

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS



***FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND
MANAGEMENT***

EASTERN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

30th June to 02nd July 2008

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1. SUBJECT REVIEW PROCESS

Subject review evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline. This review evaluates the quality of education within the specific discipline of Economics being offered by the Department of Economics (DEc), Faculty of Commerce and Management (FCM) of the Eastern University (EU), Sri Lanka. The review focused on the Self Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by the Department of Economics, FCM, EU. Based on the SER, the team evaluated the quality of the B. Econ (Special) Degree program using the criteria set out by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the Ministry of Higher Education.

The self-evaluation report consisted of eleven sections, i.e., aims, learning outcomes and program details; students and staff facilities; curriculum design, content and review; teaching, learning and assessment methods; Admissions; students' feedback; postgraduate studies; peer observation; skills development; academic guidance and counselling and external degree programme & extension unit. The quality of education within the discipline was evaluated in the light of the aims and learning outcomes given in the SER submitted by the department.

The review focused on the following eight aspects of education:

- Curriculum design, content and review
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Quality of students, including student progress and achievement
- Extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative
- Postgraduate studies
- Peer observation
- Skills development
- Academic guidance and counselling

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

- The self-evaluation report submitted by the Department
- Meeting with the Vice Chancellor, Dean/FCM, Librarian, Head/DEc, academic and non-academic staff members of the DEc, students councillors and undergraduate & post-graduate students
- Observation of teaching, student presentations and practical sessions
- Observation of relevant documents (hand books, department publications, study guides, question papers, model answers and marking schemes, marks sheets, dissertations, evaluation sheets, minutes of various meetings, etc.)
- Observation of Department and other facilities (computer centre, lecture rooms, library, etc.)

Each subject review aspect of education was judged by making one of the three standards/levels namely; good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. For the purpose, strengths, good practices and weaknesses in relation to the each aspect were considered. An overall judgment was made from the three options, i.e., confidence, limited confidence and no confidence by taking into account the status of the judgments given for all the eight aspects of the academic programme.

The dates the review team visited were 30th June, 01st and 2nd July 2008. The agenda of the subject review is in annexure I.

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

The Batticaloa University College was established on 01st August 1981 to fill a long felt need for the development of a higher educational institution in the Eastern Province, Sri Lanka. The College began with two faculties: the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Agriculture. Both these faculties were affiliated to the University of Peradeniya. On 1st October 1986 this University College was elevated to the status of the National University, and named as the Eastern University, Sri Lanka by a University order dated 26th September 1986 issued under section 2 of the University Act No. 16 of 1978. In 1988 two new faculties, the Faculty of Commerce and Management and the Faculty of Cultural Studies were established. The Faculty of Cultural Studies was then expanded and renamed the Faculty of Arts and Culture in 1991. The University recently established the Faculty of Health-Care Sciences. A Campus of the University functions at Trincomalee with the Faculties of Applied Sciences and Communication and Business Studies. Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics Studies at Kallady, Batticaloa is attached to the Eastern University where degree programmes in Music and Dance are conducted. Eastern University, Sri Lanka is one of the fifteen universities in Sri Lanka with student population of about 2500.

The vision of the university is to be a national centre of excellence for higher learning and research with a competitive advantage responsive to the dynamics of the regional and global conditions.

The mission of the university is to pursue excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, to offer through its internal and external faculties, campuses and other facilities an unsurpassed range of opportunities for education and training to all those who will be able to benefit, to enhance public welfare, prosperity and culture by encouraging application of learning and research and to secure and administer resources to achieve these aims effectively.

The Faculty of Commerce and Management has four departments namely Department of Management, Department of Commerce, Department of Economics and Department of Accountancy and Finance. The following programmes of study provided by the FCM.

	Programme	Duration
01	BBA specialization in Marketing Management	4 years
02	BBA specialization in Human Resource Management	4 years
03	BBA	4 years
04	B.Com. specialization in Enterprise Development	4 years
05	B.Com. specialization in Accounting and Finance	4 years
06	B.Com	4 years
07	Bachelor of Economics (B.Econ)	4 years

The vision of the Faculty of Commerce and Management is to be the trailblazer in creating excellence in managing the resources to the dynamics of the society through innovative modes.

The mission of the Faculty of Commerce and Management is to be the leader in management education committed to the highest standard of teaching, learning and research to contribute to the holistic development of the society with concern for quality and teamwork.

Department of Economics offers Bachelor of Economics (B.Econ) special degree programme. The students have passed in the A/L Commerce stream are admitted to the FCM

according to the general policy adopted by the University Grants Commission. However, the DEc used to select students for the economics special degree program from the Faculty of Arts & Culture on their second year, based on their good performance in Economics in the first year examination. Unfortunately transferring students from the Faculty of Arts & Culture was stopped by the Faculty of Arts & Culture in 2004. Now the department is functioning as a service department by providing the economic related course units to the other degree programmes conducted by the other departments of FCM.

In 2005 the Department had the plan to initiate two additional specialization degree programmes namely B. Econ Specialisation in Business Economics and B. Econ Specialisation in Development Economics. The course structures and syllabuses were studied and recommended by Curriculum Evaluation Committee in 2005 and published in the students hand book 2005/06. After the discussion in the Standing Committee meeting at UGC, it is revised. The revised proposal of the new degree programme - Bachelor of Business Economics (B.B. Econ.) is approved by the Curriculum Evaluation Committee and the Senate of the University in 2008.

Further, the FCM made a request to UGC to allocate students directly from A/L commerce stream to the special degree programme proposed by the DEc. The commission on its 708th meeting accepted this request. The Department expects this student allocation from next academic year (2008/09).

3. AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAMME DETAILS

3.1. Aims

The DEc's aim is to produce graduates who notably have a solid foundation in Economics but who feel confident in communication skill and are able to think critically and apply knowledge and skill to novel situations. The ultimate aim is to achieve the vision and mission of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka

The major objectives of the teaching programme are: to ensure that all the students have opportunity to study Economics and related subjects, and develop their interest in Economics and related aspects; to provide an understanding in economic concepts; to ensure the continued supply of high quality graduates with the knowledge of Economics for the society; to support the policies of central government, local government and the departments under the local government in promoting growth and competitiveness and the development of the Eastern province in Sri Lanka through the provision of an efficient and effective tertiary education programme in applied and development Economics; and to ensure the delivery of high quality teaching in a cost effective manner.

These objectives are achieved through the provision of courses which draw on subject materials from the relevant discipline. The department provides the source of expertise in the applied areas of these subjects which is not available in other parts of the universities. Efficiency is expected to be maximizing by organizing appropriate modular courses, which are available to students registered for management, commerce, economics and other disciplines such as Arts and Science.

3.2. Learning Outcomes

After completion of the degree programme students are expected to: gain knowledge and understanding of the discipline of Economics and its related fields; learn how such knowledge and understanding could be applied to research and field works; developed their personal skills in scientific method, data handling and interpretation, information management, oral and written communication etc.; and gain practical and field works experience of research and analysis of data technical skills, and developed skills for self directed learning.

Programme Details

The DEc offers a special degree programme in Economics, however as stated earlier, now it has been stopped. The courses offered by the DEc are as follows.

For the 1st and 2nd year BBA, B.Com students

ECN 1214	Economic Theory
ECN 1222	Social Harmony and Sri Lankan Studies
ECN 2114	Advanced Micro Economic Theory

For the 3rd year and final year BBA, B.Com students

DBE 3113	Monetary Economics
DBE 3223	International Economics
DBE 4123	Managerial Economics

For the Bachelor of Economics students

ECN 1214	Economic Theory
ECN 1222	Social Harmony and Sri Lankan Studies
ECN 2114	Advanced Micro Economic Theory
DBE 3113	Monetary Economics
DBE 3123	Sri Lankan Economy
DDE 3133	Development Principles and concepts
DBE 3223	International Economics
DDE 3221	Resource Economics
DDE 3213	Public Sector Economics
DBE 4112	Research Methods in Economics
DDE 4133	Agriculture and Rural Development
DDE 4123	Welfare Economics
DBE 4133	Econometrics
DDE 4213	Development possibilities and prospect

Following are the optional courses offered by the Department of Economics.

DBE 301	Public Sector Economics
DDE 401	Environmental Economics
DBE 401	Industrial Development

4. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Review

DEs' curriculum was designed when the Faculty was established with the assistance of expertise who served in various universities in Sri Lanka. Recently it was revised due to the changes occurred in the world economic order. It has introduced two additional specialization programmes namely,

- Bachelor of Business Economics
- Bachelor of Development Economics, unfortunately the plan was abandoned.

Accordingly, the new course structure of the above programme has been approved by the Curriculum Evaluation Committee and the Senate of the EU.

In order to complete the degree, a student should have completed a minimum of 120 credits and a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 in the entire degree programme.

Course units are designed to include basic and essential subject units. Optional course units contain specific areas which would provide a diverse knowledge on Economics and related subjects. All the course units are consisted of lectures, assignments, tutorials and presentations. Course units are spanned over 4 year degree programme in management, commerce and economics.

Curriculum of the DEc is reviewed regularly. In the year of 2005 the previous curriculum prepared and with the assistants of prominent professors of Sri Lanka, and approved by the Curriculum Evaluation Committee and the Senate of the EU. The proposed curricular in 2008, several new courses have been introduced. Labour Economics, Career Guidance, Social Harmony and Sri Lanka Studies, Basic Science, Small Business Management, Business Counseling, E-Commerce are some of them. The department also exploits the opportunities to update and enhance contents of the other courses by way of professional training in staff development and postgraduate training in relevant fields.

The department is progressively developing the usage of computers in teaching and learning activities. Introduction to IT, Computer Software and Application are the new courses have been introduced since 2005, for the special degree students.

4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Presently the DEc is functioning with two senior lecturers, five probationary lecturers and one temporary lecturer. Under this limited resources strategy of the department in this respect is very systematical.

Modern teaching and learning methods such as informal discussions, problem based learning and workshops are now been practiced in addition with the traditional method of lectures. Assignments and seminars give additional support for teaching. Steps are being taken to provide the lectures with the using of electronic equipments such as multimedia projector, OHP, etc. Other types of visual aids are also used if necessary.

Teaching materials such as course guides and handouts are given to the students. Students are allowed to access to any optional units for which they have special interests.

Computer assisted learning and internet resources are available for students. Students can use two computer labs that are maintained by the Science Faculty. One small lab is partly used by Arts & Culture and students of the DEc.

Computers which are available in the department are widely used for data handling, word processing e-mail and journal access.

Assessments and reports are included to support students learning to determine their progressing and to upgrade their performance.

Students are grouped and given assignments. Temporary assistant lecturers assist in this matter to the Senior lecturers. They are provided with guidelines which are given by the lecturer concerned. 80% attendance to the lectures is essential for them to sit for the examination each year.

Final year research project is compulsory for all students. It enables them to experience research in their preference. Most of students present their research papers in Undergraduate Research Forum (URF) arranged by FCM. Before the commencement of their research project they should do a presentation of their project proposal. The project proposal of the students should be accepted by the research committee which is consisted by the Senior lecturers of the subject concerned.

After the second year examinations students are sent to the selected organizations for non credit practical training. Successful completion of this component is essential for a student to qualify the degree.

There are two semesters per academic year and at the end of each semester examinations are held.

Continuous assessments also are held. 35% of the total marks are allocated to this component of exam.

The details of 35% are as follows.

Tutorials	- 10%
Mid semester exam / open book assessment / term papers / presentations	- 10%
Special assignments	- 15%
	<u>35%</u>

The research project is assessed and considered as a separate paper. 02 credits are allocated for research methods and further 04 credits are allocated for research project.

Each answer script is examined by internal and external examiners. Each project report is examined by two internal examiners. The department is working with least amount of resources, worthy of commending for their untiring effort towards this achievement.

4.3. Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement

Students are enrolled by UGC according to their admission procedures. They are given hand book (Students' Guide). All the details about faculty, departments, library and other facilities are given in that hand book. Orientation programme is arranged by the faculty for the fresh students.

Students' Progress in each year is monitored by tutorials, mid semester examinations, open book assessment, term papers, presentations, special assignments and end semester examinations. Project works are also monitored and assessed by the supervisor and by other members of the department by oral presentations related to the project.

Over the last five years, the special degree students obtained honours classes. No failures were recorded. Details are given below.

Economics special degree results for last five years

Year	Total	1st Class	2nd Upper	2nd Lower	Simple pass
2002	15	-	04	05	06
2003	14	-	07	06	01
2004	14	-	01	03	10
2005	13	02	02	03	06
2006	14	-	04	03	07

It is evident that over 50% of students achieved a class pass.

Department offers Kanagaretnam Senthilnayagam award for the best student performed well in the whole economic special degree programme each year.

Most of these graduates have obtained better employment opportunities. Each year minimum four economic graduates who passed with class are given an opportunity to serve as temporary assistant lecturers for one year in the department. They are selected in merit of their performance. Many of them have got opportunity to work in Central Bank, state and private banks, other financial institutions, NGOs, SLAS, and other private and public sector institutions. Some of them are now serving as permanent lecturers in the Management, Commerce, and Economics departments. Many of them have registered for the postgraduate programmes in various universities in Sri Lanka.

4.4 Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Students' feed back is taken in three levels – programme level, unit level, and individual level. Student representatives for faculty board often disclose their current problems related with the programme, course units and other matters.

At individual level, students' grievances are revealed via temporary assistant lecturers, and other non academic staff. The services of student counselors are immense in this matter.

The lecturers are very enthusiastic to get qualitative and quantitative feed back from the students of their teaching performance. This seems to have helped the lecturers in the department to improve their teaching process. There is a standard questionnaire developed by the faculty in this respect. The lecturers themselves distribute the questionnaire among the

students, collect them and get the feedback for themselves. In addition to the feedback through the formal questionnaire, the lecturers also get a verbal feedback while the session is being conducted. This situation seems a good sign from the point of view of the students as well as teachers because this creates a positive atmosphere to improve and maintain a good student teacher relationship.

The Head and the staff members practice an open door policy in respect of the student grievances. In addition to his duties Head of the Department acts as the academic advisor.

The University is very much happy about its' smooth functioning without any disturbance and unpleasant incidents are not taking place especially among the undergraduates.

4.5 Postgraduate Studies

Postgraduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) programme is conducted by FCM postgraduate studies unit. Economics department provides following courses.

1. Economics – as a pre-requisite course
2. Economics for decision making – as a core subject

Postgraduate unit also conducts Masters in Development Economics (MDE). Duration of the programme is 18 months. Economic department offers following courses.

1. Micro Economic Analysis
2. Macro Economic Analysis
3. Current issues in Development Economics
4. Strategies for Development
5. Regional Development
6. Dissertation

The number of students who are following MDE programme is 83 reflecting a good demand.

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

4.6 Peer Observation

Departmental meetings are held to discuss various matters and staff members share their views. All the staff members participated in curricular revision and other academic activities. Moderation of question papers and second marking of answer scripts by a senior academic member is done continuously as a practice. In line with university guidance the department expects to operate an organized peer observation system very soon.

4.7 Skills Development

Skill development is included in departments' course units and in the learning, teaching, and assessment methods they used.

The skills development is embedded in all levels from the first year to the final year. In the 3rd year all the students are allowed for training in some firms such as Banks and Insurance companies, where they can get maximum skills.

The students are able to obtain vast skills in IT by following practical classes.

The optional course units are designed for getting skills development. Students in third year and final year are able to opt e-commerce and some other optional course units and improve their skills.

All the final year students gain practice in conducting research and making presentations. They receive peer and staff feed back and have other opportunities improve their skills in communication. By the time they make their final presentations on the research projects they are normally confident and have the necessary skills.

In order to improve in the knowledge and skill in the research methods, all the students are trained as a good researcher under the supervision of senior lecturers of the department. Each student is required to submit a project report on selected diverse topics. A viva voce examination is faced by the students before handing over the final copy of the report.

A great number of skills (few of them to mention here are; conversation skills, computer and IT skills, presentation skills, inter personal skills and demonstration skills) to be developed by the undergraduates have been identified and necessary facilities have been made available to undergraduates within the University with difficulties. Practically, each undergraduate is officially allocated a minimum of five hours a week for their computer studies plus practical. These laboratories are well equipped with the required logistic facilities and physical and human resources. The laboratories are open for 10 hours a day, five days a week. 150 students can be accommodated at a time, in these laboratories. All undergraduates have access to any of these computer laboratories, irrespective of the department which they belong to.

Undergraduates have been facilitated with four English Language courses (total of 8 credits) during the whole programme. The medium of instruction of the total four year programme is English. Undergraduates, though had encountered difficulties during the first semester of the first year, had later found improved.

All most all undergraduates who had undergone their education in their mother tongue (Tamil) seem very much conversant in English language especially when they come to the 2nd half of the programme run by the department of Economics and therefore the improvements so far shown by the undergraduates in their English proficiency in the university seems acceptable.

4.8 Academic Guidance and Counselling

Academic guidance and counselling seems available at the University and faculty level and there are two student counsellors have been appointed in the department of Economics. It seems that these student counsellors perform a routine job when the students come to them with problems for redress or for some consolation. Academic guidance and counselling seems rather broader in its context.

The academic staff members in the department of Economics have volunteered at several occasions not only to provide academic guidance and counselling but also to help the undergraduates in numerous ways.

Many undergraduates in the department are involved in the extra curricular activities like sports. This aspect again demands a proper academic guidance and counselling programme.

5. CONCLUSIONS

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

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

The overall judgment is suspended

5.1 Curriculum Design, Content and Review

The following strengths/good practices and weaknesses were identified by the review team

Strengths/Good Practices

- The curriculum has been designed in a prudent and logical manner to cover a wide range of subjects in the field of Economics and Management
 - Curricula Evaluation committee at university level is established. The DEc. follows this systematic procedure in curricula design.
 - There is a practice of continuously revising the curriculum based on changing circumstances in the field. Validity of the courses included in Economics specialization seems very pertinent to the present requirement of the country.
 - Department Consulted with other university academic experts in curricular formation.
 - Theoretical components as well as practical components are included in the curricular. Three months vestibule training is given to students.
 - Curricula is reviewed regularly.
 - Credit system, GPA and Semester system were adopted.
 - The total four year curriculum carries a weight of 120 credits.
 - Independent Research Report is available for the undergraduates to follow in the final year which encourages the undergraduates to search for truth through understanding the reality of the world.
 - Inter-departmental courses to be made available for the undergraduates to follow
- The programme is conducted in English Medium.
- The course units offered by the DEc for external degree programme conducted by the faculty are an added plus mark for the department.

Weaknesses

- Very limited elective courses are available for the undergraduates to select.
- Detailed syllabuses are not been prepared for the new proposal
- Intended Learning Outcomes of courses are not explicit in line with the overall learning outcome
- Inconsistent distribution of the course units and the credit weights can be seen. E.g., First Year First Semester, English for Communication –I (03 credits); First Year Second Semester, English for Communication –II (01 credit); Second Year Second Semester, English for Communication –Reading (03 credits); Second Year Second Semester, English for Communication –Oral (01 credit)

The judgement assigned to this aspect is "**Satisfactory**"

5.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Strengths/Good Practices

- The behaviour of both lecturers in the department and the students who follow economic related courses is at a commendable level.
- The library usage by the undergraduates is at an acceptable level.
- Good learning environment is maintained as Inter-relationship between students and teachers are very high.
- Modern teaching methods are used. Multi media, handouts, white board, OHP, etc.
- Balanced assessment method is used. 65% for end semester examination and 35% for continues assessments.
- Practice of second marking and moderation by other university academics
- 80% of attendance are maintained.
- The students' attitudes towards the service delivered by academic and non academic staff in the department are very positive.
- Students are facilitated with Field Visits, Practical Training and Independent Research Report

Weaknesses

- The records maintained in connection with departmental activities, i.e. teaching learning and assessment methods and General Administration is inadequate.
- In-adequate commitment among some lecturers to acquire higher academic credentials.
- Modern teaching equipments are not properly set.
- E-learning system is not in practice.
- Abstracts of the dissertations which are written in Tamil are not in English.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "**Satisfactory**"

5.3 Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement

Strengths/Good Practices

- Separate window for student admission is proposed.
- The opportunity of getting jobs especially in the private sector just after completion of the degree programme.
- The degree of employability of the graduates seems high.

- Behaviour of both lecturers and undergraduates are positive
- Failure rate is very low or nil and more than 50% of students are getting classes
- News letters available in the department.
- Undergraduate Research Forum is functioning to publish their research articles.

Weaknesses

- Some students are reluctant to write their final year dissertation in English

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "**Good**"

5.4 Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Strengths/Good Practices

- The Head and the staff practices an open door policy, The rapport developed and maintained between undergraduates and lecturers in the department has immensely paved the way to develop a friendly and a positive academic culture in the department.
- The undergraduates do participate in the faculty meetings and their voice is given due consideration.
- The dedication shown towards solving the undergraduate problems by the academic staff members in the department is appreciable.
- Formal teaching evaluation system is in practice. A questionnaire is developed to evaluate the teacher.

Weaknesses

- Students Evaluation sheets are not analysed therein feedback could not be incorporated.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "**Satisfactory**"

5.5 Postgraduate Studies

Strengths/Good Practices

- Post Graduate unit is established under the faculty.
- The trust developed by the post graduate candidates towards the staff of the department.
- The senior members of the academic staff have had the opportunity to perform duties as teaching and coordinating the postgraduate programmes
- Having a full fledged library which is open from 0800 hrs to 1800 hrs, in five week days and from 0800 hrs to 1600 hrs, in week ends with a dedicated library staff.

Weaknesses

- 18 months programme that prevent some applicants to get promotions. i.e. University Lecturers.
- Some dissertations are written in Tamil but abstract are not in English.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "**Good**"

5.6 Peer Observation

Strengths/Good Practices

- Moderation and second marking system are in practice.
- Departmental meetings are regularly held.
- The cohesive and positive, brotherly behaviour irrespective of the gender, demonstrated by all the academic staff members in the department in all respect of academic and academic related activities

Weaknesses

- No formal peer observation system.
- No common room to share views of staff members.

Judgment is "**Unsatisfactory**" with regard to this aspect.

5.7 Skills Development

Strengths/Good Practices

- Undergraduate vestibule Trainings in the third year.
- IT and Computer learning facilities are adequate.
- Programme is conducted in English Medium so that students can face any challenge.
- Presentation skills are improved by individual and group presentations.
- Professional subjects are thought (E- Commerce, Small Business Management etc) so that students can easily find jobs
- Students research forum paves way to disseminate their knowledge.

Weaknesses

- Not organizing regular field trips, guest lectures, and other activities like organizing seminars and community related services make opportunities to improve, organize and develop leadership skills among undergraduates.
- Inadequate space and resources for the staff members in the department hinders performing the duties by the academics with their full capacity with a peaceful and innovative mind in a conducive working environment.
- No subject associations.
- There are only three computers available in the department including the one reserved for the Head of the department. The other computers have to be shared by all the lecturers and the non academic staff members in the department. Thus, the academic staff members' time is under utilized due to the lack of these basic resources.

Judgment assigned to this aspect is "**Satisfactory**"

5.8 Academic Guidance and Counselling

Strengths/Good Practices

- Orientation program conducted by the university for fresh students gives familiar environment in the University.

- Making available the undergraduates, at the beginning of the Programme, a copy of the Faculty Prospectus which contains the details of the degree programmes conducted by the faculty.
- Head functioning as students academic counsellor.
- A student counselling programme is available in the university in which two members of the Department perform duties as student counsellors.

Weaknesses

- Non availability of a well thought, properly designed academic counselling program in the department
- Non availability of a department hand book prevents access to more information about the department.
- Lack of formal training for staff on the student counselling and guidance.
- Non existence of a separate room for student counselling.
- Non-availability of a sound and a common record maintenance system in relation to Academic Guidance and Counselling in the department for future reference.
- No course coordinator to handle the subjects
- Honorarium payable to the Student Counsellors representing the departments is not encouraging

Judgment assigned is '**Satisfactory**' for this aspect

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- To re-consider the course units and course contents and if necessary to revise the course contents
- Introduction of Sinhala Language course unit with at least 3 credit as a compulsory course unit
- To reconsider the name of the degree which can be marketable i.e. BBA (Business Economics)
- Incorporate feed back from the undergraduates in teaching as well as a formal peer observation method would help increasing the productivity of the department.
- The staff in the DEc be given a formal training on Academic Guidance & Counselling.
- An initiative to encourage the staff members to do research with the undergraduates will help developing a research culture in the department.
- A senior member can be assigned for academic counselling.
- Reasonable amount of space and resources shall be provided for the lecturers to make their academic contribution efficient and effective.

- A better filing system should be maintained in connection with departmental activities, i.e. teaching learning and assessment methods and general administration
- In curricular revision, other stakeholders and students views should be considered.
- Introduce a number of elective courses to enable the undergraduates to have a wider choice.
- It will be very useful if course manuals can be developed for all the courses conducted by the department. A list of compulsory additional readings along with articles published recently in the journals also is a must to make students aware about the recent developments in the discipline.
- To improve the employability of the graduates of the department, it is advisable to incorporate practical training as a compulsory credit course unit.
- It is important to establish alumni association for the department to get their views and support to develop the department.

7. ANNEXES

Annex 1 - AGENDA FOR THE SUBJECT REVIEW VISIT

Day 01- 30.06.2008

08.30 – 09.00 Private Meeting of Review Panel with QAA Council Representatives
09.00 – 09.30 Discuss the Agenda for the Visit
09.30 – 10.30 Meeting(s) with the Vice-Chancellor / Chairman, Internal QA Unit / Dean, Head of the Dept. / Head, Faculty QA Cell etc. (*Working Tea*)
10.30 - 11.30 Department Presentation on the Self Evaluation Report
11.30 – 12.30 Discussion
12.30 – 13.30 *Lunch*
13.30 – 14.30 Observing Departmental Facilities
14.30 – 15.30 Observing other Facilities (Library, Computer Centre etc.)
15.30 – 16.30 Meeting with Department Academic Staff
16.30 – 17.30 Meeting Student Counselors / Academic Advisors / Personal Tutors
17.30 – 18.30 Brief Meeting of Reviewers

Day 02 - 01.07.2008

09.00 – 09.30 Observing Teaching – Lecture
09.30 – 10.00 Observing Teaching – Lecture
10.00 – 11.00 Observing Documents (*Working Tea*)
11.00 – 12.00 Meeting with Technical Staff and Other Non-Academic Staff
12.00 – 12.30 Meeting with Postgraduate Students
12.30 – 13.30 *Lunch*
13.30 – 14.00 Observing Teaching – Lecture
14.00 – 14.30 Meeting with Undergraduate Students
14.30 – 15.00 Observing Students' Presentations
15.00 – 15.30 Observing Teaching – Practical Class
15.30 – 16.30 Observing Documents
16.30 – 17.00 Meeting of Reviewers

Day 03 - 02.07.2008

09.00 – 10.00 Reviewers Private Discussion
10.00 – 12.00 Meeting with Head and Staff for Reporting
12.00 – 13.00 *Lunch*
13.00 – 17.00 Report Writing