to research, social, and cultural aspects to improve the skills of the students. Further the Faculty could concentrate on introducing research awards for academic staff to improve the research culture within the faculty.

SECTION 8

Summary

The Faculty has the proper organizational structure for effective management. The University provides the Corporate/strategic plan, the Faculty Handbook and mission statement, and the Faculty Action Plan. Student participation in the Faculty Board is effective and the requests are solved positively. A three week orientation program is organized regularly. Handbooks are printed on time and distributed at the orientation program to teach students. The IQAC is operational within Faculty and University. There are initiatives for collaborations with national organizations for industrial training. A Proctor, senior student counselor, and student counselors have been appointed by the Faculty and the University. The Faculty has qualified staff at the senior lecturer / lecturer levels (each department has about 6-8 senior lecturers) and competencies are adequate for the design/development and delivery of the academic program, research, and outreach. Staff training at SDC is at a satisfactory level. The Faculty has adequate infrastructure

facilities such multimedia, projectors, computers, SMART boards etc. for teaching purposes. Computers in ICT laboratories are at a satisfactory level. The English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) of the Faculty provides the English language teaching for students. The Career Guidance unit provides adequate services to students on soft and life skills. The Faculty also engaged in several outreach programmes such as cultural, aesthetic, and community level programmes, at a satisfactory level.

The Faculty introduced the B.A.(Sp) in Environmental Management and the B.A.(Sp) in Economics in 1998. Further there were additional courses introduced to the curriculum from time to time according to the need. The review team highly commended the faculty for offering both programmes in the English medium after the first year, to address the employment opportunities in the private sector. Course design and development has been carried out from time to time. Lecture rooms are equipped with SMART Boards for teaching purposes. We have observed that the staff are using the SMART Boards for teaching and these SMART Boards are being used by the students for the learning process. It was noticed that the faculty has adopted a friendly administrative, academic, and technical support system, that ensures a conducive and caring environment and greater interaction among students and staff. Further, the Faculty guides the students to comply with the code of conduct, and employer-learner support to take personal control of their development. In addition, the Faculty monitors the student support services, providing ongoing training and specialized learning resources. It was also noticed that the Faculty uses ICT tools to facilitate the students' access to use information effectively. The Faculty provides a satisfactory level of library services. It was also noticed that the Faculty provides introductions between mentors, student guides, senior guides, and students. Further, co-curricular activities such as sports and aesthetic programmes conform to the mission of the Faculty and contribute to the social and cultural dimensions of their educational experience. It was also noticed that students are equipped with career management skills, empowering them to make informed career choices. The Faculty has initiated gender equity and equality to ensure that there is no direct or indirect sex discrimination or harassment.

The assessment strategy of student learning is considered as an integral part of programme design; The Faculty ensures that the weightage relating to different components of assessments are specified in the programme/course specifications. Students are provided with regular, appropriate, and timely feedback, through informative assessments to promote effective learning and support the academic development of students. Graduation requirements are ensured in the degree certification process. An undergraduate research symposium is regularly conducted to present research findings.

Review Panel's Recommendations

- Promote senior staff to apply for professor promotions, as neither department has even a single professor in the field.
- Conduct a need survey for both programmes with stakeholders and identify the needs of the country to offer these two programmes.
- Establish a Faculty curriculum committee with senior members of the departments, have regular monthly meetings, and include it as an agenda item of the faculty.
- Strengthen the IQAU and make use of review and monitoring of curriculum revision.
- Develop the curriculum according to SLQF standards, Course Synopsis and ILOs, and POs with stakeholder feedback ideas.
- Obtain adequate space for laboratory and staff room.
- Approve the revised curriculum through Faculty and Senate.
- Adopt a Semester Calendar, and make it available for students at the beginning of the semester, and strictly follow its activities.
- Release all the assignments and examination results before the commencement of next semester.
- Make the selection of specialization transparent by releasing Semester 1 and 2 marks with cut off marks for selection. Better to select more students for specialization based on the demand.
- Offer an interim English course for students selected for specialization programme as it is offered only in English.
- Introduce an industrial training component by signing MoUs with relevant industries and making it a compulsory component for a specialization programme, as it will improve employability.
- Enhance internet facilities and introduce VLE/LMS to enhance the teaching and learning processes.
- Introduce Teaching Excellence and Research Excellence awards for academic staff and continue student and Research symposia as regular activities.
- Introduce a credit transfer system and introduce a fallback option in the degree programmes
- Conduct student satisfaction surveys and employability and introduce OER policy.

Names of the review panel

Signature

1. Prof. C. S. De Silva (Chairperson).....

2. Prof. F. H. Abdul Rauf.....

3. Dr. K. Suthakar.....

4. Dr. N.W.B. Balasooriya.....