Institutional Review of University of Peradeniya (8 – 12 May 2023)

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University Grants Commission
Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council
Sri Lanka

Institutional Review – 2023, The University of Peradeniya

From 8ᵗʰ to 12ᵗʰ May 2023

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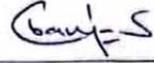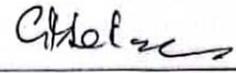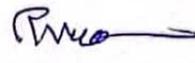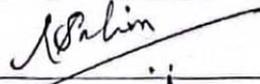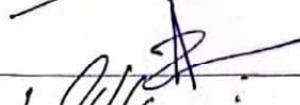
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Section 1: Brief introduction to the University and its review context

The first unitary arts and research university in Sri Lanka, the University of Peradeniya (UoP), retains much from the early days following its formation from a merger of the Ceylon University College and the Medical College in 1942. Four of its nine faculties; the Faculty of Arts (1942), Faculty of Science (1942), Faculty of Agriculture (1948), and Faculty of Engineering (1950) date back to its first decade, as does the 775-hectare campus. The campus has earned the title "Garden University" and is located on the outskirts of the city of Kandy in the town of Peradeniya. The university was initially called the University of Ceylon and then it became the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya campus when the nation dropped its colonial name in 1972 and took the name Sri Lanka in 1978. It aims to be "a center of excellence in higher education with national, regional, and global standing" while describing itself as "the most comprehensive university in Sri Lanka today". The five early faculties were joined in the 1980s by the Faculty of Dental Science, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, and Animal Science, and in the 21st Century by the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences and the Faculty of Management. Four affiliated Postgraduate Institutes (PGIs); Agriculture, Science, Medicine, and Humanities & Social Sciences cater to the needs of postgraduate education locally and internationally. The UoP caters to eligible citizens who have not been fortunate to receive higher education as internal students in the conventional system to obtain qualifications with programmes designed and delivered through the Centre for Distance and Continuing Education (CDCE) using ODL methods. The library and other service centers of UoP provide great support to achieve its vision and mission ~~success~~. The University caters to a UG population of about 13700 including 44 foreign students, and a PG population of 10600. The University currently has a permanent staff of of about 3200, of which 880 are academics. Among the academics, 22% are professors, and 6% are senior professors. The university has 50 administrative and finance officers and 13 other executive staff who are assigned to general, financial administration, and service divisions along with 3 permanent medical officers of the Health Centre (HC).

The Institutional Review (IR) process of the UoP strengthen with the carefully analysed recommendations of the IR-2016 and the university has addressed many of the recommendations. Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) along with the Internal Quality Assurance Cells) (IQACs) of all faculties, PGIs, CDCE, the Administrative and Finance divisions and the library network managed the preparatory work of the IR with the participation of its various stakeholder groups. Vice-Chancellor appointed SERWCs with representations from all faculties, PGIs and relevant Divisions/Centres/Units/entities headed by Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) to manage the IR writing and the collection of evidence. Senior academics were appointed as chairpersons of Self Evaluating Report Writing Committees (SERWC), and administrative officers were the secretaries to the committees. SERWC comprised tier 2 committees, and junior academics were appointed to each criterion under the same chairperson to support their senior colleagues and provide relevant exposure for the future leaders to be. The process was supported by meetings with the Director-CQA, conducting 82 meetings with

chairpersons of CQA and SERWC, and holding 72 meetings organized by criteria with various groups, excluding internal group discussions. Moreover, Vice-Chancellor directed the MC-CQA to proceed with an Internal Institutional Review with the participation of a panel of 7 reviewers comprising internal and retired academics of the University representing all disciplines. Final IR report enriched with the suggestions of internal IR.

Section 2 - Review Team's view of the University's Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The IR team is satisfied with the process followed in preparing the SER. The University commenced the formal process of preparation of its IR 2021 as early as 2019. Ten committees had been formed for each criterion and the members for each committee included representatives from academics as well as administrative staff. Later, according to the nature of the criteria, more administrative and financial officers were also appointed. There were representatives from each faculty and PGI, and each committee had its own structure with a senior academic as the chairperson and an administrative officer as the secretary. The university has also carried out an internal IR based on the SER prepared where a panel of seven well-experienced reviewers was involved. A series of meetings were conducted by the Vice-Chancellor and the Director/CQA to address the concerns of the internal review team. The format given in the revised IR manual has been followed in writing the SER which begins with an introduction to the university describing its history, its vision, mission, and goals, the establishment of each faculty / postgraduate Institute/centre, and the programme they offer in detail. This is followed by the many changes implemented by the university since its last IR conducted in 2016 presented according to the goals set out in the strategic plan for 2022 - 2026. The SWOT analysis clearly reflects the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is likely to enable the UoP to improve its overall performance.

The Ten (10) criteria and 107 standards explained in the revised Manual (but not the finalized version) for IR have been described with a list of documentary evidence linked to a google drive to support the claims in a tabulated form. In the SER, Column 1 standard no., Column 2 the university's adherence to the Standard (claims) and Column 3, lists the documentary evidence to support the claim, and Column 4 indicates the code number of each supporting document. The SER had been prepared in a professional manner according to the UGC guidelines to reflect the developments on the ground and the team approach had been followed. The SER is very comprehensive and presented in a very structured and organized manner. However, the review team observed that the UoP has not focused sufficiently on the developments taken place in line with the recommendations of the previous IR (2016). Further, there was uncertainty about some evidence provided online which had no reference to original documents. A long list of abbreviations applied in the SER is defined on pages iii to ix though, familiarization with them within a short period of time was somewhat difficult.

Section 3: A brief description of the review process

In its 26th meeting on 12th June 2019, the Management Committee CQA at the University of Peradeniya (UoP) decided to commence preparations for the Institutional Review (IR) 2021. As part of these preparations, Self-Evaluation Report (SER) writing committees were appointed, and the SER was prepared in accordance with the ten criteria outlined in the 2015 version of the IR Manual. Despite the committee's efforts, the external review of UoP was delayed due to various unavoidable reasons. The UoP was requested in April 2023 by the QAC of the UGC to submit their SER for the second IR, which was scheduled to take place from 8-12th May 2023. To facilitate this review process, the Chairman of the UGC appointed a seven-member team.

The SER was uploaded online and made available to all members of the review team for desk evaluation. Each member conducted a thorough desk review based on the evidence presented in the SER. As part of the institutional review process, the team evaluated the following ten criteria:

1. Governance and Management
2. Strength and Quality of Staff
3. Curriculum Design and Programme Development
4. Teaching-Learning
5. Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression
6. Student Assessment and Awards
7. Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation, and Commercialization
8. Distance Education
9. Community Engagement, Consultancy, and Outreach
10. Quality Assurance

The review team began their evaluation of the UoP, conducting meetings with staff, stakeholders, and an on-site inspection. The first meeting was held on 08th May 2023 with the CQA Director and the SER writing committee, with the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor in attendance. The SER writing team chairs delivered informative and creative presentations, which were commendable.

On 9th May, the Vice-Chancellor presented the vision, mission, challenges, and future direction of the UoP. This presentation was attended by the Council members of UoP, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Directors of PGIs, Directors of Centres and Units, Director-CQA, Proctor, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Chief Marshall, Chief Medical Officer, Wardens, Senior Student Counsellor, and other relevant staff members.

Throughout the evaluation process, approximately 111 meetings were conducted, as outlined in Annex I. These meetings facilitate the review team to gain a comprehensive understanding of the operations of UoP , and best practices and identify areas for improvement.

The site visit was conducted in a warm and welcoming manner, with the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deans of Faculties, Registrar, and Director of CQA and his team ensuring that every detail was attended to. The agenda for the site visit is in Annex I, which outlines the nine faculties, departments, institutes and centres, units, libraries, hostels, auditoriums, gymnasium, and administrative divisions visited by the review team. The team spent a considerable amount of time in discussions to triangulate the evidence provided in the documentation, the outcomes of their meetings, and their observations of the facilities. During the site visit and evaluation, the review team submitted the major findings of the site visit.

Following the site visit, a wrap-up meeting was held on 12th May, attended by the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Proctor, Deans, Registrar, Directors, Director/CQA, members of the SER writing team, and other relevant staff members. The major findings of the review were highlighted in this final meeting.

The review team would like to express their appreciation for the outstanding leadership provided by Prof. Ranjith Pallegama, the Director of CQA. Prof. Pallegama and his team worked tirelessly to formulate the SER, coordinate meetings with stakeholders, and organize the site visits, ensuring that the review process was conducted smoothly and efficiently. Their efforts are truly commendable.

Section 4. Overview of the University's Approach to Quality and Standards

The approach of the UoP to the process of Quality Assurance is commendable and it appears that many effective quality assurance practices have been internalized. The importance and the central role that must be played by Quality Assurance have been identified and endorsed by the University as indicated in its Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

The establishment of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) with Faculty Internal Quality Assurance Cells (FQACs) was in 2016, as per the guidelines set out by the Commission circular 2015/5. The IQAU was renamed the Centre for quality assurance (CQA). A QA policy and by-laws with operational guidelines were established to set up a wider IQA framework under CQA. It is commendable that establishing FQACs for all faculties and QACs for Postgraduate Institutes (PGIs), the Centre for Distance and Continuing Education (CDCE), the Administrative and Finance division, and the library with the purpose of continuous concern for maintaining and enhancing quality.

Adequate space has been allocated to set up an office for the CQA within the Library building of the University and with office staff. Further to that, QA-related activities have been given prominence in the agenda of Senate Meetings and the Faculty Board Meetings. The Director/CQA is mandated to present the progress of the CQA activities at the Senate Meetings. The FQACs have their own offices and recommend having at least support staff. The QA activities of each faculty have been regularly reported at the respective Faculty Board meetings, by the faculty QA Coordinator. The Faculties and the Senate are closely monitors the progress of the QA-related decisions and their implementation elsewhere. This procedure of regularly reporting the QA activities at the Senate and Faculty Board meetings have resulted in disseminating such activities among all staff members, within the University.

Thus, the UoP has taken effective steps to internalize the QA activities within the University. This was quite evident during the site visit as all staff members, including academic and other staff members, expressed their awareness of the QA procedures. It was also commendable to note that all the senior academics have contributed effectively to the QA activities, especially in the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and their presentations made at the first meeting with the Vice-Chancellor. Conducting the Internal Institutional Review and addressing the concerns of a panel of reviewers when the preparation process of SER is commendable.

All faculties are conversant with the National Framework of Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Academics are aware of Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) of UGC and have aligned their programmes with the SLQF. Most of the programmes are based on the principles of Student- Centred Learning and Outcome Based Education. The curricula are

reviewed periodically and the process of approval from the relevant Department, Curriculum Development Committee, Faculty Board, CQA, and the Senate has been followed. All Faculties are practising student feedback and peer evaluations and recommend using the outcomes of such to enhance the quality of study programmes.

University has established various mechanisms to disseminate important information to all stakeholders. The website of CQA comprises all the information relevant to QA and is updated frequently. All the information and decisions taken by the CQA are disseminated through the official website of the CQA.

However, the progress of such quality assurance activities across all administrative units, faculties, and centres is not uniform. Although curriculum revision is required to accommodate new developments in university education, there is some variation across faculties in fully implementing such revisions. Moreover, some recommendations made in previous IR need to be fully addressed. Therefore, CQA, FQACs and QA cells could take the lead in ensuring that all faculties/centres complete such activities within a given period through regular monitoring and follow-up programmes.

It is imperative that the higher administration extend its fullest support to the Director CQA in striving for excellence in Quality Assurance.

Section 5: Commentary on the ten criteria of Institutional Review

5.1 Governance and Management

The University's governing structure comprises the Council, the Senate, and nine Faculty Boards in compliance with the Universities Act No 16 (1978). Its activities comply with the University Act, government regulations, and UGC circulars. In addition, the Boards of management of four Post Graduate Institutes also link with the university as directed by the provisions of respective ordinances. The Senate governs the academic functions and is responsible for the quality of the standards of the qualifications awarded. In addition, there are several Centres, Units, and Service Divisions established at University and faculty levels to provide ancillary services to outside stakeholders.

The UoP has taken initiatives to adopt policies aligned with the National Higher Education Policy framework and has published a five-year Strategic Plan (SP) with clearly identified 6 goals for 2022-2026, though some policies have been developed very recently (2022/2023) and a few awaiting council approvals. The Strategic Plan is prepared using a participatory approach with the involvement of all stakeholders and concurrently, has developed annual action plans. The UoP obtained approval for its revised vision and mission statements in April 2021, which are aligned with the national policies and clearly reflect regional, national, and global needs.

The University's financial procedures comply with the requirements of national administrative and financial regulations. The standard operating procedures are stated in the management guide (2020 version) developed by the university. Procedures are strictly adhered to and ensured by regular meetings of the finance committee, procurement committee, and audit management committee and through periodic internal and external audit processes. Gold medal certificates awarded for 2020 and 2021 annual reports of UoP by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka are commendable.

Allocation for human and physical resources is made transparently and is based on the annual action plans of the faculties. The University has been expanding higher education opportunities in the country by introducing new courses/programmes, establishing new departments, and a recently added PGIMS in 2019. During the five-year period under review, the academic departments offer 61 undergraduate programmes at SLQF levels 5 and 6 and around 290 postgraduate programmes at SLQF levels 7-12. The University had increased student intake in considerable numbers for many of its undergraduate programmes. As both human and physical resources not increased in line with student intake, it has caused a high workload and a less than satisfactory learning environment (for example, physical resources in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, human resources in the Engineering Faculty, etc.) Although the student intake

was increased, the number selected for Honours degree courses remains the same due to a lack of human resources, physical resources, and limited opportunities for Industrial training/internships. However, the authorities have obtained funds for large-scale building projects for all faculties and many of them   completed in 2022. Newly built smart classrooms, computer rooms, auditoriums, lecture theatres, instruments, etc. resolve some of these issues and are highly commendable. In this endeavour, the role of the UoP alumni also should be commended.

The establishment of locally developed MIS has enabled the UoP to introduce effective administrative processes such as student registration, examination matters, issue of transcripts, etc. All faculties use Learning Management System (LMS) for teaching and learning in line with changing student needs. The LMS facility enabled the university to continue its teaching programme during the COVID pandemic. In all faculties, the students have access to Wi-Fi, at least in selected locations. In addition, UoP has established a Network and communication service Unit (NCSU) with 6 servers, however, two of them need replacement but have not attended to it due to financial constraints. Network service is not available in student hostels. The learning experience of the students can be enhanced by the provision of network access to the hostels. UoP does not have a centralized ICT, and the resources are decentralized. The lack of a permanent Assistant Bursar, training for staff, Managing Assistants, and computer Engineers is of great concern.

The UoP recruits appropriately qualified staff as per approved cadre, following the University Act and the relevant UGC circulars in a transparent manner. The academic staff profile indicates that around 66% hold Ph.D./MS/MD and comprise more than two-thirds of academics at the level of Professors (Senior Professors/Professors/Associate Professors) and Senior Lecturers. More attention, however, should be focused on young staff and encourage them to obtain postgraduate qualifications. Numerous academic and academic support staff positions are vacant across the faculties, and effective mechanisms should be formulated to address these issues.

Policies that are enforced on academic honesty and integrity, conflict of interest and ethics are well established. The University has adopted work norms given by the UGC for academic staff and detailed job descriptions for other categories of staff are communicated at the recruitment. UoP provides Council approved code of conduct at the recruitment of teachers while educating them on accountability and honesty through Continuous Professional Development Programmes (CPDPs). Ethics review committees have been established in some faculties and students are made aware of plagiarism and publication ethics. However, policy on publication ethics is under preparation and no effective mechanisms are in place to detect plagiarism. Publication in predatory journals is discouraged. UoP promotes research by providing grants, publication support fees, and providing annual Vice Chancellor's Award for outstanding publication records. UoP researchers have obtained several patents, good publication statistics and some innovations have been commercialized.

The UoP adopt an explicit policy and a framework on internationalization, which are fully complied with UGC guidelines. It has promoted all aspects of internationalization that include international students' recruitment, staff/student exchange programmes, and research collaborations with global partners under MoUs. However, some faculties lack such connections or collaborative partnerships with industries/institutes. The role of UoP alumni in providing financial support for foreign travel, and research training is commendable.

The welfare facilities are adequately provided to both students and staff. However the facilities in some hostels are not adequate. These include lack of Wi-Fi and common study areas. Prevailing personal hygiene regarding living conditions in some older hostels is also of great concern. Adequate healthcare facilities and financial assistance to needy students are evident. The UoP has established a Special Need Resource Centre with the help of International grants which provides excellent facilities and practices teacher-learning and assessments to ensure the well-being of differently abled students. The University has a policy and by-laws on Sexual or Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Violence (SGBHSV) aligned with national policies. Regular awareness programmes at the faculty level are in place and training on SGBHSV is provided to new staff during induction programmes. The UoP has taken effective steps to rule out ragging in the university through the ragging prevention committee. The University has formulated policies aligned with the UGC Circular 919 to curb ragging and any other form of intimidation and harassment of students. Disciplinary actions against those who were involved and found guilty are evident.

5.2 Strengths and Quality of Staff

The UoP has taken various initiatives to effectively manage and develop its human resources. One such initiative is the establishment of a comprehensive policy on human resource management and development. This policy provides guidance on various aspects of human resource management, including recruitment, training, performance evaluation, and career development. The University has also set up a well-equipped SDC that provides training to newly recruited academic staff through an induction programme and various professional development programmes for staff. Additionally, the university invests in the professional development of junior staff by providing ongoing training and institutional and programme review activities that prepare them for future leadership roles. The availability of job descriptions or TORs for numerous staff categories ensures that staff members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the university offers numerous awards, grants, and incentives to motivate academic staff to engage in high-quality research, which ultimately benefits both the university and society at large.

However, the review has identified several areas of concern in the human resource management and development of the university. It is crucial to establish a structured approach for evaluating employee performance and addressing individuals who are not meeting the expected standards. Additionally, the absence of a formal system for senior academics to mentor newly hired academic staff needs to be addressed. The current vacancies for the teaching staff across all faculties, where approximately 60% of academic positions remain unoccupied, is a matter of concern that requires immediate attention. It is also important to recognize and appreciate the services provided by the non-academic staff in some faculties and institutes. While mentoring is a vital tool used by universities to support new recruits, it is unfortunate that a formal mechanism for such support is not available. There is also a lack of a proper procedure to identify underperforming staff members, both academic and non-academic, and appropriate action needs to be taken to enhance the quality of their work or service. Encouraging and supporting young academic staff members to pursue their Ph.D. qualifications at universities outside, and preferably in foreign countries, is another important initiative that can help prevent insularity. It is essential for the university to take immediate action to address these concerns and implement measures to improve overall human resource management and development.

In conclusion, the UoP has implemented various initiatives to manage and develop its human resources, including a policy on human resource management, a well-equipped Staff Development Centre, and incentives for research. However, areas of concern have been identified, such as the absence of a formal mentoring system, a lack of proper procedures for addressing underperforming staff, and numerous vacancies in teaching staff positions. Immediate action is needed to address these concerns and improve human resource management to ultimately benefit the university and society.

5.3 Curriculum Design and Programme Development

The University of Peradeniya offers nearly 350 undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes covering a wide range of disciplines through 86 Departments belonging to 9 faculties, CDCE, and four Postgraduate Institutes.

The University's commitment to enhance the quality of its study programmes is visible in the revised Strategic Plan of 2022-2026 as well as in the previous strategic plan. Three policies have been approved by the university recently to streamline the activities of different entities. These include the Requirements to Align with National Policies and Framework Curriculum Planning; Development and Revisions; Post graduate students and research. The University follows a systematic process to get the approval of CDCs, the Faculty Board, the Senate, and the Council for its new and revised programmes which are strongly supported by its policies.

The curriculum design and programme development of the university of some entities are on par with the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework. Depending on the nature and characteristics of programmes in different entities innovative approaches are adopted to incorporate the principles of Outcome Based Education and Student-Centred Learning into their study programmes. It was observed through evidence that the university set apart some funds to facilitate these activities. As such, it is high time that the university ensures the adherence of all entities to this process.

The development of new study programmes as well as revision of existing programmes are done in a participatory manner involving both internal and external experts while considering the analysis of pertinent needs, stakeholder views, and as well as the current demands of the community. Most of the study programmes promote multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches though some entities are still in the preliminary stages to introduce such approaches to their programmes. The incorporation of supplementary courses to improve English language proficiency and other professional skills specific to different study streams is supported through university policies and they are integrated into some of programmes with a view to improving the employability of graduates. There is evidence to prove that the university allocates funds from its annual budgets to promote such activities.

Programme specifications, including policies and principles of design and development of study programmes and assessment mechanisms are communicated to students and other stakeholders through a variety of means such as Prospectus, Student Handbooks, and blueprints of evaluations. The inclusion of Industrial training in study programmes are supported by several university policies and promoted through developing partnerships with local and international entities. Transferring credits is not a common characteristic in most of the study programmes. and not a regular exercise. These are earned from specified student exchange mechanisms, and a few facilitate credit transfer within internal programmes. Transferring credits earned from research is promoted in a few undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Tracer studies are featured in some programmes to identify the employability of students and to assess the quality and relevance of study programmes though it was observed that the responses to such mechanisms are limited. Further, there is uncertainty about the regularity of this exercise and how far the signals coming from those mechanisms are considered for strengthening the quality of programmes. No evidence is available for conducting tracer studies for Postgraduate programmes.

Overall, the review committee is satisfied with the practices adopted by the University for curriculum design and programme development. However, the committee believes that there is more room for further improvement.

5.4 Teaching-Learning

The teaching and learning environment, resources, and stakeholders vary across the nine faculties and variability links with a wide range of disciplines. A conducive learning environment, diverse teaching and learning methods, innovative approaches, and ICT-driven technology-adopted environment make for a transformative, inclusive, and flexible learning experience. Teaching panels of most of the faculties include real experts, underpinned by local and internationally significant research and strong links with industry. In addition, some of the renowned scientists whose wealth of knowledge, research experience and collaborations, and passion inspire to reach the full potential of the students. Achievements of junior staff, undergraduates (UGs), and Postgraduates (PGs) proved the richness of the teaching and learning of UoP. Blended, flexible learning opportunities available in most of the faculties and PGIs provided greater flexibility and choice to both teachers and learners. The University's commitment to blended and flexible learning is part of its strategy to create increased student choice and flexible learning through combinations of face-to-face, online, and blended learning. Teaching pedagogies varied from in-person lectures to practical classes including clinical classes, workshops, and farm practice along with ICT-enabled seminars, Q&As, discussions, and workshops with high-quality online materials for self-study. Further, the main library and its faculty library network introduced digital enhancements such as e-textbooks and digital document annotations and will deliver new modes of teaching to make learning accessible to all. The exact mix of teaching pedagogies and learning styles depends very much on discipline or subject of study, and the university is continuing to shape a flexible learning approach in partnership with students and staff. Further, the teaching and learning experience of most of the faculties of UoP encourages independent critical thinking and analysis**,** assessing not only the student's academic knowledge but also skills that employers value and the industry preferred, such as how to work as part of a team, deliver presentations and tackle problems creatively. Courses of STEM faculties that reflect the needs of industry and business**,** make sure that students gain the skills and knowledge to enhance their employability and flourish in their chosen careers.

In contrast, a countable number of cases were far behind the university's desires, and limited or poor interventions were made to change their teaching and learning pedagogies to fit into current trends. Unfortunately, students were eagerly looking for a change and exposure to modern student-centred, object-based, and industry-oriented teaching and learning pedagogies to implement. Revisions to the assessment criteria were poor compared to the development of teaching and learning practices. Traditional and conventional evaluation methods were unable to capture the merits of student-centred learning. Multidisciplinary teaching and learning approaches were limited and resource sharing among faculties and departments will ensure better improvement in student-centred learning.

5.5 Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression

The University has nine faculties and three postgraduate institutes offering several degree programmes in different disciplines. It was observed that the university has adequate learning resources to conduct the UG and PG programmes. Further UOP provides students support and all relevant facilities. The University provides adequate, appropriate, and accessible infrastructure facilities to support teaching-learning activities.

The University has a main library and eight branches with experienced staff and reasonable infrastructure development. The library has been digitalized and well organized with a unique collection of printed and electronic versions of relevant resources that really assist students and staff in their learning and teaching. The main library and branch libraries are fully automated and easily accessible. Proper guidance is provided to students by the relevant staff of the library during the orientation programmes conducted by all faculties. Twenty-four hour opening services are available only in the engineering library at a limited scale. The University can pay special attention to provide the same opportunity in other libraries as much as possible. Students from almost all faculties can access all relevant information including degree programmes, examinations, disciplinary matters, etc through a Handbook/Prospectus which was uploaded on the website or distributed among them during this orientation programme.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) are well used by all faculties, and students' usage is very high and user-friendly. The scheduled academic programme, teaching plan, learning materials, assignments and answers, and additional materials are made available for students. Anyhow, it should be ensured that all departments in all faculties adopt the same mechanism. It was observed that the ultimate use of LMS was recorded during the COVID pandemic period.

Even though most of the faculties have adequate infrastructure facilities for the effective implementation of programme related activities, a few entities/faculties seriously lack inadequate infrastructure facilities, e.g., Allied Health Science, Veterinary Science, and Management. It was observed that the faculty alumni especially with foreign chapters abundantly support the respective faculties by providing scholarships and training for students, and other infrastructure facilities. The University and faculties provide students opportunities to obtain internships to acquire onsite skills training by having a strong bond with its alumni. Such students following graduation have been recruited by the industries/organizations as permanent employees.

It is evident that learner support is provided through well-equipped and properly functional centres. The central ICT centre of the university provides services like networking, and relevant technological services for all faculties and work divisions/units. However, this centre lacks a permanent Director, and trained staff. Further, Wi-Fi facilities are still not available in student hostels, this will be a barrier for students to connect students to each other locally and globally for their knowledge advancement and information sharing. Moreover, few faculties like

Management provide eight-week preparatory programmes for new registrants to gain a reasonable knowledge in English and ICT which are very much essential to prepare for undergraduate education. This can be mandatory in all faculties. It is important to note here that the university has well-set up special needs education centre (SNEC) for differently able students with some essential equipment and functioning well which is appreciable.

The University put forward a strong platform for extra-curricular activities: sports, recreation, cultural and creative activities. Sports and cultural competitions are also organized frequently so that students can record their performances. The same is available for special needs students too, the evidence is documented by the SNEC which is commendable.

The student support system including mentoring, counselling, and career guidance is adequately functioning in most of the entities. Mentors are appointed not only for students but also for junior academic staff. Students with financial needs are identified and facilitated to continue their studies. Providing financial support by academic staff of the respective faculties are observed and such approaches are appreciable. Counselling services are also provided to students to be free from stress and personal complexity. Anyhow, student counsellors should be responsible to identify students who need counselling instead students themselves presenting for counselling. For this purpose, regular training should be provided for all staff and not limiting to students' counsellors only. It is better to change the name of the Psychiatric Centre, since such a name may psychologically prevent students to visit it to seek remedies. Even though learning resources and students support systems are reasonably available, a regular mechanism to monitor the progression of students is not in place.

5.6 Student Assessment and Awards

Student assessment methods and awards are key to delivering the outcomes of teaching and learning methods adopted by the programmes or courses. Assessment methods outline the level of learning; depth, scope, and exposure to the discipline. Therefore, it is essential to align assessment tasks with intended learning outcomes. The Faculty of Engineering has a well-established student assessment strategy to achieve intended learning outcomes. The assessment strategy is aligned to programme outcomes and specified qualification/level descriptors of the SLQF. The UoP has established committees to design, approve, monitor, and review the assessment strategies for programmes. In addition, there are well-established mechanisms to review and amend assessment strategies. Student assessment consists of both formative assessment and summative assessment methods and the methods depend on the degree programme. The programme design of the UoP has established the necessary mechanisms to address the assessment strategy in programme design. Further, by-Laws and performance criteria for each degree programme were developed. Students are assessed using the published criteria, regulations, and procedures which are communicated to students at the time of enrollment

mainly through the faculty handbooks and university website. The Faculty ensures that both internal examiners as first markers and second markers and they are involved in assessing the students. In most cases, the second making is considered only for a sample (10%).

Internal Boards of Exams are conducted to ensure the accuracy of graduation requirements are verifying marks at several stages. The Faculty Board and Senate check the result submission progress. The University has taken several measures and is committed to addressing further needs of differently abled students in terms of infrastructure development and examination time allocation. Examination results are documented accurately and communicated to the students within the stipulated time. The University provides a complete transcript indicating the courses followed, grades obtained, the aggregate GPA, and class. The UoP has developed a policy for plagiarism and by-laws, including those on academic misconduct. But implementation of the plagiarism policy was very weak, and the unavailability of plagiarism software badly affected the use of policy directives. The above policies and procedures ensure achieving the expected standards of student assessment and awards.

5.7 Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization

The University of Peradeniya is committed to promoting postgraduate training, research, scholarship, and commercialization as a fundamental aspect of its operations. This commitment is reflected in the university's planning and resource allocation, which prioritizes these functions. The university has established three Postgraduate Institutes (PGIs), namely the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture (PGIA), the Postgraduate Institute of Science (PGIS), and the Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (PGIHS). Additionally, the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) was established in 2019 and is currently under development. The PGIs offer over 290 postgraduate programmes (PGPs) in various disciplines, ranging from SLQF levels 7-12. The details of these courses are available on the PGIs' websites, and course offerings are advertised on the website as well.

The availability of policies, institutional arrangements, and procedures for research innovation, commercialization, securing intellectual property rights (IPR), and supporting the acquisition of patents is essential for any academic institution. The establishment of the Business Linkage, Innovation, Incubation, and Technology Transfer Office (BLITTO) and its implementation is commendable as it provides a platform for the university to engage with industry and facilitate technology transfer. The university's collaborations and partnerships with local, national, regional, and international organizations, with established criteria for monitoring and evaluating the sharing of knowledge, expertise, human resources, services, and research, demonstrate a commitment to fostering productive relationships. However, there are areas for improvement that need to be addressed to enhance the quality of postgraduate education and research.

One of the major areas that require attention is the lack of established connections or collaborative partnerships between some faculties and industry, limiting the potential for practical research and innovation. It is recommended that the university takes steps to establish partnerships with industries in areas that are currently lacking collaboration. Additionally, despite the presence of a substantial amount of research publications in Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals, there is a noticeable inadequacy of publications in the fields of arts, humanities, and social sciences in such journals.

In terms of delivering quality postgraduate education, it is suggested that the university utilizes tracer studies and student satisfaction surveys more effectively to evaluate the quality of postgraduate education provided by some postgraduate institutes for their postgraduate taught courses and research degree programmes. Furthermore, the absence of regular induction programs for MPhil and Ph.D. students prior to the commencement of their degrees can lead to confusion and a lack of clarity regarding expectations and responsibilities. It is recommended that the university introduces induction programmes to provide students with a clear understanding of their responsibilities and expectations.

Similarly, the absence of a Research Supervision Agreement, which outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of research supervisors and students and fosters a relationship of trust between them throughout the research process, is a notable gap. Implementing such an agreement could enhance the quality of research and the student experience. Moreover, continuous progress monitoring of students is also essential in research-based higher degrees. This practice not only provides technical guidance but also facilitates mentoring and counselling, ultimately helping students achieve their academic and professional goals. A lapse candidature is recommended to support students facing distractions like health issues or personal matters that may hinder their ability to meet thesis submission deadlines. It involves temporarily interrupting a student's enrolment in an academic program due to factors like unmet requirements or requested leaves of absence. This period of non-enrolment, usually temporary, accommodates personal circumstances such as health issues, financial difficulties, or other commitments. Implementing lapse candidature allows students to retain their candidature period. However, it is essential to establish clear policies and guidelines to inform and guide students accordingly.

Finally, endowment funds can be an excellent way to support needy students by providing them with continuous financial assistance throughout their undergraduate and postgraduate studies. To initiate such funds, it is recommended to allocate a small percentage (for example, 0.5%) from each academic programme conducted through PGIs. This can help create a sustainable pool of resources to support students who might otherwise struggle to finance their education. These funds can be used to provide scholarships, bursaries, and other forms of financial aid to

deserving students, thereby enabling them to focus on their studies without worrying about the financial burden.

In conclusion, addressing these areas for improvement will assist the UoP to provide a high-quality education and research experience to postgraduate students and fulfil its commitment to promote postgraduate training, research, scholarship, and commercialization.

5.8 Distance Education

The UoP is the pioneering Higher Education Institution (HEI) ins that initiated offering external degrees in the country in 1964. The University offers ODL programmes through their Centre for Distance and Continuing Education (CDCE) in alignment with the policy framework and guidelines issued by the UGC and ensures that students enrolled satisfy the requirements for admission as stipulated by the UGC and the admission criteria and methods of selection are consistent with the UCG Circulars and the UGC Handbook on External Degrees and Extension Courses. It is commendable that UoP has put several efforts into providing ODL to students who are unable to enter the University. Some students from the Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Development, highly appreciated the programme which is timely and applicable to their profession. The CDCE has sufficient human and physical resources to implement the programmes (Office space, adequate office staff, large lecture hall which can accommodate 500 students and computer laboratory which is under construction, and other infrastructure facilities.). It was observed that some of the faculties have given less priority to the external degree programmes. The administrative structure of the Centre has been well defined including the Board of Management, representatives from administrative bodies, Council nominees, and Deans of respective Faculties, and is given on the CDCE webpage, which is a strong aspect. Most of the necessary documentary evidence, academic programmes, handbooks, policy, and strategy documents, application forms, past papers, results, and other relevant documents were available and such information is also available on the CDCE webpage. The review committee noted that CDCE has recently established an Internal Quality Assurance Cell, which is commendable.

According to the information provided, CDCE currently offers nine (09) programmes that have specific enrolment requirements. However, information available on the webpage indicates 9 courses. During the review of documents related to the CDCE, it was noted that the degree certificate awarded to those who complete the programme of study specifically states that it is an external degree; this is in breach of the UGC guidelines, and the students have expressed their concerns in this regard.

The BBA degree program at the CDCE fully utilizes the MOODLE platform for its students, while other programs at the CDCE make minimal use of it. The inadequate and inaccessible

learning resources, such as library resources/e-library, internet facilities, LMS, and laboratories, for CDCE students is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. Students are almost left to study on their own without the support which might badly affect the continuation as well as the competition of the programmes. Lack of feedback in assignments further hampers the progress. The lack of an effective mechanism to obtain student feedback on services, administration, and related issues for continuous improvement of its services are to be addressed and an external graduate employability survey is also an important aspect of measuring the quality and relevance of study programmes.

Considering the documentary evidence and information available on the University's website, CDCE is managed acceptably but there is a great need of strengthening it with a focus on quality enhancements which will satisfy the students' aspirations and leads to better service to the community. It is high time that the centre identifies and recommends a pool of visiting academics in addition to the internal staff and facilitates interaction between the students and tutors.

5.9 Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach

The University has well recognized the importance of extending its services to the community which is commendable. Some of the entities have established special units and they are reaching the customers effectively. This practice can be extended to other entities as well.

The University as a whole and some entities with national and international organizations and HEIs enable them to expand their horizons by sharing and receiving expertise and knowledge.

The outreach activities by the student community to support the less privileged students through conducting academic programmes and providing educational material is a very good gesture. Through these activities, in addition to sharing knowledge, undergraduates inculcate good habits into their lifestyles to become citizens.

Collaborations with outside entities such as industrial training or internships are vital components of education programmes. Through these exposures, opportunities arise to undergraduates to establish their careers. While the external partners can absorb experienced quality graduates into their workforce other graduates can become entrepreneurs. Hence, it is recommended to expand these industrial training and consultancies to other entities that have not used these opportunities to the maximum potential of the entity.

The University has unique faculties, and the A/L students may not be aware of the functions and the prospects of the graduates from these entities. Current students revealed that they had no intention of joining these faculties after the A/L. These half-hearted at the university entrance have realized the importance of these programmes. Currently, they enjoy their educational

programmes wholeheartedly. Credit must be given to programme developers and academics to provide successful educational programmes through these entities. It is clear that the maximum benefits can be achieved by creating awareness at the school level that may harness students with greater enthusiasm.

It is suggested to create awareness of the services provided by the university through the available media resources. Through a need analysis or suitable mechanisms and customer feedback, the university can attract wider attention and cater to the demands of the country. It is imperative to note that outreach activities enhance the image of the university while serving an important role in the university.

5.10 Quality Assurance

The University has recognized the importance of engaging in improving quality standards and best practices. A system has been established by formulating the necessary policies, mechanisms, and procedures enabling all the entities to engage them in a fruitful manner. During the review process, it was clear that a strong commitment from most of the entities. The lack of participation of the minor staff and the students were evident even though they were aware of the review process.

The involvement of younger staff as contributors in SER preparation and evidence collection is appreciated. They were given responsibilities in the SER preparation process which is a future investment for the university. The group leaders have showcased their commitments through their presentations. The exercise would have been more fruitful if each entity has given responsibility for the presentation. It was evident that all entities were represented in SER writing and evidence gatherings. But the contribution of some entities was less for a few entities.

The University has performed an internal institutional review using its own experts. This is a positive aspect. It is suggested to have this as a calendar event rather than a rehearsal for the review. Ideally, the quality needs to be practised routinely not as an excise at a specific review.

The University has paid attention to the suggestions made in the previous review. A summary of the corrective actions was available for the reviewers. A compilation of the evidence would make this exercise more fruitful. It was noted most of the entities have followed a systematic approach in conducting examinations and releasing results on time which is an improvement from the last review. Some faculties have released the results faster than the UGC stipulation, but a few are still delaying the release of results even though they are getting the services of internal second examiners.

It is saddening to note that enthusiasm and participation of the senior academic staff were lacking in a few of the review meetings. Though the Deans or Directors were asked to make a

10-minute presentation to showcase their activities, some of the presentations were lengthy and the review team has to shorten them to facilitate effective meetings.

Though the university has laid effective procedures to ensure quality through best practices, some entities have provided evidence without the processes and procedures in formulating them. In other words, the pieces of evidence provided are incomplete or questionable. These practices will tarnish the image of the university .

Section 6. Grading of the overall performance of the University

The cumulative total score under each of the ten criteria and the final score for the University of Peradeniya are given the Table6.1 below.

Table 6.1. Overall Performance of the University of Peradeniya

No	Criterion	Weighted minimum score	Actual criterion-wise score
1	Governance and Management	100	177
2	Strengths and Quality of Staff	50	80
3	Curriculum Design and Programme Development	60	97
4	Teaching-Learning	45	67
5	Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression	50	89
6	Student Assessment and Awards	40	70
7	Postgraduate studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization	50	72
8	Distance Education	35	51
9	Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach	30	47
10	Quality Assurance	40	70
	Total score (out of 1000)		**819**
	Total score (out of 100)		**81.9**

i) *Overall University Score is 81.9.*
ii) *Number of Criteria that received equal to or more than the weighted minimum score is 10.*
iii) *Criteria that received less than the weighted minimum score is 00.*

Accordingly, the Quality of Education and Standards of Awards of the University of Peradeniya is given an "A" Grade with an Overall Grade of "Very Good".

Section 7. Commendations and Recommendations

Criterion 1: Governance and Management

Commendations
- ✓ Establishment of University Management Guide.
- ✓ Strategic Plan/ Action plan is on par with the University's Vision and Mission
- ✓ Existence of effective and efficient leadership.
- ✓ Establishment of a comprehensive and well-functioning Welfare scheme.
- ✓ MIS platform is in place.
- ✓ Regular awareness programs and training of the new staff during induction programmes including the distribution of a handbook on SGBHSV printed in all three languages.

Recommendations
- ➢ Vacancies in all categories should be filled as early as possible.
- ➢ Need to focus on Infrastructure facilities where required.
- ➢ A centralized ICT system should be developed.

Criterion 2: Strengths and Quality of Staff

Commendations
- ✓ Establishing a comprehensive policy on human resource management and development is remarkable.
- ✓ The SDC is fully equipped for induction training and professional development programs for all staff members is commendable.
- ✓ Investing in junior staff's professional development, training, and participation in institutional and programme reviews is appreciated.
- ✓ Job descriptions are available for numerous staff categories is a positive aspect.
- ✓ Numerous awards, grants, and incentives are offered to motivate academic staff to engage in high-quality research is commendable.

Recommendations
- ➢ Implement a comprehensive performance evaluation system for underperforming employees.
- ➢ Establish a system for senior academics to mentor newly hired academic staff.
- ➢ Urgently address the significant vacancies in teaching staff across all faculties
- ➢ Develop a proper formal mechanism to recognize and appreciate the services provided by the non-academic staff in some faculties and institutes.

- ➢ Form a formal mechanism in place to provide mentoring support for new non-academic staff, to improve their competence.
- ➢ Develop a proper procedure to identify underperforming staff members.
- ➢ Encourage and support young academic staff to pursue their Ph.D. qualifications at foreign universities to prevent insularity and promote diversity.

Criterion 3: Curriculum Design and Programme Development

Commendations
- ✓ University has developed and approved the policy framework required to maintain the quality of its curriculum designs.
- ✓ Curriculum designs of many study programmes match with Sri Lanka Qualification Framework and Subject Benchmark Statements.
- ✓ Study programme and their curriculum designs apply Outcome Based Education and Student Cantered Learning.
- ✓ University promotes multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches in study programmes.
- ✓ Most of the undergraduate study programmes are developed and revised based on need analysis and stakeholder surveys and team approach.
- ✓ Tracer studies are conducted to identify the employability of students.
- ✓ Medical and Engineering programmes are accredited.
- ✓ Programme specifications are available for students using different means.
- ✓ University adopts proper procedures for Phasing out curricula of its study programmes.

Recommendations
- ➢ All study programmes should link with the SLQF, SBS, national goals and international trends.
- ➢ Tracer studies should be conducted regularly and should be featured in all entities.
- ➢ Regular curriculum revisions are recommended to cater to the rapidly changing demands of society and to accommodate recent developments in the study disciplines.
- ➢ Annual reviews should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of academic programmes.
- ➢ Credit transfer facilities should be expanded.

Criterion 4: Teaching-Learning

Commendations
- ✓ Strategic interventions on promoting student centred, problem-based teaching and moving towards industry-oriented practice-led teaching pedagogies.

- ✓ Conducive learning environment enriched with modern teaching facilities of most of the faculties facilitated the learning process very much.
- ✓ Well-established system for lecture records, student, and peer evaluation
- ✓ Practice base learning empowered through fully equipped lecture theatres, labs, computer centres, accredited workshops, and labs.
- ✓ Dedicated service of the main library and network of faculty libraries, a learning treasure, providing immense service in both programme and research-oriented material supply
- ✓ Innovative learning arrangements enriched with modern facilities; learning space of faculty of engineering (24x7), digital discussion rooms (Faculty of Science), accredited labs and works shops (Faculty of Engineering), digital learning and patient care (Faculty of Medicine
- ✓ Annual research sessions of most of the faculties encourage the research culture among both staff and students.

Recommendations

- ➤ Essentially need to promote student centred and problem-based learning in all programmes, especially postgraduate programmes are in eager need of modern-day teaching.
- ➤ Feedback mechanisms to communicate the outcomes of the lecturer evaluations and monitoring process on the implementation of corrective measures are vital.
- ➤ Library opening hours, especially during the exam period need to revisit, and arranging facilitation is essential.
- ➤ Crowded, less equipped, learning environments of the faculty of Allied Health Sciences need to be improved and empower staff.
- ➤ Limited or poor student engagement in research-led learning across all faculties needs empowerment.
- ➤ Poor or neglected student mentoring and advocacy on innovation, research, and postgraduate education of some faculties need to improve.
- ➤ Re-visit the internship programmes, and design new programmes to fit with the programme as well as the industry requirements.
- ➤ Facilitate multidisciplinary teaching and learning, especially enhance the capacity of non-science students, and open new avenues.

Criterion 5: Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression

Commendations

- ✓ Most of the faculties have infrastructure facilities for effective implementation.
- ✓ The university has digitalized and well-organized library with experienced staff and resources.

- ✓ Learner support is provided through well-equipped and properly functional centres.
- ✓ The faculties are well operating an ICT-based platform (LMS) to facilitate multi-mode teaching delivery and learning.
- ✓ The Faculty websites contain all necessary information including the faculty handbook to provide all incoming students.
- ✓ Some faculties provide preparatory programmes for freshers (English and ICT)
- ✓ University provides facilities for extra-curricular facilities: sports, recreation cultural and creative activities.
- ✓ The student support system (mentoring, counselling, career guidance, etc) is adequately functioning in the University.
- ✓ The university has a Special Needs Education Centre with reasonable facilities.

Recommendations

- ➢ Few entities/faculties e.g., Allied Health Science, Veterinary Science, and Management seriously lack adequate infrastructure facilities.
- ➢ A regular mechanism is not in place to monitor the progression of students.
- ➢ Wi-fi facilities are still not available at students' hostels.
- ➢ The facilities in the hostels are not conducive.

Criterion 6: Student Assessment and Awards

Commendations

- ✓ Well-established structure and system for Student assessment and awards
- ✓ Paper setting, moderation of both papers and answer scripts, and scrutiny boards have created transparency and credibility in the evaluation process.
- ✓ Most of the faculties, except a few, made arrangements for timely releasing results, within 1-3 months period with large groups of students.
- ✓ Exam Mat of the faculty of Medicine clearly demarcates the entry and existing dates of graduates and this leads to create an ambitious administrative system.

Recommendations

- ➢ Assessment methods essentially need to revisit, revise, and develop to capture the outcomes of student-centred learning and weights or allocation of marks need to re-visit.
- ➢ All faculties need to follow the procedures of timely releasing the results, and awarding the degrees, especially faculty of Arts and PGIs.
- ➢ Feedback mechanisms to obtain the student's views on assessments and evaluations are essential to ensure to deliver of appropriate assessments and evaluation methods.

Criterion 7: Postgraduate studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization

Commendations
- ✓ University supports research innovation, commercialization, IPR protection, and patent acquisition through established policies, and procedures is remarkable.
- ✓ Establishment of the Business Linkage, Innovation, Incubation, and Technology Transfer Office (BLITTO) is commendable.
- ✓ University evaluates collaborations with diverse organizations based on set criteria for knowledge sharing, expertise, human resources, and research is a positive aspect.
- ✓ Formation of IQAC in postgraduate institutions is a praiseworthy initiative.

Recommendations
- ➢ Establish all faculties connections or collaborative partnerships with the industry.
- ➢ Introduce tracer studies and student satisfaction surveys.
- ➢ Introduce formal induction programmes for research degrees.
- ➢ Encourage all academics in all faculties to publish their research in Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals.
- ➢ Introduce a Student-Supervisor Agreement system prior to conducting research.
- ➢ Implement standardized progress evaluation processes to prevent unjustified prolonged studies in research degrees.

Criterion 8: Distance Education

Commendations
- ✓ CDCE has made many efforts in providing Open and Distance Learning to the community who are unable to enter the universities is remarkable.
- ✓ The LMS platform being used for the online delivery of courses is commendable.
- ✓ Introduction of an online student enrolment system is noteworthy.
- ✓ Establishment of a Quality Assurance Cell is a positive aspect.

Recommendations
- ➢ A comprehensive survey on the employability status of CDCE students is recommended.
- ➢ Replace the "External Degree" label on graduate certificates with a neutral term to ensure equal recognition and fairness for all students, regardless of study method.
- ➢ The alignment of all study programmes with the SLQF guidelines needs to be addressed.
- ➢ Take urgent action to release the results of CDCE within the stipulated time.
- ➢ Enhance learning resources (library, internet facilities, LMS, laboratories) for CDCE students to ensure accessibility and improve learning experiences for all.
- ➢ Need to establish a systematic peer review process and take student feedback.
- ➢ Create inclusive and accessible study materials for all CDCE programmes.

Criterion 9: Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach

Commendations
- ✓ Establishing and practising the services to society is remarkable.
- ✓ Science-based faculties have collaborated with the industrial sector well.
- ✓ Engagements in technology transfer and capacity strengthening are appreciated.
- ✓ Utilization of the generated funds for the development of infrastructure and strengthening academic activities is noteworthy.
- ✓ Commitment to policy developments is welcome.

Recommendations
- ➢ Community engagement can be strengthened.
- ➢ Awareness of the specialized academic programmes and research activities needs to be accustomed to the relevant stakeholders.
- ➢ Develop mechanisms to find the required services or expertise from the stakeholders.

Criterion 10: Quality Assurance

Commendations
- ✓ Quality aspects and best practices have been embraced in most of the entities.
- ✓ The commitment and enthusiasm of the workforce at all levels are encouraging.
- ✓ The involvement of younger staff as contributors in SER preparation and evidence collection is appreciated.
- ✓ Conducting internal reviews is a positive aspect.
- ✓ Giving responsibilities to the junior staff along with the seniors would be a great investment.

Recommendations
- ➢ Wholehearted engagement in quality practices is a must for all the academic staff.
- ➢ The lack of involvement of the minor staff and students in quality-related matters needs to be strengthened.
- ➢ Appropriate awareness is required among some academics to alleviate the misconceptions and lack of understanding of the best practices and QA aspects.
- ➢ Regularise the internal reviews rather than at targeted events.

Section 8: Summary

The University of Peradeniya, one of the oldest and leading universities in the Sri Lankan system was reviewed by a panel of seven members appointed by the UGC. Unlike the normal institutional reviews, the team was asked to complete the assignment in less than one month which includes the desk evaluation by individual members, evidence-based proper evaluation, and a four and half day site visit encompassing the nine faculties, three postgraduate institutes and the other facilities in the university.

Under the able guidance of the university administration and CQA, the SER writing team has presented a very good SER with the added information within a short period of time. University has developed a network to formulate policies and procedures systematically. The university's approach to asserting the quality and its achievements were presented by the Vice Chancellor, Heads of the academic entities, and the Leaders of the SER writing teams. The adoption of these policies at the entity levels varies from one entity to the other due to the lack of commitment in those entities. Overall, the university has made accomplishments in attempting to inculcate good practices to improve the quality of the academic programs.

The review team has observed that the university has made a positive approach in addressing the comments made in the previous institutional review held in 2016.Overall, most of the entities have corrected their weakness prescribed in the previous IR report and slow progress was evident from a few entities.

The enthusiasm of the senior management and the young academic staff in practising the quality aspects were evident, and this can be extended to all the staff and students as well. Almost all the conversations with the students and supporting staff were very positive and they expressed their happiness in the university system despite the problems and financial difficulties in the country. Leaving the staff for better pastures and retirement of the experienced staff and the lack of supporting staff will become a threat to maintaining the current standards in the future. Increased student intake with limited resources may hamper progress in some of the faculties.

University has fulfilled the expected obligations of an HEI which include the dissemination of knowledge, generating new knowledge and engaging in community activities. Students' preference to gain admission to the UoP and the acceptance of the graduates locally and internationally reflects the accomplishment of the university. Engaging research activities and policymaking by the staff and the committed research of the students under the guidance of academics have generated new knowledge for the country in all disciplines. It is highly encouraging to see the commitment of the staff and students in engaging the outreach activities

which include capacity building, conducting awareness programmes and field works at the community level.

Considering all the aspects and evolution of the university during the review period, the review team is of the view that the University of Peradeniya is maintaining a higher standard and earned a **Very Good A grade from this review**. While congratulating all the stakeholders, the review team sincerely wishes that UoP will address their minor deficiencies and recommendations to elevate its quality and standards.

ANNEXES

Annexe: 1: Schedule for the Institutional Review

Schedule of Activities

7th (Sunday) May 2023

Evening	The arrival of the members of the Review Team to the Hotel
	(Casual welcome at 5.00pm)

8th (Monday) May 2023

08.00-08.30 am	A panel discussion among reviewers (in the Committee Room)		
08.30-10.00 am	Presentations by the CQA Director & SER Writing Committee Chairpersons & discussion in the presence of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Directors, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, and all IQAC Coordinators (with tea)		
10.00-12.30 am	Desk review **(Venue: Toolkit Room/CQA)**		
12.30-01.30 am	Lunch (at CQA) & travelling		
	Senate Room	**Arts-Faculty Seminar Room**	**PGIHS Board Room**
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
01.30-02.00pm (Meetings)	DVC, Proctor, Deputy Proctors, SAR & AR Legal Division & Staff, Chief Marshal, Deputy-Chief Marshal, Marshals	Acting Registrar, DRs, SARs, ARs, Statistical Officer, Including SAR CMD, SAR Capital works	Director- CQA, IQAC Coordinators, Senate Representatives of the MC-CQA, AR-CQA, CQA Staff
02.00-02.30 pm (Meetings)	Curator, Works Engineers, CSO, Public Relations Officer, Farm Managers,	Bursar, DBs, SABs, ABs, Staff of Financial Division (#15 of staff)	Librarian, DLs, SALs, ALs, and ARs of the Library, 15 staff members

	Workshop Engineer (Eng. Faculty), Project Manager, Graduate Translator		of the library
02.30-03.00 pm (Meetings)	Director-IT Centre, Director-NCSU, Faculty IT units Heads/Director/Coordinates; Network Engineer, (ITC); Webmaster/Web Administrators of units; System analysts and Network Administrators, etc	Deputy Internal Auditor, Senior Assistant Internal Auditor, and the staff	Director Accommodation, Wardens, and Sub-wardens
03.00-07.00pm	Completion of the desk review (with tea) **(Venue: Toolkit Room/CQA)**		

9th (Tuesday) May 2023

08.00am	Arrival at the Senate
08.30-09.15 am	Presentation by the Vice-Chancellor & the discussion (Review Team; Council members, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Directors PGIs, Directors of Centres/Units, Registrar, Bursar, Librarian, Proctor, CMO, Chief Marshal, CSO, Chairman Student Counsellor, Academic Wardens, Works Engineer, Director Student Accommodation, etc.)
09.15-10.00 am	Meeting with the external members of the Council (with tea)

	Travelling		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
10.30-11.00 am. (Meetings)	Alumni Association, UoP & Arts Council, UoP, Cultural Centre Staff	Students Services Division, Student Registration Division (DR/SAR/AR & Staff), Chairpersons of Student Scholarship Committees, Student	Director, URC, Members of the Senate Research Committees, Chairpersons of Faculty Higher Degree Committees

		Support Services and Welfare Systems (SSS&WS) Committee	
11.00-11.30 am. (Meetings)	The staff of the Department of English Language Teaching	AAD Director Director, CES Director SDC Director, OTS (AHEAD)	DR and Staff of Non-academic Establishment and Academic Establishments Divisions
11.30-12.00 am. (Meetings)	Chairman, Student Counsellor, Senior Student Counsellors, Director, and Staff of CaPSU	Director INRO, Director BLITTO Director, MuNIC	Visit CGU & discussion with the Director and Staff
12.00-01.00 pm	Lunch at CQA & Travelling		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
	Faculty of Medicine **(Venue: Medical Faculty)**	**Faculty of Arts** **(Venue: Arts Faculty)**	
	Responsibility: IQAC Coordinator		
01.00-02.30 pm (Visits)	Visit to Clinical Teaching Facilities & Other Facilities	Visit specialised learning facilities	<u>**01.00-01.20 pm:**</u> <u>**(Senate Room)**</u> Meeting with the SGBV Committee
02.30-03.00 pm (meeting)	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	**Visits** Visit to **SNRU**
03.00-03.20 pm (meeting)	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	Visit to **SDC** Meeting with the Director & the Programme Committee,
03.20-	Representatives of alumni	Representatives of alumni	staff & demonstration of

03.40 pm (meeting)	associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	facilities, inspection of records
03.40-04.00 pm (meeting)	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	Visiting the **Physical Education unit** and sports facilities Visit to **NCSU**
04.00-04.20 pm (meeting)	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants	
04.20-4.40 pm (meeting)	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc	
04.40-05.00 pm (meeting)	Representatives of students	Representatives of students	
05.00-07.00 pm	Travelling & Document View **(Venue: Toolkit Room/CQA)**		

10th (Wednesday) May 2023

8.00am	Arrival at the Senate & departure from the Senate		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
	Faculty of Agriculture (Venue: Agriculture Faculty)	**Faculty of Veterinary Medicine & Animal Sciences (Venue: Vet Faculty)**	**Faculty of Science (Venue: Science Faculty)**
	Responsibility: IQAC Coordinator		
08.30-09.00 am. (meeting)	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator
09.00-09.20 am. (meeting)	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units
09.20-09.40 am. (meeting)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)
09.40-10.00 am. (meeting)	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants
10.00-10.20 am. (meeting)	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers,	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers,	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical

	Senior Management Assistants	Senior Management Assistants	Officers, Senior Management Assistants
10.20-10.40 am. (meeting)	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS & managing any other special T&L facilities etc	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS & managing any other special T&L facilities etc	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS & managing any other special T&L facilities etc
10.40-11.00 am. (meeting)	Representatives of students	Representatives of students	Representatives of students
11.00-12.30 pm (visits)	Visit to Agriculture Biotechnological Centre & other specialised learning facilities	Visit to clinical teaching facilities & Other facilities	Visit specialised learning facilities
12.30-1.30 pm	Lunch (At CQA) & travelling		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
	Faculty of Engineering (Venue: Engineering Faculty)	**CDCE (Venue: CDCE)**	**Faculty of Dental Sciences (Venue: Dental Faculty)**
	Responsibility: IQAC Coordinator		
01.30-03.00 pm	Visit specialised learning facilities	**01.30-02.00 pm:** Presentation by the Director/CDCE (10 min) &Meeting with the Director, Deputy Directors, IQAC	Visit to clinical teaching facilities & Other facilities
03.00-03.20 pm	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the		Presentation by the Dean (10 min) &

	Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	Coordinator **02.00-02.20 pm:** Meeting with the BoS Chairpersons & Programme Coordinators **02.20-02.40 pm:** Meeting with the SAR, AR, & AB	Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator
03.20-03.40 pm	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units		Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units
03.40-04.00 pm	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	**02.40-03.00 pm:** Meeting with the staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc.	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)
04.00-04.20 pm	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	**03.00-03.20 pm:** Meeting with students and alumni **03.20-04.00 pm:** Visiting facilities and Tea *Travelling to CQA*	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants
04.20-04.40 pm	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants	Document View	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants
04.40-05.00 pm	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing,		Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing,

		Document View	
	managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc		managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS & managing any other special T&L facilities etc
05.00-05.20 pm	Representatives of students		Representatives of students
05.40-07.00pm	Document View with tea **(Venue: Toolkit Room/CQA)**		

11th (Thursday) May 2023

8.00	Arrival at the Senate & departure from the Senate		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
	Responsibility: IQAC Coordinator		
	Faculty of Management (Venue: Management Faculty)	**Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (Venue: AHS Faculty)**	**Visits** 08.30. Health Centre: Facility Visit at the **Health Centre** and discussion with the staff.
08.30-09.00am. (meeting)	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	Presentation by the Dean (10 min) & Meeting with the Dean, HoDs, Senior Academic Staff, IQAC Coordinator	
09.00-09.20am. (meeting)	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	Deputy Proctor, Student Counsellors, Chairpersons of Committees, Directors/Coordinators of Centres & Units	09.30: **IT Centre**
09.20-09.40am. (meeting)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	

09.40-10.00am. (meeting)	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	Junior Academic Staff including Probationary Lecturers, Temporary Lecturers and Demonstrators, Teaching Assistants	10.15: Male (one new and one old) &Female (one new and one old) **hostels**
10.00-10.20am. (meeting)	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants	DR/SAR/AR, SAB/AB, AL/SAL Senior Technical Officers, Senior Management Assistants	10.45: **Sarathchandra open-air theatre**
10.20-10.40am. (meeting)	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc	Staff responsible for handling examination matters/units (printing, managing marks and storage), staff responsible for managing IT facilities, LMS &managing any other special T&L facilities etc	11.00: **Places of worship**
10.40-11.00am. (meeting)	Representatives of students	Representatives of students	11.15: **Student Centre & facilities**
11.00-12.30 pm (visits)	Visit specialised learning facilities	Visit specialised learning facilities	11.30 **Main Library**
12.30-01.30 pm	Lunch & travelling **(Venue: CQA)**		
	Team A	**Team B**	**Team C**
	Responsibility: IQAC Coordinator		
	PGIA **(Venue: PGIA)**	**PGIS** **(Venue: PGIS)**	**PGIHS** **(Venue: PGIHS)**
01.30-02.00 pm (Meetings)	Presentation by the Director (10 min) & Meeting with the Director, Chairpersons of	Presentation by the Director (10 min) & Meeting with the Director, Chairpersons of	Presentation by the Director (10 min) & Meeting with the

	BoSs,	BoSs,	Director, Chairpersons of BoSs,
02.00-02.20 pm (Meetings)	Meeting with Chairpersons of Committees, Programme Coordinators, Staff responsible for student support & welfare etc	Meeting with Chairpersons of Committees, Programme Coordinators, Staff responsible for student support & welfare etc	Meeting with Chairpersons of Committees, Programme Coordinators, Staff responsible for student support & welfare etc
02.20-02.40 pm (Meetings)	Meeting with a representative sample of teaching panels	Meeting with a representative sample of teaching panels	Meeting with a representative sample of teaching panels
02.40-03.00 pm (Meetings)	Meeting with DR/SAR/AR & SAB/AB & Non-academic staff	Meeting with DR/SAR/AR & SAB/AB & Non-academic staff	Meeting with DR/SAR/AR & SAB/AB & Non-academic staff
03.00-03.20 pm (Meetings)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)	Representatives of alumni associations & other external stakeholders (with tea)
03.20-03.40 pm (Meetings)	Senior MAs & TOs responsible for managing records of students and examinations, handling examination matters, managing IT facilities, LMS etc	Senior MAs & TOs responsible for managing records of students and examinations, handling examination matters, managing IT facilities, LMS etc	Senior MAs & TOs responsible for managing records of students and examinations, handling examination matters, managing IT facilities, LMS etc
03.40-04.00 pm (Meetings)	Representatives of students	Representatives of students	Representatives of students
04.00-04.45 pm	Visiting facilities	Visiting facilities	Visiting facilities

(Visits)			
	Travelling to CQA		
05.00- 07.00pm	Document View (with Tea) **(Venue: Toolkit Room/CQA)**		

12th (Friday) May 2023

08.00-09.45 am	Document view and Panel Discussions
10.00-11.00 am	Document view and Panel Discussions (with tea)
11.00-11.30 am	Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor
11.30-01.00pm	Wrap-up meeting (with tea); **(Venue: Senate Room)**
01.00-01.30 pm	Lunch
	Departure from the University