PROGRAM REVIEW 2017

University of Sri Jayawardanapura
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Cluster - 4
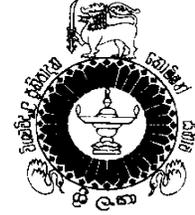
Programme Review Report

Cluster 4
BA (Honours) Degree Programmes
In

* Pali Language

* Buddhist Philosophy

* Buddhist Civilization

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

2017

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University Grants Commission
Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council
Sri Lanka

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PREAMBLE

The programme review team visited the Department of Pali and Department of Buddhist Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura on 6th and conducted the review until 8th November 2017. The review team had pre-arranged discussions, conducted several visits to facilities and viewed a stack of documents pertinent to the eight criteria as stipulated in the UGC programme review manual. The review team believes that it is the responsibility and duty of the team to pass accurate and unbiased information to the UGC doing justice to all parties involved in conducting and managing the study programs as well as all stakeholders including present and future students and the entire country funding these programs in a state university.

Although the department had written one composite SER for the cluster (Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization, Philosophy and Psychology), there was noticeable differences in the performances among the 4 study programs. When the site visit was conducted it was quite evident that the performances of the first three study programmes in the cluster (Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, and Buddhist Civilization) were quite different from that of the fourth, the Philosophy and Psychology. Among the evidence cited in the SER, the available for inspection was mainly related to the first three degree programmes (in related to a large number of standards) and evidence related to the performances of the 4th programme, Philosophy and Psychology was scarce or nil.

As the SER was one, it was unavoidable that there would be a Grade common to all four study programmes. However, the review team felt that, when considered the available evidence for the first three study programmes, the cluster would get a good Grade even though the fourth programme (Philosophy and Psychology) does not deserve it. Giving a common grade would misplace the Philosophy and Psychology programme in the university system in terms of quality and would misguide all stakeholders including the university administration, the UGC and present and future students. Such a misplaced (or rather inflated) Grade would attract a larger number of deceived students from the entire country to this programme who will ultimately have an unfortunate fateful experience. Therefore, the review team decided to grade the cluster 04 based only on the performances of the first three programmes to do justice and to be fair by the programme managers of those, who had worked hard towards quality and teachers, present and future students and all stakeholders in the country.

Based on these concerns, the review team **categorically decided to write the review report and grade the cluster 4 based only on the first three study programmes** and to clearly state in the review report that the **Philosophy and Psychology Honors degree programme was omitted from the review process** citing (within limits) all issues noted. Hence, Philosophy and Psychology Honours degree programme cannot own the grade given to this cluster and it is **only for** the **Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilizatio**n programmes in the Cluster 04.

SECTION 1- BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMMES (CLUSTER 04)

The University of Sri Jayewardenepura was originally formed in 1959 under the name of Vidyodaya University of Sri Lanka. In 1978, with the University Act No.16 the Vidyodaya Campus was granted independent university status and the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was created. The university, well placed in the administrative capital of Sri Lanka, currently has seven faculties. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, which is the oldest faculty, renders its services in two main disciplines, namely Humanities and Social Sciences. Under the provisions given in the University Act, the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies has been established in 1980 and is one of the oldest departments in the university. As given in the SER, the mission of the department is "To produce scholars endowed with sharp acumen with superb commands and ability to contribute positively to their relevant field of study at local and global levels". After undergoing various policy and structural changes, the department at present offers four (4) main study programmes in English and Sinhala media namely (i) Buddhist Philosophy, (ii) Buddhist Civilization, (iii) Pali (iv)Philosophy and Psychology.

As members of the UGC appointed cluster 4 panel to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, after conducting our official three-day visit, we raise the pertinent and important question; has the above-mentioned mission realized by the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies?

Student Numbers

The number of students enrolled in **four honours study** programmes of the Cluster 4 in 2017 is as follows:

Table 1.1: Pali Honours degree Programme

	Number of Students
2nd year	10
3rd year	11
4th year	05
Total	26

Table 1.2: Buddhist Philosophy Honours degree Programme

Year	Number of students
2nd year	15
3rd year	12
4th year	14
Total	41

Table 1.3: Buddhist Civilization Honours degree Programme

Year	Number of Students
2nd year	56
3rd year	62
4th year	52
Total	171

Table 1.4: Philosophy and Psychology Honours degree Programme

Year	Number of students
2nd year	80
3rd year	128
4th year	136
Total	344

As per above data it is apparent that the two study programmes, Pali Language and Buddhist Philosophy, enroll fewer number of students than the other two programmes. However, scrutiny of the SER prepared by the departments and during the three-day review visit, members observed and further perceived that *Pali, Buddhist Philosophy and Buddhist Civilization programmes (hereafter referred to as first-three programmes)* are maintaining significantly higher standards and quality compared to the Philosophy and Psychology study programme. In the first-three programmes, student to staff ratio is acceptable, although infrastructure is not adequate. Student enrollment in Pali (Hon) programme is average, but it is structurally well managed under the capable leadership of the Head of the Department, Rev. Prof. Vijithadhamma Thero. Reviewers observed that though demand for Pali and Sanskrit languages is on the decline locally, demand is high in Asian and Western countries for studying in Pali and related subjects. However, due to lack of hostel and infrastructure facilities appropriate for foreign students, the department is unable to respond to this demand. Sustainability of the Pali language programme is a major concern at present. However, in the context of the global demand, the possibility of accommodating foreign students by providing their basic needs is worthy of perusing and paying attention. As a middle Indo-Aryan language, definitely, Pali and related subjects are to be preserved as a national heritage and appropriate mechanisms should be found in order to teach these subjects to the future generations, making use of modern technology, such as ICT tools.

Another important suggestion well worth considering is amalgamating all three departments in state universities that offer Pali, and related subjects (Jayewardenepura, Kelaniya and Peradeniya), or at least Jayewardenepura making provisions for student and academic exchange programmes with the other two universities.

The review panel further wish to comment on the report of the Subject Review (of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies) carried out in 2010 by three eminent scholars, Rev. Professor Kollupitiye Mahinda, Professor Asanga Thilakaratne, and Professor Rohana Majliyaarachichi. This review has been conducted from 7th to 9th June in 2010. Valuable and appropriate suggestions pertaining to all four study programmes of the department have been made in this report. However, we observed that no serious consideration or adequate attention has been taken by the department for the implementation of suggestions and recommendations in the report. Further, as a panel, we were appalled by the non-professional activities and malpractices carried out by some members of one study programme in the department. The reviewers were compelled to write a confidential report to the UGC on these matters as the same issues have been raised in the Subject Review and no attention has been paid by the responsible members in the particular study programme to

rectify the shortcomings and implement recommendation. The Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies should consider seriously, the recommendations of the previous report made by three subject specialists in the proposed curriculum revision expected in early next year. All four study programmes need to consider those proposals aligning with present subject benchmark statements and especially in accordance with agreed national guidelines such as Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework. Furthermore, needs of the various stakeholders and their feedback on the present syllabus should be sought earnestly. Overlapping of similar subjects during the four years needs to be avoided and course content of all the subjects need to be reevaluated with a participatory approach. The proposed new study programme by the department; "Buddhist Heritage and Tourism" is catchy and timely. The concept of eco-tourism could be included in it. Since the Philosophy and Psychology study programme lags far behind other programmes we reiterate the following once again as we have already pointed out in our confidential report.

I. **It is more sensible to merge this discipline of the USJP with another Philosophy and Psychology department in another state university as a short-term measure until they could perform effectively independently. A senior visionary person, with proper credentials in that particular specialized area, should be appointed to provide leadership in revising the curriculum and to guide the team.**

II. **If the discipline continues to exist, a defined time line should be given to do the necessary improvements and a separate review of their performance should be conducted thereafter.**

III. **Although the existing Philosophy and Psychology discipline has made a proposal to separate from the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies and create a separate department to introduce a separate Philosophy and Psychology honours degree programme, the review team is not convinced that the existing academic staff members are competent enough to organize an effective study programme in a separate department to teach and train to produce high quality competent graduates.**

SECTION 2 – REVIEW TEAM'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

There is no doubt that self-evaluation report (SER) has been prepared well by a competent team. The participatory approach was very much evident in the preparation of SER; starting from the Dean all relevant parties of the faculty and the university had been consulted in preparing the SER. Most of the required documents/evidence including the Corporate Plan and Strategic Management Plan have been cited in the SER and the fundamental weaknesses noted in the SER were as follows.

- SWOT analysis is not exclusively on programmes in the Cluster 4. It has focused outside these disciplines and appears to be a SWOT performed for another purpose.
- SER is not composed in a manner to make it clear that it is a report of the Cluster 4 independent study programmes. Therefore, differences among study programmes could not be noted through the SER.
- SER provides many clues which are not completely an independent work by the writers in this cluster (Cluster 4) and it perhaps shares content written for SERs of other clusters in the faculty.

REVIEWER'S COMMENTS ON THE SWOT ANALYSIS

The reviewers observed that the SWOT analysis does not adequately reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies. It is rather too general and not specific. Opportunities and Threats are real, however, they can be realized by wise leadership. Main weaknesses the team observed was the lack of a proper feedback mechanism and wider consultation in preparing the subject content. A praiseworthy initiative has been taken to help out the students with special needs (differently able students) on individual initiatives but more may be done with assistance from UGC.

SECTION 3 – A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The PR process started in October 2016. The relevant dates are noted here,

- Discussion on PR at Deans level by UGC (April 2017)
- Workshop on SER writing conducted by QAAC (27th May, 2017)
- Submission of SER (30th June, 2017)
- Appointment of Reviewers (July 2017)
- Desk evaluation (10th August, 2017)
- Workshop on Pre-site –visit (23rd August, 2017)
- Site- Visit (6th – 8th November, 2017)
- Key findings to QAAC (20th , 2017)
- Submission of draft report (4th December, 2017)

THE PANEL OF REVIEWERS

Professor Theodore Fernando (Panel Leader)

Professor Ranjith Pallegama

Dr. (Mrs) A. N. Wijayanayake

Dr. GPTS Hemakumara

PRE-SITE VISIT EVALUATION

After appointment of the review panel, a pre-site visit workshop was held at the UGC in August 2017 and SER was given to us for desk evaluation. Desk evaluations were done individually and a discussion was held among members before the site visit to agree on decisions on the SER. The team visited the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies with a very clear plan and confidence having done the desk evaluation of SER. A three-day site visit on the Cluster 4 of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura was held from 6th November to 8th November, 2017 at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies.

MEETINGS HELD DURING THE SITE VISI:

i. **Meeting with Dean of the Faculty and the IQAU Director**

Dean explained the present situation of the programmes (Cluster 4) and their approach to the QA process. Director IQAU also joined the meeting and explained the present IQAU work plan of the university, senate approved by-laws and other activities of IQAU. (Ref. Photo No 1 in the annexure, Attendance Sheet A)

ii. **Meeting with Head of the Department**

Head of the Department made a presentation before the meeting explaining their department, programmes offered, approaches to quality enhancement and how SER was prepared. (Ref. Photo No. 2 in the annexure, Attendance Sheet B)

iii. **Meeting with Academic Staff of the Department**

Permanent staff members of the department/ programmes were present, and they expressed their views related to approaches they have taken to maintain quality in the programmes offered. They further, highlighted problems the department have been facing during couple of decades such as lack of space, ICT facilities and human resources. (Ref. Photo No 3, 4 in the annexure, Attendance Sheet C).

iv. **Meeting with the Vice Chancellor**

Team had a meeting with the Vice Chancellor; he stated that adequate funds have been allocated for improvement of skills of staff members and highlighted on a proposed International Buddhist Studies Centre within the university premises, which would be closely linked to the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies. Further, he stated that the university has established a special research fund so that the academic staff members, either individually or as a group, may receive research grants up to Rs.3.5 million annually. Meanwhile, the discussion revealed that the university facilitates welfare activities of students to improve their academic life. The review team was very impressed about the Vice Chancellor's views and his plans to develop the university as well as his good understanding of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies and its programmes.

v. **Meeting with SAR and Deputy Bursar of the faculty**

Faculty SAR has been transferred due to a promotion, and an acting SAR has been appointed. Bursar of the faculty explained that financial matters of the faculty are smoothly executed. (Ref. Photo No 5 in the annexure).

vi. Meeting with the students

A meeting with the students who are following study programmes in the cluster 4 was held on the second day of the review visit. Many students require their internship practice be changed to a different segment of the programme due to heavy workload. (Ref. Photo No 5. 1012033 in the annexure)

vii. Meeting with the temporary staff

The review panel observed that the workload of some temporary staff members is unacceptably heavy, and they were keen to improve the knowledge of English. Young staff members are not encouraged to do their post-graduate studies at other institutions. (Ref. Appendix G)

OBSERVATION OF EVIDENCE (REF. PHOTO NO 8 1012033 IN THE ANNEXURE)

Evidence for all 8 criteria in relation to three study programmes in the Cluster 4 was neatly arranged at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies. Team evaluated all criteria and compared with the evidence documents and reviewed the desk evaluation scores. All doubtful areas were clearly inspected with the assistance extended by the Head of Department, and other academic and non-academic staff members. Reviewers highly appreciate their cooperation in this regards. (Ref. Photo No. N0 6 1012033) in the annexure.

SITE VISIT

1. Main Library
2. ICT Centre of the University
3. ICT Centre of the faculty
4. Student and Staff Canteens
5. Student Class Rooms
6. Auditorium
7. Welfare Society of Visually Handicapped Students (photo no 6)
8. Welfare Society of Visually Handicapped Students (Ref. Photo No 7. 1012066 in the annexure)
9. ELTU
10. Physical Education Department
11. Library
12. Examination Department

WRAP-UP MEETING

Wrap up meeting was arranged on the third-day of the review visit at 3.00 P.M. The meeting was headed by Chairman of the review team Professor Theodore Fernando with the participation of members of the review team. Dean of the Faculty, Head of Department, academic staff members, temporary academic staff members and few non-academic staff members attended the meeting. Summary of findings and strengths and weaknesses of the programmes were discussed while sharing the views of all reviewers. On behalf of faculty, Dean of the Faculty, Head of Department and few other members expressed their views regarding the review process and its outcome. (Appendix H)

SECTION 4 - OVERVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT'S APPROACH TO QUALITY AND STANDARDS

The University of Sri Jayewardenenepura has established an Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) according to the QA circular of 2015. It has been temporarily located in the University premises, at the pervious lodge of the Vice Chancellor of University. A senior academic staff member (Prof. Samanthi Seneratne) has been appointed as the Director of the IQAU to lead the quality assurance (QA) work of the university. Regular monthly meetings have been held since December 2016. The senate closely monitors the work of the IQAU and QA process of the university.

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has established an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and housed in a separate office within the faculty premises. An active academic (Ms. Dilini Chamali Walisundara) has been appointed as the Chairperson. She has coordinated several review processes in the Cluster 4 of the faculty pushing the programmes to a positive direction in terms of QA. The faculty leadership is keen in upgrading the quality and standards of its programmes. However, there were no records of IQAC holding meetings in the last few months and matters have only been discussed under a permanent agenda item of the Faculty Board meetings. However, many faculty members are not fully aware of the role of IQAC in the faculty and is reflect in the SER as pointed out in Section 02.

Hence, reviewers believe that more attention should be given to improve the QA work in the faculty via newly establish IQAC office. Team wish to suggest that IQAC committee with representatives of all departments must meet monthly basis and all records must be sent to Faculty Board and IQAU of university.

SECTION 5 - JUDGEMENT ON THE EIGHT (8) CRITERIA OF PROGRAMME REVIEW

(Only in relation to Study Programmes; Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization in the Cluster 4)

Criterion 1: Programme Management

Among the 27 standards, 15 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 7 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; 4 standards achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided; and 1 standard achieves a score of 0 indicating inadequate adoption or irrelevant evidence being provided. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 63 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 117 out of 150.**

The faculty adheres to an annual academic calendar, although it gets disrupted with students and TU activities (S1.5). The students are provided with necessary information in the Handbooks and during the orientation programme (S1.6). The orientation programme organized at the beginning is an effort by the faculty that has to be noted and commended (S1.9). However, more information could be made available to students and staff through online media. It is noteworthy that the faculty website is well updated and is full of relevant information (S1.8). Some of the study programme related information is provided in the Handbook; however, detailed objectives, ILOs and related information are not given to them although some programmes display such information on notice boards (S1.7). It is highly encouraged to note that the students are given full information on the website (S1.8). The faculty has established an IQAC under a coordinator and has begun expanding its functions aiming at enhancing the quality and relevance of the study programmes (S1.15). Faculty has delivered duty lists and work norms of some staff members, but a discussion with the IQAC coordinator revealed that codes of conducts and workload norms are being developed (S1.13). The faculty has a curriculum revision committee and has been working on revising curricula of the study programmes offered by the faculty. The much-expected study programme revisions will be implemented in the next review cycle due in 2018 and 2019 (S1.16).

The study programmes are in line with the SLQF in terms of volumes of learning, however, it should be revised with ILOs more appropriate for level 6. The absence of SBS in certain subjects would be a barrier for this. The study programmes have included a sufficient amount of SCL activities including internships wherever possible, but curricula in the cluster haves been developed without the views of the stake holders, which is a major weakness (S1.17). The faculty adopts a clear policy and procedure on programme approval. When a department proposes a new programme or a curriculum, a review team is appointed by the Faculty Board. Once reviewed, the Faculty Board, following discussing the report approves the proposal, and submits it to the Senate for approval (S1.18). The attainment of aims during teaching is reviewed through peer and students feedback (S1.19). The department has established many links with outside partners (Local and international) and are mainly used for research and academic collaboration, with some benefits extended to the students (S1.20). The faculty appoints student counselors and has a Faculty Welfare and Counseling Committee, which is monitored by departments (S1.21). The university assures that students have free access to healthcare through the health center. And the university maintains a separate health care center extending the services to the public in the neighborhood at a concessionary rate (S1.22). Adequate measures are taken by the university, for safety and security of students (S1.23). The faculty uses the examination rules and regulations common to all undergraduate programmes in the country, although it is advisable to have the programme specific regulations in addition (S1.24). The department has very commendable steps to facilitate the learning of students with impaired vision by having a special examination center with some basic facilities. However, the faculty intake of students with hearing impairment has been raised in the recent past and the faculty, the university and the UGC should provide the department with relevant facilities to assist effective learning of these students. Further, the university should have a dedicated mechanism to fulfill the logistical requirements of these students (S1.25).

Faculty has an Action plan aligned with the Cooperate plan of the USJP (S1.2). However, the faculty level by-laws, ToRs of standing and ad-hoc committees, documented SoPs/management procedures and annual audit reports were not available (S1.1, S1.3). There was minimum evidence to support a participatory approach in governance and management especially in relation to student matters (teaching and welfare) (S1.4).

The collection and maintenance of student related information and data are matters of concern (S1.10). It is encouraging to note that the faculty use digital media to collect and

store confidential information from students. The use of ICT platforms for all key functions in the programmes/faculty (use of LMS for teaching and maintaining data bases /information of students and staff with a MIS connected to the website) could be established (S1.11). The faculty does not have codes of conduct prescribed by the university either for students or other categories of staff (S1.12). Except the common incentives such as the annual increments available for the entire university system, there are no local mechanisms developed as incentives targeting the staff members (S1.14). Although the percentage of female students is increasing, there is no faculty/university level SGBV policy (S1.26). The faculty uses the Anti-ragging Act and the UGC regulations, and the faculty has not established a local policy. Adequate information is not communicated to students on these matters as well (S1, 27).

CRITERION 2: HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Among the 12 standards, 8 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; and 4 achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 32 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 89 out of 100.**

The reviewers were happy with the qualifications and competencies of the available academic staff to deliver an effective academic programme although an augmentation of the cadre would be beneficial in enhancing the quality (S2.1). It's a must for the academic staff members to undergo an induction programme. In addition, especially the Buddhist monks were observed to have ample opportunities for further training and foreign exposure for their CPD (S2.3, S2.4). The department is in touch with the Ministry and other relevant bodies to provide specialized training/internship to students, and the academic staff members are extending their support to achieve these targets (S2.6). Every faculty in USJP has a separate IT laboratory with internet access and students are encouraged to use the facilities for their learning. Especially the Buddhist monks who are academic staff members are IT savvy and are helping and motivating students to a greater extent (S2.9). A compulsory 6-credits course on ESL is offered to students aligned with UTEL band 4.

1st and 2nd year students have English classes every day from 8am to 10am and a progress is noted as some students have changed the medium to English after the 1st academic year (S2.10). A few students have had the opportunity of taking part in international conference and again the English language competency of academic staff who are Buddhist monks is

commendable. Development of soft skills has been incorporated into the degree programmes (S2.11). The department encourages and organize multicultural activities targeting cohesion of students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (S2.12).

However, the human resource profile as mentioned previously may not be adequate in terms of the numbers (cadre) and an enhancement is required to match with increasing intake of students and considering the fact that all study programmes are offered in both media (English & Sinhala) (S2.2). Infrastructure including the lecture halls and classrooms, and specialized class rooms with special facilities for students with special needs is inadequate (S2.5). More training and a conceptual understanding in OBE & SCL could be provided to academic staff members at all levels (S2.7). The University library is considerable resourced, although the annual allocation of funds for upgrading and purchasing new books is negligible (S2.8).

CRITERION 3: PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Among the 24 standards, 3 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 12 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; 8 standards achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided; and 1 standard achieves a score of 0 indicating inadequate adoption or irrelevant evidence being provided. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 41 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 85 out of 150.**

The department has taken a considerable effort to introduce interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary courses that align with the ILOs of the graduates as core, elective and optional courses (S3.10). As it was pointed out in previous sections the programmes are aligned with the SLQF and the department has taken maximum effort to incorporate SCL within limitations. (S3.15).

The provisions and arrangements to provide education to students with special needs is highly commendable. However, much improvement is required considering the increasing numbers of such students, and this highly motivated department deserves a very good support from the university and the UGC (S3.24). The faculty has a transparent mechanism for development and approval of new and revised courses (S3.16).

Although the programmes are designed and documented well, the participatory approach could be widened with a feedback from all stakeholders (S3.1, S3.2, and S3.3). The programme should conform to the national requirements (S3.4). The volumes of learning comply with SLQF but the graduate profile developed by the Head of the Department should go through a wider discussion and should get approved with the consent of all stakeholders (S3.5, S3.7). The fallback options and entry pathways to the honours degree programmes are satisfactory, however, the outcome levels should be matched with the ILOs appropriate for both levels (S3.6). The course specifications were not descriptive enough to assess whether the programmes are constructively aligned as assessment information was inadequate (S3.9). The structure of the study programmes can be further improved to promote progression of students on increasing intellectual challenge with more autonomy given to students on learning at later levels (S3.12, S3.13). More training on developing new courses with appropriate ILOs with a constructive alignment should be provided to the academic staff members at all levels (S3.8, s3.17). Limited internship opportunities are available and the ILOs for these can be more specific (S3.18). More activities to develop skills such as self-directed learning, collaborative learning and lifelong learning should be incorporated in to the programmes (S3.19) and the IQAC may actively get engaged in assuring quality in programme development especially by routine monitoring and suggesting corrective measures (S3.20, S3.21). The content should be included into the curricula to encourage students to appreciate issues such as gender, social and cultural diversity and to facilitate their ethical conduct with high moral standards (S3.11). Lack of information, in the absence of evaluation of the performances of the programmes, including students' destination after graduation, is a major barrier to develop more OB curricula (S3.14, S3.22, and S3.23).

CRITERION 4: COURSE/ MODULE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Among the 19 standards, 8 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 9 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; and 2 standards achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 44 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 116 out of 150.**

Course design and development is done by the curriculum committee and once developed, it goes through a formal review and approval process (S4.1, S4.16). Courses are in compliance with the SLQF definitions and developed using a standard format and are offered in a cohesive manner (S4.3, S4.4, S4.8, and S411). The department has taken trouble to use

appropriate learning strategies, although improvements are possible (S4.9). The senior staff of the three study programmes of the cluster are well trained but more training in relation to curriculum development would be of benefit (S4.14).

However, some courses may be updated to serve the national needs with appropriate content and this may be possible to achieve in the forthcoming revision (S4.2, S4.12). The course design template may give a better description on the assessment to make it clear that courses are constructively aligned and more SCTL strategies are included (S4.5, S4.6, S4.7). As a considerable number of students with special needs are enrolled more attention could be paid to design courses incorporating TL strategies appropriate for them (S4.10). The department is talking a commendable effort to incorporate modern technology and this may further be enhanced (S4.13). The faculty may provide more facilities and training to staff aiming more effective curriculum design. A more intensive involvement from the Faculty's IQAC is expected in this especially by monitoring the progress of the process and guiding the department to develop nationally relevant study programmes that will produce graduates with relevant profiles to serve the present needs of the society (S4.15, S4.17, S4.18, S4.19).

CRITERION 5: TEACHING AND LEARNING

Among the 19 standards, 8 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 5 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; and 4 standards achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided and 2standard achieves a score of 0 indicating inadequate adoption or irrelevant evidence being provided. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 38 out of 57 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 100 out of 150.**

The department has taken measures to align teaching and learning strategies to the faculty's mission and curriculum requirements. The department provides course specifications and timetables before the commencement of the degree programmes. (S5.1, S5.2). The department encourages blended learning as a way of maximizing student engagement with the programme (S5.5). Teachers encourage students to contribute to creative work, and discovery of knowledge to relate theory and practice appropriate to their programmes and the institutional mission. (S5.8). Teachers engage students in research as part of the teaching and learning strategy and encourage the students to publish their research giving due credit to the

student (5.10). Students' research and creative work were published in conference proceedings and annual magazines. Samples of good dissertations were available. Teaching learning strategies include providing opportunities for students to work in study groups to promote collaborative learning (S5.9). Field visit reports for the last three years were available for all 3 degree programmes.

Although, teachers integrate into their teaching, appropriate research and scholarly activities of their own, the materials available in the public domain could be used more. Research publications of few of the academics were available for inspection. But most of the academics didn't have their Google scholar or research gate accounts to keep a record of their publications. The academics need continuous support from ICT center to get familiar with such websites to publicize their research (S5.6). Teaching and learning activities should be monitored routinely for their appropriateness and effectiveness. Course specifications and details on implementation were not provided. Only one lecturer was using LMS for his teaching.

Staff needs additional support to incorporate LMS for their teaching (S5.12). Only few lecturers practice student-centered teaching-learning methods. Limited evidence of adoption of student centered teaching methods was available (S5.14). More training programmes for academics in those areas are required.

Very limited evidence was available on where teachers use appropriate tools to obtain regular feedback on the effectiveness and quality of teaching from students and peers through a coordinated mechanism for improvement of teaching and learning. Regular internal monitoring by IQAC on above is questionable (S5.16). Currently the department does not have nor uses a defined set of indicators of excellence in teaching to evaluate performance of teachers or teaching excellence, and promote adoption of excellent practices (S5.19).

CRITERION 6: Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression

Among the 24 standards, 10 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 7 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; and 6 standards achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided and only one standard achieves a score of 0 indicating inadequate adoption or irrelevant evidence being provided. **The Cluster 4**

achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 50 out of 72 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 69 out of 100.

Students are supported adequately by provision of a range of opportunities for tutoring, mentoring and counseling. Evidence of effective counseling and conducting motivation oriented programmes for students was available. The department has initiated many impressive delivery strategies, academic support services and guidance to meet the needs of students with special needs. They have initiated a mechanism to convert all the recommended books and academic materials into audio-mode enabling the blind students to learn (audio-book project called "vinivida") (S6.5, S6.6, S6.7 and S6.9). This should be highly appreciated and rewarded, and should be assisted by providing more facilities and resources to keep up the work. The teachers in partnership with the library ensure that the use of library and information resources are integrated into the learning process. Co-curricular activities such as annual sports and aesthetic programmes conform to the mission of the department/faculty, and contribute to social and cultural dimensions of the educational experience (S6.13, S6.15, and S6.16). The department facilitates the students who do not complete the programme successfully to settle with the fallback option of enrolling into the external degree programme with exceptions for already completed course work.

However, there was no evidence on learning support provided in its educational programmes through methods of delivery and providing an effective learning environment. Therefore, the department should arrange training programmes for academics on creating an effective teaching and learning environment. The department is proactive in counseling the students to facilitate their progression from one level of a programme to another. But these counseling were done by the probationary lectures. The department should ensure that senior most experience academics take an active role in this regard. Also it is necessary to encourage a mentor-mentee relationship between the staff and students (S6.20). The department should regularly monitor retention, progression, completion/ graduation rates, and employment rates as they do not have such evidence. This will enhance the quality of the degree programme and enable the department to identify the employability needs of the industry (S6.22). The department do not have any networks with alumnus; it is recommended and encouraged to initiate an active alumni association. This can be easily maintained through a web portal to gather the alumnus information online. The support and encouragement of alumnus may assist the students to prepare themselves for their professional future employments and to

find appropriate internship placements and may contribute to solve unemployment issue as well.

CRITERIA 7: STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND AWARDS

Among the 17 standards, 10 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 5 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; and 1 standard achieve a score of 1 indicating barely adequate adoption with major issues in either the quality maintained in relation to those standards or the strength of evidence provided and only one standard achieves a score of 0 indicating inadequate adoption or irrelevant evidence being provided. **The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 41 out of 51 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 121 out of 150.**

Assessment strategy of the department is aligned with the SLQF and Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS). However, credit values given for internship should be revised according to the SLQF standards (S7.2). Currently 6 credits are awarded for 3 months internship training which should be revised to 3 credits.

Also, the department should adopt well defined marking scheme, various forms of internal second marking and procedures for recording and verifying marks to ensure transparency, fairness and consistency (7.12). The department ensures the implementation of examination by-laws and regulations on academic misconduct, and strictly enforces them according to the institutional policies and procedures in a timely manner.

However, there is a delay in releasing results, which may at times take 4-6 months and students are very disappointed on this. However they have a MIS system to issues results accurately and efficiently (7.17)

CRITERIA 8: INNOVATIVE AND HEALTHY PRACTICES

Among the 14 standards, 10 standards achieve a score of 3 indicating good adoption with relevant evidence being provided; 4 standards achieve a score of 2 indicating adequate adoption with a few issues noted in evidence; and no standards achieve a score below two.

The Cluster 4 achieves a raw criterion-wise score of 38 out of 42 and hence an actual criterion-wise score of 45 out of 50.

The reviewers were happy with the innovative and healthy practices adopted in these study programmes. The department recognizes complementarity between academic training, research and development (R&D), innovations, and industry engagement and those as core duties of academics. Some of the academics have received the Buddhist literary prizes awarded   by the International Association Buddhist University. One of the reverend staff member is an executive committee member of the above association and an invitee as a guest speaker in many international Buddhist conferences (S8.3 and S8.4).

The study programme contains an undergraduate research project as a part of the teaching and learning strategy and encourages students to disseminate the findings. All honours-programme students are required to do a research project and dissertation writing to get the degree. Most of their research are published in the Faculty Annual Magazines, journals and conference proceedings (S8.5 and 8S.6).

The study programmes contains a three month 'industrial' training as a part of the teaching and learning strategy; it is operationalized through formal partnerships with 'industrial' establishments/organizations such as NAITA, Ministry of Buddhist Affairs, Ministry of social service and Nature secret Pvt. Ltd and etc. (S8.7).

The department has established and operationalized strong links with various international, national, governmental and non-governmental agencies and industries, and uses such links to build the reputation of the institution and expose students to the 'world of work' and to promote staff and student exchange. The department has initiated "Dham guru sevaya" programme where they collaboratively work with the Ministry of Buddhist affairs to educate the Sunday school teachers. Further, the department has signed several MoUs with foreign universities for research related to Pali and Buddhist affairs (S8.8). The department has collaborative work with the Examination Department of the country for paper setting of O/L and A/L examinations. They have also undertaken teacher training seminars for teachers under NIE. Therefore, the attempts taken for industry engagement/social mobilization programmes are very impressive.

The department has diversified its sources of income to complement the funds received through the UGC by engaging in income-generating activities. The department runs a Diploma course on Buddhist Studies which is conducted in weekends. Another Dham-Guru Diploma course is conducted and funded by the Ministry of Buddhist Affairs. Fee-levying international students are enrolled to the university and this programme is assisted by the government's income generation initiative to diversify sources of funds.

The department promotes students and staff engagement in a wide variety of co-curricular activities such as social, cultural and aesthetic pursuits, community and industry-related activities. Many students and staff members in the department actively participate in the annual talent show of "RanRasu". Further, there were a few students who were champions at the inter-university swimming tournament. It is very impressive to see that the department takes every possible step to make all-rounders with knowledge and multiple skills (S8.11)

SECTION 6 - GRADING OF OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE CLUSTER

(Only in relation to study programmes: Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization)

With a meticulous desk review of the SER submitted by the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies of the FHSS of USJP, following an evaluation of the existing situation in the Cluster and a careful examination of the provided evidence, the review panel finally concluded their scores for each criterion. The overall result is furnished in the table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Overall Performance of the Cluster 4 (*Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization)*

S.N.	Criteria	Weighted min score Allowed	Actual Criterion-wise score (Rounded up)
1	Programme Management	75	117
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	89
3	Programme Design and Development	75	85
4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	116
5	Teaching and Learning	75	100
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	69
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	121
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	45
	Total on a thousand scale		742
	%		74
	Grade awarded		B

The three study programmes in the Cluster 4 receives a total score of 74% (≥ 70%) and score more than the weighted minimum score for all eight criteria. Therefore, according to the guidelines given in the Manual of Programme Review, **the grade achieved by the above study programmes is Grade B.**

SECTION 7: COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMENDATIONS:

1. Language and IT competency of monks (academic staff members).
2. Incorporation of interdisciplinary courses.
3. A good foreign exposure of monks (academic staff members).
4. Good infrastructure in the library.
5. Good effort to make teaching-learnin0g student centered given the availability of facilities within limitations.
6. Aligning with the SLQF in developing programmes and courses.
7. The commitment by staff to facilitate learning by students with special needs. All the recommended books are converted to audio books, under a special project run by the academic staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Faculty should seek outside support/donations to develop facilities for students with special needs. The department may initiate and lobby the university, UGC and other sources to obtain funds to develop these facilities.
2. Not taking adequate actions on recommendations made by the previous subject review.
3. More funds should be available to improve library materials and facilities, specially the study material for students with special needs.
4. Students and teachers should be encouraged to use good Tablets instead of Laptops and a high-capacity free network facility (Wi-Fi) should be made available. More materials can be made available online. This would be a more practical approach rather than maintaining expensive, labor intensive computer laboratories. Nowadays, the computer laboratories could be limited for the use of high end memory consuming dedicated software for activities such as editing graphics and statistical analysis.
5. An effective mechanism should be in place for monitoring and reviewing the progress and suggesting/introducing corrective measures.
6. A thorough stakeholder participation in developing curricula is a must
7. The graduate profile should go through comprehensive review by all stakeholders before it being approved by the Senate.
8. An increase in the cadre is required if the department conducts runs degree programme in both Sinhala and English medium. A special attention should

be paid to recruit new academics who are competent in English. The department should recruit competent individuals who have graduated from other universities to the academic staff and thereby, the department may prevent inbreeding for better academic development.

9. Most of the undergraduates prefer to do their studies in English medium in the last two years of the course. Therefore, a proper mechanism should be introduced to improve their English knowledge in the first 2 years and then to absorb all graduates to English medium in their final 2 years.

10. A considerable boost in physical infrastructure (physical space, lecture halls and classrooms) is necessary.

11. Some of the degree programmes have limited number of undergraduates at certain levels. In such case, it is beneficial to merge such degree programmes with similar departments in other universities or find alternative ways to balance the staff workload.

SECTION 8 - SUMMARY

1. Under the provision of the University Act of 1978, the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies was established in 1980 as an independent department. After undergoing various policy and structural changes, the department at present has four (4) main programmes namely, (i) Buddhist philosophy, (ii) Buddhist civilization, (iii) Pali and (iv) Philosophy and Psychology. The University of Sri Jayewardenepura is well placed in the administrative capital of Sri Lanka. It has seven faculties. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences caters its services in two main disciplines, namely Humanities and Social Sciences. According to records, the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies is one of the oldest departments in the entire university.

2. The four-member panel observed that SER has been prepared well by a competent team headed by Ven. Professor Medagampitiye Wijithdhamme Thero. However, may be due to semantic difficulties, evidence in some of the standards needed for verification was not found or available. A participatory approach was quite evident in the preparation of SER. We were given access to all the required documents promptly without any delay.

3. Evidence in eight (8) criteria had been well arranged at the Department of Pali and Buddhist studies for the three study programmes (Buddhist philosophy, Buddhist civilization, Pali). Team evaluated all standards with evidence available and scores given at the desk-evaluation were revised accordingly. All doubtful matters were clearly checked with the assistance of the Head of Department, other academic and non-academic staff members. Reviewers highly appreciate and commend their cooperation in this regards.

4. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has established an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and housed in a separate office within the faculty premises. The IQAC has begun some work towards enhancing the quality of programmes offered by the faculty but much could be expected. The faculty leadership is keen in upgrading the quality and standards of its programmes. Many faculty members are not fully aware of QA, the IQAC and its role in the faculty, and hence is not reflect in the SER. Many deficiencies can be seen in SER.

5. Based on the desk-review of the SER submitted for Cluster 04 of the FHSS and the review visit to the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies of the FHSS,

USJP, the reviewers observed that adequate evidence was available for review **only** *in relation to three study programmes namely: Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization.* The performance and the quality assured in these three programmes were far ahead of the fourth programme, Philosophy and Psychology. Therefore, being fair by all stakeholders of this cluster in the country, **the review teams decided to include only the first three programmes in the review and grade the Cluster based <u>only</u> on those three programmes.** The **Philosophy and Psychology programme was omitted from the review** and issues were reported to the UGC separately as noted at the beginning of this report. The overall result is as below.

Table 8.1: Overall Performance of the Cluster 4 (*Pali Language, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Civilization)*

S.N.	Criteria	Weighted min score Allowed	Actual Criterion-wise score (Rounded up)
1	Programme Management	75	117
2	Human and Physical Resources	50	89
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4	Course/ Module Design and Development	75	116
5	Teaching and Learning	75	100
6	Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression	50	69
7	Student Assessment and Awards	75	121
8	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	45
	Total on a thousand scale		742
	%		**74**
	Grade awarded		**B**

6. Most of the undergraduates prefer to do their studies in English medium in the last two years. Therefore, a proper mechanism should be introduced to improve their English knowledge in the first 2 years and then to absorb all graduates to English medium programmes in their final years.

7. A considerable boost in physical infrastructure (physical space, lecture halls and classrooms) is necessary.

8. Some of the degree programmes have very less number of undergraduates at certain levels. In such case, it is best to merge such degree programmes with other universities or find alternative ways to balance the staff workload.