PROGRAM REVIEW 2017

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Languages
BA General in Dep. of Arabic Languages

Programme Review Report
of
BA (General) in Arabic Language

Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Studies
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council
University Grants Commission
2018

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study Programme

The Department of Arabic Language (DAL) was established as one of the academic departments of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (FIA), established in 2005 with two departments in order to offer study programmes in the fields of Islamic and Arabic Studies. This is the only faculty in Sri Lanka, which offers bachelor's degrees in Islamic and Arabic Studies. The vision and mission of the Department and the Faculty are in line with the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUL) which aspires to be a leading centre for the integration, research and compressive educational excellence in the Arabic language.

The DAL offers four degree programmes; three honours degree programmes, namely Bachelor of Arts (BA) Honours in Arabic Language and Grammar, BA (Honours) in Literature and BA (Honours) in Arabic Linguistics & Translation and one general degree programme, namely BA (General) in Arabic Language.

The BA (General) in Arabic Language is a 3-year programme offered by the DAL with some courses offered by the Inter Disciplinary Unit (IDU) that comes under the purview of the Dean of the Faculty. Present curriculum of the Study Programme categorizes the courses into three types; the main subjects, compulsory subjects and auxiliary subjects. The auxiliary subjects are offered by the IDU. The courses offered by the DAL are mainly related to the modern areas of Arabic Studies.

The study programme is in conformity with the level 5 of the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF). Admission into the study programme requires minimum pass grade from GCE (AL) examination or an equivalent qualification (i.e. completion of at least 60 credits of SLQF levels 3 and 4 with a minimum of 30 credits at SLQF Level 4 or equivalent). The volume of learning of study programme is 90 credits, offered over 6 semesters. Students are given the choice of selecting main courses as well as minor elective courses from 6 disciplines which allows the students to opt for inter disciplinary study programme. The IT and English are compulsory subjects aimed at imparting ICT skills and communication skills, respectively. These and several other auxiliary courses are aimed at enhancing social and career skills. The programme adheres to 70:30 ratio in allocating marks in assessments where 70% is allocated for end-semester examinations and 30% is allocated for in-course assessments.

The Z-score of the students enrolled to the DAL is relatively low, and they are from the GCE'AL Arts stream. The total student population as of 2017 is 507. However, SER did not provide information on year-wise distribution of student numbers. Review team had the opportunity to meet the students and about 65 students attended the meeting and explained about good practices in the department as well as their difficulties.

The DAL has thirteen permanent lecturers, six temporary lecturers and 3 supporting staff. Five out of 13 academic members are Ph.D holders while most of the others except some of

the probationary lecturers are trained up to MA/MSc level. Some of the academic staff at present are pursuing their higher studies in overseas universities. It appears that the staff at the Department has very little or no practical experience in application of modern methods of curricula development, and teaching and learning and assessment methods, and this may perhaps due to failure of the Staff Development Centre to offer sufficient training programme in these important areas.

The FIA has established the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) in compliance with the UGC instructions. As the study programme focuses on Arabic studies, the graduates may find job opportunities in Muslim and Arab countries that accounts for 1.5 billion people in the world. The number of students allowed in a class is large and hence the students may find difficulties in obtaining sufficient practical opportunities to acquire skills that are particularly demanded by the present-day state and private sector job markets.

The FIA provides adequate learning resources to students such as library facilities, ELTU, CGU, computer facilities, etc. Moreover, Wi-Fi connectivity, photocopy, printing and binding facilities is also available for students within the Faculty premises.

A survey on students views and opinions of students, conducted using questionnaire format provided by QAAC revealed following shortcomings:

- inadequate physical resources,
- lack of opportunities to interact with 'world of work',
- inadequate exposure to research methodologies and academic writing,
- limited opportunities to get involve in social and cultural activities,
- inadequate emphasis given for continuous assessments as assessments in most instances are limited to the end of the semester examination, and
- absence of adequate opportunities for publishing abstracts from their students' research.

Section 2: Review team's observations on the Self Evaluation Report (SER)

The programme review process evaluates the quality of education within a specific study programme. The aim of the review process is to evaluate the quality of students' learning experience where the responsibility of quality maintenance and standards lies within the institution.

The programme review team visited the DAL from 15th – 17th November, 2017 under the direct coordination of the QAAC. The agenda of the three days visit was prepared by the Chairman of the review team in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty. The programme review was focused on the Department of Arabic Language and BA (General) Degree Programme offered by the FIA in SEUSL.

The SER was prepared using the template prescribed by the Programme Review Manual (PR Manual). The template with 4 columns are required to list the standard with its serial number, claims of compliance, documentary evidences to support each claim of compliance and codes of the evidences provided.

The first column was not presented according to the required format; the required format is to list the 'standard' with its 'serial number'. In the SER, only the serial number of the standard was given without listing the corresponding 'standard', and it made very difficult for the reviewers to peruse the document. Reviewers had to refer the PR manual to identify the respective standards corresponding to the serial numbers.

The SER is expected to demonstrate the degree of internalization of best practices and levels of achievements of standards. However, every claim of compliance and level of attainment was not supported with sources of documentary evidence. As the Department has failed to furnish all relevant documents, the review team could not consider certain claims for which supporting documents were not provided as evidence.

The PR team noted following weaknesses in the SER submitted,

- Coding system was not properly done
- Claims of some standards or criteria were mismatched
- Some of the evidences listed were not compatible or relevant with the standards
- Some standards were not relevant or applicable
- Most of the standards were not correctly identified in relevant documents.

Section 3: Description of the Review Process

The review process was started with a workshop conducted on 7th June 2017 at the University of Peradeniya for programme reviewers to create awareness on the planned review of study programmes offered by the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculties of Arts. This initial workshop was followed by two workshops which were especially focused on assessment criteria and desk evaluation. At the workshop held on 23rd August at University Grants Commission, members of the review team of the BA (General) degree offered by the Department of Arabic Language of South Eastern University discussed the marks assigned by each member for the standards of respective criteria in the desk evaluation

The two review teams responsible for reviewing programmes of the Department of Arabic Language and the Department of Islamic Studies met at the Hotel where they were staying on 14th night and discussed three days schedule in detail. Then the review teams visited the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language of South Eastern University during the period of 15th to 17th November 2017.

Upon arrival at the Faculty in the morning of 15th November, the review teams were welcomed by the Dean of the Faculty and two Heads of Departments. The first meeting planned for two review teams was with Director of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) and she briefed the functioning of quality assurance (QA) activities of the university including administration, budget allocation and the process of Self Evaluation Report preparation. Later on, there was a presentation on SER with the participation of review team, Head and all permanent members of the Department of Arabic Language.

Then two review teams were accompanied to the Board Room of the Faculty where a meeting was arranged with the Dean and two Heads of Departments. According to the request made by the review teams, two separate meetings were arranged, as one with the Dean and the other with two Heads of Departments.

The Dean responded to the questions raised by members of two review teams referring to the preparation of SER, Faculty Board discussions on QA activities, student participation in Faculty Board meetings, maintaining of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the Faculty, student intake, programme curricula and course contents of the degree programmes, professional development and higher studies opportunities for the academic staff and number of other related aspects. Following that, review teams had a meeting with two Heads of Departments of Arabic Language and Department of Islamic Studies.

As a result of the discussion with the Head of Departments, the review teams were able to gather more information on student intake, curriculum revision process, extracurricular activities, examination matters namely marking, moderating and releasing results, assessment procedures, student feedback, peer evaluation and undergraduate soft skill development.

The next meeting was scheduled with permanent academic staff members of the Department of Arabic Language. They explained their involvement of the SER preparation and responded to the queries made

by the review team referring to several aspect of the study programme of BA (General) in Arabic Language. This meeting was followed by another meeting with temporary staff members. Temporary staff members were in general satisfied with the facilities provided to them. However, they complained about not having access to staff development programmes conducted by the SDC as these are open only for permanent staff members of the University. Afterwards, two review teams met the members of the Curriculum Development Committee comprising of the Dean, two Heads of Departments and three members nominated by the Faculty in order to find out the curriculum development process of the Faculty and the functioning of IQAC of the Faculty. Following that the review team inspected learning resource centers of the Faculty, namely IT labs, auditorium, lecture halls, faculty library, and main library, and also the physical education unit and the playground. Towards the end of the first day, the reviews team commenced the perusal of documentary evidences.

During the second day, two review teams had a meeting with the Head of English Language Teaching Department. Responding to queries raised by members of two review teams, the Head explained about placement test, teaching and learning methodologies, resources available for teaching and learning, student engagement in learning, and also about opportunities available for professional development. Next meeting was arranged with student counsellors of the Faculty. According to the information, six student counsellors, two from Department Arabic Language of and four from Department of Islamic Studies are engaged in providing counselling services. It was clearly evident that counsellors were not given any formal training on counselling and hence they rely on their intuition to perform the assign responsibilities. Moreover, the male to female student ratio was not considered in appointing student counsellors. Later on, the review teams were able to meet a group of students representing second and third year students and observe two teaching sessions. After the lunch, the review teams continued the perusal of documentary evidences and facility observations until the end of the day.

On the third day of the review, the review teams had two meetings, one with the administrative officers and the other with non-academic staff members. Responding to inquiries made by the review teams, the non- academic staff members provided a lot of information regarding their duties and responsibilities and the facilities available for them within the Faculty. Review teams were able to obtain more information regarding the matters highlighted by non-academic staff while discussing with the Assistant Registrar of the Faculty

In the afternoon, two review teams had the wrap up meeting with the Head of Departments, Director of IQAU, members of academic staff of two Departments, Arabic Languages and Islamic Studies. Members of each review team presented main points of their observation including strengths as well as weaknesses. Later on, prior to the departure, the review teams met separately and discussed about the key findings of the programme reviews and preparation of the final report.

The two review teams appreciated the commitment and the enthusiasm shown by the academic staff toward the review process. Logistical support provided and the hospitality extended throughout the site visit was commendable.

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

The University has established an Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) according to the UGC Circular of 2015. The IQAU was provided with a well-equipped office located in the main administrative building of the University. A senior academic member has been appointed as the Director of the IQAU to lead the internal quality assurance (IQA) programme within the university. The Senate closely monitors the work of the IQAU and IQA process within the university. There is a permanent item in the Senate agenda on IQAU and IQA related activities.

The Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language have established an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) which is housed in a separate office within the faculty premises. The Faculty leadership is keen in upgrading the quality and standards of its programmes. Senior academic member has been appointed for the post of Coordinator IQAC. The Faculty Board closely monitors the work of the IQAC and IQA process within the Faculty. There is a permanent item in the Faculty Board on IQAC and IQA related activities. The IQAC provides guidance on maintaining quality standards, and preparation of SER and also maintain the documents related to the IQA process of the Faculty.

As evidenced through the review team's meetings with the stakeholders, observation of facilities and perusal of documentary evidences, the Department of Arabic Language's approach to enhance quality and standards is progressive. It appears that the Faculty is aware of the value of adopting the prescribed best practices in academic development and planning and programme delivery, and has taken few steps to some extent to internalize such practices. Although the Department has implemented some of the best practices related to curriculum development, the documentary evidences to that effect are not maintained properly by the Department or the Faculty. Further, majority of the academic staff members in the Department appear to be aware about the quality assurance procedures and processes, and also recognize their role in enhancing the quality and standards academic and allied activities. It is indeed a positive sign of the progression in relation to quality enhancement process. However, it was observed that non-academic staff members and students are not fully aware about ongoing QA activities. It is evident that though the Faculty and Department administration has begun to pay greater attention to quality assurance procedures, the prescribed best practices have not been disseminated and adopted by all levels. Further, from documentary evidence made available to the review team during the site visit, it appeared that internal review and audit processes have been initiated recently to promote internalization of quality culture in all activities related to academic and administrative work. Therefore, it can be said that the internal quality assurance process of the Faculty and the Department of Arabic Language has only recently been imitated and appears to be progressing satisfactorily.

The Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language does not adopt Standard Operating Procedures (SOsP) to guide academic and administrative activities. It is recommended to design SOPs as a guide for staff, covering areas such as programme development, approval and review, assessment of students, student support career guidance, internship etc. By adopting the SOPs, the Faculty will be able to take the academic programmes to a higher level while retaining their unique features. It was also observed that the Faculty and the Departments do not have a proper mechanism to obtain stakeholder views on their programmes, programme delivery and quality of outputs. Therefore, it is also necessary to conduct

minor and major revisions, as necessary in timely manner with all stakeholder participation including students and employers and external experts.

Department of Arabic Language does not have a proper mechanism to handle important records and confidential data. It is recommended to develop procedures for the maintenance of important records, biographic information staff and students, examination results, etc., in secure manner. Further, the Faculty should ensure the confidentially in typing of exam papers by non-academic staff. Further, it was observed that Faculty and the Departments do not have any mechanism to monitor the performance of teachers and reward teachers for teaching excellence. This can be rectified by introducing performance appraisal and reward mechanism such as teaching excellence award scheme for academics.

The review team's view is that the FIA has the capacity to upgrade quality standards of its academic programmes and allied activities. However, to achieve this goal, all academic members of the Faculty should have greater understanding on quality principles, best practices and standards, and must work with a positive attitude and commitment. Therefore, it is important to conduct further training for academic and non-academic members to create awareness on best practices and standards so as promote internalization of quality culture within the Faculty.

Section 5: Judgement on the eight criteria of Programme Review

The section below provides an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the study programme reviewed with respect to each criterion and recommendations for enhancement of quality.

5.1 Criterion 1: Programme Management

Most of the UGC circulars covering the quality standards have been adopted by the Faculty in the management of the BA (General) degree programme in Arabic Language. Faculty has set up an IQAC in liaison with University IQAU.

Strengths

- Faculty adheres to the annual academic calendar enabling the students to complete the programme and graduate at the stipulated time.
- Faculty provides orientation programme for all incoming students.
- Faculty provides a student handbook which carries all required information to all incoming students.
- Faculty practices the policy of zero-tolerance to ragging, and has adopted necessary measure to prevent ragging and any other form of harassment and intimidation.

Weaknesses

- Faculty does not have a proper management information system to handle administrative records, student records, registration and graduation, examination data and other confidential information relevant to the degree programmes.

- Faculty does not adopt a duty list, work norms and ethics, and Codes of Conduct for its staff.

- Information regarding workload allocation for academic staff of departments has not been found.

- Faculty or the department does not have a proper academic counseling or mentoring system.

- Student counselling service is saddle with problems; counsellors do not have proper training on counselling and there are no female student counsellors to look into counselling matters of female students.

Recommendations

- Proper management system should be introduced in order to handle administrative records, student records, registration and graduation, examination data and other confidential information relevant to the degree programmes.

- Duty lists, work norms and ethics, and codes of conduct for staff should be introduced

- Work load allocation for academic staff should be calculated and documented and reviewed regularly.

- Academic counselling or mentoring should be established and maintained.

- Student counseling system must be strengthened by appointing female student counsellors and providing formal training on counselling.

5.2 Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources

Faculty and the Departments are equipped with required human as well as physical resources. The Dept. of Arabic Language has sufficient number of academic staff with several Ph.D. holders.

Strengths

- Newly recruited staff of the Faculty is provided with an induction programme.

- Students of Arabic language degree programme hve access to a well- resourced library facility, which holds up-to-date print and electronic reading materials. In addition, the students are

provided library facilities with a mini library within the Department premises which stocks all required reading material and books for their academic work.

- Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic language has well maintained ICT facility for its students.

Weaknesses

- Department does not have a proper mechanism for continuous upgrading and enhancing the capacity of all staff members.
- Staff has not been provided with adequate training on the concept, principles and applications of outcome-based education and student-centered learning (OBE-SCL) approach in programme design and delivery.
- There is a shortage of technical staff to provide technical assistance to students, especially in ICT laboratories.

Recommendations

- Staff should be provided with continuous professional development training programmes to strengthen their professional competencies.
- Staff should be provided with adequate training on the concept, principles and applications OBE_SCL approach and its application on programme design and delivery.
- Seek the required cadre for technical staff in order to improve student support services, particularly in ICT related areas.

5.3 Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development

The curriculum of BA (General) in Arabic Language appears to have been developed in a participatory manner by the Curriculum Development Committee. However, external stakeholder participation at key stages of programme planning, design and development had been at minimal level. The Faculty offers minimum of 30 credits per year totaling to 90 credits for the three-year degree programme, which is conformity with level 5 of the SLQF.

Strengths

- Study Programme consists of different categories of courses namely main subjects, compulsory subjects and auxiliary subjects.
- Study programme design accommodates both core and supplementary courses that would enrich them with core knowledge and skill in the chosen subject areas

- Throughout the programme of study, the students have to follow English Language and ICT related course as compulsory courses.

Weaknesses

- Department of Arabic Language has not revised its curriculum for a long period.

- Appropriate measurable process indicators and outcome-based performance indicators for monitoring the implementation and evaluation of study programmes have not been clearly defined.

- Department does not adopt monitoring strategies to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development, and approval processes.

- Tracer studies have not been conducted to find out information regarding employment opportunities for students after graduation.

Recommendations

- Curriculum of the BA (General) degree programme in Arabic Language should be revised without further delay by adopting SLQF guidelines and OBE-SCL approach.

- Design and introduce a monitoring mechanism to evaluate and improve the programme design and development process.

- Tracer studies on student satisfaction, employer assessment of graduates, employability of graduates, etc., should be conducted in regular manner and the results of such studies should be analyzed and used in programme design and delivery.

5.4 Criterion 4: Course Module Design and Development

Programme content of Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree in Arabic Languages has been organized into course modules, with a minimum total of 90 credits required to be completed by candidates.

Strengths

- Course modules have been developed using a standard template approved by the University that includes at least a part of required details, namely the course aims, specified ILOs, and course content.
- Course content are generally aligned with course module and study programme ILOs.
- Study programme includes several categories of courses as main subjects, compulsory subjects, electives and auxiliary subjects.
- Courses are scheduled and offered in a manner that allows the students to complete them within the intended period of time.

Weaknesses

- Although university adopts a standard template for course specifications, it does not contain assessment procedures and weightage for continuous and end semester assessments.
- Faculty IQAC does not adopt internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the course design and development process.
- Staff involved in instructional design and development has not been trained for such purposes, and they have not been provided with regular training on curricula design and development, teaching and learning strategies and assessments methods.
- Courses are not evaluated at the end of each course with regard to its content, appropriateness and effectiveness of teaching,
- Students' feedback on course modules has not been taken for the improvement of courses.

Recommendations

- Course specification format should be expanded to include assessment procedures and the weightage for continuous and end-semester examinations, and recommended reading material.
- Student feedback should be analyzed and comments and suggestions from such feedbacks should be taken into account for continuous improvement of the study programme design and delivery.
- Internal monitoring strategy should be introduced by the Faculty IQAC to evaluate and review and to improve the course design and development and delivery process.

5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

Despite having ample physical resources to use SCL methods in programme delivery, the Faculty still continues with teacher-centered teaching and training approach. According to the information gained, SDC programmes are conducted only for permanent staff members and therefore there is no opportunity for temporary staff members to gain professional training on application of Outcome Based Education (OBE) and Student-Centered Learning (SCL) methods. No evidence could be found for the use of evaluation indicators for excellence in teaching.

Peer review and student feedback are obtained for some courses, but it is done merely as a formality. Feedback has not been used properly used to make improvements in the study programmes or to address student concerns since they have not been properly analyzed. Although Faculty has sufficient IT facilities, there is hardly any evidence of using those facilities to teaching and learning. Furthermore, it was evident that there are no technical officers on hand to assist students when they are using ICT laboratories

Strengths

- Faculty provides course specifications and timetables before the commencement of each course.

- Except the facilities in the main library, students are provided with a departmental- level mini library which stocks the required learning materials and books.

Weaknesses

- Lack of training opportunities for temporary staff members to engage in professional development activities.
- Although student feedback and peer observations are conducted there is lack of evidence of using the information gained from such assessment for improving teaching and learning.
- Absence of evidence to indicate the use of SCL methods to strengthen students' knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Use of ICT platform and applications for teaching and learning was not clearly evident to the review team,

Recommendations

- ICT recourses need to be utilized effectively for teaching and learning.
- OBE-SCL strategies should be practiced in teaching and learning.
- Analyses of peer review and student feedback should be used for improving teaching learning and assessment..
- Teaching excellence award scheme should be initiated to motivate teachers and identify and reward high performers.

5.6 Criterion 6: Learning environment, student support and progression

The Department is enriched with physical resources such as ICT labs, auditorium, sufficient number of lecture halls and a mini library. In addition, Faculty has a well-resourced library with printed and electronic materials for studies. Furthermore, there is a separate place for students, close to the library to use free Wi-Fi facilities for 24 hours. Students are also provided with hostel facilities, sports facilities and the medical facilities within the university premises. However, students are not satisfied with the available funding facilities for sports and the cleanliness of the hostels. According to the information gained, students are not very much pleased with the training offered by the CGU, particularly on soft skill development and employment opportunities available.

English Language Teaching Department (ELTD) conducts English courses for students throughout the degree programme. However, it was evident that there was a shortage of staff to conduct small group classes. Further, the opportunities for staff members for their professional development are rather limited.

Although student counsellors are appointed, they were not provided with any formal training relevant to student counselling. It was also noted that when appointing student counsellors, male and female student population ratio had not been considered at all. Although there are higher percentages of female students (more than 75%) almost all counsellors are males.

Strengths

- Main library and the facilities available in the Faculty and the Department provide adequate learning resources and facilities for students in their academic pursuits.
- Access to internet through university-wide wi-fi, free of charge to students and staff. Thus, students have ample opportunities to access on-line learning resources.
- Students are provided with facilities to enhance English language proficiency and ICT skills.

Weaknesses

- Absence of academic counseling system in the Department to assist student in their academic pursuits.

- According to the information gained, students are not satisfied with the cleanliness of the hostels.

- Students claim that the sports facility does not receive adequate funds to strength its capacity and promote recreational sports and sport competitions among students.

- Although there is a Medical Centre operated within the university premises, there is no permanent female nurse in this unit which is essential for considering the higher number of female students.

Recommendations

- Available ICT resources should be used as efficiently as possible for improving IT skills for students.

- Academic counseling should be initiated while improving students counseling services.

- Due consideration should be given to improve and maintain clean environment in the hostels.

- Sports facilities must be further strengthened by allocation required funds.

- Staff shortage, particularly the absence of female paramedical staff at Medical Centre must be addressed without any further delay.

5.7 Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards

The DAL has followed the University approved examination rules and regulations, and assessment strategies as appropriate. However, second examiners have not been used in examinations. Complete and appropriate transcripts were given to the students at the completion of the study programme.

Strengths

- FIA adopts university approved examination rules and regulations and by-laws and these are documented and distributed among staff and students.

- Assessment procedures and the weightage are stated clearly and communicated to students.

- Procedures for conducting examination, eligibility for appearing in the examination, rules pertaining to examination offences are included in the Handbook.

- Faculty and Examination Unit collate process and maintain examination results in efficient and confidential manner.

- A complete transcript indicating the programme and courses followed the grades and GPA and the lass obtained are made available to all students at graduation.

Weaknesses

- Failure to provide regular, proper and timely feedbacks on formative assessment to students.

- Faculty adopts the policy of second marking of the answer scripts.

5.8 Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices

University-wide reward system, namely Vice Chancellor's and Senate awards recognize academic and research achievements of the staff. However, Faculty also should consider introducing a suitable reward system to encourage the staff for achieving excellence in teaching, research and outreach activities. Furthermore, it was observed that programme does not offer fallback option for those students who could not complete the programme successfully to exit at lower level.

Strengths

- FIA provides opportunities for academics involving in academic training, research and development and innovations in various ways.

- University implements a reward system (such as Vice Chancellor Awards) to encourage academics for achieving excellence in research and outreach activities.

- Faculty conducts Undergraduate Research Symposium as a part of teaching and learning strategy and encourages students to disseminate the findings.

- Research methodology is taught as an auxiliary subject.

Weaknesses

- Department has no links with various international, national, governmental and non-governmental agencies.

- Faculty promotes students and staff engagement in a wide range of co-curricular activities such as Social and Cultural.

- Absence of students' participation at regional / national level competitions.

Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance of the Programme

The table below presents the review team's judgment of the level of attainment of quality under each criterion by the Bachelor of Arts in Arabic Language General Degree Programme. Each standard was evaluated based on evidence provided and a score was assigned from 0 – 3 (0= inadequate, 1= barely adequate, 2= adequate, 3= good). Raw criterion-wise score was estimated based on the scoring system given in the PR manual. The raw score of each criterion was converted to the actual criterion-wise score using the formula given in Chapter 3 of the PR Manual. The sum of actual criterion-wise scores was taken as the overall score of the Degree Programme.

No	Criteria	Weighted Minimum Score	Raw Criterion-wise Score	Actual Criterion-wise Score
1	Programme Management	75	51	94.44
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	26	72.22
3	Pogramme Design and Development	75	34	70.83
4	Course/Module Design and Development	75	35	92.10
5	Teaching and Learning	75	34	89.47
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	40	55.55
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	35	102.94
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	19	24.35
Total in Thousand Scale				601.93
Total as a Percentage (%)				60.19
Grade Awarded				C
Performance Descriptor				Satisfactory
Interpretation of Performance Descriptor				
Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme; requires improvement in several aspects.				

Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations

The recommendations and commendations are included in the relevant sections and most important aspects are highlighted here.

Strengths

- IQAU and IQACs have been established.

- QA activities are discussed at the Faculty Board and Senate meetings

- Faculty is aware of the importance of improving the quality and standards of the education that they provide.

- Degree programme structure includes main subject, inter- disciplinary subjects, electives and auxiliary subjects. Job oriented courses such as ICT, English courses and some other subjects are also incorporated.

- Provision of adequate library facilities through the mini Library in the Faculty and main Library in the University.

- All the students are provided with ICT facilities.

Weaknesses

- LMS usage is very less but it has to be improved.

- Programme design and development has not been designed systematically. Participation of stakeholders appear to be absent. Alignment of course ILOs with programme ILOs has not been attempted.

- Use of SCL approach in course delivery is not satisfactory. only limited methods.

- Usage of student's education output is not incorporated in the quality of teaching.

- Collecting the Students feedback is good but there is no evidence for using the information in teaching for improvement.

- Peer evaluation feedback was practiced in the Faculty in 2013. This process has not been continuously done, and there is no evidence in the use of outcomes of peer reviews for improving the quality of teaching.

- Despite having a high percentage of female students (80%), the university has failed to give due consideration to male: female student ratio in staff recruitment, appointing student counsellors, providing accommodation facilities etc.

Recommendations

- Commence curriculum revision process without any further delay.

- Curricula should be designed adopting SLQF guidelines and OBE-SCL concepts, principles and procedures.

- Provide adequate training to academic and non-academic staff to improve their knowledge and skills.

- Introduce academic counselling/ mentoring system to facilitate the students in their academic pursuits.

- Implement an awarding system to recognize excellence in teaching and research at Faculty level.

- Further improvement of international collaboration is encouraged.

- Provide more training opportunities to develop the teaching skills of academic staff.

- Adopt participatory approach, including the inputs from stakeholders (e.g. Industry, Alumni, Students, etc.).in programme design and development.

- Student feedback procedure should be strengthened and analyzed and the outcome from such analyses must be used for making further improvement in programme delivery.

- Peer evaluation procedure should be practiced and follow-up action must be initiated to improve the capacity teachers and reward the high performers.

Section 8: Summary

The QAAC of the UGC in consultation with South Eastern University of Sri Lanka entrusted the task of reviewing the BA (General) in Arabic Language degree programme to a team of 3 members who were selected based on their expertise. In this process, the evaluators had engaged in individual desk review and site visit evaluation. The duration of the site visit was for three days from 15th to 17th November 2017. Review team observed that Self Evaluation Report (SER) submitted by the Department of Arabic Studies has not been prepared properly.

The review team observed that Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language of the SEUSL has begun internalizing many good practices as prescribed in the Review Manual to improve the quality and

standards of operations and its study programmes. The Department of Arabic Language has a well-developed action plan up to the year 2018, developed in alignment of the Faculty Strategic Plan, and it adequately reflects the new trends in higher education as well. Moreover, the Faculty maintains healthy environment and administrative structure to facilitate its core functions. The review team also observed that Faculty has maintained student registration, examination data in proper manner. The release of results within the stipulated time period is highly commendable.

The Department of Arabic Language is having adequate number of qualified academic staff and all of them are doing commendable work. However, the review team observed that the class room lecture-discussion sessions are still conducted, primarily through teacher-centered approach despite the efforts taken by the Staff Development Centre (SDC) train the staff on modern teaching and training methods. ICT laboratories and their terminals are working at satisfactory level. Carrier guidance unit provides adequate services to students on soft skills and life skills. Furthermore, the university provides access to the well- equipped library facilities with internet access to the students as well as staff.

The BA (General) in Arabic Language degree programme can further be improved by reforming its curriculum by adopting OBE-SCL approach and delivering the study programme through multimode delivery with ample use of ICT platform and its applications (such as LMS) and also by encouraging students to use Open Learning Resources. Academic staff involvement in research and development too has to be improved further. The Department provides opportunity to publish the research work of students by organizing an annual student research symposium. Even though, there is a mechanism for student evaluation and peer evaluation, the outcomes of such assessments have not been conveyed to the staff. Therefore, it is essential to implement an appraisal system (i.e. student evaluation and peer reviews) which can be used for further improvement of teaching and learning. Opportunities are given for the students to interact with the community outside the university through student research forums, internship programmes, carrier fairs and outreach activities conducted by the Faculty. It I recommended that the Department should obtain regularly feedback from students and conduct tracer studies to identify the areas to be improved in order to enhance the employability of graduates. Even though, there is a reward system at the University level (i.e. Vice Chancellor's / Senate awards), it is recommended to commence an appraisal and reward system to recognize and reward high performers in teaching and research at Faculty level. Moreover, the Department needs to make an effort to further enhance the quality of teachers by providing them opportunities to study at local or foreign universities.

As of the outcome of the pogramme review process, the study programme leading to BA (General) in Arabic Language degree programme received overall score of 60.19% with all eight criteria securing

scores higher than the respective weighted minimum scores. Accordingly, the study programme receives the Grade of 'C' which is interpreted as *"minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme; requires improvement in several aspects"*.

The Department of Arabic Studies and the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language are encouraged to strive for further improvement in all spheres of academic and administrative activities in order to achieve excellence in quality and standards of academic and allied activities.

Programme Review Committee

Prof. Subathini Ramesh

Chairman, University of Jaffna

Dr. Janaka Wijayanayake

Member, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Dr. Pushpa Vitharana

Member, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka