



# **PROGRAM REVIEW 2017**

University of Kalaniya  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
General Degree

**Programme Review Report**  
**of**  
**Bachelor of Arts (General)**  
**Degree**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**  
**University of Kelaniya**

**Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council**  
**University Grants Commission**  
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## Table of Contents

	Page(s)
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Section 1: Brief Introduction to the Programme</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Section 2: Review Team’s Observations on the Self Evaluation Report</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Section 3: A Brief Description of the Review Process</b>	<b>09</b>
<b>Section 4: Overview of the Faculty’s Approach to Quality and Standards (Not Included)</b>	
<b>Section 5: Judgment on the Eight Criteria of Programme Review</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.1 Criterion 1: Program Management</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.2 Criterion 2: Human and Physical Resources</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5.3 Criterion 3- Programme Design and Development</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5.4 Criterion 4: Course / Module Design and Development</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5.6 Criterion 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5.7 Criterion 7: Student Assessment and Awards</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5.8 Criterion 8: Innovative and Healthy Practices</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Section 6: Grading of Overall Performance of the Programme</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Section 7: Commendations and Recommendations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 8: Summary</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Programme Review Team</b>	<b>23</b>

## **Introduction**

External programme review is an important component to assure the quality in any higher education system. Its main objective is to ensure the quality of education. It inculcates a quality culture within the institution which runs the programme and promotes continuous quality improvement in all spheres of higher education, facilitated through periodic review and feedback. For an institution with varieties of study programmes and large number of students, internal quality assurance with internal mechanisms, cannot suffice. Therefore, an external quality assurance by a peer review team is conducted periodically in Sri Lankan universities and higher education institutions under the guidance and coordination of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka (QAAC/UGC).

The BA (General) Degree Programme of the Faculty of Social Sciences (FoSS) of the University of Kelaniya was reviewed by a review team appointed by the QAAC/UGC from 20th to 22nd of September 2017. The review team was consisted of three senior academics drawn from three universities. According to the instructions given in the Programme Review Manual of the QAAC/UGC (PR Manual), the quality framework consists of eight ‘criteria’ and ‘best practices’ and corresponding ‘standards’ for each criterion. Based on the guidelines prescribed by the PR Manual, the FoSS of UoK has prepared the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of BA (General) Degree programme and submitted it to the QAAC of UGC.

The review team in its programme review process, the information provided in the SER, in relation to all eight criteria and the observations and evidenced-based judgments made during the site visit were used to assess the performance of the study programme. Observing the achievements in maintenance of excellence, quality of teaching and research undertaken by the academic staff, improvement in learning skills of the students, extent of application of outcome-based education and student-centered teaching and learning approach, and degree of internalization of good practices of higher education at the programme level was the prime objective and mission of the review team with a spirit of peer evaluation. The team also observed several other related aspects such as application of advanced and modern teaching methods, use of modern technologies, facilities available to the students and academic and non-academic staff, availability of supporting staff in the departments, infrastructural facilities, qualifications and experience of the academic staff, practicing peer evaluation, obtaining student evaluation and feedback, and the availability of student counseling and carrier guidance.

## Section 1: Brief Introduction to the BA (General) Degree Programme

*'Vidyalankara Pirivena'* founded in 1875 as a centre of higher learning for Buddhist clergy was the chronological root of the University of Kelaniya (UoK). With the establishment of universities in Sri Lanka, *'Vidyalankara Pirivena'* became Vidyalankara University in 1959, later it was named as the Vidyalankara Campus of the University of Ceylon in 1972, and in 1978, it became the University of Kelaniya. The UoK now has 7 faculties with 50 academic departments offering study programmes in diverse disciplines.

In the academic year 1981/82, the Faculty of Arts which was functioning at the UoK since its inception was divided into 2 faculties, as Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Humanities. These 2 faculties maintain a close rapport in their academic, research and other allied pursuits. The Inter-faculty Centre for Coordinating the Modular System (ICCMS) serves as the administrative organ to connect these 2 faculties.

In terms of student population, FoSS is the largest faculty in UoK. It offers 18 BA (General) degree programmes through 9 departments, *viz.* Archaeology, Economics, Geography, History, Library and Information Science, Mass Communications, Philosophy, Sociology and Sport Science and Physical Education. Out of these 18 programmes, only 17 programmes are reviewed currently; for the study programme 'Peace and Conflict Resolution' which comes under the Department of Philosophy, the course content has not been finalized yet.

The BA (General) degree is a 3-year study programme and the students reading for BA (General) degree should offer a minimum of 30 credits per academic year and a minimum of 90 credits over three years to become eligible to graduate with the degree. The programme can be completed by offering three major subjects. The Faculties of Social Sciences (FoSS) and Humanities (FoH) offer many subjects which can be offered as major subjects for the Bachelor of Arts degree. The FoSS offers 18 major subjects and FoH offers 25 major subjects for the BA (General) and BA (Honours) degree programmes. All major subjects offered by these two Faculties are grouped into 10 baskets. Students can select one subject each from any three of the 10 baskets. In addition, to compulsory course units from the selected major subjects, the students could also select course units from optional courses, auxiliary courses and general education courses. Out of the minimum 90 credits at least 72 credits should be obtained from the compulsory course units. Others credits could be earned from the optional course units, auxiliary

course units and general education courses, offered by any department of the FoSS or FoH. A student who follows this programme is expected to obtain at least 30 credits in each academic year with minimum of 2.00 GPA. All the requirements should be fulfilled within a period of maximum of 5 academic years. Thus, a student gets an opportunity to study in 2 faculties at the same time. However, there is an increasing tendency of students enrolled in the FoSS to read for BA (Special) Degree Programmes instead of offering for BA (General) degree. For the academic year 2014/2015, only 73 students enrolled in the BA (General) degree programme.

The curriculum of FSS was revised in 2014 under the guidance and assistance of QIG/HETC project and the FoSS has adopted a graduate profile for its BA (General) degree programmes. It is compulsory for a student in FoSS to complete the course unit of English for Social Sciences (ELTU 11212) to become eligible for graduation. In close scrutiny, it was observed the curricula/syllabi of some departments need updating, and the study programmes were not in alignment with the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) guidelines.

As of 2017, the FSS has 98 permanent academic staff, 31 temporary academic staff and 04 demonstrators. Out of this number, 19 are professors (senior/associate) and 32 are Ph.D. holders. The student: staff ratio of the Faculty is 29.3. There are 40 academic support staff members including technicians, lab assistants, clerks, and skilled and unskilled labourers. Their services are rendered in the departments, faculty office, ICCMS and in the 3 computer labs.

The FoSS has many physical facilities for learning and research activities. The review team was able to visit these places and observe the facilities available for the students and staff. The library has a good collection of books and journals. It also provides electronic access to full texts from the terminals located in the library. Outdoor reading facilities are also provided.

Wi-fi facility is available to all the students and staff throughout the university premises. There are 3 computer labs established in the FoSS and all these labs are available for students. Main lecture rooms of the departments are equipped with multimedia and other relevant teaching facilities. The Department of Mass Communication has an audio-visual studio. The ELTU does not have a language lab which is a drawback in the provision of effective teaching of English. The Department of Geography maintains a GIS lab. However, it appears that it's functions are constrained by space limitations.

FSS of UoK has a Research Centre in Social Sciences (RCSS) for facilitating academic staff in research and development activities. The RCSS publishes 'Journal of Social Sciences' once in 3 months enabling the academic staff members to publish their research findings. The RCSS has also launched a programme to provide financial assistance for researches. A research library which was established under the SIDA/SAREC project is also in operation within the FoSS and it holds a collection of books, research publication and journals thus providing easy access published literature. The, Palm Leaf Manuscript Study and Research Library of FoSS engages in collecting, organizing and preserving digitally the ancient manuscripts of the country and providing facilities for scholars to engage in study and research on them. The Department of Mass Communication maintains Communication Research Unit (CRU) and Centre for Study of Media and Human Rights (CSMHR).

A student welfare committee which is a subcommittee of the Faculty Board of the FoSS has student representation and gives a forum for expression of students' concerns. Students are given variety of venues such as the Student Centre, 2 playgrounds and the Open-Air Theatre for extra-curricular activities which are organized in inter-departmental and inter-faculty levels. Student Societies/Associations have also been operated at departmental level, and organize social and cultural events annually. The hostel facilities are given to the first year and final year students, who are from out stations. Special facilities are also provided for the differently-abled students.

The review team noted that many members of the Departments were not aware of the subject review programmes which should have been carried out in the university 5 years back. None of the Departments could produce their Subject Review Reports. The reason that they gave was that the Heads of Departments are new, and hence they are not aware of the previous Subject Reviews conducted. This situation raises the necessity of having proper record keeping system within the Faculty.

## **Section 2: Review Team's Observations on the SER**

The review team members carefully scrutinized the SER individually during desk evaluation and allocated marks. Then as a team met together and scrutinized the assessments and comments made by individual members on the SER and arrived at consensus on the final assessments. The main deficiency of the SER was it had failed to address all standards; 15 standards were not covered (i.e. standard 1.20 and standards from 5.6, 5.7 to 5.19). The documentary evidences to support the claims of best practices are not stated properly for many of the standards.

The review team observed that the SER was prepared in a hasty manner. The representative of the writing team stated in his presentation that they were compelled to complete SER preparation within a very short period of time (approx. 6 weeks). He also stated that the members of the SER team were not briefed properly, and not fully aware of the relevancy of some standards. They acknowledged that some standards may have not been adequately addressed in the SER. (i.e. standards 3.11, 3.21, 3.22, 6.4, 6.12, 7.1, 7.11, and 8.2). The representative of the SER writing team also stated in his presentation that current review is the first programme review conducted since its inception in the academic year 1981/82.

The PR Manual prescribed a template to list the standards, best practices, documentary evidences and code numbers of documentary evidences. It also requested to give a summary for each criterion at the end of respective criteria. Further, it was expected that SER should include the profile of SWOT analysis. However, in the SER presented by the FoSS for the BA (General) degree programme has failed to comply fully with the prescribed guidelines and also didn't include a profile of SWOT analysis anywhere. The SER contains only the strengths and achievements of the Faculty along with relevant documents as evidences for their achievements. Therefore, the review team was not in a position to make evidenced-based judgments and comments on many aspects of the study programme.

The curriculum of BA (General) degree programme was revised in 2014. Out of the 18 disciplines, only 7 disciplines have subject benchmark statements (i.e. Economics, Political Science, History, Philosophy, Archaeology, Library & Information Science and Geography). Though, the departments claim that the last curricula revision was conducted with involvement

of stakeholders, the observation of the documents relating to curriculum revision suggested that the external stakeholders' participation was limited to only subject experts.

At the end of the SER, the writing team has annexed the attendance of the task force appointed to work on the SER. The review team was surprised to see that many members were absent from the meetings organized on Mondays from 08.05.2017 to 12.06.2017.

By accident the review team had the chance to see the SER of the BA (Special) Degree programme of FoSS, and it was noted that the information given for the standards of the 8 criteria and their documentary evidences provided and document numbers allocated were mostly the same in both SERs.

There was no mention in the SER about the Subject Review Reports done in the departments a few years ago.

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

The review team members were given the copies of SER at the meeting held on 05.07.2017 at the UGC. Each member did a desk evaluation and sent their assessment reports to the Director of QAAC. At the meeting held on 23.08.2017 at the UGC, the review team members shared their views about the SER and reached consensus on marks allocated, and discussed about the site-visit planned .

The site-visit visit of the programme review of BA (General) degree programme of FoSS was scheduled from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017 together with the programmes reviews of the BA (Special) degree programmes offered by FoSS and the BA (General) and BA (Special) degree programmes of FoH. The review teams were picked up from the Hotel Clarion at 7:45 am by UoK vehicles. The Director of IQAU gave a warm welcome and handed over the scheduled programmes for respective teams for their respective 3-day site-visits. The review team members were then invited to the Senate Room for a formal meeting.

Then, all the review panel members had a meeting with the VC, Deans of FoSS and FoH, and the Director of ICCMS. This meeting was to introduce the UoK, to the review members and to explain the functions of ICCMS. It was followed by a presentation in the Faculty Board Room of FoSS to introduce the two programmes under review. After such formalities, the two review teams assigned for FoSS dispersed and commenced working on their respective tasks assigned.

The review team conducted the review process adhering to the programme provided by the IQAU with some modifications wherever needed. The activities of the team during the 3-day of site visit can be listed as follows:

Meeting with the Heads of Departments of FoSS

Meeting with the academic staff of FoSS

Meeting with the administrative officers

Meeting with the technical officers

Meeting with the non-academic staff

Meeting with the students

Meeting with the Librarian, directors of ICCMS, SDC and ELTU, representatives of GEE, CGU, student counseling and welfare centre.

Scrutinizing the documentary evidences

Observing the teaching and learning activities

Observing the facilities within the FoSS (library, ICT centre, ELTU, canteen, classrooms and restrooms)

Wrap up meeting with the Director of IQAU

Wrap up meeting with the VC, DVC and Dean of FoSS

Wrap up meeting with the Heads of Departments

Wrap up meeting with academic staff

After these meetings and observations, the review team could see the real situation prevailing in the FoSS which were not fully reflected in the SER. The facilities for differently-abled students were good and commendable. However, the Centre for GEE and CGU are in a very rudimentary state.

The Heads of Departments stated that use of VLE and LMS was not fully embraced by the staff and students. Even when the review team requested for the evidences for the use of LMS, some

departments could not produce them. The administrative officers gave a view that UoK has many venues for self-earning and therefore financially satisfactory. However, the students were giving a different view that the university is not supporting financially the essential educational needs. For example, the students of Archaeology and Tourism programmes complained that even for the field visits necessary for their learning, the student are compelled to pocket out the money to meet the travel expenses.

After the meetings with various groups, the review team was able to observe that the use of English language for general conversation by the students and staff is not very common in the Faculty. It is understandable when meeting the students, technical officers, and non-academic staff as they prefer to speak in Sinhala. However, even when meeting the academic staff, they too prefer to converse in Sinhala.

It was stated by the Dean and other administrative officers that funds are available for the academic staff to go abroad for their higher studies. However presently many senior academic staff members have their postgraduate degrees earned locally, especially from the UoK.

The ICCMS is considered as an important organ that connects FoSS and FoH. It is a unique organ and such entity cannot be found in other universities of Sri Lanka. However, the Director of this important organ is also the senior student councilor. The review team is of the view that the work of a senior student councilor is unlikely to be carried out to the satisfaction of the students by an academic who holds simultaneously another very demanding post as the Director of ICCMS.

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

The FoSS, besides offering the BA (General) degree programme with options for the undergraduates to have wide variety of course combinations for their general degree, has commenced two new general degree programmes in the recent past; BA in Sport and Recreation Management under the newly establish Department of Sport Science and Physical Education and the BA in Public Relation and Media Management degree programme conducted by the Department of Mass Communication.

The BA in Sport and Recreation Management offered by the newly established Department of Sport Science and Physical Education, provides training on sports and recreation management in Sri Lanka and global contexts. This was introduced in 2005 and remains unique to the entire higher education system in Sri Lanka. Nine batches of students to read for general degree programme have been admitted so far, and 5 batches have already graduated.

The BA in Public Relation and Media Management degree programme conducted by the Department of Mass Communication provides training in public relation and media management. This was started in 2015 and is unique to entire higher education system in Sri Lanka and currently, two batches have been enrolled into this study programme.

The academic staff of the Faculty represents a fine blend of academics with professional competencies with exposure to local and foreign training and qualifications.

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

The University Council is the governing authority of the University and consists of the Vice Chancellor (as the ex-officio Chairperson), the Deans of the seven Faculties, two representatives of the Senate, and twelve members appointed by the University Grants Commission. The Organizational structure, governance and management procedures, strategic/action plan and implementation, management capacity and procedures, by-laws relating to examinations, disciplinary procedures, student unions, and duty lists and Codes of Conduct for staff and Charter for students which are related to programme management are well in place. Separate Strategic Plan prepared in alignment with the University strategic plan is available for the FoSS along with the activity plans highlighting the financial requirements as well. However, preparation of a priority list of activities with a practical approach is recommended since limitation in fund is a major constraint.

The internal quality assurance programme is carried out by the IQAU and is monitored closely. The IQAC is established at the Faculty but need separate space and more facilities. Regular monthly meetings of IQAC are held at the Faculty to monitor the progress of its activities.

Curriculum development and internal quality assurance mechanism and procedures and curricula revision process, are ongoing and expect to implement the new curricula with 2017 batch of students. Academic counseling, student counseling, welfare mechanisms and procedures are in place but need further strengthening. National and international collaboration is evident. Evidences as regard to policy of zero tolerance to ragging and for punishment of students who got caught in ragging were available for observation by the review team.

Although the Faculty makes available a Handbook to new students, information given in this book needs updating. Handbook has to be prepared in the form of a guide to students that could to be used throughout their stay in the Faculty. The Student Handbook may include information on following: programme description, programme learning outcomes, graduate profile, admission requirements, overview of programme structure, programme structure, contents of the course units, teaching and learning methods, definition of a credit, credit value for the degree, length of the degree programme, methods of assessment, grades and grade point values, pass mark of a course unit, re-sitting the examination, number of attempts for sitting examinations, calculation of cumulative GPA, award of honors, attendance, absence from academic activities & examinations grounds for issuing warnings to students and student portfolio.

#### Good Practices

1. Student Handbook prepared in three languages.
2. Faculty has adopted an action plan forecasting the future five years
3. Students are properly oriented to the norms, values, disciplinary procedures and facilities provided by the University.

#### Weaknesses

1. Participatory approach to programme management is lacking besides the statutory provision for two student representatives in the Faculty Board.
2. There is no evidence of stakeholder participation in programme management besides three external representatives in the Faculty Board.
3. MIS is not fully operational in the Faculty.
4. Performance appraisal system of teaching is not in place.

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

### Good Practices

1. The Faculty had strived to their best to get developed its human resources through earned funds.
2. Innovative step to establish Skills Development Centre
3. Some academic departments under this cluster are equipped adequately with modern teaching and learning facilities.

### Weaknesses

1. It is reported that Faculty had attempted to train the trainers for staff development work from among the academic staff. Yet there was no evidence of training conducted by them.
2. It is observed that there is no equitable and fair mechanism in place for resource allocation among the academic entities.

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

An attempt has been made to reflect the mission, goal and objectives of the Faculty in designing and developing the study programme. CDC has been established and the composition of CDC is acceptable. There is evidence for adopting a participatory approach to develop curriculum, inclusive of academic staff, students, alumni, external stakeholders such as industry and professional bodies. Employability of graduates at present is very high. Considerable number of students are admitted to follow advanced degree program after completion of the basic degree.

The IQAU of the University of Kelaniya together with IQAC of the Faculty adopts internal quality enhancement and monitoring strategies and processes to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development. Regular monthly meetings are held at Faculty contribute to solve matters pertaining to quality.

There is an ongoing curriculum revision to align curricula with the SLQF guidelines and outcome-based and student-centered learning approach and the process is nearing the completion. Courses designed are expected to be professional, semi-professional, and interdisciplinary. The programme will have outcome-based performance indicators such as student progress and success rates, student satisfaction with the programme and incorporates the feedback from employe satisfaction surveys. After necessary approvals, the revised curricula

are expected to be implemented with 2017 intake. With the implementation of the revised curricula, it is expected to strengthen the courses and programmes offered by the departments. Policies are yet to be developed for designing and developing programmes for differently-abled students.

#### Good Practices

1. There is a systematic mechanism in place to revise the programme curricula in every five years.
2. Internship programme and soft skills training have been incorporated into the study programme

#### Weaknesses

1. Absence of stakeholder's participation in programme design and development.

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

#### Good Practices

1. The Faculty had revised the course curricula and up dated the programme specifications in 2014.
2. The has commenced the adoption of SLQF guidelines.

#### Weaknesses

1. Some of the academic departments have not properly understood the philosophy behind the Course Unit System.
2. Some of the course curricula/ syllabi are not in conformity with the respective subject bench mark statements.
3. Some of the course curricula/ syllabi at advance level of learning had not touched the different domains of education.

### **5.5 Criterion 5: Teaching and Learning**

The students have complained that it was the junior lecturers that shoulder the bulk of the teaching workload, particularly the temporary lecturers. The review team was unable to observe the teaching classes because there were neither students nor teachers at the given time and in class rooms.

#### Good Practices

1. Course specification is given to every student
2. Student feedback and peer reviews are in place.

#### Weaknesses

1. There is no mechanism to evaluate teaching excellence.

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

#### Good Practices

1. Provisions of continuing professional development training programmes for staff.
2. Availability of career guidance services for students

#### Weaknesses

1. LMS platform is not properly used by staff as well as by students.
2. There is no evidence of conducting need analysis of students.

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

#### Good Practices

1. Assessment strategy is explained to students through prospectus and course specifications.

#### Weakness

1. Questions in the examination papers are not aligned with relevant course specifications.
2. Assessment information is not given to students

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

#### Good Practice

1. Establishment of Skills Development Centre and Internship Programme

## Section6: Grading of Overall Performance of the programme

The BA (General) Degree Programme in Social Sciences offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences of University of Kelaniya was reviewed in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the PR Manual. The cumulative score obtained for each criterion was based on the claims made and evidences provided for each standard of the respective criterion. Seven out of 8 criteria have scored more than the minimum weighted scores. The overall performance of the study programme in terms of actual criterion-wise scores, overall score, grade and interpretation of the grade are given in the Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1 Grading of the Overall Performance of the Study Programme**

No	Criterion	Weighted Minimum Score	Actual Criterion-wise Score
1	Programme Management	75	<b>96</b>
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	<b>72</b>
3	Programme Design and Development	75	<b>85</b>
4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	<b>100</b>
5	Teaching and Learning	75	<b>37</b>
6	Leraning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	<b>65</b>
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	<b>106</b>
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	<b>41</b>
Total in Thousand Scale			<b>602</b>
Total as a Percentage (%)			<b>60.2</b>
Grade Awarded			<b>C</b>
Performance Descriptor			<b>Satisfactory</b>
Interpretation of Performance Descriptor			
Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects.			

As shown above, based on the final aggregate score, BA (General) in Social Science degree programme has secured the Grade of ‘C’ and earned the Performance Descriptor of “*satisfactory*” which is interpreted as “*minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects*”.

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

Facilities provided to differently abled students are commendable.

The facilities that were made available to students and staff through self-earned funds is commendable. Yet it is recommended the staff needs to be directed to make their publications in standards journals.

Some of the important documents and reports were missing and it is recommended to device a proper system of record keeping.

Some of the course units had adopted a strategy of making available course specifications (as booklets) to each and every student of the course is commendable.

The review team observed that the philosophy behind the course unit system and modern education technologies such as outcome-based education and student-centered learning (OBE\_SCL) are not communicated to the academic staff of the University and many course units had addressed only the knowledge domain of the education even at the third year of the study programme. This indeed highlights the necessity of providing training on the course unit system, and application of SLQF guidelines and modern education technologies.

The review team had observed the admitting students to degree programmes in FoH and FoSS had become chaotic from the recent past with the UGC involvement in student registration. It is recommended the UGC and two faculties to work out an appropriate mechanism for student allocation to these two faculties.

The review team also had observed the quality of the visiting lecturers in some of the contributing departments are questionable in terms of their qualifications and experience. Sometimes, it was observed that students were given printed notes to students thus promoting rote learning by the visiting staff. It is recommended to adopt Faculty Board and Senate approved criteria to ensure only the persons with appropriate academic and/or professional qualifications and experience are invited as visiting lecturers. Further, the students had reported that bulk of the teaching was carried out by the temporary lecturers. This issue is needed to be addressed so as to ensure the quality and standard of academic programmes.

Some members of the staff had expressed some dissention towards quality assurance process, and this may be due to lack of awareness and/or failure of the Faculty to adopt a participatory approach in managing the Faculty affairs.

The bifurcation of existing departments without proper infrastructure facilities and human resources should be avoided.

The establishment of ICCMS, a unique entity of course coordination and issuing results for the general degree in which two faculties contributes is no doubt an innovation but such coordination must be done in systematized manner as there were instances in which students had resorted to legal procedures to get their grievances remedied.

Though student feedback on teaching was obtained in some courses, such feedback assessments were not appropriately analyzed, and the outcomes from such analyses were not communicated back to the relevant teachers. Further, peer evaluation of teachers has not been practiced. Therefore, it is recommended to streamline the student feedback assessment and commence peer evaluation so as to improve the quality of programme delivery process.

## Section 8: Summary

The BA (General) degree programme of the FoSS of the University of Kelaniya was reviewed by a review team appointed by the QAAC of UGC. The review was conducted in accordance with the procedures and guidelines prescribed by the PR Review Manual of the UGC.

The Faculty of Social Science is the largest Faculty in terms of number of academic departments, staff and student population. The BA (General) degree programme in Social Science is a 3-year study programme and the students reading for BA (General) degree should offer a minimum of 30 credits per academic year and a minimum of 90 credits over three years to become eligible to graduate with the degree. The programme can be completed by offering three major subjects. The Faculties of Social Sciences (FoSS) and Humanities (FoH) offer many subjects which can be offered as major subjects for the Bachelor of Arts degree. It was observed that the University has a well-resourced library and modern teaching and learning facilities. The student enrollment into BA (General) degree programme has been very limited as most of the students enrolled at the FoSS have shown an interest in pursuing a special degree instead of reading for a general degree.

It was observed that some sections of the SER were not complete. It appears that SER preparation was not properly coordinated by the higher management, and even the attendance by academic members who were assigned the task of compiling the SER was very poor. There was a mismatch between the coding of documents cited as evidences and the actual content of the file. Some programmes had attempted to do their best to compile all possible evidences, while others had failed to do so.

It was noticed that the degree programme was operated with insufficient human resources and physical facilities. However, the available facilities have not been properly maintained.

The review team had met all the stakeholders within the University to explore the efficacy and effectiveness of the study programme. However, the observing lecture-discussion sessions or class room activities was not possible. Though the curricula were updated in 2014, they indeed in need of urgent revision. There shall be a proper mechanism to develop course curricula/syllabi in consultation with experts and stakeholders. The review team also observed that even the documents related to previous subjects/programme reviews carried out were not properly stored. This situation raises the necessity of proper record keeping system.

The review team evaluated the BA (General) degree programme in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the PR Manual. The cumulative score obtained for each criterion was based on the claims made and evidences provided for each standard of the respective criteria. Seven out of 8 criteria have secured score more than the minimum weighted scores required. Based on the final aggregate score, BA (General) degree programme had secured the Grade of ‘C’ and earned the Performance Descriptor of “*satisfactory*”, which is interpreted as “*minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects*”.

The review team appreciates the work undertaken by the academic, administrative and supporting staff of the Faculty to run the BA (General) degree programme with many challenges and difficulties. The review team wishes to extend their sincere appreciation to the Dean of the Faculty, Heads of Departments, Coordinators of Centers and Units, Director of IQAC and all other academic and non-academic members in the Faculty for facilitating the Programme Review and providing the logistic support during the site visit.

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