

LIBRARY REVIEW REPORT

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO



16th to 18th November 2009

Review Team :

Mr. Harrison Perera, Retired Librarian

Ms. R. C. Kodikara, University of Moratuwa

Mr. L. A. Jayatissa, University of Kelaniya

Mr. J. K. C. Dissanayake, Sabaragamuwa University of SL

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1. EXTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS

Initiated by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Directors (CVCD), the Quality Assurance Mechanism for national universities was introduced to the system in 2002. Divided as Subject and Institutional Reviews, the process incorporates internal and external assessment of Universities/Departments of study, promoting and safeguarding public confidence in the country's system of higher education. In addition to the Subject Reviews conducted at Departments of Study, the process extends to the Libraries of National Universities where peer reviews are conducted.

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC) of the UGC/Ministry of Higher Education bears the overall responsibility for the conduct and sustenance of quality assurance activities in universities.

The external review process is shaped by how much can reasonably and practicably be covered in a periodic external review process without imposing an additional burden on libraries which would reduce their effectiveness in providing services. The aim is to use evidence and data generated and used by the library itself to appraise quality of its services. The greater the reliance of external quality assessment upon the library's own evidence of self evaluation, the greater is the prospect that standards will be safeguarded and quality will be enhanced.

The external review process for university libraries identifies eight broad areas for assessment-Vision, Mission and Objectives, Management, Resources, Services, Integration, Contribution to Academic Output, Networking and Evaluation. Universities and their libraries affirm different missions and there are acknowledged differences in size, age and maturity of universities and libraries. It is important that the external review process does not distort the national picture by unreasonably and inaccurately measuring all libraries by a fixed 'gold standard'. However, at the same time, all libraries are expected to have in place and to be able to account for arrangements for quality assurance of their activities that support and sustain the quality and effectiveness they claim, and reflect agreed national guidelines.

Peer review of libraries is carried out by a team of three academics with at least two Librarians from the university system. The reviewers receive the library's SER prior to the review visit, gather evidence during the visit and then make judgements on the quality and effectiveness of library services.

A Panel of Reviewers appointed by the QAAC reviewed the Library of the University of Colombo, 16-18 November 2009. This was the 11th Review conducted by the QAAC within the University Library System.

The Review Team comprised:

Mr. Harrison Perera, University of Peradeniya, Mr. L.A Jayatissa, University of Kelaniya, Mrs. Ruvini Kodikara, University of Moratuwa, Mr. Chandana Dissanayake, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE LIBRARY

History of the University

The University of Ceylon was established by the State Council in April 1942. The nucleus of the University was formed by amalgamating the Ceylon Medical College founded in 1870 and the Ceylon University College founded in 1921, both of which were incorporated into the University. Therefore, the history of the university goes back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The University College was formally opened in January 1921. College House, the then 'Regina Walauwa' which is today considered a national heritage site, was a family house that belonged to Arthur de Soysa, the grandson of the philanthropist Sir Charles Henry de Soysa.

By 1950 the University of Ceylon had a reputation as an important centre of excellence in the Commonwealth. The Higher Education Act of 1966 established a National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) and later in 1972 under the University of Sri Lanka Act No. 1 of 1972 all universities were brought under one umbrella and made Campuses of a single university established as the University of Sri Lanka. The University of Ceylon, Colombo was named the Colombo Campus of the University of Sri Lanka. This system prevailed until 1977. University autonomy was weakened and as a result, a new Act was introduced in 1978. Under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978, all Campuses of the then single University became independent Universities. Accordingly, the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka regained its autonomy in 1978.

At present there are seven faculties in the University - Arts, Education, Finance and Management, Graduate Studies, Law, Medicine and Science. Seven institutes concentrating on different disciplines are affiliated to the main university; University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC), Institute of Human Resource Advancement (IHRA), Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM), Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM), National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS), Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology (IBMBB) and Institute of Agro-Technology and Rural Sciences at Weligatta, Hambanthota (IARS).

The oldest University in **Sri Lanka**, the University of Colombo is a sprawling complex located in the heart of the capital city of Colombo. In keeping with its motto 'Buddhi Sarvathra Bhrajate', Sanskrit for 'Wisdom shines forth everywhere', the University of Colombo strives to maintain academic excellence in all areas of study.

Today, the university with a proud history of over 115 years, continues in its endeavour to meet the challenge of maintaining its position as the '**Metropolitan University, Modern and International in Outlook and Character**'. The location of the University affords the student population all the advantages of a 'metropolitan university' in easy access to international information/resource centres, libraries, theatres, sports complexes etc. The University of Colombo has a multi-cultural multi-ethnic student and staff population, fostering social harmony, cultural diversity, equal opportunity and unity.

History of the library system

The University Library started at College House with a collection of 2500 valuable books on History and Literature donated by Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan in memory of his son A. Pathmanabha. The Library also inherited the collection built up by the two Colleges - the Ceylon Medical College and the University College. Since then every effort was taken to develop the Library Collection with purchases from annual book allocations and gifts from well wishers, organizations such as the Asia Foundation, The British Council, the Overseas Development Administration book presentation, The American Center, U.N.O. to name a few.

The old Royal College buildings were taken over in 1923 and the library moved from College House to the Villa Venezia an Observatory provided in the College grounds. As there was a decision to shift the Faculties in Colombo to Peradeniya there was no plan to construct a library building.

With the establishment of second Arts Faculty in 1964, a special book vote was granted to purchase books for the Library. The Asia Foundation donated multiple copies of textbooks needed for the Arts students and a Rental Library was set up in mid 1967. Books in the 'Rental Library' were issued on a payment of 25cts. per book for a period of one month. This service was very popular among the students.

The Law Library was moved from University of Peradeniya to University of Colombo in 1965. It was a comprehensive collection of Roman Dutch Law in Sri Lanka. The Law Collection was started with the donation of Mr. N. Nadarajah, (K.C.). A collection purchased from Mr. Martinus Nijhoff on Roman Dutch Law and social sciences was also added to the Law Library.

In 1975 the Departments of Education at Peradeniya, Vidyodaya and Vidyalandara Universities were brought to Colombo and a Faculty of Education was established in 1976. The education collection was housed in the Department of Education at then the Buller's Road premises and later transferred to the Main Library.

The Sri Lanka Collection and the Rare book Collection need special mention. The Sri Lanka Collection was started in 1969 and today it has developed to a collection of valuable rare reference works. The acquisition of the Hewavitharana Collection, gifts of messers Prof. M.B. Ariyapala, Mr. Kewal Motwani and Mr. Tissa Wijeratne helped to build up the Sri Lanka collection.

In 1968 the Library at the College House and at the Grand Stand building were shifted to the *National Pavilion Building* constructed for the Industrial Exhibition and from there to the Law Faculty Building in 1986. The long felt need for a library building of the University of Colombo was addressed in mid 1997 and the work was completed in early 1999. The new building came into occupation from November 1999.

The Library system currently consists of the Main Library and the libraries of the Faculties of Medicine and Science. The Main Library is located at Reid Avenue between the Faculties of Arts and Law. The collection is about 500,000 books, 250 journal titles and many other e-resources and special collections. It has a seating capacity of 650 and serves the Faculties of Arts, Education, Finance and Management, Graduate Studies and Law. The online catalogues

of the Main Library as well as the two branch libraries are maintained using Alice for Windows Library Management software and accessible via the intranet and Internet.

The Faculty of Medicine Library is located at Kynsey Road within the Medical Faculty premises. Book stock is approximately 40,000. Copies of journals other than recent issues published since 1870 are stacked in the ground floor. Seating capacity is 165. The WHO collection, Audio-Visual collection, Thesis and Dissertation collection and the Sri Lanka Collection need special mention. The Library has MEDLINE on CD-ROM and provides searching facilities for members of the HELLIS Network. The Medical Faculty Library functions as the focal point of the HELLIS Network.

The Science Library is housed in the renovated old physics laboratory. The book stock is 40,000, classified according to the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC). Seating capacity is 150. Local Area Network (LAN) is established and the Library has an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). CD searching facilities are provided through the network. Internet facilities are available. A database with abstracts is maintained for dissertations and theses deposited in the Library. Several home-grown databases are also maintained.

The library of the Faculty of Graduate Studies was established in 1987 at the new Administration Building at Kumaratunge Munidasa Mawatha. This was specifically for the use of the Postgraduate students of the Faculty. The library which possessed about 12,000 books and journals was merged with the Main Library collection in late 1999 since the then Dean required additional space for faculty expansions.

Vision, Mission and Objectives

The Library system does not have a formally developed vision and mission, however these have been identified along with objectives and the strategies in a tentative document developed for the period 2009/2010. This has been developed within a short period of time by the Acting Librarian as a working document for the period considered but not a comprehensive plan developed in consultation with the University administration and the faculties. However, it was drafted after considering the University’s Vision and Mission and the following table indicates the co-ordination of the University’s and the Library’s vision and mission.

Table 1 – Matching the University Vision and Mission with that of the Library

University	Library
<p>Vision Inspired by historic links to the first University College of the country and inherited intellectual traditions, the University of Colombo strives to be a world class institution promoting human development through synergizing knowledge, education, research and creativity, and entrepreneurship whilst upholding democratic values in a plural society.</p>	<p>Vision To support the university’s vision in building synergies between knowledge, education and research, by striving to create an environment conducive to learning, teaching and intellectual advancement.</p>

<p>Mission To be the benchmark setting seat of higher learning and scholarship with an uncompromising commitment and dedication to providing society with human capital of high ethical standards, a proven sense of social responsibility, innovative, independent and analytical in thinking and capable in becoming partners of socio-economic, cultural and environmental development.</p>	<p>Mission To underpin the mission of the university, by providing high quality service for the staff, students and the researchers to satisfy their quest for knowledge.</p>
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In order to support this vision and mission, the following five objectives have been established:

1. To develop the working capacity of Library staff.
2. To improve the relevance and quality of university education by developing the information skills of the students.
3. To provide up-to-date information for the teachers, researchers and students.
4. To develop a collaborative culture between the faculties and the Library.
5. To initiate the quality assurance strategies in the Library

In order to achieve these objectives, following five strategies were identified;

1. To provide in-service and other short term training programmes for all grades of the Library staff.
2. To increase the number of student training programmes offered by the Library.
3. To improve and expand the services currently offered by the Library.
4. To revive the Library Senate Sub Committee.
5. To submit the Self Evaluation Report and invite the QA Peer Review Team to the Library.

The number of activities has been kept low so that they become realistically achievable and the annual activities have been planned keeping the vision, mission, objectives and strategies in mind.

Nevertheless it needs to be mentioned here that there should be more formal and planned integration with the University's development strategies through the participation of the Librarian in the development of the University Corporate Plan. There is no evidence that there was any feedback obtained from the Librarian for the development of the current Corporate Plan and this was brought to the attention of the authorities. It is expected in the months to come that the Library will be able to make a better contribution towards the many academic development activities planned by the University, especially in the offering of learning resources for new online education programmes.

3. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

Following its deliberations, the Team of Reviewers was able to come to the conclusions indicated below:

3.1. Vision, Mission and Objectives

The Library has attempted to systematize its role in keeping with the Vision and the Mission of the University of Colombo. While the objectives relevant to its role have been identified, the strategies for the achieving of these are in place.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Although the Vision and the Mission of the Library have not been formally identified, the need for these has been recognized and the University's Vision and its Mission have been drawn in to create parallels that would systematize the Library's current functions.
- Five key objectives and related strategies have been identified in delivering the current services.
- The objectives identified are relevant and realistic; further, the anticipated workload related to these is manageable.

Weaknesses

- Formal establishment of Vision and Mission in keeping with those of the University is currently lacking.
- There is no evidence to indicate that the active participation of the Librarian has been obtained for the development of the current Corporate Plan of the University.
- Objectives of the Library cannot be formally aligned with the needs of the Faculties as the Librarian is not currently invited to participate in the curriculum development initiatives of the Faculties.

Level of judgement: SATISFACTORY

3.2 Management

Under the aspect of Management, the Review Team (RT) engaged in an analysis of the management structure, policies, procedures and mechanisms being adopted in the Library Network.

1. Library System / Network of the University of Colombo consists of a Main Library, two Branch Libraries (Medical and Science) and five sub-departments / sections in the Main Library (Acquisitions, Periodicals, Cataloguing, Reader Services and Training). RT noted that due to special attention given by the Acting Librarian on training in 2009, the fifth section on staff training has been newly created. These five sub-departments / sections are adequate to continue the present library operations effectively. The Medical Library is located at the faculty of Medicine at Kynsey Road and the Science Library is housed in the renovated old physical science laboratory at the Faculty of Science.
2. The absence of an official Corporate Plan would alienate the Library System from the rest of the University and also remain strategically unfocused to assist the Vision and Mission of the University.

3. The Library System is assisted by well-qualified professional Library Staff. Five of them are on various PhD Programmes in Japan, Malaysia, South Africa and Sri Lanka. The fact that professional Library Staff are on study leave has created management difficulties in leading and supervising the sub-departments and Branch Libraries. Perhaps in future, Library Management should closely study the managerial requirements prior to approving long study leave.
4. The dearth of senior professional library staff has considerably increased the workload of the Acting Librarian.
5. The Dean, FGS, who is extremely positive towards library operations and the students welcomes re-opening of FGS Library under a permanent professional library staff member. RT realizes that the Acting Librarian will face extreme difficulties in releasing more professional library staff under the present circumstances, but perhaps she could consider a Senior Staff or Staff Assistant as a temporary cover for FGS Library.
6. During the meeting with the Acting Vice Chancellor, the RT discussed the existing library vacancies at various staff levels. The Registrar stated that he was not aware of such vacancies and requested that the Acting Librarian should contact him.
7. RT suggests that Library Management considers establishing a Cloak Room closer to the Main Library and provides drinking – water facility as according to Library Rules drinking water is not permitted into all libraries.
8. Both students and Staff stated that they are unable to obtain assistance due to the absence of staff in respective sections in the Main Library.
9. RT was surprised to note how the Library Management failed to integrate into University affairs with an inactive Senate Library Committee and congratulates the Acting Librarian for resurrecting the Committee in 2009.
10. RT suggests that Library Management should closely study the rise of Departmental Libraries and their operations, as the value and existence of the Library System may become eventually less important to the University.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Qualified, skilled, forward- looking professional Library Staff.
- Library System is recognized as an academic resource.
- Library is supported by the majority of Faculties with their invitation into Faculty Boards and establishment of Library Committees.
- Library System is enthusiastic to assist the Academia and Students in their teaching, learning and research work.

Weaknesses

- Library System does not have a Corporate Plan developed in consultation with the University.
- Very few Written Policies and Procedures can be found on library operations.
- Dissatisfied paraprofessional and support staff.

- Inappropriate branch library buildings, especially in the case of the Science Library, and lack of ideal environmental conditions.

Level of Judgment: SATISFACTORY

3.3 Resources

1. *Library resources and facilities for accessing e- resources*

The Library supplies access to some of the important full text journals databases as online resources. The University of Colombo gained free access to several online databases from Year 2002 via PERI (Programme for the Establishment of Research Information). Currently, the Library subscribes through the patronage of SIDA / SAREC Programme to 12 electronic journals databases including the American Institute of Physics, CABI Publishing, Beech Tree Publishing. In addition, the Library has subscribed to Hein Online, JSTOR, Emerald and HW Wilson databases out of its own funds or generated funds. Bibliographic information of most of these resources available in the library is searchable through Library website www.lib.cmb.ac.lk . The Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) displays the holdings of each library (not inter linked) such as books, e-resources, e-journals etc.

2. *Physical resources*

The main Library is housed in a purpose designed building at a suitable location in the University. But the faculty libraries, Science and Medical libraries, are set up in a limited space within the faculties. All holdings of these two libraries can be searchable in the OPAC within the premises.

3. *Human Resources*

Lists of duties are given to administrative, paraprofessional and support staff. Training of staff has commenced recently.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Has a qualified, experienced, knowledgeable, trained staff.
- Wide collection of books and journals caters to the needs of its users.
- Spacious building for the main library to house present collection as well as for future expansion.
- Provision of e-resources, facility for Internet access, photocopying.
- Display of subject guides floor plans etc.
- Enough ICT equipment supplied to the Main Library to maintain effective automated environment.
- Books recommended by staff are purchased.

Weaknesses

- Limited floor space, ICT facilities and non-conducive environment in the Science and Medical libraries.
- Dearth of awareness of the assistance that could be obtained from the Librarian or professional staff for academic input (specially among students).
- Inadequate staff available in certain capacities.

- Disparity in the software installed in the Departments and the Library and inability to access E-journals due to problems in passwords etc.
- Long delay in processing and informing the arrival of recommended books for staff.
- Outdated editions, inadequate number of copies in certain subject areas.

Level of judgement: GOOD

3.4 Services

Library provides a range of services to its user community such as reference, lending, photocopying, ILL, DDS, User Education Program, Information Literacy, access to full text e- journals databases etc. Majority of the user community are aware of these services and use them frequently. Both academic staff and students commended the efficient and prompt services rendered to them by most of the library staff, specially in Science and Medical faculties. Their commitment and allegiance towards the organization is worthy of appreciation.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Library is almost completely automated by using ALICE for Windows software, thus giving it user community an efficient library housekeeping system.
- Initiation of a library orientation program and Information Literacy skills development program by the Library to educate its users.
- Commencement of a Newsletter and listing the new additions.
- Uses the accepted International standards AACR2 and DDC systems. UDC is used in special libraries such as law, science and medical.
- Provides a range of quality services with instructional brochures.
- Professional staff are employed as faculty Librarians and convene library committee meetings and attend Faculty Boards meetings.

Weaknesses

- All bibliographical data cannot be searched in the OPAC as holdings of each library are not linked.
- Dearth of ventilated rooms and additional space required for Science and Medical libraries.
- Early closure of the Main Library due to security reasons.
- Leakage of rain water due to structural failures of the Science Library building.
- Absence of user education programs of the use of e-resources toward 2nd and 3rd years of the students' career.
- The cumbersome, less-systematic mode of borrowing of books arranged for the Academic Staff.

Level of judgement: GOOD

3.5 Integration

Under Integration, collaboration between the Library and other communities and departments, divisions and units of the University was reviewed.

1. Involvement in overall planning and decision making process of the University-
The Librarian is an ex-officio member of the following forums involved in the process of planning and decision making:
 - The Senate
 - Research and Ethics Committee
 - Planning and Development Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Buildings Committee
 - Procurement Committee
 - Library Committee
2. The Acting Librarian serves as a resource person at the University Staff Development Centre and as an Editor of the University Journal ‘University of Colombo Review’.
3. Senior Assistant Librarian (Reader Services) functions as a member of the Faculty Board of Arts.
4. Another Senior Assistant Librarian serves as a Student Counsellor, the Course Coordinator for ‘Postgraduate Diploma in Information Systems Management and a member of the Faculty Board of Management and Finance.
5. One Senior Assistant Librarian and two Assistant Librarians serve as members of the Faculty Boards of Medicine, Law and Science respectively.
6. Most of the SALs and ALs have participated in user education and information literacy programmes conducted in the University.

Strengths / Good Practices

- Participation in various boards / committees etc. described above.
- Initiation of user education and information literacy skills development programmes.
- Provision of a well-equipped seminar room to foster academic gatherings in the Library.

Weaknesses

- Removal of the branch library affiliated to the Faculty of Graduate Studies from the Faculty premises. FGS representatives present at the review expressed that it is difficult and sometimes not possible to use library facilities provided in the Main Library. This is aggravated due to operation of the Faculty study programmes outside usual office hours (mostly in the evenings). This situation considerably reduces the contribution of the Library in postgraduate studies and research. In order to address this handicap, the Faculty has begun the development of its library.
- Although the Librarian is a member of the Finance and Procurement Committees, efforts made in utilizing the generated income in favor of the Library (i.e. non- refundable deposit paid by postgraduate students), seems to be inadequate. In this situation, the Reviewers noted that there is a communication gap with the relevant authorities.
- Non-representation on the Faculty Boards of Education and Graduate Studies: some Representatives present for the review meeting expressed that they were unable to get access to full text databases available to the University community which seemed to the Team of Reviewers a result of lack of communication. Further, in case of acquisitions, we

noted that there are some unresolved issues related to the purchasing of local law publications and reports etc.

- The Representatives present indicated that there is a trend to organize mini departmental collections or library units themselves. It appeared that senior members of Academic Staff have mostly met their information needs in this way bypassing the Library. This needs to be addressed.

Level of judgement: SATISFACTORY

3.6 Contribution to Academic Output

1. A significant contribution is made by the Library to the academic functions of the University, as the focal point of its academic resource input. With a collection of over 500,000 publications in print in addition to e-journals, CD-ROM and other e-resources, the Library is equipped to cater to the needs of the undergraduate/postgraduate students as well as the Academic Staff, belonging to seven Faculties.
2. The three branch libraries of the Main Library, viz. the Science Library, the
3. Medical Library and the Graduate Studies Library have been geared considerably to meet the academic demands for resources of a multidisciplinary nature.
4. A satisfactory academic culture prevails within the Library System of the
5. University. While most members of the Academic Staff of the Library have obtained postgraduate qualifications in the relevant field (including Doctoral and Master's qualifications) others are actively pursuing postgraduate studies.
6. Despite limitations to do with funds, buildings, Academic and non-Academic Staff, the Library has won the confidence of the majority of the Colombo University community, and this is commendable.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Located as four integrated units, the Library of the University offers its services systematically to the University community.
- The Main Library with its custom-built new premises has the ambience ideal for academic pursuit; this facility, equipped with modern amenities for students and staff, is utilized to the maximum advantage of all users.
- The Main Library and its branches have undergone substantial automation, which has resulted in fast, efficient, user-friendly services.
- A wealth of resources in print form (some of which are indeed rare and of historical value, others that are of contemporary significance) is available for academic purposes.
- Annually, funds are allocated for subscribing to several internationally acknowledged e-journals and these are available for academic studies.
- In addition to serving the Colombo university community, the Library extends its services to research students local and foreign, readily assisting them in their pursuit of knowledge, mostly free of charge or charging only a nominal fee.
- The Library maintains close contact with most Faculties of the University, with its representation in the respective Faculty Boards. This way, the needs of the respective degree programmes are addressed and special requirements are accommodated.
- The Library conducts regular orientation programmes for the new entrants of the University and has separate orientation programmes for the Academic Staff of its seven Faculties.

- The Library has volunteered to offer the services of its well-qualified Academic Staff in delivering a credit course in Library skills at the Faculty of Science; this process is to be extended to other faculties with tailor-made content for addressing the academic needs of diverse disciplines.
- The Library readily participates in the Inter-Library Loan scheme (ILL) which is beneficial for intellectual pursuits within and outside the University.
- The willingness of the Academic and the non-academic staff of the Library to be readily accessible to all users, sometimes irrespective of the hours of service (e.g. Medical Library), is commendable.

Weaknesses

- Insufficient number of copies of books (mainly text books) related to the study of Arts and the Sciences curricula is a drawback faced by the Faculty as well as the students.
- Although students are compelled to obtain photocopies of texts that are scarce, the photocopying facility available at the Main Library is insufficiently geared to meet this demand.
- Some of the publications available for the Arts, Science and Law related disciplines are outdated.
- There is a scarcity of reference material in the English medium for some disciplines-e.g. Communication and Media Studies.
- No new books have been received to supplement the existing Library collection for the Faculty of Law in 2009.
- The availability of recent Sri Lankan publications on Law at the Main Library is minimal.
- Subscriptions for some e-journals available at the Library have expired and students cannot access these-e.g. 'e-Law'.
- The Faculty of Law needs to be given access to more core-journals in the electronic/print forms.
- Students find recent issues of Sri Lankan journals on Management Studies and Law inaccessible at the Main Library.
- Only limited access is currently available to Emerald and SSN Journals and vital sections needed by students are unavailable.
- Due to technical problems to do with IP-range, the Faculty of Medicine finds the e-journals available at the Main Library inaccessible.
- The number of online journals available at the Medical Library is inadequate.
- The dilapidated building facility available for the Science Library is woefully inadequate in terms of quality and space.
- The dearth of print material for some of the new courses of the Faculty of Science was witnessed – e.g. Molecular Biology/Financial Mathematics/Industrial Statistics.
- Insufficient facilities are available for the Students of the Faculty of Science to access 'Science Direct'.
- The number of print journals available in the Science Library is inadequate.
- The Faculty of Education and the Main Library maintain minimal interaction and this has resulted in each party being unaware of the requirements of the other.
- Students of the Faculty of Graduate Studies have not been sufficiently influenced to use the resources relevant to them at the Main Library.
- There is no evidence of participation of the Academic Staff of the Library in the curriculum development initiatives of the different faculties.
- The duration for Library orientation for new students is insufficient.
- Students' awareness of the use of OPAC is barely satisfactory.

- Insufficient numbers of staff are available at the Main Library to assist students with accessing e-material.
- Students find the operating system of the e-resource centre computers unfamiliar and face difficulties in making downloaded material compatible with Windows XP and Windows Vista.
- Insufficient awareness as well as material generated for the visually impaired students has led to the non-use of the Library by these students, who number around 15-20.
- Many students lack awareness as to how to approach the Library Staff re. their academic needs. The Help Desk maintained for a short while for the purpose is now deactivated.
- Extended hours of service have not been provided by the Library although the new context of peace in the country has allowed scope for this.

Level of judgement: GOOD

3.7 Networking

Networking and library co-operation has become essential to satisfy diverse information needs of the University community. This is further aggravated due to poor funding situation prevailing at present. The University of Colombo Library has been actively involved in the formation of the first ‘University Consortia’ and has used document delivery methods on a modest scale with the exception of the Medical Faculty Library.

1. The Library is represented in all active library networks in the country, which include SLSTINET, AGRINET and HeLLIS.

Strengths / Good practices

- As the Country Co-ordinator / Focal Point Library, the Library has coordinated INASP /PERI and HeLLIS programmes.

Weaknesses

- Academic Staff and student representatives mentioned that downloading articles through library workstations is slow. This is especially mentioned in respect of the Science Faculty Branch Library.

Level of judgement: SATISFACTORY

3.8 Evaluation

Under the aspect of Evaluation, the Review Team (RT) did a careful study of the system adopted by the Library for evaluating its performance.

1. Out of the seven Faculties in the University, the Librarian or Representative is invited to five Faculty Boards and five Faculties have established Library Committees with Library Representation. These have been provided for the Library to inform respective Faculties of its accomplishments and obtain feedback on its performance from the academia and students.
2. Library collects and uses eight types of regular statistics to evaluate its services and staff.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Availability of eight types of regular usage statistics.
- Enthusiasm to conduct Surveys in the near future.

Weaknesses

- No Library Performance Indicators identified.
- Service and Delivery Standards are not publicized.
- To date, no Periodical or User Survey conducted.
- Unavailability of a Suggestion Box for feedback.

Level of Judgment: Needs Improvement

4. CONCLUSIONS

1. Vision, Mission and Objectives

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Although the Vision and the Mission of the Library have not been formally identified, the need for these has been recognized and the University's Vision and its Mission have been drawn in to create parallels that would systematize the Library's current functions.
- Five key objectives and related strategies have been identified in delivering the current services.
- The objectives identified are relevant and realistic; further, the anticipated workload related to these is manageable.

Weaknesses:

- Formal establishment of Vision and Mission in keeping with those of the University is currently lacking.
- There is no evidence to indicate that the active participation of the Librarian has been obtained for the development of the current Corporate Plan of the University.
- Objectives of the Library cannot be formally aligned with the needs of the Faculties as the Librarian is not currently invited to participate in the curriculum development initiatives of the Faculties.

2. Management:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Qualified, skilled, forward- looking professional Library Staff.
- Library System is recognized as an academic resource.
- Library is supported by majority of Faculties through their invitation into Faculty Boards and establishment of Library Committee.
- Library System is enthusiastic to assist the Academia and Students in their teaching, learning and research work.

Weaknesses:

- Library System does not have a Corporate Plan developed in consultation with the University.
- Very few Written Policies and Procedures on library operations.

- Dissatisfied paraprofessional and support staff.
- Inappropriate branch library buildings and lack of ideal environmental conditions.

3. Resources:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Has a qualified, experienced, knowledgeable, trained staff.
- Wide collection of books and journals caters to the needs of its users.
- Spacious building for the Main Library to house present collection as well as for future expansion.
- Provision of e-resources, facility for internet browsing, photocopying.
- Display of subject guides floor plans etc.
- Enough ICT equipment supplied to the Main Library to maintain effective automated environment.
- Books recommended by staff are purchased.

Weaknesses:

- Limited floor space, ICT facilities and non-conducive environment in the Science and Medical libraries.
- Dearth of awareness of the assistance that could be obtained from the Librarian or professional staff for academic input (specially students).
- Inadequate staff available in certain capacities.
- Disparity in the software installed in the departments and the library and inability to access E-journals due to problems in password.
- Long delay in processing and informing the arrival of recommended books for staff.
- Outdated editions, inadequate number of copies in certain subject areas.

4. Services:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Library is almost completely automated by using ALICE for Windows software, thus giving its user community an efficient library housekeeping system.
- Initiation of library Orientation Program, Information Literacy skills development program by the Library to educate its users.
- Commencement of a Newsletter and listing the new additions.
- Uses the accepted International standards AACR2 and DDC systems. UDC is used in branch libraries such as Law, Science and Medical.
- Provides a range of quality services with instructional brochures.
- Professional staff is employed as faculty Librarians and convene Library Committee Meetings and attend Faculty Boards meetings.

Weaknesses:

- All bibliographical data cannot be searched in the OPAC as holdings of each library are not linked.
- Dearth of ventilated rooms and additional space required for Science/ Medical libraries.
- Early closure of Main Library due to security reasons.
- Leakage of rain water due to structural failures of the Science building.

- Absence of user education programs of the use of e-resources toward 2nd and 3rd years of the students' career.
- The cumbersome, less-systematic mode of borrowing of books arranged for the Academic Staff.

5. Integration:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Participation of the Library's professional staff in various boards / committees etc.
- Initiation of user education and information literacy skills development programmes.
- Provision of a well-equipped seminar room to foster academic gatherings in the Library.

Weaknesses:

- Removal of the branch library affiliated to the Faculty of Graduate Studies from the Faculty premises.
- Although the Librarian is a member of the Finance and Procurement Committees, efforts made in utilizing the generated income in favor of the Library (i.e. non-refundable deposit paid by postgraduate students), seems to be inadequate
- Non-representation of the Library on the Faculty Boards of Education and Graduate Studies.

6. Contribution to Academic Output:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Located as four integrated units, the Library of the University offers its services systematically to the University community.
- The Main Library with its custom-built new premises has the ambience ideal for academic pursuit; this facility, equipped with modern amenities for students and staff, is utilized to the maximum advantage of all users.
- The Main Library and its branches have undergone substantial automation, which has resulted in fast, efficient, user-friendly services.
- A wealth of resources in print form (some of which are indeed rare and of historical value, others that are of contemporary significance) is available for academic purposes.
- Annually, funds are allocated for subscribing to several internationally acknowledged e-journals and these are available for academic studies.
- In addition to serving the Colombo university community, the Library extends its services to research students local and foreign, readily assisting them in their pursuit of knowledge, mostly free of charge or charging only a nominal fee.
- The Library maintains close contact with most Faculties of the University, with its representation in the respective Faculty Boards.
- The Library conducts regular orientation programmes for the new entrants of the University and has separate orientation programmes for the Academic Staff of its seven Faculties.
- The Library has volunteered to offer the services of its well-qualified Academic Staff in delivering a credit course in Library skills at the Faculty of Science; this process is to be extended to other faculties with tailor-made content for addressing the academic needs of diverse disciplines.
- The Library readily participates in the Inter-Library Loan scheme (ILL) which is beneficial for intellectual pursuits within and outside the University.

- The willingness of the Academic and the non-academic staff of the Library to be readily accessible to all users, sometimes irrespective of the hours of service (e.g. Medical Library), is commendable.

Weaknesses:

- Insufficient number of copies of books (mainly text books) related to the study of Arts and the Sciences curricula is a drawback faced by the Faculty as well as the students.
- Although students are compelled to obtain photocopies of texts that are scarce, the photocopying facility available at the Library is insufficiently geared to meet this demand.
- Some of the publications available for the Arts, Science and Law related disciplines are outdated.
- There is a scarcity of reference material in the English medium for some disciplines-e.g. Communication and Media Studies.
- No new books have been received to supplement the existing Library collection for the Faculty of Law in 2009.
- The availability of recent Sri Lankan publications on Law at the Main Library is minimal.
- Subscriptions for some e-journals available at the Library have expired and students cannot access these-e.g. 'e-Law'.
- The Faculty of Law needs to be given access to more core-journals in the electronic/print forms.
- Students find recent issues of Sri Lankan journals on Management Studies and Law inaccessible at the Main Library.
- Only limited access is currently available to Emerald and SSN Journals and vital sections needed by students are unavailable.
- Due to technical problems to do with IP-range, the Faculty of Medicine finds the e-journals available at the Main Library inaccessible.
- The number of online journals available at the Medical Library is inadequate.
- The dilapidated building facility available for the Science Library is woefully inadequate in terms of quality and space.
- The dearth of print material for some of the new courses of the Faculty of Science was witnessed – e.g. Molecular Biology/Financial Mathematics/Industrial Statistics.
- Insufficient facilities are available for the Students of the Faculty of Science to access 'Science Direct'.
- The number of print journals available in the Science Library is inadequate.
- The Faculty of Education and the Main Library maintain minimal interaction and this has resulted in each party being unaware of the requirements of the other.
- Students of the Faculty of Graduate Studies have not been sufficiently influenced to use the resources relevant to them at the Main Library.
- There is no evidence of participation of the Academic Staff of the Library in the curriculum development initiatives of the different faculties.
- The duration of orientation in Library Skills for new students is insufficient.
- Students' awareness of the use of OPAC is barely satisfactory.
- Insufficient numbers of staff are available at the Main Library to assist students with accessing e-material.
- Students find the operating system of the e-resource centre computers unfamiliar and face difficulties in making downloaded material compatible with Windows XP and Windows Vista.

- Insufficient awareness as well as material generated for the visually impaired students has led to the non-use of the Library by these students, who number around 15-20.
- Many students lack awareness as to how to approach the Library Staff re. their academic needs. The Help Desk maintained for a short while for the purpose is now deactivated.
- Extended hours of service have not been provided by the Library although the new context of peace in the country has allowed scope for this.

4.7 Networking:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- As the Country Co-ordinator / Focal Point Library, the Library has coordinated INASP /PERI and HeLLIS programmes.

Weaknesses:

- Academic Staff and student representatives mentioned that downloading articles through library workstations is slow, especially in respect of the Science Faculty Branch Library.

4.8 Evaluation:

Strengths/Good Practices:

- Availability of eight types of regular usage statistics.
- Enthusiasm to conduct Surveys in the near future.

Weaknesses:

- No Library Performance Indicators identified.
- Service and Delivery Standards are not publicized.
- To date, no Periodical or User Survey conducted.
- Unavailability of a Suggestion Box for feedback.

Aspect Reviewed	Judgement
Vision, Mission and Objectives	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Resources	Good
Services	Good
Integration	Satisfactory
Contribution to Academic Output	Good
Networking	Satisfactory
Evaluation	Unsatisfactory

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Team of Reviewers wishes to recommend the following:

1. There should be more formal and planned integration with the University's development strategies through the participation of Librarian in the development of University Corporate Plan.
2. The Review Team (RT) strongly recommends that Librarian in consultation with the University Administration finalizes a Corporate Plan for the Library System as an officially approved Library Corporate Plan. Such a plan for the Library System does not exist except a basic Plan produced without official consultation with the Faculties etc.
3. After the initiative for a Library Corporate Plan, RT recommends that the Library System should finalise written Policies and Procedures which would establish guidelines and standards for effective Library Operations.
4. RT recommends building close relationship with the Top Managers of the University through the Senate Library Committee which would be an asset to library operations.
5. RT recommends that the Acting Librarian should delegate her work in the Acquisition Section and manage only the Training Section and the responsibilities of the post of Librarian.
6. RT recommends that the Medical and Science Libraries should be moved to well planned library buildings without further delay as both lack basic space and ideal library environmental facilities suitable for a leading academic institution.
7. While recommending immediate attention to Medical and Science Libraries, RT recommends that Library Management should re-consider formally re-establishing the library facilities in the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS).
8. RT requested Faculties of Graduate Studies, Education and Arts to consider setting up either respective Library Committees or inviting Librarian or Representative to Faculty Board Meetings. RT recommends that the Acting Librarian chase these issues.
9. RT recommends that the Duty Lists should be available for all staff, so that each and every staff member is aware of his / her professional / routine duties.
10. Paraprofessional and Support Staff in the Main Library discussed the following grievances:
 - (a) Training opportunities are not provided to all staff.
 - (b) Language Proficiency Payment of Rs. 270/- is not given to the Library Staff.
 - (c) No opportunities to express their ideas / opinions to Library Management.
 - (d) Lack of equipment (e.g. Computers, Vacuum Cleaners etc.)
 - (e) Unfair rules with regard to late arrivals and weekend overtime allocations.
 - (f) NO appreciation for their hard work.RT recommends the Acting Librarian's immediate attention to these issues.

11. RT recommends that the Main Library be kept open for longer hours as the security situation has improved.
12. RT recommends that the Acting Librarian should supervise the Staff at the Security-point as their total indifference in checking library materials especially at the Library Exit End was reported by the students.
13. Employees who deal with readers need to be trained in order to inculcate positive attitudes among them towards users.
14. Courtesy among some workers, especially in the main library counter seems to need further improvements for the benefit of the readers.
15. Rotation of staff is necessary to train and empower the personnel in all aspects in the library.
16. It is recommended to fill up all cadre vacancies with immediate effect.
17. It is necessary to outsource bindery work until cadre is filled.
18. While congratulating the Acting Librarian for initiating a new Training Section, RT recommends paraprofessionals and support staff should be given training on all library operations and specifically on Communication and Teamwork. We also request Acting Librarian to consider inviting external Resource Persons to generate staff enthusiasm in training.
19. Copies of books on certain subject areas (e.g. law, medicine, fiction etc) need to be increased and purchase of core-journals, latest editions of recommended text books needs to be given priority.
20. Steps should be taken for the timely acquisition of locally published law books, reports etc. (emphasis is placed here on law as the academic staff members mentioned that very limited number of copies are published and soon become out of print. This may be common to other disciplines as well).
21. More non-medical reading material (e.g. novels) should be made available for the users of the Medical Library. This was requested by students' representatives.
22. Library Development Fund needs to be utilized.
23. It is recommended to upgrade certain areas - especially Medical/Science libraries need to be air conditioned and broken down air conditioners in the bindery and 'Ceylon Room' need to be repaired.
24. Facilities for staff in Medical/Science need improvement (Toilet, lunch room etc).
25. It would be necessary to obtain the assistance of an architect to re-design the interior of the Medical library (issue counter to be shifted inside, sliding doors to be fixed instead of doors opening to the corridors, fix wall fans in OPAC area, study carrels etc. to be made available).

26. A proper cloak room close to the library needs to be constructed.
27. Problems regarding issue counters: working space, height of the counters and sunlight affecting the counter staff during certain months of the year need to be looked into.
28. All modules of ALICE software need to be put into use (circulation, acquisition, periodicals etc.)
29. Utilization of generated income to make improvements to library infrastructure facilities is a necessity (i.e. purchase of computer tables and chairs for the E-Learning Center and to purchase essential publications, when government funding is not available).
30. It is recommended to establish networking among university library, Law College Library, Attorney General's Library etc.
31. It is necessary to inform the Academic Staff that articles appearing in journal content page service could be obtained free of charge.
32. The cumbersome, less-systematic mode of borrowing of books arranged for the Academic Staff needs to be replaced with the issuing of library tickets.
33. The help desk needs to be re-activated in a more appropriate place.
34. RT did not notice a public display of the Minimum Library Service and Delivery Standards recommended by the Standing Committee on Libraries and Information Science (SCOLIS) to indicate that the Library honours these Standards in its respective service sections. RT recommends that the Librarian considers not only displaying them in public, but also provides related orientation to the user community and library staff.
35. Though the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAA) had conducted a Workshop on Library Performance Indicators for all University Senior Library Professionals and encouraged them to identify respective Performance Indicators, no such initiative has been taken by the Library. RT recommends that the Acting Librarian should take this initiative at her earliest convenience.
36. RT discovered that no Periodical or User Perception Surveys have been conducted and recommends that these initiatives be taken in the near future.
37. Until sufficient mechanisms/tools are in place for performance assessment, RT recommends that a Suggestion Box is kept at each library to obtain feedback from all users and that the Library publicizes their availability.