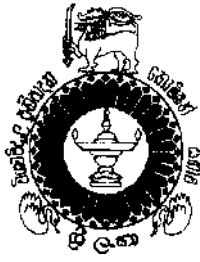




# **PROGRAM REVIEW 2017**

Eastern University of Sri Lanka - Trincomalee Campus  
Faculty of Communication and Business Studies  
BA (Hons) Communication Studies



**Programme Review Report  
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Communication Studies  
Department of Languages and Communication Studies  
Faculty of Communication and Business Studies  
Trincomalee Campus  
2017**

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**University Grants Commission  
Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council  
Sri Lanka**

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## **Preamble**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) appointed the Study Programme Review Team members, namely Professor Theodore Fernando, (Chair) Dr. N.W.B. Balasooriya, (Team Member) and Dr. Pushpa Vithana, (Team Member). They arrived at the venue, namely Palm Beach Resort in Nilawelie, (Trincomalee) on 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2017 at 2.30 p.m.

The review team had a brief meeting before dinner and discussed the way forward and how to go about in verifying evidence at the desk review of BA (Honours) in Communication Studies, Department of Languages and Communication Studies, Faculty of Communication and Business Studies, Trincomalee Campus. After scrutinizing the tentative schedule of the 3 day visit from 10<sup>th</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> September, e-mailed by Miss Shalika Boyagoda, a lecturer assigned to coordinate the visit of the review team; the members made few changes in the schedule because of time constraints and informed her about changes. Following perusal of the final instructions sent by the Director (QA), members discussed the questions that need to be raised on the SER prepared by the campus, in the scheduled official meetings with the academics and non-academics of Trincomalee Campus, and the buildings need to be visited.

The review team first met Rector of the campus Dr. V. Kangasinham, to explain the objectives of the three-day official visit and to determine how the SER preparation was initiated in the campus and it was officially communicated to the staff, top down, and lastly who were officially assigned the task of preparing the SER. He was very cordial and assisted the team, and welcomed all three members, and answered all queries raised about the SER process. He informed the review team that he was in charge of the “Quality Assurance Cell” in Batticaloa Campus (IQAC), before he was appointed as Rector of the campus.

The Rector was very busy with the preparations to host an International Conference in the campus on the 13<sup>th</sup> September morning in which Chairman of UGC will be the Chief Guest. Further, there will be other dignitaries as the Governor of the Eastern Province. Immense preparations were in progress in the campus to welcome them. Because of the planned International Conference, the Communication Unit, which was to be reviewed, had requested for a postponement of the review visit, but the Rector has requested the Unit to go ahead with the scheduled visit because he believed that reviewing a Study Program was equally very important.

The next interview was with the Dean of the Management Faculty. After discussing with the Dean, the team members met the SER Team headed by, Dr. Navinraj, acting Head of the Department.

During the three-day visit, the review team also met many officials of the administration, including several Assistant Registrars, Assistant Bursar, Librarian, and the students of the campus. As a result of some problems taken place in the recent past, it was evident that the administrative staff, non-academics and students were under tremendous tension. Hence the team decided that it was not prudent to photograph or take signatures of the students. The team completed the visit on the 13<sup>th</sup> evening following the debriefing session with the

Rector, administrative staff and students. The team members presented to them the positive as well as negative points observed as a team and the final report under three headings. Though all of them had a very busy schedule for the morning because of the inauguration ceremony of the International Conference, Rector, and other senior officials, except the Dean were present for the session. The Rector took relevant notes of what was presented.

## **Section 1- Brief introduction to the Programme**

The Department of Languages and Communication Studies (DLCS) is a department of Faculty of Communication and Business Studies of the Trincomalee Campus. The curriculum of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication had been drafted in 2001. The campus has survived and managed to conduct classes with difficulties even during the turbulent period of the Civil War.

Trincomalee town is historically and strategically important. It is situated in the East of Sri Lanka, which was also part of the war-torn area. It shelters all ethnic groups. It has strategic bases of Army, Navy, Air Force and Police. Natural harbor, ancient temples, beautiful beaches and bird sanctuaries attract many visitors including tourists. Earlier the campus was located in the Trincomalee town, in a small building belonging to the Sri Lanka Navy. Of late, it has been shifted to Nilaveli, and the campus at present is situated in the midst of 250 acres where a bigger space for expansion and development is available. Within a short span, many new buildings have been constructed and it was amazing to see the growth that has taken place since the end of Civil War. As Rector of the campus, Dr. Kanagasinhham was happy and elated about the support that he had received particularly from the UGC for the infrastructure development of the campus. Since the campus is located away from the main town and situated in an underdeveloped area, the team strongly feels that it deserves all the help from the Central Government and UGC to strengthen the welfare of the present students and students to be enrolled in the future.

The records show that the Trincomalee Campus was originally established as the Trincomalee Affiliated University College (AUC) in April 1993 under ordinance No. 01 of 1993 by the Universities Act No.16 of 1978, section 24A. The Trincomalee Campus of the Eastern University was established on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2001 by a Gazette notification that goes back to 6<sup>th</sup> June 2001. It is one of the pioneer faculties in Sri Lanka, which offer a 3 year General Degree Program and a 4 year Honours Degree Program in Communication Studies since 2001 in English medium.

One of the main objectives of the Communication Study Programme is to create employable graduates to the local and global market while developing their competencies, professionalism and continuous learning, which enable them to become distinguished persons in society. The Faculty of Communication and Business Studies offers Bachelor of Science in Management, Bachelor of Arts in Languages, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies for undergraduates, enabling them to specialise in their respective disciplines based on their preference. As explained in the brochure, the streamlined degree programme is to be supportive to students to exhibit their knowledge and skills. As the brochure indicates, the Communication Degree is geared to help them to seek career opportunities prevailing in the local and global market in various fields.

As observed by the review team, it is the only conventional campus in Sri Lanka, which offers media studies in the English Language. Because the campus is situated in the East and especially in a multi-ethnic background, students who are admitted by the UGC have the

opportunity to mix with peers from all communities. In the first year, the two main languages of Sri Lanka, namely basic Sinhala and basic Tamil are offered. However as per observations made by the team it is recommended that, if possible the two language courses should continue in the third and fourth academic year, to promote social cohesion as well as to support the language policy of the government.

Since the medium of instruction is English, there is an urgent need to establish a proper ELTU/ELTC unit. At present, the program runs without any Senior Lecturers or without qualified permanent staff with PhD. Since most students are Sinhalese, care is needed to recruit academics with good credentials, considering the ethnic ratio of the students. At present, most students are Sinhalese and majority of them informed the team members that there are no academic or non academic staff members to seek help when they encounter problems who have the capacity to understand their problems, in their own mother tongue, because majority of the staff members are from the Tamil community.

The Communication Unit, at present, has a state of the art mini theater, an editing studio and a drawing unit (appendix pages 34, photos, O, and L). However, there is an urgent need to strengthen academic, academic support and non-academic staff with proper credentials and a balanced mind and body, because of the protracted ethnic problem that has not been resolved completely. Though the Civil War is over, common prejudices and fear of the other is present among the students as well as academics and non-academics. Basic infrastructure facilities at present, except the classrooms, are adequate. However, facilities need to be upgraded continuously and maintained properly.

In our guided tour around the campus we observed, a newly built canteen and a mini cooperative shop (appendix pages 33, photos G), but we were informed that there is no adequate staff to serve food and students have to wait in long queues for food. Since the campus is far away from main Trincomalee town (8 to 10 kilometers) there is an urgent need to have a good transport service till about midnight, from Trincomalee town to campus and from campus to town. An emergency calling number and an emergency unit operative 24 hours is needed, since most students are females. In addition, there is a need to have security officers and wardens who are males and females from all ethnic groups, keeping with the ethnic ratio of the students.

The team members inspected the new library and museum (Appendix pages 34, photos M) which needs Wi-Fi Facility Urgently. The library also needs new books and access to scholarly journals. It was the view of the team that, if possible, inter-library loan facility should be provided to the students, since the campus is located far away from other universities. Though the curriculum was revised in 2015, it is not yet fully implemented due to several constraints. There is an urgent need to introduce interdisciplinary subjects and credit transfers even with other universities that provide communication discipline as a subject in Sri Lanka. Consideration should be given to the introduction of interdisciplinary courses and credit transfers with other universities because as indicated in the SER report, the campus is situated in a remote area and far away from the other cities and there is an unwillingness of other academics to visit there because of the distance.

There is an urgent need, namely to equip some of the present classrooms to make suitable for learning. A healthy staff-student relationship is the need of the hour and officials who ever they are, needs to be more mature, prudent and well balanced in keeping the welfare of the students who are susceptible to outside influence and manipulation. Since the campus lacks senior academics, the smooth running of programs and an established professional and university culture was not to be seen in the Communication Unit or in the faculty at present.

The present student support system is inadequate and needs constant review and further improvement. This is the first occasion the Communication Unit of the Campus and the program are reviewed. Hence no recommendations from previous visits or reports were available.

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## **Section 2- Review team's observations on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)**

The first question raised by the team members on the first day of the visit to Dr.Kanagasinhham, the Rector of the Campus, was whether SER preparation was well informed, top down, officially and the progress was followed by him. He said that it was done and we saw the evidence of it, namely that it was documented, and minuted in the Faculty Board minutes. This was confirmed when the review team had a meeting with some of the members of the SER Steering Committee as well as the Final Report preparation and Writing Group. However, members noticed that especially due to the lack of trained and senior academic staff and other constraints only a small group of lecturers had worked on it. The reason explained to us, was that some of the members had to leave for mandatory teacher training course conducted in the Eastern University Batticaloa and most of the male academics were also heavily involved in the International Conference to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September.

Due to these limitations, there was no evidence to support the participatory approach in the preparation of SER. Though in the report expected standards were indicated, there was hardly any evidence to support that those standards were implemented in practice. The SWOT analysis findings were quite objective, but the indicated opportunities have not been fully explored or yet to be realized. The review team is in total agreement with the “Threats” described in the SWOT analysis prepared by the Communication Unit.

Although indicated in the SER, documents such as corporate plan, strategic management plan and other important documents were not available for perusal. The reason explained for the lack of such documents was that, those documents were at the Eastern University, Baticolooa and the Trincomalee Campus was only an affiliated institution of it.

In the SER, the Communication Department of Trincomalee Campus indicated that the organisational structure is adequate for the effective management and function and that Faculty’s Action plan is updated periodically to ensure absorption of latest trends. However, members did not find sufficient evidence to support such claims. The faculty minutes or staff minutes were not available for perusal. There was no evidence to confirm the availability of a Performance Appraisal system. There was no sufficient evidence to support that the students’ welfare is seriously looked after by the administration. Though the required duty lists, work norms and code of conduct for all categories of staff were described, in the SER, how objectively these were implemented or maintained was a serious question. There were also no minutes of CDC or alternative mechanism for monitoring, reviewing and updating the curriculum. Appropriate and prudent procedures were lacking in effective academic mentoring, academic advising, student counseling and holistic welfare mechanisms.

### **Section 3- A brief description of the Review Process**

As shown in the photo H in Appendix, page 33, the first meeting of the review team was with the Rector of Trincomalee Campus. Though he was busy with the preparation of the International Conference to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September, he willingly and generously allocated his time and answered all our queries. Following the meeting with the Rector in his office, we moved to the Board Room, to meet the Dean of the Faculty, Mrs. S.Kumuthinidevi (Appendix pages 34 photo P).

However, she had been appointed few months back, and was not fully aware of the SER preparation or activities in the campus. Due to lack of time, members decided to meet the acting Head, Dr. Naveen Raj with other academics who were responsible for the preparation of SER (Appendix, pages 34 photo R). In total seven academics participated in the meeting. The team was able to ask and verify the technical details on how the SER was prepared by them. At this meeting, the Head admitted that they had worked day and night to complete the SER under his guidance, attending meticulously on all issues but when the team scrutinized the submitted documents, there was no evidence to support that a meticulous attempt has been made to prepare the SER. The review team following the above meeting after refreshments had a brief discussion with the stakeholders, invited by the SER team. Only seven stakeholders were present or requested to be present. Six of them were past students of the campus, and one was a visiting lecturer (Appendix, pages 34, photo Q).

While appreciating the undergraduate degree obtained from the campus, they expressed the need to have interdisciplinary subjects and credit transfers within or outside the campus, and the importance of strengthening the language unit. All of them agreed that the campus was situated in a multi-ethnic area, which was a blessing in disguise that gave an opportunity to learn the aspects of different cultures, in addition to their own culture and language. This meeting was followed by a meeting with the IQAC Coordinator Mrs. Anuja Ravindran. She has just taken over as an IQAC Coordinator and was learning the ropes of her new job. She said that she has been provided space to establish the IQAC Unit, located next to the Dean's Office and a computer. In our view, the space allocated for the unit is not adequate. Though she has just been appointed to the post she was not familiar with most of the responsibilities of the post. Being a young academic, she was energetic and enthusiastic of assigned duties. This meeting was followed by the meeting with the administrative staff (Appendix pages 32 photo E,H) .

All of whom we met during the visit, were technically aware of our official visit and answered various questions raised by us about the campus. Since it was 4.30 p.m. we decided to meet students on the following day. The team met the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-year students, and our meeting with them lasted about one and half hours. Due to the tension that existed between the students and the administration, due to some past events, the team did not want to maintain an attendance list. The majority of students, expressed their dissatisfaction, the way they are been treated by the campus authorities. Most of them felt that disciplinary inquiries that were conducted by the campus were unsatisfactory and unprofessional. There

was a long delay of submitting reports, and due to this unjustified delay, campus was still out of boundary (nearly 6 months) for some students. The main complaint was that inquiry was done at the main campus in Batticaloa, without proper procedure and there was a long and questionable delay in releasing the result of the inquiry. Some of the students felt this was purposely done because of their ethnicity and in order to intimidate them. It was revealed that some of their friends have given up the university life due to the long delay of opening the campus and releasing of the reports of inquiries as well as the imposed sanctions. During the out of boundary period for all the students, there was no what so ever contact from the campus staff and all the phone calls made by the majority of students were not answered or attended, and just cut off. After the meeting with students, a site visits or a guided tour around the campus was arranged and we were able to see, most of the facilities available for the students including their hostels. (Appendix page 32 photo A). However, team members felt that though many basic facilities are available, there was no record of using them by the students. There was also a need for up keeping the equipment and proper maintenance. Site visit was followed by the meeting with the 1st year students, and most of them expressed that they are not very happy with how they are being treated specially by the non-academic staff. Since most them were Sinhalese, they all, expressed the need for friendly administrative staff and student councilors who can understand their difficulties in their own language. On the 13<sup>th</sup> morning, the team went to observe two teaching sessions and recorded our observations. We also found the time for scrutinizing the evidence mentioned in the SER report. Due to the upcoming International Conference only one lecturer and two junior lecturers, and office assistants (all females) were available to assist us in our visit. On the whole, the degree of commitment of the faculty and openness, transparency, communications, and logistical support given to us would have been better. Attendance sheets of all our meetings are annexed.

#### **Section 4 - Overview of the Faculty's/Institute's approach to Quality and Standards**

The fundamental aim of the IQAU is to put in place comprehensive plans, mechanisms and systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision of all services and activities of the university. The Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC) of the Faculty of Communication and Business Studies of Trincomalee Campus, have been established under the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (FQAU) of EUSL. The review team observed that the EUSL has not provided with sufficient office space and staff assistance for the FQAC to perform their duties smoothly. There was a newly appointed staff member for the FQAC.

The review team did not observe any documentary and physical evidence of FQAC activities such as; the action plan, minutes of FQAC meetings, reports of FQAC and circulars of QA to support such activities. Therefore, the faculty does not have any effective internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development and approval processes. It is suggested to maintain QA as a permanent item in the Faculty Board agenda.

The faculty or FQAC lacked evidence to support the availability of internal QA policies and mechanisms to communicate such to all staff. However, the young teaching staff understood the importance of QA activities and has a capacity to implement measures to remedy weaknesses and pursue quality improvement.

The team members observed the commitment of EUSL and attention towards quality enhancement and excellence, which will support the improvement of Trincomalee Campus.

## Section 5 – Judgment on the eight criteria of the Programme Review

### Review Program Name: BA (Hons) in Communication Studies

Table 5.1 - Programme of Study Score Conversion to Percentage

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria-wise score
1	Programme Management	75	93
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	64
3	Programme Design and Development	75	83
4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	106
5	Teaching and Learning	75	95
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	51
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	109
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	26
	<b>Total on a thousand scale</b>		<b>627</b>
	<b>%</b>		<b>62.7</b>

According to the scores given in the Table 5.1 **final grade for the program was judged as ‘C’**.

Review team was able to observe strengths as well as weaknesses under each criterion.

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

In considering the first criterion, providing a Hand Book and a Student Charter to all incoming new students, organising an orientation program for new entrants, implementing duty list work norms and code of conduct for all categories of staff were strengths observed under this criterion. Furthermore, providing students with opportunities to engage in sports and recreation as well as cultural and aesthetic activities can also be considered as positive aspects observed by the review team. Nevertheless, members were of the view that lack of evidence for a performance appraisal system, lack of regular functioning of curriculum development committee (CDC), inadequacy of the services of academic mentoring and student counseling, lack of evidence for ensuring the safety and security of the students and lack of proper evidence of maintaining gender equity were the prominent weaknesses in the programme management.

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

The campus was equipped with number of physical resources such as mini theaters, computer labs, a spacious new canteen, a mini supermarket, new hostels and a gymnasium. Ensuring the success of the induction programme for newly recruited staff and encouraging students to engage in multicultural programmes to promote social

harmony were strengths observed by the team members. However, inadequacy of experienced senior academics, lack of well-equipped classrooms, lack of online facilities in the library premises are serious issues to be addressed in near future. In addition, the Team noted the lack of sufficient opportunities for students to learn and use English as a second language and lack of professional development programmes for the staff to update their pedagogical knowledge.

### ***Criterion 3: Program Design and Development***

The initiative taken to revise the curriculum in 2015 is commendable but still the process has not been completed. There was no evidence of considering Subject Bench Mark statements and the contribution of relevant professional bodies in curriculum development process. The appropriate measurable process indicators and outcome based performance indicators to monitor the evaluation of the program was not described. The records related to students' destinations following graduation which can be used for the improvement of the programme has not been maintained.

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

Designing the program per SLQF guidelines and with participation of external and internal experts are two important aspects which are already considered in curriculum development. Although IQAC has a responsible role to play in the design and development of a quality course it was not clear whether this objective has been achieved. Lack of evidence for using feedback obtained from students for further improvements of the courses is another aspect to be considered in future.

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

Review team could identify some strengths and weaknesses related to teaching and learning. Encouraging students to engage in creative work and contribute to scholarships, providing opportunities for students to engage in collaborative work, providing course specifications and time tables before the commencement of the course were observed as good practices. There was no clear evidence for the close alignment of teaching learning strategies, assessment and learning outcomes, effective use of SCL and use of feedback for improvement of teaching.

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

The Department is enriched with physical resources such as a mini theatre, editing suit, video room sound studio, art drawing centre, animation labs and ICT labs. In addition, providing students with an induction programme regarding the rules and regulations of the campus, having a close relationship with academic staff and the students, providing six-month internship training to the students, providing opportunities for students to engage in social work, were observed as strengths of the programme. Nevertheless, the team observed several issues which hinder a continuous learning environment, such as lack of close relationship between administrative staff and students and shortage of technical

staff to get the maximum benefit of some of the resources. Inadequacy of lecture halls with facilities, maintaining gender equity, conducting students' satisfaction surveys, inefficient counseling service are some of the other negative points under this criterion.

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

The good practices observed by review team were appointment of internal and external examiners and allocation of weightage for different components of assessment. Lack of evidence of amendments to improve assessments was observed as a negative point.

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

Review team was of the view that providing industrial training as a part of the study program, having an undergraduate research project as a part of their learning, using VLE in teaching and learning, student's participation in national competitions and co-curricular activities were good practices of the Department.

## Section 6 – Grading of Overall Performance of the Programme

Based on the judgment on the eight criteria, the study programme scored 62.7 percent of marks. Actual criteria-wise scores for all eight criteria are more than the weighted minimum score for all eight criteria.

Therefore, the overall performance of the BA (Hons) in Communication Studies programme was “C” and performance descriptor was judged as “satisfactory” indicating a minimum level of accomplishment of the quality expected of a programme of study, requiring improvement in several aspects.

**Table 6.1. Grading of Overall Performance of a Study Program**

Institution	Actual aspect-wise	Grade	Performance	Interpretation of description
>60	Equal to or more than the minimum weighted score for several Of the eight criteria	C	Satisfactory	Minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; requires improvement in several aspects



## **Section 7 - Commendations and Recommendations**

### **The Faculty's/Institute's Policy and Procedures in Programme Management**

The organisational structure should rearrange for the effective management and functioning of activities. It is recommended to update Faculty's action plan periodically to ensure absorption of latest trends. The faculty disseminates the latest circulars of the UGC and campus.

It should regularise, with prior information and fair selection of two students' representatives to the Faculty Board and ensure that their requests are being addressed. It is suggested that student welfare should seriously be looked after by the administration.

There needs to be systematic Faculty minutes and it is suggested to hold regular departmental meetings. Faculty needs to introduce the Performance Appraisal system for academic teaching and research. Hand Book and Student Charter provided to all new entrants delineates programs, the roles expected, rules and regulations. Orientation Program is facilitated by external experts imparting behavioral formations facilitating transition in-cognition.

The duty lists, work norms and code of conduct are implemented for all categories of staff, which must be maintained with regular monitoring.

It is recommended to maintain the minutes of CDC and alternative mechanisms for monitoring, reviewing and updating the curriculum to be implemented. Academic mentoring, academic advising and student counseling must be regularised. Specially trained women counselors should be appointed.

Effective welfare mechanisms and appropriate and prudent procedures should be introduced. It should be seriously focused to maintain the importance of the concept of gender equity in the campus.

The review team is confident that, with trainable young and energetic staff with wise and mature guidance from the administration, the Department has the power to grow soon.

### **Human and physical resources;**

Physical resources like mini theaters, computer labs, a new canteen, and a mini- super market, and new hostels, for male students and female students, and a gymnasium was constructed for students. The details of the mechanism and design should be well addressed including the use of human and physical resources and effectiveness.

Newly recruited staff has undergone some training. It is recommended to establish an ELTU or ELTC, and since the medium of instruction is English, serious efforts are needed to empower the student to learn a new language.

It is suggested that the financial implications in suitability and allocation of resources for the continuation of the faculty activities must be regularized. It is also recommended to fill the important administrative vacancies for smooth functioning of the campus.

The Institutional commitment to promote academic staff for research, funding to attend seminars and in organising research symposia is commendable. Proper mechanisms to distribute Research Grants or funds have to be introduced. Action is recommended for provision of additional human (academic and academic supportive staff) and physical resources (TV studio and community radio).

It is recommended to arrange sufficient teaching and training facilities to implement OBE-SCL. The engagement of many students in multicultural programmes from time to time is commendable.

### **Programme design and development**

BA in Communication Studies is unique in Sri Lanka with English being the medium of instruction. The curriculum (General/Special) was drafted in 2001 and duly approved by UGC. Since 2015, a curriculum revision is in progress under the leadership of the Curriculum Team with the participation of team of experts, and stakeholder gathering the regional and national needs in training students in all forms of communications with core and optional courses maintaining diversity and flexibility. It is recommended to ensure wider external stakeholder participation at key stages of curriculum planning, design and development and identify the measurable indicators and outcome based performance indicators to monitor the programme.

It is also recommended to follow the Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS), and requirements of relevant professional bodies guiding curriculum development process. Strategic plan and Action plan are based on the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the faculty and the University. It is recommended that the vision of Graduate Profile should be addressed together with the attributes of students graduating from the faculty.

It has been proposed to launch an e-platform for exchanging of information between the university and industry to establish a proper linkage mechanism, course design and development;

Course design and development team comprises internal and external experts. The subject experts (three in number) have been appointed as reviewers. It is recommended that the programme has to be designed according to the ILOS based on the constructive alignment and current knowledge reflecting the foreseen skills through theory and practical pedagogy.

**Existing and proposed revised programme and course specification were designed as per guidelines of SLQF.**

### **Teaching and Learning;**

It is recommended that the teaching staff should encourage their students to contribute to scholarship, creative work, and discovery of knowledge to relate theory and practice appropriate to their programmes. The evaluation comprises of various tools under the internal (continuous assessment with a weightage of 35 marks) and external (semester examinations weightage of 65 marks) adopting grading system.

The semester examinations have both the internal markings and the external markings in order to be objective as per the regulations and By-laws. It is recommended to strictly follow the UGC circular to facilitate the release of results on time.

Maintaining of the feedback boxes, and peer reviews is commended. It is also recommended to establish a good reflect between the transcript and the student's capacity and skill showing that the awarding system corresponds to the set teaching cum learning criteria.

### **Recommended Actions to be taken to use and introduce LMS in teaching and learning purpose.**

A proper system should be established to cater to the special needs of the differently able students. It is recommended to adopt good practices for recognition of students and staff in the form of rewarding for their achievements and contributions.

### **Learning environment and learner support;**

Access given to a well-equipped air-conditioned lecture Theater, Sound Studio, and Art-drawing Center, Animation technique Center, and equipped Video Editing Lab is highly commendable.

It is a good practice that 4<sup>th</sup> year honours students are given internship opportunities of three month, to enhance professionalism and hands on experience with the industry situated in the Capital city of Colombo. It is recommended to extend it for six months.

It is recommended to introduce a friendly administrative, academic and technical support system which will ensure a conducive and caring environment and greater interaction among students and staff.

The life-world of the students will improve if more number of permanent cadre vacancies is filled rather than depending on visiting lecturers.

Recommended actions to be taken to host inter-university competitions in the field of communication and cultural fields to expose and experience the field of study and also to promote self-esteem etc.

The Department needs to have a Department Library housed at least within the Department Office area where books pertaining to the curriculum are housed not only for easy reference but also for future course of action.

It is recommended that the department participate in community service and the dying communicative art forms like *koothu*, puppet show, *Poikalkuthari*, *karakattam* and etc..., be revived.

It is recommended to improve counseling strategies for motivation of students to develop independent learning. Actions should be taken to implement monitoring mechanisms to evaluate student support services.

### **Student assessment and awards;**

It is commended that the department ensures the required weightage relating to different components of the assessments and to appoint the internal and external examiners with accepted policies and procedures. Measures should be taken to introduce a common template for preparing examination papers. It is recommended to conduct the examinations under a conducive atmosphere and enforce professionalism in marking and conducting examinations.

### **Healthy and innovative practices.**

The Department's communication study programme contains "industrial" attachment, research project and training as a required part of the teaching and learning strategy and this is commended. It is a good practice to use VLE in Teaching & Learning and the Faculty or the Communication Department should encourage student participation in national competitions and in co-curricular activities. Since the department is situated far from the Capital Colombo, there is a strong and an urgent need for clear and flexible inter-faculty and external (with other sister universities offering communication major) credit-transfer policy. It is suggested that the Department's young energetic staff should be extra dedicated in research, innovation, outreach and extracurricular activities. The academic and research collaboration too, could be further strengthened and supported. Providing students with a mini cooperative shop in the university, since the main town is far away about 10 kilo meters is a commendable good practice.

It is commended that the student-centered learning is encouraged by the faculty through various activities, such as creative video productions.

## **Section 8 – Summary**

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

The Department of Languages and Communication, Trincomalee Campus is one of the Departments of Communications in Universities of Sri Lanka, that offer a 3-year General and a 4-year Honours degree programme in Communication Studies for undergraduates in English medium. Though the campus is situated in a unique location in the Eastern Province with many opportunities and possibilities, full potentials are not yet explored or fully realised. The opinion of the review team is that, since the majority of Students are Sinhalese, it is desirable to recruit academics and supporting staff with good credentials, considering the ethnic ratio of the students.

A healthy staff-student relationship is the need of the hour and the key officials have to be more mature, prudent and well balanced to ensure the welfare of students who are susceptible to outside influence and manipulation. On the whole, as observed by the review team, present student support system is inadequate and needs constant review and further improvement

### **Section 2: Review team Observation on the Self-Evaluation Report**

The view of the review team is that, especially due to lack of trained and senior academic staff, and also due to the constraints only a small group of lecturers had written the SER as it was handed over to the UGC on the 30th of June 2017. It was explained to us, that some of the members of the faculty had to leave for the mandatory teacher training course conducted in the Eastern University Batticaloa, and most of the male academics were actively involved in the International Conference to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> of September. Due to these limitations, the preparation of SER using a participatory approach was totally lacking since there was no evidence to conclude otherwise

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

As part of the agreement, not only commenting on the desk review but, as a review team, we were able to see the documentary as well as physical evidence of the review process in the minutes of the Faculty Board. On the whole, the review team is not fully satisfied with the degree of commitment of the faculty. However the openness, transparency, communications, and logistical support given were adequate.

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

The review team did not observe any documentary and physical evidence of FQAC activities; action plan, minutes of FQAC meetings, reports of FQAC and circulars of QA. Therefore, the Faculty does not have any effective internal monitoring strategies and effective processes to evaluate, review, and improve the programme design and development. It is suggested to include QA as a permanent agenda item in the FB meetings.

The Faculty or FQAC has no evidence to confirm that the internal QA policies, plans and mechanisms have been communicated to all staff.

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

The review team is of the view that lack of evidence for performance appraisal system, lack of regular functioning of curriculum development committee (CDC), inadequacy of the services of academic mentoring and student counseling, lack of evidence for ensuring the safety and security of the students and lack of proper evidence of maintaining gender equity were the prominent weaknesses in the programme management. The initiation taken to revise the curriculum in 2015 is commendable but the slow progress of the revision is questionable.

The review team members observed presence of factors such as lack of close relationship between administrative staff and students, shortage of technical staff and inability to obtain the maximum benefit of some of the resources will hinder the creation of a student friendly learning environment. The inadequacy of lecture halls with facilities, maintaining gender equity, conducting student's satisfaction surveys, inefficient counseling service are some of the other negative points under this criterion. In our opinion, since the medium of instruction is English, establishing a good ELTU is mandatory.

It is surprising that even in the newly designed building, though located in a protracted war and conflict zone, has no facilities for students with special needs. Hence provision of such required facilities in the future has to be considered seriously.

The good practices observed by the review team members included appointing internal and external examiners and allocation of weightages for the different components of assessment. Lack of evidence of amendments to the assessment for quality improvement was observed as a negative point. The question papers given to students for final examinations lacked the official emblem of the university.

### **Section 6: Grading of the Overall Performance of the Programme**

Based on the judgment on the eight criteria, the study programme scored 62.7% of marks. Actual criteria-wise scores for all eight criteria are more than the weighted minimum score for all eight criteria.

Therefore, the overall performance of the BA (Hons) in Communication Studies programme is "C" and performance descriptor was judged as "satisfactory" indicating the minimum level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study, and requires improvement in several aspects.

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

The organisational structure should rearrange for the effective management and functioning. It is recommended to update Faculty's action plan periodically ensuring absorption of latest trends. The faculty disseminates the latest circulars of the UGC and Campus.

The selection of two students' representatives to the Faculty Board must be regularized and ensure that it is done in a fair manner by providing advance notice of the process. It is necessary to ensure that their requests are addressed. It is recommended that the welfare of the students should be seriously addressed by the administration.

There is a need to have regular meetings of the Faculty Board and Departments. It is suggested to introduce the Performance Appraisal system for academic teaching and research.

The duty lists, work norms, and code of conduct should be implemented on all categories of staff and maintained by regular monitoring.

Effective welfare mechanisms and appropriate and prudent procedures should be introduced. It should be seriously focused to maintain the important concept of gender equity in the campus.

It is recommended to improve and work towards a friendly administrative, academic and technical support system which ensures a conducive and caring environment and greater interaction among students and staff.

The life-world of the students will improve if more number of permanent cadres are recruited instead of depending on visiting lecturers.

To host Inter-University competitions in the field of communication and cultural fields to expose students to acquire experience in the field of study and also to promote self-esteem etc is recommended.

The Department's communication programme contains an "industrial" attachment, research project and training as a required part of the teaching and learning strategy.

The use of VLE in teaching & learning is a good practice. The Faculty or the Department of Communication should encourage students to participate in national competitions and in co-curricular activities.

Since the department is situated far from the Capital Colombo, there is a strong and an urgent need for clear and flexible inter-faculty and external (with other sister universities offering communication major) credit-transfer policy.

It is suggested that the department's young energetic staff should engage actively in research and development, and outreach and extracurricular activities.

Providing students with the establishment of a "Mini Cooperative Shop" in the campus is a commendable good practice, since the main town is about 10 kilometers away from the Campus.

It is commended that the student-centered learning is encouraged by the Faculty through various activities, such as creative video productions.

The report was prepared by:

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