

# **SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY**



**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA**

27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**Review Team :**

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## **1. SUBJECT REVIEW PROCESS**

Subject Review Process of the University Grants Commission involves evaluating the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline focusing on the student learning experience and on student achievement. This subject review process evaluates the quality of both undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

Subject review process at the Department of Archaeology (DA) of the University of Kelaniya was conducted following the guidelines provided in the Quality Assurance Handbook for Sri Lanka Universities published by the CVCD and University Grants Commission in July 2002.

The DA, University of Kelaniya submitted a Self Evaluation Report (SER) consisting of ten sections, namely:

1. Background
2. Overview
3. Graduates
4. Management and Organization
5. Evaluation
6. Teaching, Learning and Assessment methods.
7. Student Feedback
8. Skills Development
9. Facilities
10. Conclusion

The quality of education was reviewed according to the aims and learning outcomes given in the SER of the DA.

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

1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review
2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods
3. Quality of Students including Students Progress and Achievements
4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback
5. Postgraduate Studies
6. Peer Observation
7. Skills Development
8. Academic Guidance and Counseling.

The Review Team visited for three days, namely 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2007. The agenda of the three-day visit is given in Annex 1.

The Review Team held meetings with the following individuals and groups.

- Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences.
- Head, DA
- Academic staff of the DA
- Non-Academic staff of the DA

- Undergraduate Students.
- Student Counselors, Academic Advisor.

The Review Team visited the following places of the DA for observation:

- Departmental Museum.
- Departmental and University main Library.
- Conservation Laboratory of the department.
- GIS room.
- Drawing activities at the department.
- Lecture Halls at the DA and Faculty of Social Sciences when Special and General Degree Archaeology students were following lectures.
- All equipments for the teaching process.
- Administrative office and Academic staff rooms at the DA.

The Review Team studies the following documents:

- Undergraduates Hand Book, Department of Archaeology – 2006/2007
- Student Hand Book of Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Kelaniya – 2006/2007
- Revised syllabus, Special and General Degree Programme – 2007
- New Syllabus of Tourism and Cultural Resources management (General Degree) – 2007
- Details about the visiting staff of the department.
- A set of answer scripts marked by internal and external examiners.
- Copies of subject related handouts issued by lecturers at their lectures.
- Student assignments and presentation of multimedia.
- Grades and relevant grade points used in examinations.
- A set of course evaluation forms filled by the Special Degree Students.
- Research publications, academic staff members of the department.
- The Annual Journal of University Archaeology students Society – Vasundara.

Each of the eight aspects was judged as good/satisfactory/unsatisfactory, in light of strengths, good practices and weaknesses in each.

If the department wishes it may request clarification from the Review Team or make any comments on the report within one month receiving the report. The department is required to send a report on the action taken in response to review recommendations within one year. Finally, the review report will be published and a certificate will be issued.

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

The University of Kelaniya was originally established in 1875 as Vidyalankara Pirivena, a center of learning for Buddhist Priests. It was one of the two great national centers of traditional higher learning, heralding the first phase of the national movement and national resurgence.

With the establishment of modern Universities in Sri Lanka in the 1940s and 1950s, the Vidyalankara Pirivena became the Vidyalankara University in 1959, later the Vidyalankara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka in 1972. In 1978, the University was founded under its present name.

The DA is one of the departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences. The Faculty of Social Sciences, in terms of student population, is the largest faculty in the University of Kelaniya. Although it was instituted in the academic year 1981/82, its constituent of the university itself. At the beginning, the Vidyalkara University, the predecessor of the University of Kelaniya, consisted of several faculties of which the Faculty of Arts was divided into namely the Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Humanities. While the traditional disciplines of History, Archaeology, Geography, Philosophy, Economics and Sociology strength the academic content of the Faculty, the new departments like Mass Communication, Library and Information Science and Physical Education have opened their doors to professional.

The DA has been established in 1973 as a sub Department of History, Faculty of Arts at the Vidyalkara Campus of the University of Sri Lanka. It has become a fully fledged department of study in 1979. The first batch of students who followed the Special Degree course in Archaeology, graduated in 1977.

### **3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

#### **3.1. Aims**

The DA conducts the undergraduate (Special and General) and Postgraduate Degree Programmes with the following aims.

- To provide students with an understanding of the past society of Sri Lanka and World.
- To impart to students aware of the Archaeological insight and drawn into the issues which offered the protection and management of the Cultural resources in Sri Lanka.

#### **3.2. Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of the Degree Programme in Archaeology, students should (as stated in the SER)

- Be able to critically understand the Archaeological Heritage in Sri Lanka and World.
- Be able to understand forms, concepts, theories and basic models of Archaeology.
- Be able to critically understand a number of central issues Archaeology in the contemporary society.
- Have knowledge of the recent development and changes in the subject.
- Have a general understanding of the relationship between broader administrative, legislative and financial context in which Archaeology functions today.
- Have gained a field experiences and a professional experience.
- Have improved their ability on information technology, which is essential for the field Archaeology.
- Have developed a critical understanding of our cultural heritage and the impact of social, economic and environmental issues on the sites and monuments.

- Have an introduction to the skills required for Archaeology and the cultural resource management in both public and commercial sectors which may be transferable to a vocational situation.
- Have gained knowledge of involving in research work on Archaeology.
- Have participated in fieldwork, and improved their adaptability to work as a team.

## **4. FINDING OF THE REVIEW TEAM**

### **4.1. Curriculum Design, Content and Review**

The DA offers the subject of Archaeology in the BA General Degree programme as well as in the BA Special Degree programme. A new subject, Tourism and Cultural Resource Management, is also offered in the BA General Degree programme.

The BA General Degree programme is of three academic years consisting six semesters of 15 weeks each. To be eligible for the BA General Degree, a student should accumulate a total of 76 credits at minimum: 72 credits (24 credits per year) from core course and 4 credits from elective or auxiliary course. However it is suggested that the minimum number of credits should be increased to 90 in keeping with the standard of most of the other universities in Sri Lanka. In the case of the new subject of Tourism and Cultural Resource Management which is offered over three years, 28 credits should be earned. The cadre provisions for Tourism and Cultural Resource Management Degree Programme are not adequate.

To be eligible for the BA Special Degree, a total of 120 credits is required: 8 credits from foundation year, 102 credits from 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years and 10 credits for final year dissertation. The dissertation topic is assigned at the beginning of the final year and the completed dissertation, which has to be of about 10,000 words, should be submitted at the end of the final year. In addition, Special Degree students are expected to submit a project report on a topic related to an archaeological site or ancient monuments. The topics of dissertation and project reports assigned to the students by the DA cover a wide area in the field of Archaeology.

The curriculum of the DA which was developed initially in late seventies has been revised several times to meet to department's requirement. In year 1998, DA moved from three-term system (old curriculum) to the credit based semester system.

The Review Team has noted that the curriculum of Archaeology of General Degree and Special Degree which has been revised in 2007 meets the current national needs. The undergraduate curriculum of Archaeology has the field training component and this gives the students practical experience in Archaeological exploration, excavation and analysis so on. The field work in Archaeology is used not only to gain an understanding of the physical and built environment but also to develop students' skills. The curriculum is enriched through subjects with a presentation component to improve various skills at each level. There is a special English Language course conducted at the department for its Special Degree students in addition to the general English course offered by the Faculty. The Review Team was satisfied with the depth and breadth of the syllabi covered in the undergraduate programme.

Based on the merits of the first year examination, a limited number of students are selected to follow the Special Degree programme by the DA. The number selected is 10, due to the available resources of the department and the limited scope in the job market.

***It is the view of the Review Team that the Curriculum Design, Content and Review adopted by the DA can be judged as GOOD.***

#### **4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods**

The majority of the course units in the BA General and Special Degree programmes comprise of the common method of imparting knowledge, which is through teacher centered lectures. However, in the practical classes and field work, a more student centered approach could be seen where there is better rapport between the teacher and the students. Therefore the students prefer this practical programme. All the lectures of the General and Special Degree courses are conducted by senior academic staff and senior visiting academics while the junior staff members provide assistance particularly in practical programmes. The support in the practical programmes provided by the Department of Archeology (Sri Lanka), Central Cultural Fund, National Museum of Sri Lanka, National Achieves of Sri Lanka and the Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology are commendable. The Review Team suggests that the timetables of the Faculty and DA are followed by the visiting staff members too.

Through the lecture observations and the discussions with the students, it was evident that the multimedia projectors, overhead projectors, slide projectors and printed lecture materials were used in the delivery. The speed and the style of presentation were found to be satisfactory.

Both lecturers and students work together in the field work and this brings about improvement of professional skills of the students of the Special Degree programme. The Upper Malwathu Oya project conducted by the department and organized by the University of Durham in collaboration with some other local and foreign universities helps the students in this regard in great deal as it is a five year research and training programme. The Annual Archaeology Exhibition organized by the department too contributes to the improvement of the talents and the practical ability of the students. The annual journal, *Wasundara*, which is edited by the students, improve the research capacity of the students. Lists of recommended reading and topics for essays and assignments are provided by the individual lecturers during lectures. The students were learning by listening, seeing, taking down notes and by discussion. The Review Team recommends that the students in the General Degree programme too should be provided with field work as a practical component.

The Review Team noted at the discussion that the building space available for the teaching and learning process as well as administration is not adequate.

Although there is a satisfactory collection of publications in the main library, there is a dearth of modern literature on the subject such as international periodicals and books. It was revealed in the discussion of the Review Team with the academic staff of the DA that the orders placed by the staff are not supplied by the main library. Both the lecturers and the students complain of the inadequacy of the number of copies of available titles.

It is noteworthy that the contribution made by the non-academic staff (Technician, Clerk and Labourer) was at a satisfactory level.

The student progress is evaluated by the DA using a variety of evaluation techniques based on the course unit examination system. Marks are assigned to end-semester written examinations and assignments (field study, drawing portfolio, photo documentation, visual media and presentation). Grade point average (GPA) system has been adopted for evaluation. The GPA is calculated as a weighted average on the grade points.

All the question papers are set and moderated and students answer scripts second-marked by the senior academic staff of the department and external senior academics.

***The Review Team judges the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods of the DA as GOOD.***

#### **4.3. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements**

The Archaeology is a prerequisite subject for admission to the first year course; it is based on a pass in any subject with Advance Level Examination. The number of students admitted to the DA is 230 and Z-score for foundation students, of the Faculty of Social Sciences ranges from 2.1995 to 1.2242 in 2006/07 academic year. A limited number of students are selected to follow a Special Degree programme in Archaeology on the basis of merit of the examinations of the first year. The academic year is smoothly functioning. Student performance of Special and General Degree Programme is monitored at the end of each semester by calculating GPA, attendance for lectures, tutorials, assignment and other academic matters. A high level of success is achieved by students on Archaeology Special Degree programme. In the year 2005/06, 1 out of 13 students (7.6%) obtained First class Pass. 6 students (46.1%) obtained Second class Upper and 6 students (46.1%) of the same batch obtain a Second class Lower division Pass (Source: SER).

The Special Degree holders who pass out from the DA enjoy a satisfactory job opportunities. For example, the Review Committee observed that a considerable percentage of students in the last two academic years are employed in the relevant field according to the Self Evaluation Report of the department.

***It is the view of the Review Team that the Quality of the Students including Student Progress and Achievements can be judged as GOOD.***

#### **4.4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback, Qualitative and Quantitative**

Qualitative feedback of the students is collected from small group discussions, tutorials and practicals. The feedback received from the students is taken into consideration in organizing the teaching, research and tests. The quality of the DA activities is always maintained on the basis of the student's qualitative feedback.

Quantitative feedback is gathered from the multiple-choice questionnaires served to the students on the lecture programmes and other activities. Teacher evaluation and departmental innovations are mainly carried out through the feedback statistically received in this procedure. However the Review Team noted at the discussion with students that the feedback from the students is not received in a systematic manner in all papers. As suggested by the students, with multimedia facilities, photographic and drawing equipment, research equipment and enhancements effected on the departmental library will ensure proper use of the qualitative and quantitative feedback received from the students.

***On the basis of this situation it is the view of the Review Team that the Extent and Use of Student Feedback within the DA can be adjudged as SATISFACTORY.***

#### **4.5. Postgraduate Studies**

The subject of Archaeology was introduced into the Social Sciences curriculum of the University of Kelaniya under the Department of History in 1973. The first batch of Special Graduates in Archaeology passed out from the university in 1977. In 1979 a separate

Department of Archaeology (DA) was set up under the Faculty of Social Sciences. The DA introduced a postgraduate course in Archaeology in 1980, but the same year the Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology was inaugurated as an affiliation of the University of Kelaniya. This deterred the progress of the postgraduate course in Archaeology conducted by the DA. Nevertheless, by the year 2000, seven postgraduates completed their respective degree programmes. Against this background the DA started a new set of courses in Archaeology leading to MA and MSc Degrees in July 2007. The staff consisting of two Professors and four Senior Lecturers, one with a Doctorate and the others with Masters Qualifications, is strong enough to carry out the needful.

***On the basis of this situation it is the view of the Review Team that the Postgraduate Studies of the DA can be adjudged as SATISFACTORY.***

#### **4.6. Peer Observation**

The SER does not mention about the peer observation process in the department, but the value of it has been discussed during the departmental staff meetings and it was also articulated by the staff during the review discussion. The DA has arranged to gather student observations of the courses conducted there at the end of every semester. This made to arrangement not implemented in a proper manner. They also get their question papers moderated and their answer scripts second-marked by their counterparts in the other universities.

***On the basis of this situation it is the view of the Review Team that the Peer Observation strategies adopted by the DA can be adjudged as SATISFACTORY.***

#### **4.7. Skills Development**

The range of skills required in an archaeologist in real life are developed through intensive field work involving excavation and conservation, report writing assignments based on their explorations and in field and library research, power-point presentations conducted by students on their experiences and discoveries, computer-based assignments requiring a high level of computer literacy, oral and written assignments demanding proficiency in English, field activities carried out through GIS, exhibitions and scientific sessions where students make of photography, drawing, drafting and mapping. The DA is involved in coordinating activities of the University Cultural Centre and thereby the students enjoy opportunities to improve their singing, dancing, drama and music. Even the training the students receive at the National Museum of Sri Lanka, the annual journal of the University Archaeology Society – VASUNDARA, and the upper-Malwathu Oya Project in which both the students and the lecturers are involved help them develop numerous organizations skills required by a professional archaeologist. The newly introduced BA (General) Degree course in Tourism & Cultural Resource Management will also help them develop a fund of skills to make them attractive to the job market. An internship at places like the National Museums, the Central Cultural Fund, the National Archives, and the historical sites in the ancient capitals, will give the students a through exposure to the profession of Archaeology.

***On the basis of this situation it is the view of the Review Team that the Skills Development procedures of the DA can be adjudged as GOOD.***

#### **4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling**

Some of the senior academics of the DA are engaged as academic advisors and student counselors. A Professor in Archaeology is currently the chief academic advisor of the faculty. Two other members of the DA are student counselors. They coordinate various types of student welfare activities. All students are made to feel free that they have access to the professor or any senior lecturers on any matters related to their studies or their personal well-being. Academic guidance is crucial during the first year studies and in the events of selecting subjects for specialization, and selecting topic for the final year dissertation. Because of the strong relationship between the staff and the students, it has been obvious that all academic in the department are ready available to the students in their entire academic and welfare matters.

*On the basis of this situation it is the view of the Review Team that Academic Guidance and Counseling in the DA can be adjudged as GOOD.*

### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

#### **1. Curriculum Design Content and Review**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- Curriculum is a credit based course module system.
- There is a sufficient coverage of the discipline and the academic standards maintained are good.
- There is a sufficient weighting given to the field of Archaeology such as, field study, drawing portfolio, photo documentation etc.

##### *Weaknesses*

- The number of credits in the General Degree programme is not adequate.

#### **2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- Modern technology is used in teaching
- Practical oriented teaching interests the learners
- Standard criteria are used for evaluation.

##### *Weaknesses*

- Library facilities, Buildings and equipment are inadequate.

#### **3. Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievement**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- High interest of students in their studies
- Encouraging student performance at examinations
- The Special Degree students have sufficient job opportunities in the relevant field.

#### **4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- Feedback is received from the students at the end of the semester.
- Department innovations have been carried out based on student feedback.

##### *Weaknesses*

- Suggestions of the students are not considered in the areas of library facilities, supply of equipment etc.
- The feedback from student is not received in a systematic manner in all relevant papers.

#### **5. Postgraduate Studies**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- The DA has been contributing to the Postgraduate programme conducted by the faculty.
- The DA has started its own MA and MSSc programmes in July 2007
- There is an adequate senior academic staff.

##### *Weaknesses*

- The number of Postgraduate students passing out from the DA is low during the period from 1980 to 2006. (The reason for this seems to be the establishment of the Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology University of Kelaniya.)

#### **6. Peer Observation**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- The need for peer observation has been discussed at the departmental meetings.
- Question papers are moderated and students' answer scripts are second marked by the senior academics of the other universities.

##### *Weaknesses*

- Although it has been discussed, a proper observation programme has not been implemented within the DA.

#### **7. Skills Development**

##### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- The weighting given to field work leads to skills development
- Students, research presentations are made using modern technology
- The annual Journal of the archaeological students, society *Wasundara*, improves their research capacity.
- The involvement of the DA in the activities of the Cultural Centre develops the aesthetic skills of the students.

- A Special English course is conducted by the DA for the Special degree students of Archaeology.

## 8. Academic Guidance and Counseling

### *Strengths/Good Practices*

- The current Chief Academic Advisor of the Faculty is a professor in Archaeology.
- Some senior academics of the DA are engaged as Academic Advisors and Student Counselors.
- The rapport between the teachers and students leads to a better attention on students, academic and welfare matters.

Based on the observations made during the study visit by the Review Team the eight aspects were judged as follows.

<b>Aspect Reviewed</b>	<b>Judgment Given</b>
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Good
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Method	Good
Quality of Students, Student Progress and Achievements	Good
Extent and Use of Students Feedback	Satisfactory
Postgraduates Studies	Satisfactory
Peer Observations	Satisfactory
Skills Development	Good
Academic Guidance and Counseling	Good

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the Review Team would like to make the following recommendations.

1. It is strongly recommended to increase the floor space allocated to the installation of the permanent and temporary staff, museum, laboratory, drawing room, GIS room and the department library. Further, the present departmental conference hall has to be enlarged.
2. The computer facilities already supplied for the staff need to be increased, and the DA may consider setting up a new computer unit for the students' use.
3. It is recommended that the DA be provided with at least 2 multimedia projectors and 2 laptop computers.
4. The DA may consider that a special allocation be made from the annual budget for museum development.
5. The DA may consider establishing a conservation unit for student training.

6. It is strongly recommended to introduce the proposed internship programme for the out-going undergraduates.
7. It is the opinion of the Review Team that the interdisciplinary courses need to be developed between the Faculty of Social Sciences and the other faculties of the University.
8. The DA may consider streamlining the Peer Observation practices by extending it to teaching and practicals.
9. The library needs to be enhanced with new books and periodicals from foreign institutions. In this regard, the DA may consider granting a special allocation to the departmental library needs for the purchase of books.
10. The DA may consider introducing Archaeology practicals to the General Degree students too.
11. It is strongly recommended to increase the credit amounts for the General Degree programme.
12. The DA may consider launching a staff development programme incorporating local and foreign training.
13. It is recommended to establish a formal system for educational guidance and counseling within the department.
14. As the department is introducing a new course 'Tourism and Cultural Resource Management' academic cadre provisions need to be increased.

## 7. ANNEXES

### Annex 1. AGENDA FOR REVIEW VISIT

#### **DAY 1 (27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2007)**

08.30 – 09.00	Private meeting of the Review Team with QAA Council Representatives
09.00 – 09.30	Discuss the Agenda for the visit
09.30 – 10.30	Meeting with the Head of the Department of Archaeology and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences
10.30 – 11.00	Observation of Teaching: Lecture (Art History) L –I
11.00 – 12.00	Observation of Department Facilities
12.00 – 12.30	Observation of other Facilities – Library & Computer Facilities
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.30	Meeting with the Department Academic Staff
14.30 – 16.00	Meeting (I) with Undergraduate Students (Special Degree)
16.00 – 16.30	Observation of Teaching: Lecture (Visual Media in Archaeology) L-2
16.30 – 17.00	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

#### **DAY 2 (28<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2007)**

08.30 – 09.00	Meeting with Student Counselors and Academic Advisors
09.00 – 10.00	Department Presentation on the Self Evaluation Report
10.00 – 11.00	Discussion
11.00 – 11.30	Observation of Teaching: Lecture (Theory & Practical) L – 3
11.30 – 12.30	Meeting with the Technical Staff & other non-academic staff
12.30 – 13.00	Meeting (II) with Undergraduate Students (Special Degree)
13.00 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.30	Meeting with Undergraduate Students (General Degree)
14.30 – 15.00	Meeting with student Counselors, Academic Advisors & Tutors
15.00 – 16.00	Observation Documents
16.00 – 16.30	Observation of Students' Presentation (Special Degree)
16.30 – 17.00	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

#### **DAY 3 (29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2007)**

09.00 – 09.30	Observation of Teaching: Lecture (Archaeological Conservation) L – 4
09.30 – 10.00	Observation Documents
10.00 – 11.00	Observation of Practical: (Pottery Drawing) P – 1
11.00 – 11.30	Observation of Practical: (Digital Photography) P – 2
11.30 – 12.00	Reviewers Meeting
12.00 – 12.30	Meeting with the Head & Staff for Reporting
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 16.30	Report Writing