

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES AND
COMMERCE
UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYEWARDENEPURA**

23rd to 25th January 2008

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CONTENTS

	Page
1. Subject Review Process	2
2. Brief History of the University, Faculty and the Department	3
3. Aims and Learning Outcomes	4
3.1. Aims	4
3.2. Learning Outcomes	5
4. Findings of the Review Team	6
4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review	6
4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	7
4.3. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	8
4.4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative	9
4.5. Postgraduate Studies	10
4.6. Peer Observation	11
4.7. Skills Development	12
4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling	13
5. Conclusions	14
6. Recommendations	22
7. Annexes	25

1. SUBJECT REVIEW PROCESS

Subject review evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline. This review evaluates the quality of education within the specific discipline of Business Administration being offered by the Department of Business Administration of Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce (FMSC), University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJP). The review focused on the Self Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by the Department of Business Administration. Based on the SER, the team evaluated the quality of the B.Sc.Business Administration (Special) Degree program using the criteria set out by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the Ministry of Higher Education.

The self-evaluation report consisted of twelve sections, i.e., Profile of the Department, Previous and the Revised degree programs(PDP and RDP), aims, learning outcomes and program details of the RDP; students, staff and facilities; curriculum design, content and review; teaching, learning and assessment methods; the quality of students including student progress and achievement; the extent of student feedback: qualitative and quantitative, peer observation, skills development, student support services, academic guidance and counselling and postgraduate studies. The quality of education within the discipline was evaluated in the light of the aims and learning outcomes given in the self-evaluation report (SER) submitted by the department.

The review focused on the following eight aspects of education:

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

The evaluation of the above eight aspects of the program were done by obtaining the information from the following sources:

1. The self-evaluation report submitted by the Department
2. Meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Dean, Head of the Department, academic members, non-academic members, and undergraduate & post-graduate students
3. Observation of teaching
4. Observation of student presentations
5. Observation of relevant documents (question papers, model answers and marking schemes, marks sheets, evaluation sheets, minutes of various meetings, etc.)
6. Observation of Department and other facilities (computer centre, lecture rooms resource centres, library, etc.)

Each subject review aspect of education was judged by making one of the three standards/levels namely; good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. For the purpose, strengths, good practices and weaknesses in relation to the each aspect were considered. An overall judgment was made from the three options, i.e., confidence, limited confidence and no

confidence by taking into account the status of the judgments given for all the eight aspects of the academic program.

The dates the review team visited were 23rd , 24th and 25th January 2008. The agenda of the subject review is in annexure I.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND THE DEPARTMENT

Vidyodaya Pirivena was established in 1883 at Maligakanda by the Rev. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Thero. This Pirivena was up graded and University status were given in 1959 and named as Vidyodaya University of Ceylon. Together with this transformation the University was shifted to Gangodawila, Nugegoda. In 1978, it was re-named as University of Sri Jayewardenepura. Today it is one of the leading national Universities in the country hosting about eight thousand students. The University consists of five faculties, namely; Arts, Applied Sciences, Management Studies and Commerce, Medical Sciences and Graduate Studies.

The Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce (FMSC) was established in 1972. With the continued improvement, in 2001, the FMSC marked a turning point in the history. That is the re-structuring process which was started in 1997 resulted in formation of ten (10) academic departments. Each department offers a unique degree program within their scope. B.Sc. Business Administration (Special) degree is offered by the Department of Business Administration (DBA) which is under the review.

The DBA is the largest and the oldest department in the FMSC, of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, having an academic history of a near quarter century. It has been the pioneering contributor in the field of Business Management in Sri Lanka. DBA commenced as a separate academic department in Year 1980, under the FMSC. However, the Degree in Business and Public Administration was initially introduced in 1959 by the Faculty of Arts, under the Department of Economics. At present, DBA is responsible for the following two Degree Programmes:

- **B.Sc. Business Administration (Special) Degree** - Introduced by the DBA after the restructuring of the FMSC in 2001- Revised Degree Programme (**RDP**)
- **B.Sc. Business Administration (General) External Degree** - Introduced by the DBA in 1997 – External Degree Programme (**EDP**)

During the last 25 years, DBA has been continuously engaged in various activities to enhance the quality of its degree programmes and its undergraduates. As it did in the past, it is still playing a parental role in developing and supporting the new specialised degree programmes introduced in the FMSC.

Currently, DBA as a support service department in the FMSC is responsible in offering 3 core courses (Introduction to Management BUS-1301, Organisational Behaviour BUS-3301 and Strategic Management BUS-4301) for approximately 800 internal undergraduates in the Common Programme and 11 major courses relating to general management to about 400 students enrolled for the RDP and various specialised degree programmes offered by other departments of the FMSC. In addition, it serves for close to 25,000 external undergraduates.

Out of the DBA's two degree programmes (Internal - **RDP** and External - **EDP**), for the purpose of the review only the internal four-year special degree programme in Business Administration has been considered.

The 4-year special degree in Business Administration (presently known as **RDP**) was in operation since 1982 until the time of the faculty restructuring in 2001. This degree programme which existed prior to 2001 has been termed as Previous Degree Programme (**PDP**). It has to be noted that the exercise on Quality Assurance Assessment was due to take place during the latter part of the transitional period (**from PDP to RDP**) as a result of the faculty restructuring which took place in the year 2001.

To date, the **RDP** is in progress for only five years from its commencement and only one batch of students has passed out. Because of this on going transitional process, the DBA is compelled to focus on certain teaching and assessment methods and practices it has been adopting and the student performance statistics with regard to **PDP** in this Subject Review. Hence, the focus on the PDP is mostly discussed where the quality of the output is concerned. However, in all other areas of concern, the activities carried out by the DBA during the last five years with regard to **RDP** are mostly discussed in this report under relevant headings. (SER – p.1)

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3.1 Aims

DBA's strategic direction is primarily based on the strategic goals of FMSC in particular and the broader vision and mission of the USJP in general.

DBA's strategic intent is to produce "**Socially and economically productive management graduates with a broader conceptual capacity to take up any entrepreneurial, managerial and leadership position.**"

The core and supportive activities of DBA is mainly guided by the strategic intent of the department. Hence, the staff and students of the Department are always expected to be:

- Entrepreneurial in action
- Creative and innovative
- Futuristic
- Learning oriented
- Contributory to the society and to the national development

DBA is guided by these core values in establishing its objectives, formulating strategies, designing and re-designing programmes and initiating specific short-term operational activities to make the strategic intent of the Department a reality.

Unlike the other departments in the FMSC, which offer specialized management degrees to produce functional specialists, DBA offers multifaceted management degrees to produce an integrative generalist in management. That is why the present curriculum of the RDP includes a wide range of integrated management courses aimed at imparting multidisciplinary knowledge to view management issues and problems in a holistic and integrative perspective. At the same time, the curriculum has been re-designed to provide the undergraduates with a broader knowledge of leadership and strategic orientation required by modern business

organizations. The degree also includes certain capstone courses to enrich the students with entrepreneurial spirit to independently commence and manage business ventures on their own or to become successful intra-preneurs in organizations. The students are exposed to practical excursions to acquire the expected practical knowledge, skills and work attitudes required by the modern business organizations. These distinctive features bring a special identity to DBA and its revised degree programme.

The programme goal of the RDP is to develop generalists in business administration who possess an integrative knowledge in management, positive attitudes and transferable business skills required to successfully perform as managerial leaders in any business organization, locally and internationally and who could successfully commence and manage any business venture and become productive contributors, towards such organizations and the socio-economic development of the Country.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

DBA conducted a market survey in the year 2000 with the purpose of understanding and identifying the current and emerging requirements of the prospective employers of our graduates and their expectations in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Based on the survey results and with more than 25 years of experience, the objectives and learning outcomes for the RDP has been identified by the department as follows:

The intended output of RDP is a graduate who:

- has a broader understanding and appreciation of knowledge in all functional areas of management.
- could develop theoretical and practical frameworks to clearly understand and successfully make decisions and solve various managerial problems and issues in an holistic and integrative manner.
- has an instinct for management research and sensitivity to changes in the business environment
- is having an intra-preneurial instinct for innovatively manage the organizations for which they serve
- is having an entrepreneurial instinct for commencing and managing any business organization.
- is having a strategic and leadership orientation.
- is having good moral, intellectual and spiritual values.

Expected Skills of the output (RDP)

General Skills

The graduates of the RDP are expected to develop:

- effective decision-making and problem-solving skills
- effective presentation and communication skills
- entrepreneurial and leadership skills
- teamwork and inter-personal skills
- research and analytical skills in Management

Specific Skills

The graduates of the RDP should be able to:

- diagnose accurately the symptoms and central issues in management problems and to suggest appropriate solutions by using qualitative and quantitative analysis.
- carry out a comprehensive project feasibility and to report and present it appropriately.
- carry out a strategic/general management audit of a business in order to understand its current issues & problems and the causal relationships to improve performance.
- prepare a Business Plan or a Strategic Plan for any business organization.
- perform organizational/business analysis based on systems perspective of management in relation to any functional or general area of management.
- independently carry out an organizational surveys and research to understand the realities of the complex business scenarios and problems.
- initiate any change (behavioural and system) in an organization with the application of an appropriate technique/s.

In addition to the above knowledge and skills, the graduates of the DBA are expected to develop attitudes relating to learning to learn, appreciate continuous improvement and flexible enough to modify their behaviours accordingly.

The RDP is primarily designed to offer a learning experience that enable the incoming students to widen their potential by progressively developing the expected and relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes based on multidisciplinary approach allowing the students to broaden and deepen their educational and learning experiences within and outside the university.

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Review

Exciting curriculum is a four year (08 semesters) academic programme having 40 courses assigning a total of 120 credits. The total program is divided into two distinct programmes, namely; Common Program (first and second year) and Specialization Program (third and fourth year). The duration of each programme is two years and Credit weight assigned is 60.

The Common Program consists of twenty one courses mainly on the areas of Management, Economics, Accountancy, IT, English, and Quantitative based courses along with a course on Personal and Social Responsibility and a course on Natural Resource Management. It is very clear that these courses are included in the Common Programme, with the intention of giving a basic knowledge for all the students enrolled in the FMSC, before they go for their specialization areas in the third and fourth years.

The FMSC offers 10 degree programmes. The undergraduates, who successfully complete the common programme during the first two years, are available with 07 specialization areas in the FMSC from which one area of specialization can be opted during third and fourth years. The Business Administration specialization is one of the areas of specialization on which this Subject Review is carried on.

Curriculum designed for the B.Sc. Business Administration (Special) degree has been given due consideration to include essential and important courses coming under the purview of Business Management. There are 23 courses available (Year III Semester I, 05 courses, Year III, Semester II, 05 Courses, Year IV, Semester I, 07 courses with two Electives, and Year IV Semester II, 06 course with two electives), carrying a total credit weight of 60 to be earned by an undergraduate during these two years. The credit weight of 60 are equally distributed (15 per semester) between the two years (Third and fourth). The 23 courses include BUS 4305 Research Methods in Management (elective) BUS 4311 Internship in Management I (elective), BUS 4308 Research Study in Management (elective) and BUS 4312 Internship in Management II (elective). At the discussion with the members of the staff in the department it was revealed that majority undergraduates choose a different elective course leaving all these 04 elective courses stated above, in the final year (year IV). The different course(s) chosen by the undergraduates in place of the 04 electives stated above seems not stated under 3.2.4. Programme Structure for Year IV. (Faculty Prospectus 2007, P.32)

When taking into consideration, all 40 courses to be completed by an undergraduate during the 04 years under the Common Programme and the specialization programme, to become eligible for the B. Sc. Business Administration (special) degree, the Department of Business Administration offers only 15 courses as follows:

Common Programme				Specialization Programme			
Year I		Year II		Year III		Year IV	
Semester I	Semester II	Semester III	Semester IV	Semester I	Semester II	Semester III	Semester IV
01 Course	NIL	NIL	NIL	01 Course	02 Courses	07 Courses, (including 02 electives)	04 Courses, (including 02 electives)

This situation reveals that, although the B.Sc. Business Administration (Special) degree is offered by the Department of Business Administration, the department can claim only for 45 Credit weights (37.5%) out of 120 credit weights an undergraduate should earn to qualify for the degree.

4.2 Teaching, learning and assessment methods

The exemplary and inspiring teaching methods adopted by the staff of the department are worth commending. The team observed a wide range of effective teaching methods used by the lecturers in the department to impart knowledge with the real crux included in the content of the courses. Team teaching, case studies, role plays, and skill builders are the prominent methods adopted by the lecturers in the department. The review team was fortunate to have seen a number of teaching sessions conducted under all these methods during their review in the department. In addition role plays and case analysis done by the undergraduates demonstrated a higher degree of capabilities possessed by them. It was observed that all teaching sessions conducted by the staff in the department were effective and efficient.

The lecturers in the department have collectively made effort to develop course manuals for five courses namely; BUS 1301 Introduction to Management, (A course under the Common

Programme. This course manual is made available to all the under graduates in the first year, free of charge), BUS 3301 Organizational Behaviour (Common), BUS 3302 Organizational Change and Development (Major) BUS 4301 Strategic Management (Common) and BUS 4306 Integrative Studies in Management (Major). [(Two common courses and two Major courses in the 3rd and the final years under specialization programme. Except for the manual on BUS 3302 Organizational Change and Development, the other three manuals are made available to the undergraduates at a concessionary price with the patronage of the Association of the Business Administration (ABA)]. In addition, either a set of slide collection or a set of hand outs are made available to the undergraduates for each teaching sessions conducted by the department for all the courses in the third and fourth years. However, all senior and junior staff members in the department are rendering an invaluable service not only to their own department of Business Administration, but also for the other nine departments set up under the FMSC and also to the other faculties and departments in the University.

The expertise available in the department is well utilized in the field of Business Management as well as in the related disciplines. Out of 20 teaching staff members in the department 07 members have published 16 text books in the recent past. 13 members have contributed towards academic development through research. There are 35 completed research projects to their credit. 09 members have published 24 research articles in the local journals and 06 members have published 29 research articles in the international Journals. Out of these 29 research articles 20 articles are completed by one staff member and he is the only professor (on sabbatical leave) who is in the department and presently serving in the Ministry of Higher Education. 06 members have presented 18 research papers in the local forums and 07 members have presented 21 research papers in the international forums. In addition they also have played active roles in the examination related activities while contributing towards the success of the (Annual Sessions) International Conference on Business Management (ICBM) conducted by the Faculty. The ICBM has been conducted consecutively for the last 04 years by the FMSC and the 5th Conference is scheduled to be held in March, 2008. The 4th ICBM was chaired by one of the members in this department and 07 members have served in different capacities as Session Chair Persons, Session Coordinators and Committee Members at different occasions.

The currently adopted Performance Assessment method in the department includes both Continuous Assessment (CA) and a Final Examination (FE). Depending on the assignments and activities specified at the discretion of the lecturer(s), marks assigned for CA varies from 30% to 40%. Accordingly, the marks assigned for FE varies from 70% to 60% respectively. The review team was informed by the staff, that the undergraduates have to earn at least 40% marks from each component (i.e. CA and FE) for each course, to secure a simple pass in the degree program. With the available evidence the review team wish to note that this is a reasonable and justifiable situation for the Performance Assessment of the undergraduates.

4.3 Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement

The FMSC, USJP enrolls 800 to 1000 undergraduates annually for 10 special degree programmes conducted by 10 respective departments. Among these 10 departments 03 departments namely; Department of Commerce, Department of Estate Management and Valuation and the Department of Public Management are allocated undergraduates directly by the University Grants Commission (UGC) on the criteria set out based on the merits shown by the candidates at the Advanced Level examination and the choice made by them. The annual intake for these three departments is 125, 55, 60 respectively.

Undergraduates for the other 07 departments are allocated by the FMSC, based on the "Z score" earned at the Advanced Level Examination and the choice made by them. The selection is done at the very beginning of the Common Programme in the first year itself and almost all the undergraduates are fortunate to have got their choice.

Approximately 175 to 200 undergraduates join the Department of Business Administration annually to follow B.Sc. Business Administration degree programme offered by the department. In the year 2004, it has increased to 369 as it was a double batch.

It was noted that the popularity among the undergraduates about the B.Sc. Business Administration (Special) degree programme seems increasing during last few years and thus, the number of undergraduates choosing Business Administration specialization programme as their first priority is continuously on an upward trend.

It is a crystal clear fact, that the very best performers at the Advanced Level Examination (conducted at national level by the Examination Department of Sri Lanka) get selected to the universities (except for the Open University of Sri Lanka) in our country. When it is the FMSC, USJP only the best out of best will be fortunate to join there. This is a great advantage enjoyed by both teachers and undergraduates in the FMSC which helps to boost the morale of both these parties all through out the programmes conducted by all the departments in the faculty. With no hesitation at all, this advantage is enjoyed by both teachers and undergraduates of the Department of Business Administration as well.

In spite of all these privileges, prestige, (majority students who opt for commerce stream at Advanced Level, believe that securing a place in the FMSC, USJP after completing his/her examination is a privilege and prestigious) and advantages enjoyed by the teachers and the undergraduates in the department, the performance demonstrated by the undergraduates at the end of the 04 years by the time of completing the B.Sc. Business Administration degree programme seems in-appropriate. Majority undergraduates (around 80%) secure a pass less than Second class Lower Division. Securing a Second Class Upper Division or a First Class (during last five years) seems at a decreasing trend.[Self Evaluation Report (SER) Table – 2] Annual failure rate seems at an increasing trend.

Undergraduates preparing for the other professional examinations conducted by the local and foreign professional institutions may be one reason for this situation; hence the attendance in lectures is around 50% to 60%. On the other hand it is an eye opener for all of us to see whether the undergraduates have lost confidence in university level education, or may be the process of the university education is inferior although the inputs are at a superior quality. This seems a serious problem that needs to be addressed immediately as this situation is prevalent in all most all the degree programmes conducted by the Faculties of Management in all the universities in Sri Lanka.

4.4 The Extent and Use of Student Feedback

The lecturers are very enthusiastic to get qualitative and quantitative feed back from the students of their teaching performance. This seems to have helped the lecturers in the department to improve their teaching process. The present practice is to get the feed back from the students by the lecturer himself for each course they conduct during a semester. There is a standard questionnaire developed by the department in this respect. The lecturers themselves distribute the questionnaire among the students, collect them and get the feed

back for themselves. In addition to the feed back through the formal questionnaire, the lecturers also get a verbal feedback while the session is being conducted. Both these ways of getting feedback from students have been very effective and in some instances some undergraduates have anonymously commended the extra efforts made by some lecturers. There was documentary evidence to show good responses with positive remarks, made by the undergraduates in this connection. This exercise seems not easy with about 200 undergraduates in one batch. But it works smoothly. This situation seems a good sign from the point of view of the students as well as teachers because this creates a positive atmosphere to improve and maintain a good student teacher relationship.

On top of these, each lecturer sets apart four hours a week in their time tables and has made the undergraduates aware of their availability in their respective offices by displaying these hours in the department notice boards, with the intention of meeting the undergraduates and to help them solving any problems in connection with their academic or otherwise. The review team evidenced that, this system works in perfect order which has made room to develop a long lasting trust between teachers and students in the department.

The Dean of the Faculty practices an open door policy in respect of the student grievances. A suggestion box is made available in the Dean's office; common grievances of the undergraduates irrespective of the departments can be brought to the notice of the Dean, through this suggestion box. After going through the grievances, forwarded by the undergraduates, the decisions taken there upon by the Dean of the Faculty and the other respective authorities are displayed promptly on the students' notice boards. Apart from this facility, the Dean is available for the undergraduates to come and meet him personally in his office daily, during weekdays, from 1200 hrs. to 1300 hrs. (Dean's hour).

The FMSC, USJP is very much happy about it's smooth functioning during the last few years without any disturbance or any ad-hoc closure due to unpleasant incidents taking place especially among the undergraduates. The credit should go to all 10 departments in the FMSC and the staff of the Department of Business Administration having the largest numbers of undergraduates, working with least amount of resources, worthy of commending for their untiring effort towards this achievement.

4.5 Postgraduate Studies

A separate Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) is there in the University. There are about 13 post-graduate courses conducted by the FGS. The FMSC conducts a M.Sc. in Management. Total credit values one should earn to obtain the M.Sc.in Management are 20. The duration of this programme is two years. During the first four terms (three terms a year, and the faculty operates on a term basis) a Post-graduate student has to offer courses aggregating to 12 credits and upon completion of 10 credits of this requirement, they are allowed to go for the M.Sc. subject to the completion of the two 02 credits falling behind, before they become eligible to earn the M.Sc. An M.Sc. candidate has to select one of the specialization areas out of 09 areas offered by the FMSC, and should do a research thesis on the area he opts to do the M.Sc. during a period of two terms (six months). The research thesis is assigned 08 credits.

Approximately 60 candidates enrol in the Post-graduate programmes annually and at the end of the first four terms 40 (approximately 66%) candidates fulfil the stipulated requirements to join the M.Sc. programme. The balance 20 (approximately 34%) have to confine to their

Postgraduate Diploma in Management. Only about 20 (50% approximately) out of 40 (66%) who opt for M.Sc., complete the M.Sc. within next two terms and the other 20 (50%) take further time to complete the same. About 05 to 06 (8% to 10%) candidates, who are unable to get the M.Sc. within the stipulated five year period from the first registration, finally have to be satisfied with a Post- graduate Diploma in Management. (The option is available for the candidates to obtain a Post-graduate Diploma in Management after successfully completing the 12 credits requirement within a period of five years.)

In general, the drop out rate of the M.Sc. Programme was found to be 5-6 (8%-10%) per batch. The main reason for this draw back seems that the majority candidates enrolling in the M.Sc. program are busy with their work places. However, within a five year period from their first registration only 20 (33 1/3%) candidates from the total enrol in the programme secure their M.Sc. In other words 662/3% candidates are denied of this opportunity. In all respect, this seems an unacceptable achievement level.

In conducting the M.Sc. Management program, the Department of Business Administration plays a significant role; as thesis supervisors, and course coordinators.

Currently the senior staff members in the Department of Business Administration contribute significantly to the M.Sc. programmes, conducted by the other universities by conducting lectures and supervising the research thesis. Post –graduates degree programmes of Moratuwa, Colombo, Kelaniya and Rajarata are a few to mention here.

4.6 Peer Observation

There is a strong understanding among the academic members about the importance of having a Peer observation as a powerful tool for improving the quality of teaching, learning process. It was observed that the overall attitude of the academic staff members about the Peer Observation is positive. It was revealed that, an attempt has been made recently to develop a mechanism for Peer Observation in the department. The existing practice with regard to Peer Observation in the department is that, two academic members observe the other member while teaching in the class room and discuss the strengths and weaknesses at the end of the teaching session. They do this in a very friendly manner with the intension of improving the teaching learning process. A department based evaluation form is used for this purpose. All most all the members in the department have followed this process and hardly has it come to a proper forum for discussion.

It seems that this process could be improved further for the benefit of the students and the teachers of the whole institute. Some self driven efforts to identify his/her weaknesses in teaching also have been carried out by few staff members in the department in this regard. A sound peer evaluation system also had introduced by one of the former Heads in this department. All these efforts made by all the members on the staff in the department well demonstrate, how much pain they have taken to improve themselves as good teachers in the system. But the fact remains that, an aversion is created at every level to discuss the matter in an open forum. Thereby, the lapses and good attributes of teaching learning process is seldom discussed openly for necessary improvements and praise. Apart from this, moderation of question papers and second marking of answer scripts by a senior academic member is done continuously as a practice.

4.7 Skills Development

The skills that have identified and developed by the staff in the department of Business Administration are great in number and some of them are running across all the management related disciplines. This requirement has been very well taken into consideration by the teachers in the department and that effort is worthy of commending because the graduates who obtain a Business Administration degree is a generalist manager who should be capable of handling any problem in all functional areas of management in an organization. In this regard one cannot forget the continuous and untiring efforts being taken by the members of the staff in the department by trying to introduce and establish a number of innovative and novelty methods to develop the undergraduates with a number of creative skills running across all the management related disciplines with an integrated approach.

A great number of skills (few of them to mention here are; conversation skills, computer and IT skills, presentation skills, Problem identification and problem solving skills, Critical Analytical skills, inter personal skills and demonstration skills) to be developed by the undergraduates have been identified and necessary facilities have been made available to undergraduates within the University with least difficulties, if there are any to be encountered. Practically, each undergraduate is officially allocated a minimum of four hours a week for their computer studies plus practical. There are 04 computer laboratories maintained at the faculty level. These laboratories are well equipped with the required logistic facilities and physical and human resources. The laboratories are open for 12 hours a day, six days a week. 250 students can be accommodated at a time, in these laboratories. All undergraduates have access to any of these computer laboratories, irrespective of the department which they belong to. Apart from these a resource centre with a mini library is run by the third & fourth year undergraduates with bare minimal resources. Association of Business Administration (ABA) is running the place.

Undergraduates have been facilitated with three English Language courses (duration of each course is 60 hours) during the common program. The English Language Teaching Unit conducts these courses with the consultation of the departmental requirements.

There are two instructors allocated to the faculty to look after the English language teaching component. All most all undergraduates especially when they come to the 2nd half of the programme run by the department of Business Administration seem very much conversant in English language. One should not forget that all these undergraduates before joining the university had undergone their education in their mother tongue (Sinhala or Tamil), and therefore the improvements so far shown by the undergraduates in their English proficiency during the three or four years in the university seems acceptable. The medium of instruction of the total four year program (Common Program 2 years and Specialization 02 years) is English. Undergraduates, though had encountered difficulties during the first semester of the first year, to switch on to English language over night, had later found improving dramatically as they had taken this as a challenge in their career path.

The Subject Review Team observed that the third years were confident with the language as they had to do specialization in English and the final years were very much confident of their achievements. The Subject Review Team had an ample number of opportunities to observe the conversation skills as well as the presentation skills along with problem identification, analytical and problem solving skills demonstrated by the undergraduates during the period of the Subject Review.

4.8 Academic Guidance and Counselling

Academic guidance and counselling seems available at the faculty level and there are two types (some are paid an honorarium and others on a voluntary basis) of student counsellors appointed representing each department. It seems that these student counsellors perform a routine job when the students come to them with problems for redress or for some consolation. Academic guidance and counselling seems rather broader in its context. This seems lacking in the faculty and this may affect the undergraduate academically and socially in performing his/her studies in the university.

The academic staff members in the department of Business Administration have volunteered at several occasions not only to provide academic guidance and counselling but also to help the undergraduates in numerous ways in most instances with regular financial assistance demonstrating a parental approach. This also has been able to win the hearts and minds of the students by the teachers in this department.

A faculty prospectus is made available to the undergraduates at the commencement of the common program. There is an orientation programme for one week conducted by the Faculty at the beginning of the two years Common Programme. There are tutorial classes and student contact hours allocated in the time table during which the students are closely monitored, both academically and socially while the Common Programme is in operation.

As per undergraduates, they follow the common program blindly as they have no other alternative to follow. Undergraduates show interest with the management related courses like, Human Resource Management, Marketing Management, Financial Management, Accounting and Economics conducted under the Common program as they are the basis of a Management Degree and they are well aware that every body should be conversant with the basic fundamentals before they go for the specialization in the third year. In addition, they are also of the opinion that, if they are taught a few areas related to quantitative subjects like Basic Mathematics, Statistics, and few other Management related courses along with some inter faculty courses like Natural Resource Management, will be beneficial to them.

As there are a large number of disciplines available for specialization (10 specialization areas) from the third year in the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, the majority undergraduates come to know about these specialization areas through their immediate seniors. A well thought out academic counselling program during the first two years will help undergraduates to a great extent in this connection.

After understanding the lapses in this connection, remedial steps have been introduced recently by the faculty, to select the students at the beginning of the Common Programme and to maintain rapport between students and teachers in the respective department from the first year onwards. But, in practice opportunities seems very minimal for these two parties (students and teachers) to meet during the common programme. The department of Business Administration provides services only for one course (BUS 1301 Introduction to Management) during the first semester of the first year in the common program and there is no any other opportunity for them to move with students academically or other wise for the next three semesters (one and a half years) until they come officially to follow the specialization courses offered by the department from the 3rd year.

Only 10% to 12% undergraduates in the department are involved in the extra curricular activities. This aspect again demands a proper academic guidance and counselling programme.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Review

The Review Team had the opportunity to get the views of the Vice Chancellor of the University, Dean of the Faculty, Head of the Department, almost all the staff members, and the undergraduates and the post-graduate students in the department. Accordingly the following strengths and weaknesses were identified.

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The curriculum has been designed in a prudent and logical manner to cover a wide range of subjects in the field of Business Administration and related fields
2. There is a practice of continuously revising the curriculum based on emerging trends in the field.
3. Regular feedback from industry and the academics in the field.
4. The total four year curriculum carries a weight of 120 credits.
5. A one year Practical Training (BUS 4311 Internship in Management I – Elective, BUS 4312 Internship in Management II - elective) in a recognized industry/ institution gives the undergraduate an exposure to the world of work. The lectures are conducted after 1730 hrs. during this period to enable the undergraduates to take part in them after their days training. A well developed evaluation system is adopted in this regard (This opportunity is inadequately utilized by the undergraduates in the department.)
6. A management related Independent Research Report in the field of Business Administration as well is available for the undergraduates to follow in the final year which encourages the undergraduates to search for truth through understanding the reality of the world. (This aspect as well has been neglected by the undergraduates and a very minimal number (around 10%) of undergraduates opt for this course.)
7. Validity of the courses included in the Business Administration specialization seems very pertinent to the present requirement of the country
8. The department is in a capacity to conduct the entire program with least dependence on external human resources
9. Inter-departmental courses to be made available for the undergraduates to follow
10. The programme is conducted in English Medium

11. The External three year general degree programme conducted by the department is an added plus mark for the department
12. The opportunities are available for any undergraduate to join the external degree programme who is unable to keep pace with required standards due to acceptable reasons during the specified time period
13. Initiatives have been taken by the department to introduce Certificate, Diploma, Post-graduate Diploma level programmes in the discipline of Entrepreneurship Development
14. Initiatives also have been taken by the department to introduce a Distance Education Management Programme

Weaknesses

1. Non existence of a formal curriculum revision mechanism is the major drawback in the department
2. "Production Management" a main functional area in the discipline of management seems omitted either purposely or otherwise with no reasonable justification
3. In-consistent credit weights assigned for different courses in the common programme [(Ex.BCC 1201 English I Grammatical Foundation 60 hours (02 credits), ACC 1401 Financial Accounting, 60 hours (04 Credits), IDS 1301 Finite Mathematics 45 hours (03 credits)].
4. Very limited elective courses are available in the specialization Programme (only one in each semester in the final year) and non existence of a single elective in the common programme for the undergraduates to select.
5. Least academic and other opportunities available for the lecturers and the undergraduates to meet during the common programme
6. The objective of teaching EMV 2208 Natural Resource Management course in the common program seems not been achieved, as this course has been confined to teach mainly forestry

(The responsibility lies partly on the Faculty and partly on the Department)

The judgement assigned to this aspect is "Satisfactory"

5.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The exemplary and committed behaviour of both lecturers in the department and the students who specialise Business Administration is at a commendable level.
2. The lecturers themselves in the Department of Business Administration have demonstrated their capabilities especially in research, teaching and community service.

These prominent features performed by the lecturers in the Department of Business Administration have created a conducive academic and learning environment for the undergraduates in the department

3. It is happy to state that the students' attitudes towards the service delivered by various categories of academic and non academic officials in the department are very positive
4. Students are facilitated with Field Visits, Guest Lectures, Practical Training and Independent Research Report
5. The library usage by the undergraduates is at an acceptable level. A substantial amount of funds are allocated to purchase international journals annually by the library
6. A language laboratory is available in the Department of Accounting and the undergraduates in any department in the FMSC has access to this laboratory with prior reservations
7. Inter-relationship between students and teachers is very high.
8. The records maintained in connection with departmental activities, i.e. teaching learning and assessment methods and General Administration is good.
9. The external general degree programme of three years duration is available in the department and the student strength of this programme is close upon 20000. This programme has brought distinctive recognition for the department
10. In order to adhering to the Faculty requirements and due to the proper understanding of the repercussions that could cause to damage the reputation of the department the examination answer scripts are marked as early as possible by implementing the conference marking system and there by the delay of releasing results is minimized
11. The exemplary commitment demonstrated by the Head of the department has been able to harness the efforts of all the academic and non academic staff members in the department
12. Having a Professor and two PhD qualified Senior Lecturers in the department is a great advantage.

Weaknesses

1. Less recognition given by the authorities with regard to the work load performed by the academic staff members in the department in connection with the external degree programme conducted.
2. Less importance attached to the data collected and maintained in the department with least prominence given without converting them in to information for effective management decision making Ex. End semester examination results, "Z scores of students who join the department annually
3. In-adequate commitment among some lecturers to acquire higher academic credentials

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "Good"

5.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievement

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The admission to the academic programs in the department is competitive
2. The best of the best students with the highest "Z score" marks at the Advanced Level Examination are joining as undergraduates in the FMSC and in this department
3. The high morale and self confidence of the undergraduates maintained from the time of joining the department is appreciable
4. Based on our limited observations, the review panel found that the attitudes and behaviour of both lecturers and undergraduates are extremely positive
5. A considerable number of students who had undergone Practical Training in the fourth year had the opportunity of getting jobs especially in the private sector just after completion of the degree programme
6. The degree of employability of the B.Sc. Business Administration graduates seems high.

Weaknesses

1. Less prominence attached to the common programme conducted by the faculty during the first two years seems demoralizing the students' enthusiasm for studies
2. Preference for less riskier jobs (Ex. graduate teaching) by the students after completing the degree in B.Sc. Business Administration will de-establish the objectives of the department
3. Low performance shown by the undergraduates at the end of the fourth year with decreasing trend of securing a 2nd class upper division and above (SER – Table 2)
4. Increasing trend of annual student failure rate

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "Satisfactory"

5.4 The Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The rapport developed and maintained between undergraduates and lecturers in the department has immensely paved the way to develop a friendly and a positive academic culture in the department
2. After understanding the draw backs existing in the system and as a result of listening to the students' requests, the department is in the lines of incorporating continuous improvements to the programme during last two years. Ex. Initiations taken to develop entrepreneurial courses and steps being taken to introduce those courses in the near future

3. The department has commenced rapport with the undergraduates who are allocated to the department from the first year onwards unlike with the previous batches of undergraduates. With the previous batches, the undergraduates were assigned to the departments only at the end of the 2nd year.
4. The undergraduates do participate in the departmental meetings and their voice is given due consideration. This was evidenced by the minutes of the department and Faculty Board meetings.
5. The Dean of the FMSC practices an open door policy, and the system seems popular among undergraduates irrespective of the department.
6. The dedication shown towards solving the undergraduate problems by the academic and non academic staff members in the department is appreciable

Weaknesses

1. A formal and well thought out mechanism to identify the real issues encountered by the undergraduates especially during the first two years in the programme is demanded. The undergraduates in the immediate senior batches who pretend to be the saviours do the mentoring process of their juniors at present. The role played by the immediate seniors in this regard cannot be underestimated, in the absence of opportunities available for the academic staff members in the respective department to play an active role. But the fact remains whether these roles played by the under graduates are appropriate? .

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "Good"

5.5 Postgraduate Studies

Strengths/Good Practices

1. Having a number of experienced Senior Lecturers with PhDs in the department including a Senior Professor brings credibility to the postgraduate programmes serviced by the department
2. The senior members of the academic staff have had the opportunity to perform duties as the coordinators of the M.Sc. Management programme
3. The trust developed by the post graduate candidates towards the staff of the department and the M.Sc. Management Programme is at a higher level
4. The recognition gained by the academic members in the Business Administration Department by serving especially the other Management related professional institutions and universities in the Private and the Public Sectors is at well acceptable level.
5. The prestige gained as it is the oldest department of the FMSC over a period of 4 decades with the highest number of student population is commendable
6. Having a full fledged library which is open from 0800 hrs to 2000 hrs, six days a week with a dedicated library staff.

Weaknesses

1. A considerable delay (more than 03 months) is experienced in releasing results of the Post-graduates
2. Least access, the department practically has, as the Faculty of Graduate Studies is a separate entity by itself.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "Good"

5.6 Peer Observation

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The common favourable acceptance having among all the academic members about the requirement of a peer observation system within the department
2. Having, already a peer observation procedure adopted in the department, in an less formal manner
3. The cohesive and positive, brotherly behaviour irrespective of the gender, demonstrated by all the academic staff members in the department in all respect of academic and academic related activities
4. Team teaching itself is a self motivated peer observation mechanism practiced in the department
5. The academic diary maintained by all the academic members adhering to a university requirement in the recent time had been a good starting point (Unfortunately this has been done away with)

Weaknesses

1. The most senior members being out of the department as they are on their sabbatical entitlement seems has caused to bring down the image of the department to a certain extent in the short run. (This entitlement cannot be deprived or underestimated at any cost as they bring more reputation to the department and the University in time to come)

Judgment is "Good" with regard to this aspect.

5.7 Skills Development

Strengths/Good Practices

1. The continuous effort and the perseverance shown by the academic staff members in the Department of Business Administration in identifying, improving and developing strategies in relation to skills demanded by the discipline in the 21st century.

2. The Practical Training of one year undergone by the undergraduates and the exposure they acquire about the real working world.(A minimal number of undergraduates in the department take the advantage of this opportunity.)
3. The ample opportunities the undergraduates are provided with, to develop skills on IT and Computer learning, Report writing, analytical and problem solving skills.
4. The exercises developed by the lecturers provide more opportunities for the undergraduates to present their views and discuss problems and solutions in the class room rather than the lecturer dominating the class.
5. Organizing regular field trips, guest lectures, and other activities like organizing seminars and community related services make opportunities to improve, organize and develop leadership skills among undergraduates.

Weakness

1. Inadequate space and resources for the staff members in the department hinders performing the duties by the academics with their full capacity with a peaceful and innovative mind in a conducive working environment. There are only six computers available in the department including the one reserved for the Head of the department. The other five computers have to be shared by all the lecturers and the non academic staff members in the department. Thus, the academic staff members' time is under utilized due to the lack of these basic resources.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "Good"

5.8 Academic Guidance and Counselling

Strengths/Good Practices

1. Having a better qualified, multi disciplinary full fledged faculty for necessary guidance and direction.
2. A student counselling programme is available in the university in which senior members of the Department perform duties as student counsellors.
3. Having a committed set of personal tutors not only to help solving problems faced by students in their learning process but also with their day to day personal problems.
4. Having two orientation programs (duration each one week) during the total programme at the beginning of the Common programme as well as at the beginning of the special Programme
5. Making available the undergraduates, at the beginning of the Common Programme, a copy of the Faculty Prospectus which contains the details of the degree programmes conducted by the faculty.

Weaknesses

1. Non availability of a well thought, properly designed academic counselling program either in the faculty or in the department to provide required information and guidance to prevent misleading the undergraduates by in-appropriate groups in the system. Non existence of a well planned academic counselling program may jeopardize the academic career of the undergraduates as well as the expectation of the stake holders
2. The academic counselling during the first two years seems very vital for the undergraduates especially in this faculty as there are a big number of specialization areas. The specialization areas are offered by different departments in the faculty on one hand and on the other the best performed students at the Advanced level examination are sent here and the morale of those students at the time of joining the faculty is at a very high degree and that should be maintained all through out their studies in the University in order to make him/her an asset to the country.
3. Non availability of a department hand book prevents access to more information about the department which may lead for wrong-judgements
4. In-appropriate recognition given to the duties and responsibilities and non- adhering to the rules and regulations enforced by the authorities concerned with regard to the honorarium payable to the Student Counsellors representing the departments.
5. Lack of formal training for staff on the student counselling and guidance
6. Non existence of a separate room for student counselling. In some cases a certain amount of confidentiality needs to be maintained by the teachers as well as by the under graduates who seek redress.
7. Non-availability of a sound and a common record maintenance system in relation to Academic Guidance and Counselling in the department for future reference.

Judgment assigned is ‘Satisfactory’ for this aspect

Based on the observations made during the visit by the Review Team and as per the facts discussed above the judgments given to those eight aspects under review are as follows:

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

The overall judgment is suspended

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made by the Review Team for further improvement of the programs being offered by the Department of Business Administration as the Review Team felt that they will be useful:

1. To re-consider the courses and course contents and if necessary to revise the course contents to make the common programme meaning full and useful to the undergraduates during the first two years in order to keep their morale up as their ambition and the dream from the day they joined the Advanced Level class, let alone after joining the University was to come to the FMSC, USJP for their higher studies.
2. If the recommendation 1 above is taken into consideration, the following suggestions also may be helpful considering:
 - a) Reduce the content and the number of hours along with the credit values presently allocated for ACC 1401 Financial Accounting to avoid repetition as these undergraduates have at least undergone an Accounting Course for 320 hours (08, 40 mts. period per week) or more in the present two year Advanced Level classes.[The present students in A/L classes follow a 420 hour course(10, 40 mts. periods per week) in Accounting] On the other hand do they need that much of Financial Accounting to perform duties as Generalist Managers?
 - b) A Basic Mathematics course is useful instead of IDS 1303 Calculus and Probability Theory. EMV 2208 Natural Resource Management may be useful with revised contents to suit the title of the course.

- c) All functional areas (Human Resources, Marketing, and Accounting & Finance) other than Production Management is included in the curriculum. It may be useful for the undergraduates, if "Production Management" too could be included as a common course in the Common Programme.
 - d) Undergraduates are of the opinion that they be offered another Professional English course which will be beneficial to them before they go for Industrial Training.
 - e) Introduce a number of elective courses coming under the discipline of Management and Management Related disciplines both in the Common and Specialization Programmes to enable the undergraduates to have a wider choice. This could help undergraduates finding an appropriate employment in the relevant job market.
 - f). Distinguish "Major" Courses from "Common" Courses If there are any?
We will not confuse at any cost, the undergraduates with our jargon. Our duty is to provide the undergraduates with easy terms with sufficient explanations to minimise misleading them in selection their courses. Also distinguish "common courses" from "Major courses".
 - g) It will be very useful if course manuals can be developed for all the courses conducted by the department. A list of compulsory additional readings along with articles published recently in the journals also is a must to make students aware about the recent developments in the discipline.
 - h) A well planned Research Methodology and a Research component or Research Methodology with Report Writing be introduced and make it compulsory for all the undergraduates in the final year. (Presently both, BUS 4305 Research Methods in Management and BUS 4308 Research Study in Management are offered as electives in the programme. (The undergraduates often try to evade these two courses.)
- 3 A formal way of getting feed back from the undergraduates as well as a formal Peer observation method would help increasing the productivity of the department. The lecturers as well as undergraduates will ultimately be benefited with this exercise. Dynamically changing business environment demands different knowledge, skills and attitudes from managers. Therefore it is suggested to get the feedback from the undergraduates after the Industrial Training program. It is also suggested that the feed back from the passed out graduates through the alumni association needs to be obtained. A well organized alumni association would be very useful in this respect.
 - 4 The staffs in the Department of Business Administration be given a formal training on Academic Guidance & Counselling.
 - 5 An initiative to encourage the staff members to do research with the undergraduates will help developing a research culture in the department
 - 6 The majority undergraduates in almost all the batches in the department seem females. An additional effort and enthusiasm shown by the female lecturers in the department will encourage the female (Under) graduates to deviate from seeking traditional job opportunities like teaching and to take more challenging jobs in the managerial positions.

- 7 A well designed academic counselling program will be helpful for the undergraduates especially during the second year before they select their specialization areas
- 8 Reasonable amount of space and resources shall be provided for the lecturers to make their academic contribution efficient and effective.

7. ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Agenda of the Subject Review

Day 1-23.01.2008

0800 - 0900 hrs.	Private meeting of Review Panel with QAA Council Representative.
0900 – 0930 hrs.	Discussing the Agenda for the visit
0930 – 1000 hrs.	Meeting(s) with the Vice Chancellor/Chairman, Internal QA Unit/Dean/ Head of the Department/ Head Faculty QA cell etc. Welcome meeting with the Dean and Head of the Department
1000 – 1030 hrs	Department Presentation on the Self Evaluation Report and a working tea
1030 – 1130 hrs.	Meeting with Department Academic staff
1130 - 1230 hrs.	Discussion
1230 – 1330 hrs.	Lunch
1330 – 1430 hrs.	Observing departmental Facilities
1430 – 1530 hrs.	Observing other facilities (Library, Computer Centre etc.)
1530 – 1630 hrs.	Meeting with under graduate students
1630 – 1730 hrs.	Brief meeting of reviewers

Day 2 – 24.01.2008

0800 – 1000 hrs.	Observing Teaching - Lecture
1000 – 1100 Hrs.	Observing Documents (Working Tea)
1100 – 1200 hrs.	Meeting with Technical and other Non – academic staff
1200 – 12.30 hrs.	Meeting with the Post-graduate students
1230 – 1330 hrs.	Lunch
1330 – 1430 hrs.	Students' Presentations
1430 – 1530 hrs.	Evaluating Lecturer Performance
1530 – 1630 hrs.	Computer Practicals
1630 – 1700 hrs.	Meeting of Reviewers
1730 – 2030 hrs.	Students' Presentations

Day 3 – 25.01.2008

0900 – 1000 hrs.	Observing Teaching/Practical class
1000 – 1030 hrs.	Meeting student coucsellors/Career Guidance Advisor
1030 – 1100 hrs.	Reviewers Private Discussion
1100 – 1200 hrs.	Meeting with Head and Staff for Reporting
1200 – 1300 hrs.	Lunch
1300 – 1700 hrs.	Report Writing