



# **PROGRAM REVIEW 2017**

University of Sri Jayawardanapura  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Cluster - 2

# **Programme Review Report**

on

## **Cluster 2 of Special Degrees**

Honours Degree Programme in Sociology, Honours Degree Programme in Anthropology, Honours Degree Programme in Mass Communication Honours Degree Programme in Criminology and Criminal Justice

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## **Section 1: Brief Introduction to the Programme**

### **1.1 Overview of the University of Sri Jaywardenepura and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

The University of Sri Jaywardenepura (USJP), located in Colombo is the second university established in Sri Lanka. Started as the Vidyodaya University in 1959, it was later renamed the University of Sri Jaywardenepura in 1978, after Sri Jaywardenepura-Kotte became the administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Presently, USJP has seven Faculties, namely, Humanities and Social Sciences, Applied Sciences, Management Studies and Commerce, Medical Sciences, Graduate Studies, Technology, and Engineering. The university also offers Post Graduate Level Degree Programmes through the Postgraduate Institute of Management. It caters to an internal student population of over 12,000, an external student population over 100,000, and over 3,000 postgraduate students.

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) of the University of Sri Jaywardenepura is one of the most prominent faculties in higher education in Sri Lanka. It started with 22 Departments, and today it is the largest faculty of study in Humanities and Social Sciences in state Universities in Sri Lanka. The Faculty offers study programmes in two sets of disciplines, namely Humanities and Social Sciences. FHSS of the USJP offers three degree programmes, namely; Bachelor of Arts - General, Bachelor of Arts - Special (in both Humanities and Social Science disciplines) and Bachelor of Science in Information and Communication Technology. Currently the faculty consists of eleven academic Departments: Economics, English, Geography, History and Archaeology, Languages, Cultural Studies and Performing Arts, Pali and Buddhist Studies, Political Science, Sinhala and Mass Communication, Social Statistics, Sociology and Anthropology, and Criminology and Criminal Justice. FHSS has eight more centres and units catering to the teaching and learning activities of the faculty. In addition to its internal degree programmes, for which the annual intake of students is more than 900, the faculty also offers a three-year external degree programme.

### **1.2 Cluster 02 of Social Sciences**

For the convenience of the reviewing process to enhance the quality of education, the programmes were separated and clustered. The General Degree programme was evaluated separately, whereas the Honours Degree Programmes (HDP) were clustered. Of these, the following degree programmes were included in Cluster 02;

1. Honours Degree programme in Sociology,
2. Honours Degree programme in Anthropology
3. Honours Degree programme in Mass communication
4. Honours degree programme in Criminology and Criminal Justice

The above Degree Programmes belonged to three Academic Departments, namely, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication, and the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

These three Departments representing Cluster 02 offer several other Special Degree Programmes for the undergraduate students of the faculty but only four special degree programmes were grouped together in this cluster.

### **1.3 Department of Sociology and Anthropology**

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology is one of the oldest and the largest Departments in the FHSS. During the course of five decades since its establishment, the Department has undergone progressive changes to become the largest Department offering two important HDPs, Sociology and Anthropology. In addition to academic and research activities conducted by the Department, it pays special attention to enhance employability of all the students who are following the HDPs offered by the Department. It organizes various internship programmes and provides students with an opportunity to develop necessary hard and soft skills that are required to form a global graduate. At present, there are 09 permanent academic staff members, including 03 Professors and 05 Senior Lecturers, of whom 04 have Doctoral Degrees. Additionally, there are three tutors and two non-academic staff members in the Department.

### **1.4 Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication**

The Department of Sinhala was one of the key Departments of the Faculty of Languages of then Vidyodaya University of Ceylon. In 1993, it was re-named as the Department of Sinhala and Mass Communication. In its more than five decades' history, the Department has contributed immensely to the enhancement of the quality of education and research, particularly on Sinhala language, literature, communication, and media studies. The Department offers many study programmes and the Honours Degree in Mass Communication for the undergraduate students.

The primary objective of the HDP in Mass Communication is to provide students with the necessary orientation relevant to the field and deep awareness of the theoretical and the practical aspects of Communication and Media Studies. The course units are designed to meet the needs of this field and to strengthen the career prospects of the students. Furthermore, they are expected to broaden the knowledge of the students on the language usage pertaining to the supportive languages, such as Pali, Sanskrit, Tamil, and English. There are two senior academic staff members in the field of Mass Communication and they render their maximum services to fulfil the teaching and learning activities of undergraduates who follow Mass Communication HDP.

### **1.5 Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice**

Being the newest of all the Departments in the FHSS, the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice was the pioneering body in the country, to offer this subject since 2016. The late Senior Professor Nandasena Ratnapala, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology of the FHSS, USJP, was one of the most famous sociologists, and he was the key figure in introducing this novel subject to the Sri Lankan University curriculum. Criminology and Criminal Justice mainly focus on crime and crime related social and legal settings. The prime objective of this multi-disciplinary field of study is to prevent and control crime in order to uplift the quality of individuals' social lives. This Department works closely with the University and outside institutions, including but not restricted to the Faculty of Medicine, Sri Lanka Police, Child Protection Authority, and Legal Department of Sri Lanka. At present, there are 09 staff members including a Professor, 06 Senior Lecturers, and 02 Probationary Lecturers. There are two temporary tutors and two non-academic staff members in the Department.

Learning Resources to foster better educational opportunities for all the undergraduates who follow HDPs under this cluster are provided by the University, the Faculty and the respective Departments at their own capacities.

The English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) of the USJP, which is committed to developing the English language proficiency of students in the FHSS and other faculties, provides its services to the FHSS with special English courses to improve their language skills. The ELTU helps the FHSS to empower graduates of Humanities and Social Sciences to challenge the tide of competition and employability by improving their English language skills.

The Computer Centre was established in 2001 for the undergraduates of the FHSS of the USJP, with the aim of enhancing the knowledge and skills in Information and Communication Technology of the students of FHSS. Students follow courses of GIS and, SPSS to enhance their knowledge with the latest learning and data analytical strategies.

The Soft Skills Development Unit helps the undergraduates of the faculty to enhance the qualities of personality development, along with professional expertise to make them more employable according to the current employment demands, and to be more dynamic individuals for Society. The Career Guidance Unit helps undergraduates of the FHSS to develop their skills and abilities necessary for their future.

## **Section 2: Review Team's Observation on the Self-Assessment Report**

Following the guidance received from the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC) and UGC, the USJP has taken some steps to enhance quality assurance of its Degree Programmes. The university has established an Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQUA) for the university and Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) for each faculty. The Self Evaluation Report (SER) was prepared under the purview of the IQAC of the FHSS.

The SER has been prepared by a six-member team, which included two members from the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, one member from each of the other two Departments, and two members from the ELTU. It seems that these two members from the ELTU have given support for editing the SER. Thus, four members from the respective Departments have prepared the SER. Furthermore, there is no evidence of direct input from the director of IQUA, Coordinator of IQAC of the FHSS, and the Dean of the Faculty. They have done the quick official task of appointing committees, rather than guiding them to write a report. When compared with QAAC documents, the FHSS has not paid adequate attention for the preparation of the SER at the right time, but appeared to have finalized it within a short period of time (09<sup>th</sup> May – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017). If they had started it in January 2017, the team would have done a proper search for information, completed their SWOT analysis at the Department level, and referred to the previous subject review report done in 2010. There is no evidence of a proper search for information in this SER. Thus, this appears to be a very poor exercise performed just to fulfil the requirement. This situation implies that there is no optimistic ideology on quality assurance among the responsible members of the faculty and senior members at Department level. The team who prepared the SER were not well experienced when compared to other academic staff members in these departments. The Department of Mass Communication does not have sufficient experienced academic staff

members. There is no evidence of support from the Head of the Department of Sinhala to which the Mass Communication programme belongs for this SER preparation.

As witnessed under 2.3 of the SER, this is not an independent work. It says that “*The fifth criterion was edited from our cluster and at the end of the consecutive eight meetings, a final document carrying all the edited criteria was sent back to the cluster for further revision.*” The statement reveals that the SER was a cooperative product by the members of each cluster (5 clusters) and finally it was edited by the ELTU just giving some identities to respective Departments (*ELTU members were given details to write the introduction, criteria based summaries, overall summary and the process of preparing the SER*). The rationality of the SER writing team is made questionable by including this kind of sentence in the SER. If the review team had access to the other SERs (Cluster 1, 3, 4 and 5) the similarities and dissimilarities could be listed.

In addition, there is no evidence of following the Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Educational Institutions during the time of SER preparation. The QAAC of the UGC has conducted several workshops to make all the Universities aware of the SER preparation and there is no evidence of participation by the members of SER team in these workshops. If it is the case, it again shows the lower priority given by the senior members of the Faculty and Departments to the quality assurance process.

When the review team visited to IQAC, there were no proper arrangements and facilities arranged for the cell to function, although the coordinator seemed to be working very actively.

The consistency and sequence of the facts described in the SER show some discrepancies. For example, Table 2.3 and Annex 2 show a difference in the number of members involved in SER preparation. There are some formatting errors and typographical errors that could have been attended to before the submission of the final report.

### **Section 3: A Brief Description of the Review Process**

The review process of the Universities began with the selection of reviewers by the QAAC, in 2016. It had also been decided to evaluate the HDPs in the FHSS. Originally it has been decided to evaluate each degree programme individually, and it was later decided to evaluate the HDPs on cluster basis, whereas the General Degree Programme of each University was evaluated as one Degree Programme. Accordingly, all the state Universities of Sri Lanka compiled SERs of the Degree Programmes belonging to the Faculties of Arts and submitted them to the QAAC, UGC, on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2017, with their expression to be evaluated.

The actual process of reviewing the study programmes began with the Desk Review undertaken by each reviewer assigned for specific clusters, and by giving individual scores for the SERs. This was commenced once the individual SERs were handed over to the reviewers in July, 2017, and the latter were educated about the aim and the purpose of QA and the rationale behind the Review Manual, and what was expected by the Reviewers both during the Desk Review and the Site Visit. The individual scores were sent to the QAAC. Once the reviewers met in August, all review teams discussed together the marks given by each individual.

In the review process of the Cluster 02 of the FHSS of the USJP, the four members appointed came to an understanding about the marks everyone had given during the Desk Review before the site visits. The team agreed upon the standards, claims and evidence documents that they needed to look at in more detail during the Site Visit and the Chair for the PR Team prepared the Site Visit Schedule (attached herewith) in consultation with the other team members, which she then emailed to the Dean, FHSS (with a copy to the Director/QAAC) in advance. The Chair then shared a copy of the Schedule with the Dean and the Faculty Coordinator of the IQAC who then made arrangements to proceed with review during the given dates. The site visits took place from the 24<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> of October, 2017.

There were three teams altogether during the particular cycle of review. All three teams were welcomed by the IQAC Director, and they all were able to meet the Dean of the FHSS. Afterward, the team for the Programme Review of Cluster 02 met with the respective Heads of Departments, and the Cluster report writers, Academic staff of the respective Degree Programmes, and the Vice Chancellor, before the lunch of the first day. The afternoon was scheduled for examining the documentary evidence belonging to the degree programmes. The team also had the opportunity to meet the administrative staff, i.e., SAR of the Faculty (acting from the Faculty of Commerce and Management).

According to the site visit schedule, Day 2 started with observing teaching and learning sessions relevant to the evaluated study programmes. Members divided into two groups based on the time allocated, and within the restrictions of the time table (there were only two time slots allotted in the given dates). There were three lectures allotted from 8:00-10:00 am: Sociology Special final year, Anthropology Special 2<sup>nd</sup> Year, Mass Communication Special 2<sup>nd</sup> Year. Whereas, the lectures for Mass Communication, and Sociology were conducted by two visiting lecturers (one retired Professor for Mass Communication and one visiting lecturer from the University of Jaffna), the Anthropology lecture was not held, due to the absence of the lecturer without prior notice. The Sociology lecture started at 8:15 and it was bilingual. It was noticed that the students came even 30 minutes late to the class.

One of the biggest facts highlighted was that many of the lectures were conducted by visiting staff. None of the permanent staff members were there to undertake lectures. And the classrooms were not cleaned, and as they were overloaded with excess chairs, unnecessary stuff/junk (cupboards, tables, plastic boards, used banners etc.). They were not properly ventilated (some classrooms were dark and gloomy), nor organised in terms of providing a pleasing classroom environment.

Meetings with the students took place, and their feedback was very positive. There were several grievances from the students;

1. Elective subjects are not offered as desired by the students, though it is mentioned in the student's handbook: only Sinhala and Sociology are offered for students.
2. With regard to Mass communication, 50 students were initially selected, and from the interview, reduced to 17. The justification given was the lack of human resources.
3. Results are not released on time. As a result, the students cannot choose the subject they wish to specialize in from the second year onwards.

According to the students' Hand Book, the students can choose one subject to specialize in based on their results of the first year. However, it is not possible, since the time taking for releasing results exceeds the time to apply for HDPs. As a result, the selection for Special Degrees is not transparent and accurate. Consequently, some students with two A Grades in the first year have not been able to be selected for a Special Degree Programme as they wish.

As regards the meetings with the technical officers, and academic support staff, there were only a few members who participated: two technical officers, and four clerical staff. The members of staff at first were reluctant to answer the Team's questions and were a little backward with their opinions. It was observed that they were under pressure at the first instance. However, with the explanation by the Team leader, of the objective and the mission of the PR Review, they became more relaxed and willing to express their feelings about the environment. The open discussion made them available to judge where the Faculty was in terms of measuring up to the standards specified in the PR Manual and challenges in the way of such accomplishment. According to them, the documentation for PR review has been prepared by the junior / young staff members and the clerical staff who do not have a proper understanding of the University's governance and practices.

However, they were cooperative, cheerful, and friendly as they patiently assisted the team to the conduct of the PR-related site visits, and made the evidence documents available. The Team did not encounter any hostility or impatience by the staff, though there were some empty files. This may be either due to the unavailability of documentary evidence, or the unawareness by the senior and the responsible staff. It must be noted here that the documents (whichever were ready) were available in a friendly place where the review team could examine them freely and peacefully. This convenience allowed the team members to share their thoughts and expressions when marking the available documents. However, the inconvenience occurred when transporting the team members from and to the hotel, since the University had arranged only one or two vehicles for all the three teams. As a result, some members had to wait outside until all the members got together to be transported to the hotel.

During the review period, the team also observed the facilities in the relevant Departments, Laboratories, English Teaching Unit, Computer Labs, Hostels, Canteens, Career Guidance Unit, Staff Development Centre, and Student Counselling Centre as well. As regards the Departments and Laboratories, they were not organized well: some staff members were not available (may be on study leave / sabbatical leave), but their rooms were reserved for them whereas some members had to share one room. The anthropology lab was not clearly organised, the tools and equipment were everywhere, and it looked like storage, not like a lab at all. There were two staff rooms belonging to two members of the staff of the Department of Anthropology, but they were closed when the review team observed the facility. The Computer lab was barred for students. The girls' hostels are not well facilitated; a small room accommodates 18 students. Rooms have temporary partitions; 32 students are living in the Ground floor and use externally fixed showers and bathrooms. The entire hostel with four stories accommodates about 300 students.

In addition to the scheduled site visit, the Review Team spent several hours, after hours, to discuss and come to conclusions on offering marks for the Degree Programmes evaluated. As the team was aware that the Site Visit would be the only opportunity to have a 'face-to-face' meeting, the team had its greatest concerns about agreements on certain matters. It has to be mentioned here that, there was no big difference between the scoring at the desk review and the site visit, and there were no disagreements among the team members about the scoring and the modalities to be adopted for checking of documentation or the assessment of where the 4 programmes were in terms of achieving the standards specified

As regards meetings, in brief, it has to be mentioned that the Coordinator was able to ensure meetings with the following personnel: Director/IQAC, available academic staff, including cluster writers of the SERs, of the Faculty, and some other responsible persons. However the

students were barred by some members of the staff, as they had set some compulsory lectures for students during the time pre-arranged in the site visit schedule. However, the students managed to come despite the difficult situation (whether they would be given lower grades) they would face in the future. But the team assured the students that they would be in a safe situation, and that their achievements would not be affected.

## **Section 4: Overview of the Faculty's Approach to Quality and Standards**

### **4.1 Overall Approach of the Faculty to Quality Assurance and Management**

It was noted that implementation of the IQAU in the University on a major scale and the FQAC at the faculty level has not been properly done, though the review team was informed that the cell is operated under the main IQAU, and meetings are held every month. The review team noted that both the IQAU and the FQAC have recently been established, and that the FQAC has had only one meeting so far. However, the good practice is that the IQAU is now operating in a separate room, and a secretary has been appointed to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the IQAU. Therefore, the internalization of best practices and the level of achievement of the required standards were distinctive at different levels, and will improve in the future once QA will be in line with QAAC guidelines. However, as it appears, the University was not aware of the Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions (2015) and the IQA circular of 2015 as evident from the responses of those at the senior management level, according to whom the university is still developing systems across academic and administrative structures that would reflect these standards. The review team also noted that the Internal Quality Assurance and the implementation of best practices were not done in proper manner in the Faculty due to the internal/ external politics and personal attitudes towards the enhancement of the quality of the Degree Programmes. This may be due to unawareness of the Internal Quality, in terms of facilitating and implanting the best practices to the existing system in the Faculty.

### **4.2 The Review Team's Impression of the Faculty Commitment towards Quality Enhancement and Excellence**

The review team was of the understanding that the University, on a major scale, and the Faculty must pay more attention to the assurance of quality of the degree programmes of the FHSS. The following are the concerns of the review team with regard to the enhancement of Quality and the standards of the degree programmes reviewed;

1. The Faculty must have clear guidelines in the student handbook and such guidelines must be followed by every means.
2. The Faculty must enhance the infrastructure facilities to create a friendly and pleasing learning environment for the students.
3. The Faculty must treat all the members of the academic staff equally, and establish a convenient teaching and learning environment.
4. The Faculty should establish a student data base.
5. The Faculty should conduct peer reviews and obtain student feedback, and implement such suggestions for the wellbeing of the degree programmes.

The Team, in the overall observations, noted that the implementation of QA should be reflected from the University level to the Department Level, in that the implementing, regularizing, establishing, and operating should be undertaken through proper channels. And such practices must be in effect through regular statutory meetings, keeping records, and communicating with relevant members of the body. This must also be monitored and evaluated as a regular QA practice via a proper system of scrutinizing and monitoring to ensure that the quality and standards of the programmes of study are well maintained.

## **Section 5: Judgment on the Eight Criteria of Programme Review**

### **5.1 Criteria 1: Programme Management (55/81)**

The Faculty / Institutional structure is adequate for effective management its functions. But there is no evidence of ToRs of standing and *ad hoc* committees and the minutes of such committees. The Faculty Action Plan is aligned with University Strategic plan, but there is no evidence of minutes of the action plan implementation and monitoring. The Faculty has faculty boards and management committees, but there are no evidence of stakeholder consultations and follow-up actions. Further it was noticed that some of the minutes are not signed and authorized in an acceptable manner. The faculty has an academic calendar but there is no evidence to show that it enables students to complete the programme and graduate at the stipulated time. The Faculty provides a Handbook for incoming students with necessary information, and student disciplinary laws. The Faculty provides the study programme prospectus with information about courses, both compulsory and optional, and all the other relevant information. But there is no evidence of students having the opportunity to select the optional course they want. The Faculty has an updated website with handbook, prospectus, and special notices. The Faculty provides an induction programme for all new students and parents. Space is the major problem in most of the lecture and staff rooms. The Faculty uses an ICT platform and applications for all its key functions, linked to the university management system. There is no evidence of a reward scheme for high performers among the staff. The Faculty has established an IQAC, but there is no evidence provided to show that there is regular monitoring. Further there is no evidence for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the recommendations of the IQAC. The Faculty has established the Faculty Curriculum Committee. But there is no evidence of feedback received from stakeholders on curriculum development and the remedial measures taken. Regarding the consideration of SLQF and SBS as reference points, there is no proper evidence to support the Cluster 2 programme. The Faculty makes use of academic mentoring, student counselling, and welfare, but there is no evidence to show that there is adequate staff training. There is adequate evidence of students having access to leisure, sports, and cultural activities. The Faculty practices the policy of zero tolerance to ragging, but there is no evidence provided to show any past activities geared to prevent ragging and the punishments meted out.

### **5.2 Criteria 2- Human and Physical Resources (22/36)**

Except for Mass Communication, all the other fields of Cluster 2 have adequate qualified academic staff for design, development, and delivery of the academic programmes and outreach. The Faculty needs to adopt and practise a policy to ensure that its human resource profile is comparable with national and international norms. The Faculty offers induction programmes for new staff. There is a severe shortage of well-maintained infrastructure facilities for administration, teaching, and learning. Even though there is an industrial training

component, which is commendable, there is no proper mechanism for arranging industry training for students. It is a compulsory component in SLQF standards and therefore the Faculty has to arrange industry training for all the students in the special programme in a more organized and transparent manner. There is no substantial evidence to show that the staff is provided with an outcome based education (OBE) and Student Centred Learning (SCL) approach. The Faculty provides ICT facilities for students but there is no evidence for stakeholder feedback. Faculty has an ELTU for English language teaching, but there is severe space shortage and a very poor learning environment. All the staff and lecture rooms are harbouring junk and providing a very unpleasant environment. The Faculty has to take measures to discard junk such as old/broken items. The Faculty provides training on soft skills. But the project reports do not reflect the actual soft skills development.

### **5.3 Criteria 3: Programme Design and Development (36/72)**

Programmes in this cluster are weak in this area. There was no proper faculty plan / policy on curriculum development and there were no documents on curriculum planning. There is a curriculum planning committee but its role was not clearly highlighted. In most of the meetings of the curriculum development committee, emphasis was given in preparing feedback forms. The programme design process has not incorporated feedback from employers and professionals. It is not clear whether these programmes conform to the mission, goals and objectives of the institution, or national needs, or reflect global trends, because necessary documents such as a Corporate or Strategic Plan and programme specifications were not given to the panel. There is no senate approved curriculum design policy, faculty policy documents on the programme development process, or a course / programme specification template. A graduate profile was not given. There were no details on the graduation rates, employment rates, or data on graduates getting admitted to advance degree programmes or other special programmes. There is an industrial training component in the curriculum, which is a very positive aspect. While appreciating it, we noticed that its implementation is not clear and not transparent. Some students were offered this component whereas some were not given the opportunity. Even though the prospectus says that the Departments will arrange it through MOUs, this has not happened. Even though the students' feedback was taken in some instances, the data were not analysed and the results were not used to change, improve, or develop the curriculum or programme. IQAC activities within the faculty were minimal. We did not see the formal appointments to the IQAC. No meeting of the IQAC has taken place.

### **5.4 Criteria 4: Course/Module Design and Development (30/57)**

It was observed that there is no common design of course modules developed in these four HDPs. Course design and development is not done by a course development team with the involvement of internal and external subject experts. The course outline has gone to the senate and approved on 26 June 2014, under Annex II. The detailed course outlines are developed for many course units, but there are gaps, mainly in the sociology degree programme. Detailed course outlines in the anthropology and criminology degree programmes are at a satisfactory level. However, it needs consistency. The curriculum of mass communication is not in order, and not of a good standard. It is not aligned with the common format. The detailed course outlines are not prepared for all years.

ILOs formulated in the available detailed course outlines are at a satisfactory level in all degree programmes. But they can be further defined, matching and addressing modern educational/pedagogical needs. The entire curriculum is not given or circulated to the students at the time of admitting them to the special degree program or even later. It was revealed that

some lecturers are doing only the course units that they are teaching. Students are unaware of ILOs and the overall outline of the curriculum. This matter is common to each department. Thus, it is recommended to give a printed curriculum to each and every student.

The detailed course outlines developed contain credits values and other necessary information. All degree programmes have identified industrial training / internship as an important element, but there is no evidence of assessing it. No guidelines have been developed for the institution as well as for the student. As highlighted in programme designing and development (criterion 3), the manifestation of internship in the department of sociology is unsatisfactory. Each and every student is emphasizing that he/she is not given an opportunity to attend the internship programme. While other degree programmes are implementing the internship programme, the Sociology degree programme neglecting it. This is a violation of students' rights. It seems that the Head of the Department of Sociology has a prime responsibility to arrange it for them without any discrimination. It is a part of the degree programme, and there should be freedom for the students to select optional course units. It is evident that the Mass Communication students too face a similar problem of getting optional course units. The review panel could not find any reasonable cause for this issue. Thus, the university authority should pay special attention to this matter.

There is no conducive physical environment for differently able students in these departments. However, there is no such number yet, but those facilities should be improved for them.

The staff has undergone training on curriculum development under an extra supportive programme. The Faculty IQAC has been established and functions only after the UGC subject review process. There is no documentary evidence on IQAC activities. But quality assurance is taken as an agenda item in the faculty and senate. It reveals that the quality assurance bodies are not serious about their role. The IQAU story is similar to the IQAC of the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

As highlighted above, student feedback is taken on some course units, but there is no evidence of analysis and using it for further development of course module designing, teaching, and learning.

The curricula of all degree programmes was upgraded in 2014, and it is time for the next round of upgrading. It has already being incorporated into the Strategic Plan of the University. It reveals the commitment of the university. However, it should be implemented at the department level too.

## **5.5 Criteria 5: Teaching and Learning (30/57)**

The teaching and learning objectives of most course units are matching with the university vision and mission. As highlighted in the previous section, it can be further developed in the forthcoming curriculum development process. Also, it should be aligned with the FHSS vision and mission.

The master timetable is developed by the departments and well documented. However, as highlighted above, most lectures are not commencing on time. It is revealed that the time table is changing frequently and students are informed at short notice to attend newly arranged lectures. This is mostly happening in the Department of Sociology. It is a bad practice, and the students face many difficulties in such cases. There are similar incidents in the Mass Communication Department, and the students suffer a great deal with the smaller academic

staff. The other two departments are managing their lectures at a satisfactory level even with the shortage of physical resources.

There is evidence of using the Learning Management System (LMS) in some programmes and it is a positive trend that needs to be inculcated in other programmes in all departments. Conducting research, providing opportunities for students to learn, and blending theory and practice are happening up to a satisfactory level in many degree programmes. But focus is needed on the Mass Communication degree programme, whose students need to be given such opportunities. The lack of a sufficient number academic staff is a bottleneck for them to achieve this goal.

Creating a platform to present students' research findings is an innovative step that can be identified. Some students are enhancing their calibre by presenting their research findings in international conferences. Such students should be motivated by providing them with a suitable appreciation scheme. However, it seems that there is no such mechanism in the FHSS.

The university and the faculties do not have a specific gender policy in place. It can be developed using the UGC guideline already published. However, the review team has not identified any gender based violence or discrimination.

Lecture halls need to be furnished well with all technological and sound equipment. In addition, all these halls should be cleaned properly, removing all junk items. Thus, the university and the FHSS must have a clear policy and practice on removing damaged furniture and other items.

The review panel observed that there are some attempts to get student feedback. However, the student feedback system should be reformulated by introducing a common format. The faculty does not adopt a peer review process. The academic staff members are not in favour of it due to many reasons. However, the Faculty agrees that peer review should be adopted.

It is noticed that there are very committed teachers using some innovative techniques in their teaching. They deliver the subject matter well. However, the university and the FHSS do not have a mechanism of teachers' service evaluation. There should be a system for appreciating them.

## **5.6 Criteria 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression (45/72)**

The degree programmes that were evaluated to identify the best practices included in this Criterion had a poor performance level. No Degree programme had obtained student feedback forms, neither had they obtained the peer reviews to upgrade the quality of teaching and learning in the Faculty. The team observed that some of the documents were irrelevant to prove the degree of internalization of such practices, whereas some were very recent and made up documents. Especially with regard to a supportive learning environment, the SER and the physical environment was unable to prove it. The classrooms were not cleaned, properly ventilated or organized. There were no facilities available for differently abled students except the recently allocated elevator. There is no encouragement for student activities, neither do they have Student Subject Societies, though they had established such entities in the Faculty. It must be noted that the laboratory facilities for students were at a minimal level, and some of those were not in operation. Although the degree programmes offered are embedded with a component of industry training, this facility has not been functioned properly. Even the students were of the opinion that they were not encouraged or not provided with

guidelines and avenues to have such training, when and where necessary. Though some MOUs have been signed with the National Apprentice and Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) and other organizations, these operate poorly (the NAITA MOU was a recent document).

### **5.7 Criteria 7: Assessments and Awards (20/51)**

The scheme of assessment of the particular degree programmes showed very poor performance. It did not show any recognized policy on evaluating the examinations (no examination policy document) though it is mentioned in the Faculty Handbook. There was no indication of obtaining feedback or comments from the external / second examiners in order to reward the students. It was also evident that there was no proper operation of a curriculum evaluation committee. There is no policy or criteria to give the students awards for their achievement. There was some evidence to support that the Faculty has a system of continuous assessments as a tool, but the evidence provided gave the impression that they were very recent and prepared particularly for the purpose of SER. This was proved by the comments given by the clerical and academic support staff:

- Assessments are not given to the students on time
- Marks and comments / feedback are not given to the students on time.
- Marks are entered by the clerical staff (they are not confidential).
- No double checking of the marks.

This indicated that the faculty is not aware of a proper and uniform scheme of assessment, given that they conduct examinations at the end of the semester.

### **5.8 Criteria 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices (18/42)**

Programmes in this cluster are very weak in this area. The LMS was used only in Anthropology and by a few staff members. There is no faculty policy on the use of OER and R & D, and also there is no strategic / action plan on R & D. Evidence provided on academic staff receiving institutional / national recognition was very minimal, which is badly affecting the status of the staff and the faculty. It is not clear whether the Faculty is having a proper reward scheme to encourage academics to achieve excellence in research and outreach activities. Students' research activities were encouraged and chances were given to present or publish their work. We would like to congratulate the Faculty on this aspect. Academic and research collaborations with outside agencies are not adequate. It is encouraging to observe an industrial training component in the programmes, but it needs further improvement in policy and logistics. Links with the other government and non-government organizations or agencies were not present. Co-curricular activities among staff and students were very much promoted, but faculty encouragement for students to participate in other activities like sports is minimal. Examination by-laws and a policy / mechanism on appointing external examiners were not provided. There are no fall back options.

## Section 6: Grading and Overall Performance of the Programme

All HDPs subjected to PR under Cluster 2 in the FHSS, USJP, revealed that the Faculty has maintained just above 60% in standards on Criterion 1 (Programme Management), Criterion 2 (Human and Physical Resources), and Criterion 6 (Learning environment, Student Support and Progression). All the others – Criterion 3 (Programme Design and Development), Criterion 4 (Course/Module Design and Development, Criterion 5 (Teaching and Learning), Criterion 7 (Student Assessment and Awards), and Criterion 8 (Innovative and Healthy Practices) – scored less than 60%. Therefore, the Cluster 2 programmes of the faculty are unsatisfactory due to inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study. Therefore, improvement is needed in all aspects (Table 6.1 and Annexure 2).

**Table 6.1 Grading of Overall Performance of a Study Programme**

Institution	Actual aspect - wise	Grade	Performance	Interpretation of Descriptor
≥ 80	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for each of all eight criteria	A	Very Good	High level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study should move towards excellence
≥70	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for seven of the eight criteria	B	Good	Satisfactory level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in a few aspects
≥60	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for six of the eight criteria	C	Satisfactory	Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects
<60	Irrespective of minimum weighted criterion scores	D	Unsatisfactory	Inadequate level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in all aspects

## Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations

The review team observed the following strong points of the faculty:

- The Faculty structure is adequate for effective management of its functions except in one department.
- The Faculty Action Plan is aligned with University Strategic plan.
- The Faculty adopts management procedures that are in compliance with national and institutional Standard Operational Procedures.
- The Faculty has faculty boards and management committees.
- The Faculty has an academic calendar.
- The Faculty provides a Handbook with necessary information and student disciplinary laws for incoming students.
- The Faculty provides the study programme prospectus, with information about courses both compulsory and optional, and all the other relevant information.
- The Faculty has an updated website with handbooks, prospectus, and special notices.
- The Faculty provides an induction programme for all new students.
- The Faculty uses an ICT platform and applications for all its key functions, linked to university management system.
- Students' research activities were encouraged and chances were given to present or publish their work. We would like to congratulate the faculty on this aspect.
- Co-curricular activities among staff and students were very much promoted.
- There is an industrial training component in the curriculum, which is a very positive aspect.
- The detailed course outlines of the Anthropology and Criminology degree programmes are at a satisfactory level.

The review team observed the following weak points of the faculty:

- Document keeping was very poor. Most of the documents provided were incomplete, inaccurate, and irrelevant to the area. There was no proper authorization in most of the documents. Many draft documents with handwritten changes were included. Some documents were very recent.
- There is no monitoring of action plan implementation.
- There is no documentary evidence to show the annual internal and external audits.
- Faculty Board and Committee meetings do not have stakeholder consultations and follow-up actions.
- There is no evidence of students having the opportunity of selecting the optional courses they want from the list of courses in the Student Prospectus.
- There is no evidence of adoption of ICT tools for teaching and learning.
- There is no evidence of a reward scheme for high performers among the staff.
- The Faculty has established an Internal Quality Assurance Cell, but there was no evidence provided to show its regular activities, including monitoring the programmes. Further, there is no evidence for monitoring and reviewing of implementation of the recommendations of the IQAC.
- Even though the Faculty has established a Faculty Curriculum Committee, there is no evidence of feedback received from stakeholders on curriculum development and the remedial measures taken by the committee.
- Regarding the SLQF and SBS as reference points, and outcome based education and student centered learning, there is no evidence provided to show even the consideration of these in the Cluster 2 programmes.

- There is a severe shortage of well-maintained infrastructure facilities for administration, teaching and learning.
- There is no proper mechanism for arranging industry training for students. It is a compulsory component and therefore the Faculty has to arrange industry training for all the students in the special programme.
- The Faculty needs to adopt, and practise policies to ensure, that its human resource profile is comparable with national and international norms.
- There is no substantial evidence to show that the staff is making use of outcome based education (OBE) and student centred learning (SCL) approaches.
- The Faculty provides training on soft skills. But the project reports do not reflect the actual soft skills development.
- The Faculty has no evidence to show that the students are aware of ILOs and the overall outline of the curriculum.
- There is no evidence of analysis of student feedback, or of using it for further development of course module designing, teaching, and learning.
- There is no record of students' employment opportunities and students' destination after graduation.
- There was no faculty / university approved policy documents in relation to the academic or R & D activities.
- There is no proper, duly approved curriculum document. Students were not provided with the curriculum and their awareness about the curriculum was very minimal. Information was provided only by a few staff members during lectures.
- Academic and research collaborations with outside agencies are not adequate.
- There is no approved policy and procedure on credit transfer.
- There is no approved policy / mechanism for appointing external examiners
- Students were not provided with any fall back options.

Considering the weak points observed by the team, we would like to recommend the following in order to develop the faculty to an acceptable standard.

- A proper curriculum / programme design policy documents and templates should be developed.
- A graduate profile should be prepared.
- It is necessary to maintain records and keep track of graduates regarding their graduation rates, employment rates, or rates of admission to advanced degree programmes or other special programmes.
- The industrial training component in the curriculum must be compulsory for each and every student. It is necessary to regularize the training and arrange MOUs to reduce the burden on students.
- The feedback form has to be improved, the data has to be analyzed, and they must be used to change / improve / develop the curriculum / programme.
- Activities of the IQAC should be regularized, and it must take an active and leading role in maintaining / improving the quality of the programmes.
- Improvements are needed in the use of the LMS. It is necessary to encourage staff and students use it.
- A mechanism / reward scheme should be initiated to encourage academics to achieve excellence in research and outreach activities.
- Faculty must encourage students to participate in other extracurricular activities like sports. It is necessary to prepare a policy or guidelines on this aspect and to initiate a reward system for them.

- The programme to get better employability for graduates should be improved, and one option could be to offer the programme in the English medium so that the students could compete with other university graduates who followed the programme in English medium.
- All the assignments and semester exam marks must be released on time and the specialization selection made transparent.
- Award schemes for staff on research and teaching should be introduced.
- The work done by staff should be appreciated, and lead to promotion.
- Senior Academics should take the lead role in curriculum revision and course development.
- The Academic Calendar and time schedule for lectures, introduced in the beginning of the academic year, should be strictly followed, and changes which may affect the 80% attendance of the students minimised.

## **Section 8: Summary**

The review of the four HDPs (Sociology, Anthropology, Mass Communication, and Criminology and Criminal Justice) in Cluster 02 of the Social Sciences of the USJP which includes 03 academic Departments, namely, Sociology and Anthropology, Sinhala and Mass Communication, and Criminology and Criminal Justice, was completed by the team.

The review panel appreciates the University for providing all the necessary requirements for it to conduct the review process smoothly, except for a few lapses. The review panel also congratulates the faculty for offering several programmes, including the new areas such as Criminology and Criminal Justice, from Social Sciences point of view, which is a challenging effort.

The team went through the SER and supporting documents provided by the Faculty in the reviewing process. Further the team observed the real situation in physical resources and had meetings with all academic staff, academic support staff, technical and clerical staff, and students following the above-mentioned programmes, and collected all the necessary information. Even though there were four degree programmes in this cluster, the documents provided were common, except in a few instances; therefore, the team is not in a position to provide separate comments for different programmes.

Overall the panel noticed that documentary evidence was not provided in the proper manner for the review panel to make a better judgement. Most of the documents were missing, documents provided were incomplete (draft copies at times), and some files contained documents irrelevant to the respective criteria of the UGC standards. It was revealed during the process of meeting with different staff of the Faculty that the documents were arranged by temporary and very junior staff who do not have a proper idea of the review process. It was very clear that the involvement of the senior academic staff in the process was very poor. As the review panel heavily depends on documentary evidence for rating the UGC approved guidelines for each criterion, not providing adequate relevant documentary evidence to the review panel would have been a disadvantage to the Faculty. Accordingly Criteria 1, 2 and 6 scored above 60% but all the other criteria (3, 4, 5, 7, and 8) scored less than 60%. As a result, the Cluster 2 programme of the FHSS of the USJP did not achieve the satisfactory

level, due to inadequate accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study. Therefore, it needs improvement in all aspects. The team sincerely hopes that the Faculty will take this review process and the judgement as a positive move to improve their programmes. There are many deficient areas within the FHSS and it is very necessary to improve these areas. Short, medium and long term plans are necessary to improve the quality of the Honours Degree Programmes in this cluster to the standard level.

Finally, the team would like to appreciate the support given by the UGC, QAAC, USJP and especially the FHSS in this important process of programme evaluation. We sincerely hope that our comments will help to improve the quality of the Honours Degree Programmes in this cluster of the FHSS, USJP.

Programme Review Team Members

Prof. C.S De Silva (Chair person)



Prof. K. Karunathilake



Prof. Ruwan Jayasinghe



Dr. Prashanthi Narangoda



## **Annexure 1:**

Schedule of the Visit - Visit by the Panel of Reviewers -  
QAAC Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University  
of Sri Jayewardenepura Cluster 02, 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017

### **AGENDA**

#### **Day 01- 24<sup>th</sup> October**

- 8.00 am Welcome at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences -Meeting with the Dean of the Faculty – Prof. D. P.S. Chandrakumara (Dean’s Office)
- 8.15 am Meeting with IQAC Director
- 8.30 am Presentation by the Heads of the Departments represented in cluster 02. (Attended by, Prof. D.P.S. Chandrakumara, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) – Faculty Board Room
- 9.15 am Working Tea - Q & A session
- 9. 30am Meeting with the academic staff – Auditorium – Department of Economics
- 10.00 am Meeting with the administrative staff of the faculty of the relevant programmes – Faculty Board Room
- 11.00 am Meeting with the Vice Chancellor – Vice Chancellor’s Office (Attended by the Director IQAU, IQAC Coordinator/ Deputy Coordinator, Cluster Leader 02)
- 12 noon Lunch – Board Room – Department of Sociology
- 1.00 pm Observing documents of evidence – Faculty Board Room
- 3.00 pm Tea – Faculty Board Room
- 3.15 pm Observing documents of evidence – Faculty Board Room
- 4.00 pm End of day one

#### **Day 02 – 25<sup>th</sup> October**

- 8.00 am Observing teaching and learning sessions relevant to the programmes
- 9.30 am Tea – Faculty Board Room
- 9.45 am Meeting with the students – Reading Hall- Sumangala Building
- 10.45 am Meeting with technical officers and support staff – Faculty Board Room
- 12 noon Lunch – Board Room – Department of Sociology
- 1.00 pm Observing documents of evidence – Faculty Board Room
- 3.00 pm Tea – Faculty Board Room
- 3.15 pm Observing documents of evidence – Faculty Board Room

#### **Day 03 – 26<sup>th</sup> October**

- 8.00 am Observing relevant Departments, Laboratories, English Teaching Units, Computer labs, Hostels, Career Guidance, Staff development (Venues to be decided by the reviewers) Observing documents of evidence – Faculty Board Room
- 10.00 am Tea – Faculty Board Room
- 12 noon Lunch – Board Room- Department of Sociology
- 1.00 pm Finalizing the reviewers’ report – Faculty Board Room
- 2.45 pm Tea – Faculty Board Room
- 3.00 pm Wrap up session – Faculty Board Room (To be attended by the Heads and academic staff of the Departments represented in cluster 02)
- 4.00pm End of Site Visit

**Annexure 2: Criteria, Standards, Score Guide and Justification –Attached separately**

**Annexure 3: Programme Evaluation questionnaire of Students (Will be attached to the Final Report)**

**Annexure 4: Attendance of the Meetings (Will be attached to the Final report)**