University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka

POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE

FOR

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Centre for Quality Assurance

University of Vavuniya

Sri Lanka

2022

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Rationale

The University of Vavuniya is the 17th state university in Sri Lanka and was established with effect from the 1st of August 2021. The extraordinary gazette, published on June 8, 2021, elevated the Vavuniya Campus of the University of Jaffna to the status of a distinct state university and established it as the "University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka". The University of Vavuniya is located in the territory that was previously a part of the renowned Vanni Kings' kingdom. The University provides regional and national needs through education, research done by its academic community, and active community involvement initiatives.

The Vision

"*To be a leading centre of excellence in knowledge advancement and dissemination for sustainable change.*"

The Mission

"*To excel in the quality of education, innovative research and active collaboration for empowering the graduates and for the sustainable development of the region and nation.*"

The University of Vavuniya is dedicated to offer many degree programmes with a variety of curricula, and it has implemented a number of strategies in its curricula to guarantee that the education provided by the University is of a higher standard. At present, the University of Vavuniya has 3 faculties offering 13 undergraduate degree programmes. The University expects to increase the student intake through introducing new study programs along with the establishment of the proposed faculties, namely, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Aquaculture, Fisheries and Marine Studies, Faculty of Environmental Science, Faculty of Livestock, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The new degree programs of new faculties and existing faculties are being developed with a view to addressing the current national and international needs, the quality of higher education learning outcomes, and the vision and mission of the University. It is timely for the University to streamline the curriculum development process. The development process complies with the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) and meets the necessary standards for the degree programs offered by the faculties. This document is designed as a

thorough manual that offers details on all the crucial steps involved in the curriculum building process.

1.2. Objective

This policy and code of conduct aims to guarantee that all academic programs provided by the University of Vavuniya are carefully planned and designed, subjected to meticulous evaluation and approval prior to being actually made available to students.

Specifically, this document outlines the approved procedure for creating curricula and programs that adhere to the requirements stipulated in the Institutional and Study Programme Review Manuals, the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF), and the Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS) published by the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission.

2. Organizational Structure

2.1. Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)

The Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the University of Vavuniya was established on 01.10.2021 in compliance with the Commission Circular No.09/2019. The CQA of the University of Vavuniya is in charge of ensuring the standards of all teaching and learning activities, curriculum development, student support, and institutional improvements. The CQA makes sure that the University of Vavuniya adheres to the academic requirements and accreditation established by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of Sri Lanka as well as the Sri Lankan Qualification Framework (SLQF).

2.2. Curriculum Evaluation Committee (CEC)

At its second meeting, held on October 18, 2021, the University Senate constituted and approved the Curriculum Evaluation Committee (CEC) in order to strengthen the process of curriculum development and monitoring. The CEC of the University of Vavuniya is a senate sub-committee that ensures the regular and systematic review of the study programs offered and planned by the university and provides recommendations for improving the quality of study programs in accordance with national and university-level educational policy frameworks. These study programs will include certificate-level to PhD-level programs offered by the University of Vavuniya. The committee closely works with the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the University. The CEC thoroughly examines and analyses

the curricula that have been presented by the various faculties, units and centres of the university and recommends them to the Senate for approval.

2.3.   Faculty Level Curriculum Development Committee (CDC)

A Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) must exist in every faculty, unit and centre. The members of the committee will be appointed by the Faculty Board from each of the disciplines. With the consent of the relevant Faculty Board and Senate, the CDC should create a TOR and SOP. The committee makes methodical judgments regarding the targeted learning outcomes, target audience, content, delivery techniques, and evaluation procedures. Draft curricular materials are generated, tested, assessed, and, if necessary, modified with input from the CDC.

3.   Curriculum Development Policy Statements

3.1.   General

1. Curricula should align with the University of Vavuniya's vision, mission, goals, and objectives.
2. Curricula should comply with the designators and qualifiers listed in the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF).
3. Curricula should be created and developed after conducting a need analysis on the basis of an assessment of the courses and programs already in place, taking into account trends in employment opportunities, entrepreneurial potential, business collaborations, and national and regional priorities.
4. Curricula should be developed through a participatory approach accommodating academic staff, non-academic staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders such as subject experts, industries, and professional bodies.
5. The curriculum should be enriched by incorporating vocational, professional, interdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary courses either as core and/or optional/elective components.
6. The curriculum should also recognize diversity among students and address issues of gender, cultural and social diversity, equity, social justice, soft skills, active citizenship, and ethical values.

7. A fall-back option should be made available for any undergraduate programme for those students who complete the minimum period of study.

8. Curricula should be reviewed and updated regularly, considering the new advancements in relevant subjects and student feedback.

3.2. Programme Design and Development

1. The planning, design, organization, and improvement of the program/curriculum should be handled by an ad hoc Curriculum Development Committee appointed by the faculty board with the recommendation of the senate and the approval of the council.

2. The faculty should provide prior training and necessary inputs to the staff involved in the design and development of a study programme. The faculty should ensure the provision of adequate physical and human resources for the designing of courses and for the processes of approval, monitoring, and review.

3. Both print and electronic versions of the study program prospectus should be made available and easily accessible. The information in the prospectus should be accurate and up to date. It should be comprehensive and include:

> entry requirements, programme specifications, programme ILOs, graduate profile, title of the award, volume of learning, level descriptors and qualification descriptors, course contents, teaching/learning and assessment strategies, physical and human resources and learner support, monitoring, evaluation and review arrangements and other relevant details.

4. The ILOs for the program must be created in accordance with the graduate profile. The ILOs must be achievable, attainable, and reasonable.

5. The programme should be based on outcome-based education and learner-centred teaching (OBE-LCT) principles.

6. Entry and exit pathways, as well as fallback options, should be considered during the program design and development processes.

7. The program should be structured into course modules that include necessary core and optional aspects in the right order, maintain the right proportion of theoretical and practical knowledge.

8. The curriculum includes a work-based placement or internship as a component of the programme.

9. The curriculum of a study programme should encourage creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning, interpersonal and communication skills; and appropriate strategies such as experiential and reflective learning, collaborative learning, and self-learning.

10. Faculty should take into account the needs of differently abled students when designing courses.

11. The faculty should identify key outcome-based performance indicators for the programme such as student progress and success rates, students' satisfaction with the programme, cost-effectiveness of the programme, employability of graduates, and tracer studies after graduation and use this data for the continuous improvement of the programme.

12. Programme evaluation should be undertaken regularly appropriate intervals by the faculty level CDC through an internal monitoring system by the FQAC for the improvement of the course content, delivery, and assessment processes.

3.3. Course Unit Design and Development

1. The faculty should follow the standardized formats/templates/guidelines for course unit design as per UGC guidelines.

2. Each course unit should clearly present the following: course unit title, objectives, intended learning outcomes (ILOs), a credit value, a designated number of study hours (notional hours), contents, teaching and learning strategies, assessment strategies, and recommended readings.

3. The content of a study programme should be organized into focused courses/modules with the ILOs aligned with the programme ILOs. Course ILOs should be mapped against programme ILOs to ensure that the programme is coherent and comprehensive. Course content, teaching and learning, and assessment strategies should align with the course ILOs.

4. Course units should be designed to reflect the latest developments, trends, and practices in the field of study.

5. Course units should be designed based on student-centred principles with teaching-learning and assessment strategies and appropriate use of ICT.

6. The learning content of the course units should have appropriate breadth and depth and activities to stimulate and challenge the students' intellectuality.

7. Students' workload with respect to course units should comply with the SLQF guidelines and facilitate completion of each course within the stipulated period of time.

8. Course units should be structured in such a way that they progressively increase the challenges on students' intellectuality in terms of knowledge, skills, conceptualization, and independent learning.

9. A course unit should be made after a thorough, careful consideration of the design principles, academic standards and appropriateness of the available learning opportunities, monitoring and review arrangements, and the course specification.

10. The students' feedback is to be obtained for each course unit at the end of semester for the purpose of assessing the appropriateness of its content, effectiveness of teaching, and measurement of student learning outcomes. It should be used for further improvement of the courses/modules.

11. Course units of the study programme should be structured in such a way that they progressively increase the challenges on students' intellectuality in terms of skills, knowledge, attitude, and mindset conceptualization and independent learning to enable the progression of students from one level to the other.

4. Code of Practice for Curriculum Development, Review, and Approval

4.1. New Degree Programmes/Major Amendments: Development and Application Procedures

- o A curriculum development committee shall be appointed by the faculty board with the recommendation of the senate and approval of the council to develop new degree programmes or major amendments to the existing programme.

- Faculty board nominates External reviewers (subject experts) and gets the approval of the Council through the recommendation of Senate.

- New Curricula/Revised Curricula shall be submitted to the CDC of faculty for review through the Dean.

- The reviews of the CDC shall be completed within one month from the date of the receipt of the curriculum with the concern of the FQAC.

- The review reports of the CDC shall be submitted to the respective department by the Dean of the Faculty.

- The updated curricula shall be sent to the external reviewers who are appointed by the Senate of the University of Vavuniya for their recommendations.

- The experts recommended curriculum shall be sent to the Curriculum Evaluation Committee (CEC) of the University of Vavuniya.

- The CEC shall review the curriculum according to the ToR of the CEC and the recommended curriculum shall then be sent to the Senate through the Director/CQA for recommendation and approval of the Council.

- The Council approved curricula and all related documents shall be submitted to QAC/UGC for its clearance.

Major amendments of the Curriculum are as follows

i. Changes to the number of academic years required for the study program
ii. Changes to SLQF qualification type with designators and qualifiers
iii. Changes to SLQF exit level
iv. Adding or removing lateral entry and early exit possibilities
v. Changes to admission criteria (only for SLQF Level 5 and 6)
vi. Termination of the entire program
vii. Introduction of a specialization / majoring area in an existing degree program
viii. Deleting or substituting one or more specialization / major or minor area in an existing degree program

4.2. Curriculum Minor Amendment Process

If there are any modifications in the curriculum that don't significantly alter the course content, the format of the exams, or the credit values, they are categorized as minor revisions. The following are considered as minor amendments.

1.   Small changes in Course Content
2.   Typographical corrections
3.   Updating learning resources and recommended readings
4.   Minor changes in ILOs

Approval of the Council is sufficient with the recommendation of the Senate and the respective faculty board for the minor amendments.

5.   References

UGC, S. L. (2015). Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions. Sri Lanka: UGC.

UGC, S. L. (2015). Manual for Review of Undergraduates Study Programmemes of the Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions. Sri Lanka: UGC.

UGC, S. L. (2015). Sri Lanka Qualification Framework. Sri Lanka: UGC.