



Programme Review Report
Programme Reviews - 2018
Bachelor of Education Drama and Theatre
Department of Secondary and Tertiary Education
Faculty of Education
Open University of Sri Lanka
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Contents

Section 1	Brief Introduction to the Programme.....	01
Section 2	Review team’s observations on the Self – Evaluation Report (SER).....	03
Section 3	A brief description of the review process.....	04
Section 4	Overview of the Faculty’s / Institute’s approach to Quality and Standards.....	06
Section 5	Judgment on the six criteria of Programme Review...07	
Section 6	Grading of Overall Performance of the programme.....	14
Section 7	Commendations and Recommendations.....	15
Section 8	Summary.....	17

Section 1 Brief Introduction to the Programme

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) established in 1980, is constituted under the Universities Act. No. 16 of 1978, and OUSL Ordinance No: 1 of 1990, as amended, and has the same legal and academic status as any other national university in Sri Lanka.

Academic programmes of the OUSL have been designed to enable persons aged 18 and above to pursue courses leading to Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Post-Graduate Degrees, at their own time and in their own homes. The Central Campus and the Colombo Regional Centre of the OUSL are situated in Colombo, Nawala, and are easily accessible by road and rail. Nine Regional Centers and eighteen Study Centers are located throughout the country. The Academic Departments of the OUSL are grouped into five Faculties: Natural Sciences, Engineering Technology, Health Sciences, Humanities & Social Sciences, and Education.

The Faculty of Education (FoE) was established in 2003 as the fourth Faculty of the OUSL. Until 2003, the then Department of Education (DoE) functioned under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. The FoE comprises of three Departments one of which is the Department of Secondary and Tertiary Education. The other two Departments are the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and the Department of Special Needs Education. The Faculty is awaiting UGC approval to establish its fourth Department, the Department of Education Leadership and Management.

1.1 Bachelor of Education Drama and Theatre (B. Ed D&T)

The main objectives of the study programme are to provide opportunities for higher education to those who are qualified to enter, but do not get a placement in conventional universities and to provide opportunities to develop competencies to serve as an effective drama & theatre teacher.

The B. Ed D&T study programme is developed by the Department of Secondary and Tertiary Education, with the aim of providing opportunities for those who have the Higher Diploma in Drama and Theatre of the Tower Hall Theatre Foundation (THTF).

The students register with the THTF, with GCE A/L qualification in the first two years of the degree, to complete the Higher National Diploma satisfactorily. The students can then register in the B. Ed D&T study programme offered by the Department by transferring their credits. Currently, the programme is only offered in the Sinhala medium at the Colombo main Centre. The B. Ed D&T study programme is a 144-credit programme with a minimum duration of 4 academic years.

Table 1 .1 Number of Students in the Faculty at present- breakdown in years

Year	Student Enrolment	Numbers passed out
2012	38	-
2013	21	-
2014	16	-
2015	20	22
2016	18	43
2017	35	16
2018	33	-

According to Table No.1.1three batches of students amounting to a total of 81 students had passed out from the programme by 2017 and 65 most of the graduates had already received teaching appointments in government schools in the same year.

Section 2 – Review team’s observations on the Self Evaluation Report(SER)

The SER had been compiled by the writing team, chaired by the Dean and the entire Committee was appointed by the Faculty Board. The Team observed that SER writing process was systematic and generally followed the guidelines stipulated in the Programme Review Manual for Open Distance Learning (PRM for ODL).

The SER has four Sections and nine Tables including an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Eleven Graduate Attributes had been formed as the Graduate Profile which is relevant to the B. Ed D&T study programme in line with the Qualification Descriptors in the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) Guidelines. The Team felt that the formation of Graduate Attributes is vital in terms of offering an intensive and focused education in a particular area of specialization, to meet the requirements of the school education sector. However, the statements of Graduate Attributes should be aligned with the Programme and Course Learning Outcomes towards constructively aligned teaching learning process.

Section 3 – A brief description of the review process

The SER was provided to the review team well before the site visit and individual assessments were reported to the QAC. Members of the review team met at the pre-review workshop held on 23rd of July 2018, at UGC and discussed the individual assessments, scores and comments and found that they were comparable.

The site visit of the programme review conducted during the period of 22nd to 25th January 2019 (Annex 1: Agenda for the PR Visit). The Dean welcomed and guided the team to the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU) of the University. As the Director/IQAU had been appointed recently he was not fully familiar of the QA activities, but he tried his best to explain organizational arrangement of the IQA system.

The team met the Dean, all the Heads of Departments and the academic staff of the Faculty and the Dean made a presentation which provided an overview of the Faculty and the processes and procedures internalized for fostering quality culture within the Faculty.

Following the meetings with the academic staff, the team had a meeting with the Administrative and Operational Team (Registrar/Bursar/Directors of Research, IT, Operations, Welfare/SARs – Examinations and Student Affairs). At this meeting the Administrative and Operational Team explained about the OUSL's Operational Plan and they pointed out how it works in the implementation process throughout the year. The Team observed that the said plan is quite a detailed one including the dates, for example "enter course fees to system", "releasing results" etc. Furthermore, the Administrative Team described the routine activities carried out by them including student registration, scheduling time tables and maintaining student records confidentially, while explaining the procedures followed in handling the examination matters.

The Team visited the IT Division and the relevant staff explained about adoption of ICT based tools in management such as Online Management Information System (OMIS) etc.

On the 2nd day of the visit at the beginning, the team met the Faculty IQAC team, and the team was able to clarify several matters regarding the study programme and then at the meeting with Programme Coordinator and members of the relevant academic staff, the review team asked the Coordinator to present the details of study programme. This was helpful to the team to get a clear picture about implementation procedure of the study programme, in collaboration with the THTF. At the meeting with the AR, Staff of the Dean's Office, Non-academic staff of the Department, the team discussed their contributions in terms of providing support services for the programme activities.

Then the team visited the Colombo Regional Centre and the Director explained how the Centre implements the Day School programme, which is the only face-to-face interaction sessions with the students in the system of ODL. The Director's enthusiasm gave us a good first impression.

Then we met the Vice Chancellor of the University and he emphasized the importance of quality culture in higher education institutes and his commitment towards quality

enhancement of the OUSL, towards the attainment of the OUSL's Vision and the Mission. The Vice Chancellor emphasized the specific role of the FoE in the OUSL, catering to quite large number of students, by offering several study programmes.

On the 3rd Day of the review visit, the team had a half a day visit to the THTF and had discussions with the Director General, Director and the Assistant Director. The Director and the Assistant Director explained, from a historical perspective, how this unique link worked towards the commencement of the B. Ed D&T study programme, and how the Foundation conducts the Drama & Theatre Higher Diploma as a 2-year full time programme. After having lengthy discussions about the vision and the objectives of the programme and the contents of the curriculum, including observation of the teaching learning, the team felt that the programme offered by THTF is up to a certain standard. The Assistant Director explained that the Foundation had already initiated reorganizing the syllabus in line with the SLQFin2017, though it is still in progress. Even though spacious classroom facilities are limited, the programme is designed to have practical experiences on Drama & Theatre, mainly through dancing and music. The team then visited the Staff Development Center (SDC) and had a discussion with the Director, who explained the SDC training programmes for the academic staff and the other staff members. In the year 2018, thirty workshops have been conducted on diverse topics, such as refresher workshops on Moodle for the academic staff, tax declaration and communication skills in English, for all categories of staff, administrative procedures and guidelines for the Deans and Heads of Departments etc. The SDC also conducted a workshop regarding online course design & development for the academic staff of the FoE.

After the observation visit to the CETMe, the team was impressed with the advanced and modern audio recording facilities that the OUSL has as high-tech resources for teaching learning in the context of ODL.

Finally, review team had the opportunity to meet a group of students representing current students and passed out students. In general, students expressed their satisfaction with the academic programmes offered, in relation to both components offered by the two institutions. Especially graduates who have been recruited as teachers, explained how they contribute to the school system, while conducting aesthetic programmes, rather than teaching only the subject of D&T. Most of the students were really confident and one student pointed out that the subject of D&T is difficult to teach and one of their roles as D&T teachers, is to make the subject interesting, through diverse related activities. During their study period at the THTF, some students were given the opportunity to engage and participate to the National Drama Festival and they said that this experience was a childhood dream come true. Most of the students did aesthetic subjects for their A/Ls and they have the interest in the subject. Also, they are quite satisfied because they are recruited to teach what they can. This satisfaction gives us an important message about how we should select the students to the study programmes and the coherence of the curriculum that we teach in the universities.

In addition, the review team had made visits to observe facilities of the university which are conducive for ODL. However, the Team felt the need of more facilities for the students with special needs and disabilities in the Faculty.

Section 4 – Overview of the Faculty’s / Institute’s approach to Quality and Standards

We found that the OUSL has established the IQAU in the year 2012, which is quite early compared to other universities. The Faculty has appointed its QA Committee which meets once in two months. The Subject Review had been completed during the period of 2009 to 2010 and how the OUSL and the Faculty responded, and the actions taken by them to address the recommendations, are given in detail in the SER. The OUSL appointed a Senate Sub-Committee on the SLQF and several recommendations had been approved by the Senate towards its implementation from the academic year 2017/2018.

According to the Memo No. VV/337/03/01 of the above Sub Committee, several important decisions have been taken, especially in relation to the institute’s approach to maintain quality and standards. Among the above decisions, every programme of the OUSL, is required to formulate Graduate Attributes of qualification holders and include an attribute called “socially responsible citizen”, even though it is not in the SLQF. OUSL’s positive approach towards maintaining quality and standards is commendable. The FoE also should incorporate the above attribute to its Graduate Attributes that are identified in the SER.

During the period of the review visit, the team felt that the implementation of the B. Ed D&T study programme is progressing well, through collaboration of the two relevant Institutions, towards the fulfilment of the main objectives of the study programme stated in the Section 1 in this report.

Section 5- Judgment on the six criteria of Programme Review

The following table shows the raw criterion-wise scores for each study programme.

No	Criteria	Weighted minimum score*	Actual criteria wise score
01	Programme Management	75	133.33
02	Programme Design and Development	75	102.08
03	Course Design and Development	100	138.66
04	Learning Infrastructure, resources and learner support	150	264.99
05	Learner Support and Evaluation	75	130.95
06	Innovative and Healthy Practices	25	39.29
	%		809.3

Grade: A

5.1 Criterion wise Strengths and Weaknesses

The Observations made by the review team on the Strengths and Weaknesses of each criterion along with the recommendations for enhancement of quality in the study programmes are given below.

Criterion 1: Programme Management

The Strategic Management Plan and the Action Plan for the period of 2016 to 2020 are formulated for the effective management of the study programme. Under Goal 1: Ensure high quality and relevant education, B. Ed D&T has been identified to revise and restructure, to make them relevant to meet the needs of the community.

Strengths:

1. Vision & Mission statements are clearly defined in relation to the mode of delivery.
2. The Faculty has up to date Action Plan in line with the university Strategic/Action Plan (2016 - 2020).
3. The University has identified quality assurance as a key strength to improve the quality of the programmes.
4. Programme is designed to cater to national needs towards producing competent teachers in Drama & Theatre.
5. Availability of the University-wise Operational Plan for Programme Implementation.

Weaknesses:

1. Graduate Attributes are not included in the Programme Prospectus.
2. Adherence to the practices in terms of Outcome Based Education (OBE) is not up to standard.
3. Policy document is not available to address the discontinuation of the ongoing study programme.
4. Non availability of a Grievance Committee.

Criterion 2: Programme Design and Development

The B. Ed D&T study programme currently offered for students is based on the curriculum developed in 2008. The curriculum is outcome-driven to some extent and equips students with knowledge, skills and attitudes to succeed in the world of work and for lifelong learning. Some training programmes on OBE and Student -Centered Learning (SCL) have been conducted for probationary staff and staff in service. The programme seeks to engage students in a variety of learning activities that would encourage diversity, accessibility and autonomy of learning.

One of the major weaknesses noted is that stakeholder consultation is not fully utilized for various steps, although a very rich internal and external stakeholder pool is available. Stakeholder consultation and participatory approaches are lacking where it is needed most, namely in curriculum design, development and plan. The programme is not fully compliant with SLQF guidelines and the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS). The Faculty policy on curriculum design, development and plan were not available.

Strengths:

1. Availability of rich internal and external Stakeholders.
2. Revision and restructuring have been identified as an activity in the Strategic Plan (2016 - 2020)

Weaknesses:

1. Compliance with the SLQF and SBS is not fully addressed.
2. Although a rich stakeholder pool is available, feedback from them not fully utilized.

Criterion 3: Course Design and Development

In terms of course design and development, we agreed that courses were developed considering student-centered teaching learning, self-directed learning, collaborative learning, and interpersonal communication and teamwork skills. A well-defined teaching practicum is included as one course module. The evaluation process is well defined, and evaluation is done in consultation with stakeholders. Two course modules were defined and are conducted in consultation with THTF. Participation of external subject experts (stakeholders) in course design and development is in practice.

Although survey tools such as questionnaires for course evaluation, student feedback, peer evaluation surveys have recently been developed and used, there is no evidence of analyses or remedial action being taken. The student feedback focuses only on lecturer evaluation, but not course and program evaluation. Further, the course evaluation reports over three years were not found. Although, the library and other centers are well equipped with ODL tools, use of such facilities for the B. Ed D&T programme are at minimal level. Use of a Learning Management System (LMS) for the course development and design process is at minimal level.

Strengths:

1. Strong link with external stakeholder organization.
2. Adequate facilities for ODL in the Library.
3. Well-defined practicum during the period of six months.
4. Two courses designed by an expert group in the field of pedagogy and subject specialization

Weaknesses:

1. Non-adherence to the relevant SBS.
2. Usage of LMS at minimum level.

Criterion4: Learning Infrastructure, Resources and Learner Support

The Learning Environment has been developed in the light of ODL, with course delivery through interactive day schools, and interactive course materials such as print modules, DVD and recommended readings. Learner Support and facilities are stable with library and Wi-Fi facilities. Well organized common instructions are given during the orientation, to support in their role as distance educators and online mentoring. The students are provided with training opportunities to acquire English and ICT skills through regular career guidance programmes conducted by the Career Guidance Unit (CGU) of the OUSL and by embedding those skills into the curricula activities as well.

While, the library and other centers are well fortified with ODL tools, practices of such services for B. Ed D&T programme are at marginal level. The use of LMS for course expansion and design procedure was at minimum level. Infrastructure and resources (class room space, library, ICT facilities etc.) of the THTF should be developed as more conducive places which are suitable for practice-based teaching learning.

Strengths:

1. Mechanism for learner support.
2. Colombo Regional Centre with conducive learning environment.
3. English and ICT courses from the Career Guidance Unit.
4. Records of student counselling at registration, orientation sessions and other face-to-face sessions are maintained.

Weaknesses:

1. Non-availability of records regarding the meetings with the students.
2. Usage of LMS at minimum level.
3. Although high technological facilities such as digitized audio video and skilled human resources are available, they are not fully utilized.

Criterion5: Learner Assessment and Evaluation

Learner Assessment and Evaluation processes are practiced in the study programme according to the By-laws, rules and regulations which are approved by the Senate and the Council. The team observed evidence on exam rules and regulations, Faculty board/Senate minutes, past question papers along with table of specification, random samples of answer scripts; mark sheets, course assessment records etc. Records of formal meetings related to assessment procedures were put in place to maintain confidentiality and accuracy of such records and evidence of results.

Strengths:

1. Continuous assessment is in practice.
2. Well defined assessment system for the practicum.
3. Marked assignments returned to the students with feedback.

Weaknesses:

1. Second marking is only optional and not fully practiced.
2. An assessment practice through blended mode is not fully implemented.

Criterion 6: Innovative and Healthy Practices

The initiation of the study programme, in collaboration with a strong stakeholder organization which is relevant to the study programme itself, is an innovative practice. The team observed the dedicated approach of the two institutions to produce an able graduate, while addressing the need of the school education sector. Research was conducted to identify problems and solutions of the study programme by a team of academic staff members and the study proposed important recommendations for future development of the study programme. The team observed the Faculty's evidence-based approach towards quality development of the programme.

Strengths:

1. OER in Practice in some extent.
2. Self-evaluation of the study programme through research.
3. Availability of Research Awards.
4. Existence of the Lateral Entry.
5. Availability of income generating courses.

Weaknesses:

1. ICT base platform for multi-mode teaching is at minimum level.
2. Fallback option is not available.

Section 6 – Grading of Overall Performance of the programme

Study programme score expresses as a %	Actual Criteria-wise score	Grade	Performance descriptor	Interpretation of descriptor
80.1	801	A	Very Good	High level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study; should move to excellence

Section 7 – Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. **The Faculty has an up to date Action Plan in line with the university Strategic/Action Plan (2016 - 2020).**
2. **Availability of the University wise Operational Plan for Programme Implementation.**
3. **Revision and restructuring have been identified as an activity in the Strategic Plan (2016 - 2020).**
4. **Offering B. Ed D&T as a unique study programme in collaboration with the relevant professional body which is THTF.**
5. **Evidence based approach to identify the problems and solutions of the study programme, to improve the quality of the graduate teachers produced for the school system.**
6. **Introduction of two courses designed by an expert group from the field of pedagogy and subject specialization.**

Recommendations

1. **Graduate Profile or Graduate Attributes should be constructively aligned with teaching learning activities through Programme and Course Learning Outcomes.**
Culminating outcomes (Vision & the Mission of the Faculty, Graduate profile or attributes) should be stated first, followed by some enabling outcomes (programme level), then some discrete outcomes that are measured in terms specific learning tasks (course level).
2. **Graduate Attributes should be included in the Programme Prospectus.**
3. **Compliance with the SLQF and Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS) which is relevant to the subject, should be fully addressed in the proposed restructuring process of the B. Ed D&T curriculum.**
According to the UK QAA Glossary, the SBS sets out what knowledge, understanding, abilities and skills are expected of those graduating in each of the main subject areas, and explains what gives that particular discipline its coherence and identity. The statements are consistent with the relevant generic qualification descriptors in line with the SLQF. The team had a quick reference to the UK SBS on Dance, Drama and Performance published in July 2015, which might be useful in terms of the nature of study programme and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas in D&T, especially considering the coherence with the Sri Lankan context.

4. Expansion of the B. Ed D&T through other Regional Centres.

Shortage of qualified and competent teachers who can teach the subject of Drama and Theatre is an issue in the school system, which should be addressed immediately. Most of the past and current B. Ed D&T students highlighted that during the period of the Diploma course, THTF offered a platform to get experience in drama including dance & music. Paststudents explained this experience as a unique skill and with this skill they found themselves able to teach the subject with confidence at the school level. If the OUSL can expand the programme through other Regional Centres, for example, if the programme can be offered through the Kandy Regional Centre, it will cater to the teacher shortage in the schools situated in several provinces, which have easy access to the Central Province.

As the UNESCO report published in 2002, pointed out that one of the basic purposes of the open universities is to provide instruction to the learners at their doorsteps through various media and technology. Considering the access issue to higher education in Sri Lanka, the OUSL's role is vital in relation to the above objective by the UNESCO.

5. Maximum usage of the LMS should be promoted among academic staff members.

The team observed that CETMe has newly recruited Technical Staff to assist and provide services for academic staff to produce teaching materials and uploading those to the LMS. Academic staff of the B. Ed D&T study programme is encouraged to utilize the services fully.

6. High technological facilities such as digitized audio-visual production laboratories at the CETMe should be fully utilized.

Digitalized or normal audio-visual materials are really effective in relation to this study programme and those teaching materials should be produced with active participation of the relevant experts at the THTF.

7. Application of the assessment tasks according to OBE practices should be at a higher level.

Practical and workshop – based learning is normally a common feature of all dance, drama and performance programmes. While considering the nature of the subject, assessment tasks such as performance practice, and 'learning through doing' in group contexts, need to be aligned with the intended learning outcomes.

8. Second marking should be practiced.

9. An assessment practice through blended mode must be fully implemented.

10. ICT based platform for multi-mode teaching should be at a higher level.

Section 8 – Summary

As the sections above make clear, there are both strengths and weaknesses with regard to the quality development of the study programme, as measured by the six criteria specified in the Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of the OUSL Sri Lanka.

Section 1 gives the overall introduction the programme, including basic information about the OUSL, Faculty and the study programme.

Section 2 then indicates the review team's observations on the SER and the team had a positive impression about the systematic and participatory approach to compile the SER.

Section 3 goes on to describe the review process, while summarizing the details that the team obtained through the meeting with relevant stakeholders and observations about the facilities and the classroom teaching & learning practices.

Section 4 overviews the Faculty's approach to quality and standards of the study programme and the establishment of the IQAU in the year 2012, which is notably early compared to the other universities

Section 5 then offers the team's "judgment on the six criteria of the programme review" which shows that the study programme has attained the "high level of accomplishment of quality expected of a programme of study" and "should move towards excellence" while considering the recommendations made in the report.

Section 6 indicates that the level of accomplishment of the study programme in all 6 criteria is high, given that the overall performance grade of the B.Ed (D&T) is an 'A'. The team had the impression that most members of the staff from the Faculty and the THTF were keen on the review and were interested in putting in place mechanisms for programme improvement.

Section 7 summarises the key commendations and recommendations.

In summary, the team strongly felt that the B.Ed (D&T) study programme offered by the Faculty of Education in collaboration with the THTF, is an innovative and unique programme that should be further expanded. This kind of study programme must be encouraged in the university system by the UGC, with the allocation of funds for necessary revisions in line with the SBS in Dance, Drama and Performance and the financial support to the THTF, as they face a challenge of scarce resources including spacious and conducive practicing environment.