



# **PROGRAM REVIEW 2017**

University of Peradeniya  
Faculty of Arts  
General Degree



Programme Review Report  
of  
Bachelor of Arts (General) Degree  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Peradeniya

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council  
University Grants Commission  
2018

## Table of Contents

	<b>Page(s)</b>
<b>Section 1: Brief Introduction to the Programme</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Section 2: Review Team’s Observation on the Self-evaluation Report</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Section 3: A Brief Description of the Review Process</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Section 4: Overview of the Faculty’s Approach to Quality and Standards</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Section 5: Judgment on the Eight Criteria of Program Review</b>	<b>08-17</b>
<b>5.1 Criterion 1: Programme Management</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>5.2 Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.3 Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5.4 Criterion 4: Course / Module Design and Development</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.6 Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5.7 Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5.8 Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Section 6: Grading of Overall General Degree Programme</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 8: Summary</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Programme Review Team</b>	<b>23</b>

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

The University of Peradeniya is the heir to a seventy-five-year-old University tradition with the inception of the University of Ceylon. History and achievements of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Peradeniya are unique. In terms of both the number of students and staff, the Faculty of Arts is the largest of the seven faculties of the University of Peradeniya. At present there are seventeen departments of study and a unit called the English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) in the Faculty.

The Faculty of Arts annually admits about 850 students on "all-island merit," and 10% of that number as 'special intake', to enroll students to disciplines that do not get sufficient students under the normal intake. In addition, a few differently-abled students are given admission each year. Out of 850 students, nearly 250-300 students are following the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree. Their selection into the general degree programmes may be due their inability to get qualified to enter a special degree programme or their wish to study, more than one discipline for better job opportunities. Some students opt for three year programme mainly due their socio-economic conditions. These students need special guidance and assistance because of their vulnerable position in comparison with special degree students.

As revealed by the SER, the curriculum of the Bachelor of Arts (General) degree has not been revised recently, and therefore it does not conform with current SLQF guidelines and other desirable and recommended features such as aligning the programme outcomes with employment market requirements (outcome-based) and student- centered learning approach in programme delivery. Because of the nature of general degree, where the students are offered the flexibility to select courses from diverse choices, the course combinations of BA (General) degree vary significantly. Further, as many Departments are involved with the BA (General) degree programme, dealing with issues regarding student academic guidance and counseling, and also coordinating field-based learning and focused common activities have become a challenging task. And as a result, students appear to be faced with many difficulties leading to some degree of disillusion in their mindset. Faculty has recently taken a proactive measure to address with this issue by establishing a standing committee with a Faculty level coordinator to deal with academic counseling and administrative issues relating the general degree programme.

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

The SER reflects the sincere effort taken by the members of writers' panel. Although the Faculty commenced SER preparation process little late, the writers, through their commitment and constant interaction with all stakeholders were able to produce holistic and well-organized self-evaluation report.

In fact, the program review is offered to all undergraduate programmes which have completed at least one cycle or graduated at least batch of students. Since the Faculty entered into the quality assurance process little late, their claims are futuristic. Review team contextually considered such appropriate claims.

Analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) reflects facts as well as their expectations.

As we have mentioned elsewhere, the University now agrees to adhere with the approved national higher educational guidelines such as the Sri Lanka Qualifications Frame work (SLQF) and Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS).

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

### **3.1 Process of preparation by the review team**

The review team conducted desk evaluation of SER individually and individual review reports were then submitted to the QAAC at the UGC, Following that the reviewers met at the pre-review meeting arranged by the QAAC, and discussed and reached consensus on tentative outcomes of desk evaluation, additional information and clarifications required and shared responsibilities of the review team. And the review team chair was requested to interact with the Dean of the Faculty and arrange the programme for the site visit.

### **3.2 Program Review Site Visit**

The review team reached Peradeniya on 10th September evening and successfully completed the site visit from 11<sup>th</sup> September 8 am to 13<sup>th</sup> September 6.30 pm as per the schedule. First meeting held was with the Director/IQAU at his office, and this was followed by the meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty, and Register and Bursar of the University. These interactions were very fruitful. Review team considered that the proximity of the IQAU office next to the Vice Chancellors Office as a healthy and appropriate arrangement, and an indication of the University's commitment to internalize quality culture in its all spheres of activities.

Next meeting was held with the Heads of Departments and SER writers. At this meeting, SER writing process and key findings of self-evaluation were emphasized. This was followed by the meeting with the academic staff members of the Faculty. The discussion was very interesting and took the form of a brain storming session. Many conflicting and interesting ideas were thrashed into the discussion. Review team appreciated the participation of a cross section of academic ranging from senior professors to junior academics.

At the meeting with the administrative staff of the Faculty, the issues related to the space and administrative matters were highlighted and discussed. At the meeting with the technical officers and other support staff, the difficulties encountered in providing required quality services were highlighted. At the meetings with the Student Councilors and Director of Career Guidance Unit, the issues related to student welfare and counselling were discussed. Visit to the library and computer unit gave opportunity to witness the new developments in the library and the degree of students' engagements in ICT and e-learning process.

The team spent considerable time on discussions with the students of General Degree programme, representing different subject combination, medium of studies and gender. Students were very open and candidly contributed to the discussion on their study programme and related issues. A meeting with the alumni of the Faculty, mostly working at University was also held.

Review team also had the opportunity to observe few lecture-discussion sessions conducted in Sinhala, Tamil, and English medium and gain some insight into teaching and learning approach

commonly adopted by the Faculty. Review team was provided ample opportunities to observe the facilities relevant to the study programme. Observing the documents as evidences was a tedious exercise and considerable time devoted for this task.

Reviewers also had informal meetings, after reaching hotel at the hotel, sometimes extending till 7.30 pm to discuss the findings and the issues noted.

Review team appreciates very much the cooperation and logistical support extended and the hospitality offered by the Faculty during the site visit.

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

The Faculty of Arts has shown a keen interest in institutionalizing quality enhancement procedures within its academic and allied activities. However, there appear to be long delay in internalizing the best practices prescribed through Quality Assurance Manuals, particularly the adoption of SLQF guidelines, and outcome-based education and student-centered teaching and learning (OBE-SCL) concept, principles and tools in programme design and delivery.

Nonetheless, there appear to be renewed interest and growing enthusiasm among the Faculty higher management and academics to work towards establishing internal quality assurance mechanism within the Faculty and foster quality culture in all spheres of activities. This probably become reality as the Faculty is amply provided with the required human resources and teaching and training facilities and resources to adopt all the quality practices prescribed by the PR Manual of the QAAC.

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

### **5.1 Criterion 1: Programme Management**

The organization structure of the Faculty appears to be adequate for effective management and execution of its core functions. Faculty has established a separate standing committee and a coordinating committee to look into academic and administrative matters. Faculty has an up-to-date Corporate Plan (2010 onwards) for the review period; however, the Faculty Action Plan has been developed only from 2017 onwards. This action plan is aligned with the current corporate plan. Though the Faculty has not produced a document on standard operational procedures, the Faculty appears to adhere to University approved administrative and management procedures.

Faculty conducts an orientation programme for incoming freshman students and at this point it distribute a Student Handbook that gives adequate information on history and current statuses of the University and Faculty, student charter, disciplinary by-laws, examination by-laws, etc. In addition, this handbook provides information on programmes and courses offered, fallback and exist options available to exit from the programme at different levels, optional courses and electives offered, examination procedures and grading mechanism, graduating requirements, etc. Faculty has faced with difficulties in sticking to academic calendar in the past. However, from the recent past, the Faculty has gradually addressed this issue and as of present, the programme runs as per the approved academic calendar and thus enable the students to complete the degree programme and graduate at the stipulated time.

Since 2015 onwards all Departments have prepared the course information/specifications (C1 form) for each course and these are distributed to all students at the beginning of the semester giving information such as course aims, ILOs, and topics, teaching and learning hours, assessment procedures, etc. Apart from the above documents, students are able to obtain up-to-date information on academic and allied matters via Faculty Website which is updated regularly. Also, all urgent and ad-hoc notices are communicated to students very effectively via “Twitter” social media network. However, it is recommended to take efforts to extend this facility to students who are studying in Tamil language. Faculty has instituted a Management Information System (MIS) for manning students’ biographical data and programme and course registration and examination information. However, it is recommended that this should further be expanded to include governance and management practices in the Faculty.

All the permanent and volunteer counsellors are taking adequate measures to introduce effective orientation programme for new comers together with English programme offered by the ELTU within three months of the orientation programme. It is also recommended to introduce additional topics cover areas such as reproductive health, team work, leadership, etc. Further, it is recommended to obtain feedback from students on orientation programme in order to address any shortcomings in the orientation programme. Review team was impressed to see that the University has prepared a document on code of conduct for staff and submitted to the University Senate for approval. Faculty has not yet established any formal performance appraisal system for staff. However, the Heads of Departments is of the opinion that annual salary increments should

be based on the performance of the staff. Almost all academic members have gone through the induction programme offered by the Staff Development Centre (SDC). However, continuous professional development (CPD) programmes conducted by the SDC appear to inadequate to cover important areas such as curricula development, lesson planning, assessments and teaching and training methods. However, the (Arts Education Unit (refereed as ARTSED) which was operative during WB/HETC Project period had conducted considerable amount of training on some of these topics.

It appears that the internal quality assurance system of the University has commenced its operations only recently. Though it is unusual, the IQAC of the Faculty appears to have taken up the responsibility of undertaking the curriculum revision of the Faculty in the absence of a formal curriculum development committee within in the Faculty. In this regard, the Faculty has recently conducted a graduate satisfaction survey to obtain feedback from its graduands. However, employer feedback about the degree programme, evaluation of the present curriculum by the external peers, peer observations, feedback on courses from students, etc., have not been attempted yet. During the site visit it was not evident that the Faculty has considered the Sri Lanka Qualification Frame Work (SLQF) and available Subject Benchmark Statements (SBSc) in preparation of present curricula. Nonetheless, Faculty members appear to be aware of SLQF guidelines and the importance of adopting those guidelines in on-going curricula revision.

It is highly commendable that Faculty has taken up some progressive steps to establish collaborative programmes with foreign universities by signing MOUs, and through such collaborations three scholarships have already been identified for BA General Degree students. Review team is of the opinion that in time to come more scholarships needs to be established to motivate BA General Degree students in their academic pursuits.

Faculty has given a prominent place in students counseling and welfare activities. Yet, it is recommended to provide formal training to academics on student counselling. It is evident also from the general degree students that they receive good health care facilities through Health Centre of the University. Students engaged in cultural activities and sports, indicated by getting awards and medals at competitions. It was noticed during the site visit that the University has taken steps to ensure safety and security of student by placing many security points in and around the vicinity of the Faculty.

It is admirable to note that the Faculty has taken many measures to their level best to assist differentially-abled students. However, there is a greater need for providing further facilities, particularly, by providing required infrastructure facilities. Faculty staff claims that there are no serious issues relating to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) amongst all categories of staff and students. It is impressed to note that University has introduced policy document on SGBV for staff. Faculty student counsellors are adopting many strategies and taking steps to prevent ragging and harassments in the Faculty. Nevertheless, it was disturbing to note the existence of two rivalry groups, one labeled as pro-ragging and the other labeled as anti-ragging within the Faculty.

It is admirable that students participate in many registered faculty students' societies. The participation of the students in the governance and management affairs of the Faculty appears to be limited

## **5.2 Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources**

Human resources of the Faculty is very satisfactory. Faculty has 26 Professors, 108 Senior Lecturers and 40 Lecturers. Among them, 94 have PhD and 64 have Master level qualifications. All most all the academic staff have completed their induction programme and it is praiseworthy to mention that almost all the academic staff are involved in teaching in the general degree programme.

Academic staff is also involved in high caliber research. Some of them have established collaborating partnerships with other organizations. Some of their work has been published in indexed journals and some are published in other international and local journals. Discussions held with non-academic staff indicate that they also have high commitment towards the general degree programme and almost all the staff (academic, non-academic) in the departments is invariably involved in this programme. In the Dean's office, one non-academic member is assigned for activities related to the general degree programme. Academic staff has gone through relevant training programmes (such as OBE-SCL, teaching methods, LMS, etc.) conducted by the Arts Education Unit which was active during the WB funded HETC Project. However, more training on these aspects must be conducted by the SDC in order to develop the internal capacity to promote the adoption of SLQF guidelines and OBE-SCL approach in programme design and delivery.

One of the main concerns of the non-academic staff is the lack of opportunities provided for them, particularly on the use of ICT application, computer maintenance, trouble shooting of computers, etc., as there is a growing need for providing assistance in these areas for both academic and administrative activities. Another concern expressed was that some of them have to be involved in many other duties apart from their accepted duty list.

Main library of the University appears to cater primarily to the Faculty of Arts. It provides adequate space and reading material for students and offers many facilities such as inter-library loans, digital library facilities, photocopying services, online catalog system with 7 data bases etc. One concern of the students was that not having enough copies of books in the library to cater to a large population of students reading for the general degree programme. The library appears to have limited copies of each book in the reference section. This is mainly due to a limitation of funds received through the programme budget annually to the library. Main library gets less than one million rupees of annual allocation. The library seating capacity in the reading room is only 625 to facilitate two faculties and library also lacks audio-visual section which is needed mainly for students who study fine arts. Library opening hours are from 7.45 am to 6.30 pm, but the students expressed the need to keep the library open by another two hours.

Faculty is constrained by space limitation. However, the available infrastructure facilities are effectively, used by the Faculty. Lecture hall facilities, mainly the space allocated for teaching purposes are very limited and therefore learning environment is not highly conducive. General degree students get compulsory FND/ICT course for two semesters to upgrade their computer literacy. Faculty has 138 computers for Arts students (general and special degree). Apart, from this department computer laboratory, the university IT centre also caters for students' IT needs. Besides the training provided by the ELTU during the 10 weeks of orientation programme, the students are offered compulsory English language courses over four semesters. One Probationary lecturer and many temporary instructors are allocated for English teaching. The University Career Guidance Unit (CGU) is very actively involved in organizing core curricular and tailor-made programmes for promoting 'soft' skills in students. As evidenced through observation of a few teaching session and courses plans indicate that some of the courses are embedded with components to promote soft skills.

### **5.3 Criterion 3: Programme Design and Development**

Curriculum development of the general degree programme under review is in progress. Faculty academic development and planning committee initiated the changes in collaboration with newly formed committee of developing the curriculum of the general degree programme. Faculty has also conducted few tracer studies to obtain views from stakeholders in this regard.

Regarding SLQF and SBSs, Faculty is now aware of the need to considering those in the curriculum development process. As accepted in the SER, the Faculty should ensure the adherence to the SLQF guidelines and adopting the concepts and principles OBE-SCL approach in curriculum design process. Further, it is desirable to pilot the new programme in order to determine whether the programme is moving in the right direction.

Faculty has realized the importance of soft skills in today's context and has taken efforts to enhance the soft skills of students. The course designs accommodate components to impart soft skills. It is commendable that the Faculty offers courses in all three media that ensures the cultural and social diversity within the Faculty and University. In this direction the review team noted that the Faculty is planning to introduce second language courses for non-native speakers. Gender, equity and other social justice aspects too are considered by the Faculty in an informal manner.

Graduation rate is high. However, the employment rates and admission to advanced degree programmes appear to be low among the general degree graduates. Steps have been taken towards collecting information about graduate employment. Faculty is in the process of identifying appropriate work-based placement/industrial training component for general degree programme.

Differently-abled, particularly the visually impaired students are provided with special assistance through a facility called SNRU, established in 2004. However, the existing programme needs few structural adjustments to accommodate the requirement of visually impaired students.

#### **5.4 Criterion 4: Course / Module Design and Development**

The Faculty offers both special and general degree courses in various disciplines and all disciplines have predesigned curricula. The curriculum has been developed through departmental level curriculum development committee (CDC) and academic development programme committee (ADPC). However, it could only observe the evidence for the faculty-level curriculum development committee. In terms of ADPC, it was observed that the ADPC has made discussion on curriculum development of the faculty. However, the review team was not provided with minutes of ADPC meetings.

Faculty has also introduced several new degree programmes such as BA in Humanities, BA in Counseling, BA in Multiculturalism, etc. The curriculum for the above degree programmes has also designed through proper channels and it has up to date information on the fields of study. The team observed evidences for revised curriculum of various subjects including Buddhist Studies, Philosophy and Political Science. The academic staff mentioned that the Faculty adheres to the guidelines prescribed by the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework. However, the team could not observe proper evidences to confirm the above statement. The Faculty has only followed University approved standard guidelines to design programmes and courses.

The team further observed that the new curriculum has designed considering intended learning outcomes. However, there were no evidences for the inclusion of SLQF and SBS requirements in the new curriculum. It was evident to some extent that student-centered teaching strategies are incorporated into the course design. Faculty provides the student handbook which contains details information regarding their degree programme. The departmental time table is being used to conduct the academic programme in the Faculty. In this regard, the team observed semester time table, mid-semester attendance sheets, etc.

The course evaluation reports and evidences for course unit dropout rate were available for observation. However, the team could only observe the students' dropout rate from 2007 to 2011. The field visit report of general degree students was also documented for the observation. Staff of the faculty are being trained through SDC and special education unit. In particular, the Faculty has established Arts Education Unit under the HETC/IDAS project to train staff of the Faculty. University generated funds are being utilized for the staff training. In terms of course approval procedures, the evidences for general degree programmes were not placed for the observation.

The Faculty has established an internal quality assurance cell (IQAC) recently (15th November 2016). The unit has also conducted a few meetings. Further, the Faculty has taken number of initiatives to make MOU with other universities or higher education institutions. At present, the Faculty is benefited through the university level MOUs (Geomorphology, Geology).

## 5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are action necessary to accomplish goals in education. Teaching and learning go together. One cannot succeed without the success of the other. Value placed in teaching will reap the same value in learning. Teaching and learning strategies comply with the university vision and mission. Course specifications, curriculum and C1 forms of General degree programme are available.

Timely communications have been done. We were able to witness the notice boards with full of C1 forms and the website with relevant information. There are evidences of student feedback, but not in all departments.

The main theoretical underpinning of the outcomes-based curriculum is the model of constructive alignment, which is defined as coherence between assessment, teaching strategies and intended learning of an educational program. In this context, it is expected that the external examiner's reports play an important role. But it is not a regular practice in the Faculty except in few departments. The review team enlightened the importance of external peer review and highlighted that it is the general practice of the university system.

It is also a prime concern ensure the facilities of present-day inclusive education of differently-abled students. The review team appreciate the activities of the Faculty in this regard specially we witnessed the special attention given by the Faculty in relation to the ICT skill development of this children. We too sadly noted that these students were not able to follow certain course unities/subjects due to the location of those classes, especially in upstairs. Either by providing lifts facilities or conducting the classes in the ground floor, these students must be given the opportunities to select their subjects.

It is expected to have diverse delivery modes to maximize the student engagement in learning at group level and individual level. For a large group it is appreciated to have lecture, panel discussions, seminar etc., same as for small groups. Further, role playing, discovery learning or corporative learning should also be encouraged. During the site visit, we witnessed such group discussions as well as corporative learning. Multimedia assisted film studies class of the Faculty was a such a good example. In fact, innovative teaching and learning give life to curriculum. Use of LMS facilities, should also to be developed in all departments.

Since the Faculty is having many experienced teachers with constant research activities, students are fortunate to participate in such research activities. But we understand that the opportunities are rare for students of general degree programme.

Students are encouraged to produced cultural artifacts especially in the field of Fine Arts. In this respect we wished to appreciate the creative audio-visual productions of the students of the Faculty.

Under the present-day outcome-based education, it is necessary to assess the expected shifts from teaching to learning, skills to thinking, content to process, and teacher instruction to student demonstration. In this regard, both students' feedbacks as well as direct teaching practice observations are important to arrive at the correct path. Although the Faculty is now tuned in this regard, it is necessary to work in this direction to ensure the best practices. Regular internal monitoring by the IQAC is necessary.

At program level, in few departments the students' performance data is available, but need to have teacher performance data and to develop a teacher appraisal system. This in fact directs our future planning of training programs as well as our curriculum development plan. It is really a constant transformational process.

### **5.6 Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression**

The Faculty provides adequate facilities for a range of educational opportunities to enrich the learning experiences that ensures students' holistic progression. Staff profile of the Faculty is of high caliber to ensure quality and integrity of its academic programmes. In order to provide favorable learning environment, Faculty delivers an orientation programme for all new entrants to introduce rules and regulations, curricula, assessment processes with student charter published by the UGC. At the discussion held with the students, it was revealed that separate treatment is provided to general degree students with compared to special degree students by few departments with regard to students' grievances. Students are not provided with special help-desk to get general information regarding the degree programme. However, Dean's office assist students in this regard and direct students to relevant authorities.

Faculty has been conducting student satisfaction survey on teaching and learning, learning environment and student support and open questions on general degree programme. As assured by the faculty members, outcomes of these feedbacks will be incorporated in the ongoing curriculum revision and will take adequate measures to improve learning environment. Though students are provided with counselling service by the Faculty, students claim that they were not met by academic coordinators and counsellors. Therefore, a proper mechanism needs to be adopted to make students aware about these kinds of services.

Usages of the library facilities such as data bases by the general degree students are limited. As discussed with library staff this may be mainly due to language barrier of the general degree students. It is preferable to conduct an awareness programmes on library usage outside the orientation time period where students can absorb the information in much relaxed conditions. After the visit to the ICT laboratory it was evident that considerable amount of general degree students are using computers in their day to day studies. It is commendable to report that Faculty has taken adequate measures to give support services and guidance to meet the needs of the differentially-abled students. Discussion held with needy students reported that especially visually impaired students need more time for their assignments.

It is worth to report that the Faculty has started to streamline student data bases with up to date records by maintaining Management Information System (MIS) mainly for examinations/assessments and registration. Yet, it should be further extended to other academic activities for easy and accurate access by the staff and students. Though there are no evidence on scheduled staff-student social activities, staff-students interactions are built up to some extent by having many registered student societies. Apart from building up the social interaction between students and staff, some Departments encourage general degree students to participate in academic activities conduct by the respective Departments. The Career Guidance Unit (CGU) provides a commendable service to the entire University. There are many programmes organized by the CGU that the general degree students participate. Also, the university CGU conducts programmes requested by the students. Though it is not yet implemented it is worthwhile to mention that at present the CGU is in discussion with the Faculty on the possibility of General Arts degree students to be exposed to an internship programme. University has established a policy on sexual harassment and gender-based violence and code of conduct for staff. This policy should also be extended to students. The discussion held with students revealed that the groups of students who are not involved in ragging activities are harassed by the pro-ragging student groups. It appears that students are divided into two new classes or castes. Immediate action is needed to eradicate this unhealth development.

Faculty has started to take relevant information about the degree of satisfaction of students with the teaching programme. However, there was no evidence on using the information gathered through such feedback for making changes in the programme or courses or delivery process. Faculty also should take action to establish a policy for students who do not have completed the programme successfully to settle with any fall back options. It is a good sign that the Faculty does not encounter with high dropout rate of general degree students. Though it was not a regular practice of the Faculty to conduct tracer studies, Faculty started gathering information on employment data very recently. It was evident that the Faculty addresses the students' complaints and grievances and delivers appropriate responses in timely manner. There were no proper evidences to support that the existence of an active Faculty Alumni but some discussions were held with some alumni who have been supporting the needy students of the Faculty.

### **5.7 Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards**

The Faculty follows the university level standard guidelines for student assessment and awards. Faculty handbook demonstrates rules and regulations. Faculty has a unique policy to meet and facilitate the interests of differently-abled students.

Continuous assessment and end-semester examinations are being employed to assess the academic performance of students. Faculty has used varied assessment strategies in continues assessment process. Assessment strategies are aligned with intended learning outcomes. It was verified through curriculum and course evaluation forms. Further, the team observed that the Faculty has taken initiatives to modernize the BA General Degree programme in order to increase the employability of graduates.

The assessments of different components are clearly outlined in the course guides. Faculty Board gives approval for the list of examiners forwarded by respective departments. It is noted that second marking is not a regular practice and the marking scheme are not being used. Faculty provides extended facilities for students with special needs and conduct examination separately for them.

Further, the Faculty has an academic calendar with the details of examination periods. On the result release matter, there were two different opinions put forwarded. Authorities said that the results are being released on time. But, students have different opinion.

It was also observed that the Faculty appoints a disciplinary committee to inquire the examination offences.

Overall, the Faculty has better performance in several aspects with regard to the above criterion. However, the Faculty should take initiatives to adopt new techniques to improve the student assessment and awards.

### **5.8 Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy practices**

To be truly innovative, an intervention should improve learning, equity and systems; solve a real problem in a simple and clear way. In this respect, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has been introduced to facilitate multimode teaching and delivery. ICT skills are incorporated as a compulsory requirement in the general degree programme. Faculty is in the process of developing their learning management system. In the meantime, the Faculty is encouraging students to use OER in class projects and library orientation programmes.

Faculty involves in research activities facilitated by Faculty Research Committee as well as in collaboration with other research /funding organizations. In this context the systemic limitation of the general degree program was underlined. BA General degree programme does not have the requirement of a dissertation. Only the class projects give such experience of research, that again earlier known as extracurricular activities, helps to develop various facets of the personality development of the students. For all-round development of the student, there is a need of emotional, physical, spiritual and moral development that is complemented and supplemented by co-curricular activities. Similarly, community engagement programmes are also important. Faculty should encourage such activities among the students.

University of Peradeniya is a lively center of culture, and students have many opportunities to experience the cultures of different communities and take part in social and cultural activities. Students' participation in cultural, social and sports activities are commendable. Several organizations and student societies are active in the promotion culture and arts. These are the Arts Council, the University Film Society, the 'Gandharva Sabha' (the Oriental Music Society), the 'Sinhala Natya Mandalaya' (Sinhalese Drama Circle), Tamil Society, the Music Society, and the University Drama Society. We were able to assess the benefits of such enriching experiences

during our short interaction with the students, especially those who are involved in literature as well as in other art forms. During our second day of review, an art exhibition being inaugurated in the proximity of the Faculty by an academic of the Fine Arts Department on reconciliation. The involvement of the students as well as the staff in this creative endeavor reflects the social concern of the community, especially with innovative spirit.

Faculty's initiatives to arrange industrial training component to expose general degree students is commendable. At a more complex level, constructive alignment requires a balance and synergy between the goals and needs of the students. Faculty has indeed realized the value of such a process and taken steps to introduce appropriate innovative changes into general degree curriculum.

## Section 6: Grading of Overall General Degree Programme

The BA (General) Degree Programme offered by the Faculty of Arts of University of Peradeniya was reviewed in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the PR Manual, and the overall performance of the study programme in terms of actual criterion-wise scores, overall score, grade and interpretation are given in the Table 6.1 given below.

**Table 6.1: Actual Criterion-wise Score, Overall Score, Grade and Interpretation**

Assessment Criteria	Number of Standards	Maximum Raw Criterion-wise Score	Raw Criterion-wise Score	Weightage	Actual Criterion-wise Score
1. Program Management	27	81	67	150	124.07
2. Human and Physical Resources	12*	33	31	100	93.93
3. Program Design and Development	24	72	45	150	93.75
4. Course/ Module Design and Development	19	57	48	150	126.32
5. Teaching and Learning	15	45	43	150	113.15
6. Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	24*	69	50	100	72.46
7. Student Assessment and Awards	17	51	37	150	108.82
8. Innovative and Healthy Practices	14**	36	20	50	27.78
Total in Thousand Scale					760.3
Total as a Percentage (%)					76.03
Grade Awarded					B
Interpretation					
Satisfactory level of accomplishment of quality expected of a program of study; requires improvement in a few aspects.					

\*One standard was not appropriate to evaluate according to the degree programme

\*\*Two standard were not appropriate to evaluate according to the degree programme

## **Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations**

### **Commendations**

1. The review team appreciates the establishment of Faculty Standing Committee for general degree programme.
2. Faculty offers BA (General) degree programme in all three medium which provide opportunity for students to choose their preferred medium and greater inter-cultural interaction among students of different ethnic and socio-cultural backgrounds.
3. Adoption of Management Information System for collating, compiling and storage of information at least for limited purposes; at present this is use only for dealing with student registration, examination matters and other reporting systems. Expansion of MIS to governance and management aspects is highly recommended.
4. Availability of international scholarships for general degree students; at present three such scholarships are offered through MOUs signed by the Faculty with overseas universities where general degree students are able to apply.
5. Faculty conducts an effective orientation programme, together with offering English language training programme which extend over a period of three months for new entrants.
6. High caliber teaching staff involved with teaching of general degree students.
7. University Career Guidance Unit is actively engaged in carrier development activities.
8. Although there are few lapses, the Faculty has taken adequate measures to improve teaching and learning environment for differently-abled students.
9. Dropout rate is considerably low.

### **Recommendations**

1. Adopt Sri Lanka Qualification Framework and Subject Benchmark Statements in future curricula revisions.
2. Consider possibilities of introducing compulsory research component and industrial training component for general degree students.
3. Take appropriate measures to expand the space for lectures halls and other learning resources in order to create a conducive teaching and learning environment in the Faculty.
4. Institutionalize a mechanism to regularly conduct feedback studies and tracer studies; Faculty should pay more attention obtain views of stakeholders through student feedbacks, peer observations, student satisfaction surveys, employer feedback surveys, etc., and use inputs from such exercises in affecting the continuous improvement of curriculum and teaching and learning and assessments.
5. Adopt more participatory approach in governance and management activities; Faculty should involve students' representatives in decision making processes where needed.

6. Faculty should conduct regular curriculum development committee meetings and should maintain minutes of such meetings.
7. Employer and Students requirements should take into consideration when designing and developing programmes and courses.
8. Faculty should facilitate the adoption of student-centered learning strategies in programme design and delivery; facilities in lecture halls must be upgraded to facilitate adoption of modern teaching and learning tools and techniques.
9. Learning exercises to impart 'soft skills' are needed to be embedded in programme and course and in teaching and learning methods.
10. Faculty should adopt more participatory approach to ensure stakeholder participation in design and development of programme and course curricula.
11. Common amenities for student facilities including canteen should be expanded and improved to optimize student welfare.
12. General and special degree students need to be treated in equal manner by all Departments.
13. Faculty should consider offering multiple exit points and fallback options for students who could not proceed in the programme or who fail to complete the programme successfully.
14. Considering the large number enrolled in the general degree programme, it is recommended to establish a help-desk at the Deans Office to cater for their needs.
15. Relationship between Faculty Alumni, staff and students needs to be strengthened.
16. Faculty should consider introducing performance appraisal and award system to reward best performers in academic activities.
17. Students' counselors should be provided with training on counselling, their activities should be facilitated to ensure speedy address of students' grievances and needs.
18. Faculty should take initiatives to update the Faculty Website including staff profiles and the details of the study programme.
19. Promote the use of ICT platform and applications (such LMS) in programme delivery.
20. Faculty should take initiatives to release examination results in timely manner in order to build students' confidence.
21. Continuing professional development programmes offered by the SDC should be strengthened through needs analysis and by extending to cover all categories of staff.

## Section 8: Summary

Faculty of Arts of University of Peradeniya has established a good reputation for its BA (General) degree programme. Nonetheless, the Faculty has now identified several gaps, shortcomings and issues faced by the programme. Review team believes that present programme review would shed lights towards reforming the study programme by taking into consideration of those gaps and shortcomings and issues. Review team has observed many positive developments in this regard. Establishment of Quality Assurance Cell of the Faculty is considered as key initiative. Establishment Standing Committee for general degree programme with a faculty-level coordinator, to oversee the administrative aspects of the programme is another key development. Moreover, the Faculty is in the process of revising the curriculum of BA (General) degree programme to meet the present-day needs of the students as well as to ensure the quality and standards of the general degree. .

Human resources for the program is commendable. All most all academic staff are involved with teaching of general degree students. Regarding the physical resources, although the Faculty is managing with the existing space as well as other limitations, it is necessary to address the needs. Teaching-learning modes of the Faculty are in transformation stage towards student centered learning.

The main theoretical underpinning of the outcomes-based curriculum is the model of constructive alignment, which is defined as coherence between assessment, teaching strategies and intended learning of an educational program. In this context, it is expected that the external examiner's plays an important role, which is missing except in few departments. Review team enlightened the importance of external peer review and highlighted that it is the general practice of the university system.

Since the General degree students have wider opportunities with the present-day approach of inter-disciplinary /multidisciplinary perspective. Possibilities of extending their studies for one more year appropriately with compulsory industrial placement and a research component will immensely help these students. Furthermore, offering multiple exit and fall back options for students who face difficulties during the studies, would be desirable.

It is recommended to provide formal training to student counselors to offer student support services in effective and efficient manner. Further, strengthening the career guidance programme to general degree students would also immensely improve their outlook. With reference to the students with special needs, the existing programme needs few structural adjustments to accommodate the needs of visually impaired students.

Faculty has taken steps to expand ICT platform to create Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). To facilitate that, ICT skills are incorporated as a compulsory requirement in the general degree

programme. But technology is not the innovation; rather it is the driver and enabler of innovation. It should facilitate multimode teaching and delivery and creative endeavors.

In fact, the program review is offered to all undergraduate programmes which have completed at least one cycle or graduated batch of students. The programmes need to be aligned to the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF). In this context, since the Faculty entered in the process late, there were gaps or futuristic hope was given as evidences. Review team contextually considered appropriate claims.

Finally, the review team earnestly hopes that issues highlighted and the concerns expressed by this programme review report will be addressed without any delay/excuses. It is only through constant coordination and dedication, the aims of the BA General Degree programme could be attained.

### Programme Review Team

Prof. N. Shanmugalingam, University of Jaffna - Chairperson

Prof. Aruni Weerasinghe, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka - Member

Prof. M. A. Mohamed Rameez, South Eastern University – Member