SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES
RAJARATA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

29th June to 1st July 2009

Review Team :

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Subject review process evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline. It is focused on the student learning experience and on student achievement. It is designed to evaluate the quality of both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. However, the responsibility for quality and standards lies within the institution itself, since it alone has the power to control and to change existing practices.

Review process was conducted according to the guidelines given in the quality assurance handbook for Sri Lankan universities, published by the CVCD and University Grants Commission in July 2002. The Department of Business Management submitted a self evaluation report consisting of aims, learning outcomes and programme details; staff, students, and facilities; curriculum design, content and review; teaching, learning and assessment methods; student admission, progress and achievements; the extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative; postgraduate studies; skills development; and academic guidance and counseling. The quality of education was reviewed according to the aims and learning outcomes given in the self evaluation report.

The following eight aspects of education were reviewed at the subject level:

1. Curriculum design, content and review.
2. Teaching learning and assessment methods.
3. Quality of students including student progress and achievements.
4. Extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative.
5. Postgraduate studies.
6. Peer observations.
7. Skills development.
8. Academic guidance and counseling.

The review team visited the Department from 29th June to 1st July, 2009.

The evaluation of eight aspects was based on:

▪ Meetings held with the Vice Chancellor, Dean, Head of Department, academic staff, Assistant librarian of the main library, two student counselors of the Department, Head of English Teaching & Language Unit (ELTU), Head of Physical Education, instructors of the computer units of the university and the Faculty, undergraduates representing all the four years, coordinators of postgraduate education, coordinator of the career guidance unit, sub warden, few postgraduate students and supportive staff in the Department.

▪ Observation of physical facilities of the Department, computer center of the Faculty, computer center of the University, class rooms, office and office rooms of academics, main library, facilities available at the Physical Health Education unit, and hostels

▪ Observation of teaching classes of undergraduates and studentsø presentations.

▪ Reviewing available documents at the Department.

ged as good / satisfactory / unsatisfactory, based one
nesses in each. Considering the judgment of the eight
en as confidence / limited confidence / no confidence.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE DEPARTMENT

Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, located in the historic city of Mihintale, 14 kilo meters away from the east of Anuradhapura, was established on 07th November 1995 under section 21 of the University Act No.16 of 1978 amalgamating Affiliated University Colleges in the Central, North-Western and North Central Provinces.

Mihintale, the city where the University is located, marks the inception of Sri Lankan social development as the most prominent centre of the present academic arena in the Sri Lankan history. Even today, the University can extend its services over a vast geographical area since it is established more than 100km away from other Universities in Sri Lanka.

The University consists of five Faculties; Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, and the Faculty of Management Studies, Faculty of Applied Science, Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Medicine. The total number of students studying in these five faculties is approximately 3500.

Vision of the University
õTo be a centre of excellence in higher education, research and dissemination of knowledgeö

Mission of the University
õTo produce high quality, innovative intellectuals with creativity and discipline, develop competencies and dedication of staff, create a conductive environment for teaching, learning, research and dissemination of knowledge and to promote co-existence with mutual respect and ethical behaviourö

Faculty of Management Studies (FMS)
The Faculty was established in 1996 with three departments namely; Accountancy & Finance, Business Management and Hospitality Management and each department was to offer particular degree programme respective with its title. =B.Sc. (Accountancy & Finance), B.Sc. ((Business Management), and B.Sc. (Hospitality Management). Later in 2003, FMS introduced its fourth special degree programme:: B.Sc. (Information Technology) .After revision of curricular at two instances now the faculty is offering four special degree programmes (04 years) from their departments. The department of Information Technology is to be established shortly and currently it functions as a unit under the department of Business Management.

Department of Business Management (DBM)
The Department was established at the inception of the FMS, with 04 academic staff members and 64 students. Initially the Department offered only the special degree of Business Management. In 2003, the newly designed special degree in Information Technology was started through a separate unit connected to the department.

At present the department consists of 14 academic staff members and 309 undergraduate students follow the degree programmes conducted by the department.

OMES

To educate and train potential managers for the management field in order to provide students with an educational under pinning for a range of experience in industries. We will continue to be committed to providing a quality undergraduate education that incorporates theory and practices in the management. The main aim of the program is to create students with the knowledge, skills, values, and strategic perspective essential to obtain leadership roles in the management field.

In addition the department aims to provide**;**
- Degree programs in Business Management and Business Information Technology that offer a high quality learning environment of management education.
- A range of learning opportunities within the structure of university by using continuous assessment on various ways (tutorials, field assignments, critical knowledge evaluation, practical work test etc.).
- Opportunities for students to make foundation and develop the skills and enthusiasm require for life long learning.
- Allow students to collaborative work with students in other departments of the faculty so as to gain the overall knowledge and understanding of other related disciplines. .
- Support for our teaching staff in their career development, including the provision of feed back and peer advice.
- A friendly responsiveness and supportive departmental environment that is conducive   to enthusiastic learning.

The Information Technology Unit has the following aims and objectives.

- To provide students with the modern Information and communication technology education to manage and maintain business successfully.
- To encourage students to achieve their full potential by problem solving, team work, communication and research skills, relevant to their specific area of study
- To provide greater support to disseminate Information and communication technology education for the community in the North Central Province.
- To make available opportunities for the Intuitions in the area to get the acquainted with Information and communication technology Knowledge, especially to the North Central Province.
- To make available skilled ICT professionals to ICT market locally and abroad (Expand the ICT market).
- To provide the students with business and management education to assist and develop the business enterprises.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review

The duration of the Business Management degree programme is four years of which the first year consists of common programme offered by the Faculty of Management Studies (FMS) to all the students. The common programme offers 15 courses with the intention of giving a basic knowledge on the areas of   management, economics, accountancy, organizational

techniques, Sinhala and Tamil languages for all the entire common programme, i.e. first year, is taught by of Business Management.

The undergraduates who successfully complete the common programme during the first two semesters are offered 04 specialization areas by three departments in the FMS. Students are selected to specialization areas based on their preference and the marks obtained in the common programme. The Department of Business Management offers two degree programmes i.e. B.Sc. Special Degree in Business Management and B.Sc. Special Degree in Business Information Technology. *Of these two programmes the review is focused only on the special degree in Business Management.* The available data revealed that those students who obtained the highest GPAs have admitted to the Department of Business Management during the last three academic years.

The programme is conducted both in Sinhala and English media. The Department has designed the curricula in Business Management specialization steam by including essential and important courses. The theoretical and practical aspects are covered in the programme. Curricula are designed in a way to encourage learning in real world situations. These include well designed practical training, field visits, workshops, and guest lectures. A high weight (about 15%) is given for IT related courses and English is taught in seven semesters. These seem reasonably adequate in a degree programme of this nature. The team is particularly happy with the inclusion of subjects like indigenous management, social harmony, Sinhala for Tamil students and Tamil for Sinhala students. The preference given for students to select their own medium of instruction is also commendable.

We noticed few limitations also in the design of curricula. They are:
- Overall learning outcome of the degree programme are not clearly identified and informed to students
- Subjects and their learning outcomes have not identified in relation to the overall learning outcomes.
- Number of credits (109) does not match with the number of hours taught.
- Some course outlines are poorly designed.

In relation to the curriculum design, content and review, the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods.

There are 14 academic members in the department including 4 senior lecturers. Few visiting academics also teach in the programme. Both academic and non-academic staff displayed a high level of commitment. Some of the specialisation courses are delivered by junior staff and students have lost the confidence in higher learning. However, the commitment of junior staff for taking challenges despite their poor training in the delivery of specialised courses is notable. The staff involvement in teaching in all the five days is highly commendable.

Handouts are prepared and distributed among the students by the lecturers. Language lab in the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU), rapport between the ELTU and the staff of the Department, library, and hostel (more than 90% of students is given hostel) facilities are satisfactory. However, teaching taking place at both common and specialization levels is rather teacher-centred with little or no interaction with students. Presentations, case studies,

...ven at small class room sessions. In certain sessions, ...ne, more students are participating and for such sessions ...han lecturing is impossible. This situation proves that all most all students take part in the lectures if the lecture is attractive and interesting. The team also noted that the students were repeatedly disturbed by power failures, poor seating arrangements, and poor ventilation.

The lecturers look conversant in English language in transferring knowledge. However, students in Sihala medium are not convenient in English language. Moreover, English is not taught according to studentsø level of understanding. Poor and inadequate access to internet and IT facilities, low usage rate of the library (1500 lending per month by 800 students), lack of physical facilities such as class rooms for students, office space for staff, lack of experienced staff preferably with PhD qualifications disturb effective teaching and learning environment.

There are hardly any manuals or monographs or other form of teaching materials other than handouts prepared by the lecturers in the department or by any body else to make teaching learning process easy for the lecturers as well as for the undergraduates were evident.

The progress of students is evaluated through Continuous Assessment (CA) and Final Examination (FE). These two assessment methods are assigned 20% and 80% marks respectively. However, breakdown of CA is not given in the course outlines and the CA marks are not communicated to students before the semester end examination. Examination papers are set by the academic staff individually and are scrutinized. Answer scripts are doubled marked. Industry training is evaluated by a panel of lectures based on predetermined criteria. Studentsø research is evaluated through written work and viva examination.

In relation to the teaching, learning and assessment methods the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

Students are admitted to the FMS by the UGC. The range of "Z Score" of the undergraduates coming to the FMS is in between 1.0 ó 1.8. Thus, the quality of the undergraduates seems well above the average. Once students are enrolled in the Faculty, they are provided with a handbook containing all the necessary information about the faculty, departments, library and other facilities. Orientation programme is arranged by the faculty for the new comers. Students are admitted to specialization areas based on their performance in the first year and preference. Those students who obtain the highest GPA are admitted to the department to read for Business Management programme and their progress is monitored by tutorials, mid semester examinations, open book assessment, term papers, presentations, special assignments and end semester examinations in each year. Industrial training and project works are monitored and assessed by a panel of supervisor.

and graduate output

intake	Students Graduated	class	2nd class upper division	2nd class lower division	General	Drop outs	Total
1996/97	92%	-	02	10	47	05	64
1996/97	96%	-	04	05	46	02	57
1996/97	78%	-	01	02	08	03	14
1997/98	88%	-	01	10	19	04	34
1998/99	84%	01	03	06	12	04	26
1999/2000 2000/2001	78%	-	06	12	46	18	82
2001/2002	94%	01	02	04	26	02	35
2002/2003	88%	01	01	09	53	10	74
Total	**-**	**03**	**20**	**58**	**257**	**48**	**386**

The department is keeping in student's progress and achievements towards the main learning objectives of the degree program. As stated by students, most of the lecturers are available for consultation at any time during the week days. It was also revealed that some of the graduates of the department have found better jobs immediately after the graduation and most of the graduates are able to secure an employment within a year after graduation. Some of them have already joined the department as permanent lecturers.

In relation to the quality of students, student progress and achievements the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.4. Extent and use of Student Feedback

The staff members in the department pointed out that student feedback helped in numerous ways to develop the programme over the last five years, and therefore it adopts various forms and strategies to get the students feedback.

The departments uses a structured questionnaire as a formal method to obtain feedback from students at the end of each semester on nature of the subject delivery, clarity, use of high technology teaching equipments (power points, OHP etc), and different methods of teaching. The head of the department discusses feedback information with relevant lecturers formally. The team noted that there exists a cordial relationship between academics and students.

The lecturers are very enthusiastic to collect quantitative feedback too from students of their teaching performance. This seems to have helped the lecturers in the department to improve their teaching process.

In relation to the extent and use of student feedback the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.5. Postgraduate Studies

The Department of Business Management does not have a post graduate diploma or a degree program. The Postgraduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) leading to an MBA was introduced by the Faculty in 2000. Those who successfully complete the PGDM with a GPA of 3.25 or with an overall average of 65% are allowed to continue the MBA. After

...tion in the second year students will be eligible for the

Some of the staff of the Department are appointed as supervisors and course coordinators of the post graduate programme.. The Head of the Department serves as a member of the Board of Studies and Board of Examination of the postgraduate programmes in the Faculty. However, they do not involve in teaching in postgraduate programmes within and outside the university.

It appears that there is no research culture to create new knowledge within the department due to lack of senior lecturers.

In relation to the postgraduate studies, the judgment of the team is SATISFACTORY.

4.6. Peer Observations

The Department uses a formal method for peer observation. The senior academic staff observes juniors teaching at least once in each semester and teaching of seniors is also evaluated by other senior lecturers in the department using a questionnaire approved by the Faculty Board. At the end of the evaluation, outcomes of the evaluation are discussed with relevant academic members.
Additionally, moderation of question papers and second marking of answer scripts are done continuously as a practice by a senior academic member. Departmental meetings are held to discuss various matters and staff members share their views at these meetings. All the staff members participate in curricular revision and other academic activities.

In relation to the peer observation, the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.7. Skills Development

The department has taken certain initiatives to develop skills such as IT, communication and language, decision making, organizing, analytical, interpersonal, negotiation and learning in real world situations. The ELTU has introduced a diploma course for students free of charge. Additionally, the ELTU has introduced additional classes for weaker students. The Department offers Sinhala course for Tamil students and Tamil course for Sinhala students is also a good practice.

In relation to the skills development, the judgment of the team is GOOD.

4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling

Once the prevailing conditions in the area are taken into account, a well-defined and progressive student counseling appears to be one of the important aspects to maintain social harmony and undergraduate education. The faculty has appointed two academic members as student counselors and they work in collaboration with the senior student counselor in the department.

The counselors have taken several initiatives to eradicate the problem of ragging. The team noted that Tamil, Sinhalese and Muslim students are living and studying peacefully. This is

ng. The students revealed that the existing counseling

Other academic staff members in the department have volunteered at several occasions not only to provide academic guidance and counseling but also to help undergraduatesø personal problems.

In relation to academic guidance and counseling the judgment of the team is GOOD.

Based on the observations made during the study visit by the review team, the eight aspects were judged as follows:

Aspect Reviewed	Judgment Given
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Good
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	Good
Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	Good
Extent and Use of Student Feedback	Good
Postgraduate Studies	Satisfactory
Peer Observation	Good
Skills Development	Good
Academic Guidance and Counseling	Good

5. CONCLUSIONS

The strengths/ good practices and weakness identified by the Review Team in each of the eight aspects of evaluation of this review are as below.

1. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

Strengths/Good Practices
- Input quality of students admitted to the department is reasonably good.
- High scored students are admitted to the department.
- Over the last 8 years the department has maintained 87% pass rate with 3 first classes, 20 second class upper divisions, and 58 second class lower divisions.
- Students are able to secure an employment opportunity within a year after graduation.
- All lecturers are available for consultations at any time during the week days.
- The behavior of the lecturers and the undergraduates are positive.

Weaknesses
- Specially developed indicators are not available to measure the student progress.
- No proper record keeping system is available within the department.
- Most of the students are reluctant to follow the programme in English.

...ack

- Good rapport between students and staff
- Opportunity for students to take part in faculty meetings.
- High commitment of academic staff towards students
- Availability of formal teaching evaluation system.

Weaknesses
- No formal scheme to monitor and evaluate the progress and the quality of teachers.

3. Postgraduate Studies

Strengths/Good Practices
- Involvement of some senior academic members of the Department as dissertation supervisors, course coordinators, member of the Board of Studies and members of the Board of Examination of the postgraduate programme in the Faculty.

Weakness/Improvements
- Non existence of proper logistics and other facilities (a proper resource base including computer and internet facilities) to encourage research among the academic members and undergraduates.
- Lack of research culture within the Department
- Absence of PhD holders in the Department

4. Peer Observations

Strengths/Good Practices
- There is a formal mechanism for peer evaluation of teaching.
- Moderation of question papers and second marking of answer scripts are done by a senior academic member.
- Departmental meetings are held to share the ideas.
- Participation of all the staff members in the Department in all academic activities with great enthusiasm

Weakness/Improvements
- Non existence of rewarding system for best performers
- Non availability of team teaching and co- teaching in the Department
- Inadequate qualified staff to make observation and guide the junior members.

5. Skills Development

Strengths/Good Practices
- Industrial training is compulsory for all the students.
- There are dedicated modules for developing English language for students.
- The Department offers a compulsory 02 credit course units on Tamil Language for Sinhala students and Sinhala Language for Tamil and Muslim students in the first year.

T skills.

...ls in Sinhala medium students

6. Academic Guidance and Counseling

Strengths/Good Practices
- Existence of an organized orientation programmes for new comers on academic guidance and counseling.
- Tamil, Sinhalese and Muslim students are living and studying peacefully.

Weaknesses
- There lack of coordination between the university senior student counselor and the faculty senior student counselor.
- Non availability of a well thought, properly designed academic counseling programme in the department.
- Lack of formal training on student counseling and guidance for counselors.
- Non availability of a separate room for student counseling.
- Non availability of a sound and a common record system in relation to academic guidance and counseling in the department.
- Female student counselors were not appointed by the department.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Review curricula in every three-year cycle to incorporate new disciplines which are high in demand and relevant with the involvement of various stakeholders including people from the relevant industries.

2. Establish a curricula review committee at the faculty representing members from each department to ensure high quality degree programmes being designed and offered continuously.

3. Establish a quality assurance cell at the faculty to ensure high quality of each degree programme being offered by the faculty.

4. Overall Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) of degree programmes must be very clear and should be informed the students. The course outlines should be improved by including a course description, learning outcomes for each course, comprehensive description of evaluation methods, breakdown of the total time among individual topics, reading list under each topic, and relationship of learning outcome of each course with the overall learning out come of the degree programme.

5. Increase the present credit number (109) to 120 to be par with national and international standards.

6. Make dissertation compulsory to all the students to develop critical thinking and ability to work independently.

ning specialized courses.

urse for all the members of the department with a view to learn different teaching methods such as the student-centered learning rather than the present dominantly used teacher-centered method by the majority of lecturers with little or no interaction with students.

9. CA methods need to be further improved by making them precise and should be related to measure the learning outcome of each course.

10. Inform students about the progress of their assignments with useful comments before the examination to encourage their learning continuously.

11. Quickly attain the repair or maintenance activities of continuous disturbances occurring due to power interruptions and failures.

12. Maintain student database to get to know the progress made by students during their course of studies and also their employability after the graduation.

13. Promote subject associations allowing students to involve in more activities such as Journal publication, organizing gust lectures, workshops etc.

14. The Department lacks sufficient number of class rooms for carrying out effective teaching, space for staff office and adequate computers to train students in IT related skills. These physical resources requirements should be looked into.

15. Create research culture within the department by encouraging academics to do research in their specialty areas.

16. Provide training on ‑academic counseling‑ for academic counselors in the department.

17. Provide training on ‑alternative approaches to research methodologies‑

18. Develop strong links between the department academic counselors and senior student counselor of the university an aim of redressing students‑ unrest.

VIEW VISIT

29.06.2009 (Day 1)

8.00 – 8.30	Private meeting of Review Panel with QAA Council Representatives
8.30 – 9.00	Discuss the Agenda for the Visit
9.00 – 9.30	Meeting with the Vice Chancellor/ Chairman, Internal QA Unit/ Dean, Head of the Department/ Head, Faculty QA Cell (working tea)
9.30 – 10.30	Department presentation (Head, Department of Business Management)
10.30 – 11.30	Discussion
11.30 – 12.30	Discussion with the academic staff
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.00	Observing Department Facilities
14.00 – 14.30	Meeting with undergraduate students (4th year)
14.30 – 16.00	Observing other facilities (Library, Computer Center, Resource Center, English Language Teaching Unit, IT Lab)
16.00 – 16.30	Discussion with undergraduate students (1st year)
16.30 – 17.00	Discussion with undergraduate students (2nd year)
17.00 – 17.30	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

30.06.2009 (Day 2)

8.30 – 9.00	Observing teaching (1st year)
9.00 – 9.30	Meeting with the students (3rd year)
9.30 – 10.00	Observing teaching – practical class (2nd year)
10.00 – 10.30	Meeting with student counsellors
10.30 – 11.00	Refreshment
11.00 – 12.00	Observing documents
12.00 – 12.30	Discussion with the non academic staff
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.00	Observing Physical Education facilities
14.00 – 14.30	Observing teaching - Lecture (3rd year)
14.30 – 15.00	Observing teaching - Lecture (4th year)
15.00 – 15.30	Hostel visit
15.30 – 16.30	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

01.07.2009 (Day 03)

8.30 – 9.00	Observing Research Presentation
9.00 – 10.00	Meeting with postgraduate students
10.00 – 10.30	Refreshment
10.30 – 12.00	Meeting with Head of Department and staff for reporting
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch
13.00 – 17.00	Report Writing