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**Dean, Faculty of Law
General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University
Ratmalana**

25th June 2014

Dear Sir:

Institutional Review Report: Faculty of Law, KDU

We are pleased to see that the Faculty of Law has taken tremendous effort to enhance its teaching learning culture by implementing the recommendations that we have made in our Institutional Review Report submitted on 25th May 2014, and by now lots of good practices are in place that would take this Faculty into one of the best academic institutions serve for this purpose.

We are now in a position to submit you the **FINAL VERSION OF THE REPORT**. We take this opportunity to extend my sincere thank, on behalf of the panel of reviewers, to you and all academic and administrative staff in your Faculty and the University for extending their fullest support to undertake this review as scheduled.

Please feel free to contact me at (071/077) 362 8911 and/or udith@hotmail.com for any clarifications.

Thanks You

Yours sincerely



Prof. Udith K. Jayasinghe-Mudalige

Professor (Chair) – Dept. of Agribusiness Management, WUSL

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Program Review Report



Faculty of Law **GENERAL SIR JOHN KOTELAWALA** **DEFENCE UNIVERSITY**

05th and 09th May 2014

Review Panel

Prof. Udith K. Jayasinghe-Mudalige

(Chair of the Panel)

QA Consultant to the Ministry of Higher Education / HETC-WB Project
Professor, Dept. Agribusiness Management and Director, Staff Development Center
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

Prof. Rohana P Mahaliyanaarachchi

Former Vice-Chancellor & Senior Professor
Dept. of Agribusiness Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

Ms. Wasantha Seneviratne

Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Colombo

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Chapter 1

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

University accountability for quality and standards is a key factor required to promote and safeguard public confidence in higher education. As higher education in Sri Lanka is a public good, universities must conscientiously exercise their responsibility for quality and standards. The program review is one of the components of the external quality assurance program carried out in Sri Lankan universities. It evaluates the quality of education within a specific discipline. It is focused on evaluating the student learning experience, student achievements and the teaching learning process. It is understood that the final responsibility for quality and standards remains within the institution itself, since it alone has the powers to control and to change existing practices. Key features of the program review process include the critical analysis of the Self Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by the faculty concerned, peer observation of teaching, observation of documents, observation of the facilities available, and gathering information on activities towards quality assurance through discussions with as many stakeholders as possible.

On the invitation of **Dean, Faculty of Law** of the **General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU)** to Prof. Udith K. Jayasinghe-Mudalige (Quality Assurance Consultant – Ministry of Higher Education / HETC-WB Project) has agreed to conduct a full scale review on its **Bachelors of Law degree program**. A standard Program Review was conducted by a Panel of Reviewers (see below) following the guidelines provided in the *Program Review Handbook for Sri Lankan Universities* (DRAFT), prepared by the *Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council, Division of the University Grants Commission (UGC)* in January 2013. The quality of education of the Faculty of Law, hereinafter referred to as Faculty, was reviewed according to the aims and learning outcomes given in the SER of the Faculty.

The following nine aspects of education were, in particular, reviewed at the program level:

1. Curriculum design, content and review
2. Teaching and learning
3. Assessment methods
4. Quality of students including student progress and achievements
5. Generic skills development
6. Academic guidance and counseling
7. Extent and use of student feedback
8. Peer observation
9. Postgraduate studies

The review panel consisting of the following members:

- **Prof. Udith K. Jayasinghe-Mudalige** (*Team Leader*) – Quality Assurance Consultant to the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) / HETC-WB Project, Professor, Dept. Agribusiness Management and Director, Staff Development Center, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

- **Prof. Rohana P Mahaliyanaarachchi** – Former Vice-Chancellor & Senior Professor, Dept. of Agribusiness Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.
- **Ms. Wasantha Seneviratne** – Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Colombo.

As agreed upon, the Dean, Faculty of Law has invited Prof. Udith K. Jayasinghe-Mudalige (Quality Assurance Consultant – Ministry of Higher Education / HETC-WB Project) for an official meeting with the Vice-Chancellor of the KDU and other senior administrators of the University and Faculty on 07th April 2014 in order plan and organize the process of Program Review. In this meeting, it was agreed to have conduct the program review on 05th and 09th May 2014 from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. at the KDU.

On 05th May 2014, the QA Consultant briefed the review panel about the quality assurance process and writing of the Program Review Report. The agenda of the two day visit submitted by the Faculty was discussed and fine-tuned with the Dean of the Faculty and the Head of the Departments (*The Agenda of the review program is in Annexure I*).

During the period of review, the review panel met with the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Dean / Faculty of Law, Head of the Department, Academic staff of the Faculty, Supporting staff, and Undergraduates of the Faculty who read for the Bachelors of Law degree. Several documents were perused to gather first hand information pertaining to the conduct of the degree program, including the prospectus, academic calendars, structures and curricula of undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs, documents pertaining to curriculum revision, lesson plans, lists of examiners, assessment criteria, student feedback forms, question papers, marking schemes, answer scripts, etc. The review panel also examined the facilities available for teaching and learning. These included the lecture theatres, equipment, library, computer laboratories, sports facilities, canteen facilities, wash room facilities etc.

The process was continued on 09th May 2014, at the end of the end, the review team gave a feedback of the findings to the Dean and Heads of the Departments and other members of the academic staff. After the review visit, this report was prepared incorporating the findings of the review panel. In the report, the strengths, good practices and the weaknesses are highlighted together with recommendations. Each aspect has been given a judgment of ‘Excellent’, ‘Good’, ‘Satisfactory’, ‘Needs improvement’. The draft report will be sent to the Faculty and the feedback will be obtained.

Chapter 2

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY, FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT

General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) was established initially as Sir John Kotelawala Defence Academy (KDA) in 1981. The Academy was granted degree awarding status in 1988 and was elevated to the university status in 2007. Degrees awarded by the KDU are recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka. In 1996, KDA was granted the membership of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), United Kingdom. In 2011 KDU obtained the membership of the International Association of Universities (IAU), France. Currently the KDU is recognized as one of the best Universities in the region, and it receives a contingent of foreign students every year from the countries in the SAARC region as well as countries outside the region.

KDA was renamed as the General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University in 2007 and it is the pioneering Defence University in the South Asian region. At present, it is the only Defence University in Sri Lanka which grooms young Officer Cadets to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces. Recently the Military Academies of the Armed Forces were brought under the umbrella of the KDU for the award of academic and professional qualifications.

KDA commenced its own degree program i.e. Bachelor of Science in Defence Studies, with the admission of Intake 4 in 1986. Currently, the University awards Bachelor's degrees in the fields of Medicine, Law, Engineering, Allied Health Sciences, Management, Social Sciences and Humanities. The Officer Cadets follow courses in academic studies in their respective fields and are also given a basic military training. Further, the University offers postgraduate degrees for the officers of the Armed Forces and the Police, and civil servants. KDU has expanded its frontiers further with the establishment of the Southern Campus at Hambanthota. Its first Faculty i.e. Faculty of Built Environment and Spatial Sciences will commence degree programs in Surveying Sciences, Quantity Surveying and Architecture, shortly.

Faculty of Law

Administration of the LL.B. Degree Program comes under the purview of the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Head of the Department and other members of the academic staff who function under the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) is directly responsible to the Vice Chancellor, the Chief Executive Officer of the University. Prior to 2007, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) position was named as Director of Academic Studies (DAS). It was renamed as Dean, Faculty of Academic Studies in 2007.

Department of Law

The Department of Law was established in 2010. The motive behind the establishment of the Department was to provide legal education to the Officer Cadets of the Armed Forces and to train them academically and professionally to attend to legal matters relevant to the respective Forces in the capacity of Legal Officers.

The men and women of the Armed Forces are bound to perform their duties for national requirements both in times of war and peace. Studying Law is greatly beneficial to them in discharging their duties to the nation. The University is proud to have a separate Department of Law as it is indeed a fulfillment of a national aspiration.

The Department now has a permanent teaching staff, professionally and academically qualified, to implement its mission. It has also obtained the services of academics and professionals holding higher positions in the Universities, Ministries and Attorney General's Department, in the capacity of visiting lecturers.

The Department of Law offers LL.B. Degree Program to the Officer Cadets enlisted to the University annually. From the year 2012, the Department has opened its doors to the civilian students also: They are referred to as Day Scholars and are not required to join the Forces. The objective was to make available the facilities of the University to a wider segment of student community in order to expand higher educational opportunities in the country.

Exemption from the Preliminary and Intermediate Examinations of the Sri Lanka Law College for the LL.B. graduates of the KDU has already been sought from the Council of Legal Education, and representations have been made to both the Council and its Chairman His Lordship the Chief Justice. A decision on the matter is still pending.

The Department offers the modules of Legal Environment and Industrial Law to the students of other disciplines also. At the KDU, Law was taught as a distinct subject to the Officer Cadets of Engineering, Management and Social Sciences streams even prior to the establishment of the Department of Law.

Chapter 3

AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAM DETAILS

Vision and Mission of the University

Vision

“To be a university nationally and internationally known for its unique ability to engage both undergraduate and graduate students in distinctive and interdisciplinary defense related higher education that best serves the tri-services, the state sector and society at large”

Mission

“To ensure a high-quality, learner-centered educational experience through undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs along with high quality research across many disciplines in the field of defense, in both residential and non-residential settings in the campus”

Objectives of the University

The objectives of the KDU are to:

1. Provide facilities to introduce Officer Cadets to the profession of arms, and guide them to develop their knowledge and skills in the profession of arms, prior to being commissioned in the Armed Forces.
2. Provide facilities and instructions in academic studies for Officer Cadets, Officers, public servants and any other persons in preparation for the first degree in such subjects that are relevant to their professions or employment.
3. Foster a spirit of comradeship amongst Officer Cadets to develop a sense of amity and unity in the officer corps of the Armed Forces for the purpose of facilitation of joint operations during the course of their service in the said Forces.
4. Provide courses of study on continuous professional development for Officers of the Armed Forces and any other persons selected by the Board of Management to make them qualified for the award of postgraduate degrees, diplomas and other certificates by the University.
5. Discharge such other functions including research and development as the University may consider necessary for the achievement of its objectives.

Vision and Mission of the Faculty

Vision

“To be a Faculty of Law nationally and internationally recognized for its unique ability to generate academically and professionally qualified distinctive graduates and postgraduates in the field of Law to serve in the Armed Forces and in the public sector and society at large”

Mission

“To ensure through learner centered educational experience, properly guided under supervision of the Department of Law consisting of academically and professionally well-qualified personnel, and with higher quality research exposure to make distinctive graduates and postgraduates in the field of Law”

Vision and Mission of the Department

Vision

“To provide a floor for the undergraduates and graduates to reach high standards of knowledge of Law, and to become excellent and innovative professionals of Law with national and social commitment, and to be a mostly sought repository of teaching and learning of Law”

Mission

“To ensure the provision of properly designed curricula, facilities and instructions in academic studies with interaction of distinctive academics and professionals internally and externally recruited for teaching, guidance and research, and to make excellent interdisciplinary service personnel in legal profession in the country”

Aims and Learning Outcomes

Aims of the Department

The Department aims to: provide an excellent legal education program to the Officer Cadets and Civil Students in the fields of Law.

The Department firmly retains a preeminent position in almost all aspects of legal studies and strives to be recognized as a well-established leading institute of Law among other competitive Law schools at national, regional and international levels. Therefore, it is confident that the graduates produced would be able to achieve excellence in all facets of the legal profession.

The Department seeks to attract three types of students:

- A. The *Officer Cadets* who are permanently recruited to the Armed Forces to serve as Legal Officers in the legal divisions of the respective Forces as commissioned officers after graduation.
- B. The fee levying *Volunteer Force Officer Cadets* who, after graduation and commissioning, would be opted to be mobilized or demobilized depending on the needs of the country.
- C. The *Day Scholars* who are admitted as fee levying students on day school basis without an obligation to join the Armed Forces.

The students admitted to the Department as aforesaid are provided equal facilities and opportunity to pursue their studies.

Learning Outcomes

- a) The Department will ensure that each student receives instructions in Substantive Law generally regarded as necessary for effective and responsible practice of the legal profession.
- b) The students are expected to acquire competence in legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem solving and oral communication.
- c) The Officer Cadets will specialize in Military Law which exclusively pertains to their profession.
- d) The graduates produced by the Department will be able to function effectively with cutting edge knowledge, in a multidisciplinary environment and with a global outlook.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW TEAM

4.1 Curricula Design, Content and Review

The LL.B degree is of four years' duration. It is offered in English medium. The Faculty follows the semester-wise academic calendar, comprised of 08 semesters. There are 65 subjects, out of which 46 are Common Compulsory subjects (CC) and 18 are Auxiliary subjects (AX). Total credits for the whole course are 120 GPA, 40 NGPA and 50 MGPA. Although the degree program is offered to both military and non-military students in a same batch, certain subjects are exclusively offered for either military or non-military students.

In Semester I, except 'Introduction to Information Technology' and 'English: Basic Study Skills (Law)', there are 06 CC subjects for all the students and one CC subject exclusively offered for the military students, namely 'Military Studies'. These CC subjects (except Military Studies) provide the necessary impetus for "law learning beginners" to understand the fundamental principles of law with special reference to the legal system and legal history of Sri Lanka, present and past constitutions of the country and the elements of criminal law. Offering of 'Roman Law' is of significance, since this particular subject provides the foundation upon which the system of Roman Dutch Law (common law of the country) was built, and therefore, the students should have a very thorough grounding of that subject in Semester I.

In Semester II, there are 08 CC subjects offered, which include 'Constitutional Law II' that allows the students to learn the fundamental principles of constitutional law with specific reference on decentralization of power amongst the provinces of the country. 'Family Law; Jurisprudence' considered as science of law and teaching of which demonstrates the high academic quality of the Program, since it invokes the students' ability of critical analysis; Interpretation of Statutes and Documents; Law of Contract and Criminal Law II. 'English Advanced Study Skills (Law)' is the only Auxiliary subject offered in Semester II.

In Semester III, certain subjects are of particular significance, since those subjects allow students to understand current international affairs and the common legal traditions of the entire world. For example, teaching 'Public International Law' that includes the customary and treaty laws governing interstate relationship and provides the foundation for many branches of international law (i.e. human rights, international arbitration, investment law and environment law). The subject of 'International Relations', offered exclusively for non-military students, is also a unique feature in this degree program, because this is generally a subject taught in Faculties of Arts and Humanities. These innovative approaches are appreciated.

A certain degree of specialization can be achieved in Semester IV and V by learning certain specific subjects, including: 'Intellectual Property Law', 'International Investment Law', 'Human Rights Law', 'Law of the Sea', 'Law of Space', and 'International Humanitarian Law'. In other traditional Law Faculties and Departments of Law, generally,

these subjects are offered as optional or electives allowing the students to choose the combination of electives according to their future career prospects and aims. There could be different views among the academics and professionals of the discipline of law in relation to offering them as compulsory or elective subjects. Nevertheless, when the review panel inquired about the opinion of students on the issue, the whole student community seems unanimously of the view that this exceptional decision, which allows them to study the basics of all import subjects with no choice, helps them greatly to have a sound knowledge on all the subjects. When it is further queried whether this holistic approach makes them too much burden their answer has been to the contrary. According to their view, the ones who may not desire to pursue postgraduate studies on specialized law subjects in the future are benefited by this of “all inclusive approach”.

Semester VI of the program is also distinct. Unlike in other LLB degree programs, which generally offer substantive law subjects in particular, this program offers number of procedural subjects, which are mostly needed for legal profession. If a student wishes to become a practicing Attorney-at-Law or a judicial officer, subjects like ‘Civil Procedure’, ‘Criminal Procedure’ and ‘Law of Evidence’ are really helpful. In particular, for a practicing lawyer, learning ‘Conveyancing’, ‘Trust Accounts’ and ‘Professional Ethics’ in an academic law program could be a novel experience with an additional benefit.

Semester VII offers opportunities to non-military students to gain practical experience on the application of law by having “Legal Clinics” and a “Leadership program” in order to impart those necessary skills to be future leaders and pioneers in the field of law. Semester VIII includes components of ‘Internship’ and ‘Research Project’ to enhance practical legal skills amongst non-military students, whereas the military students are exclusively trained through a number of military specific subjects. These well-oriented subjects would help both military as well as non-military students to develop as full pledge law graduates and to direct them towards achieving their specific goals.

The Prospectus (Handbook) prepared by the KDU for new students of all the Faculties contain only a general background and basic information pertaining to the degree of law. It is recommended that there should be a Handbook exclusively prepared for law students to make them aware about the teaching framework, examination and evaluation at the outset by providing a sound knowledge on the by-laws pertain to the LL.B Program. It is, therefore, important to ensure that a Handbook for new law students is distributed with specific details of the LL.B Program and the student body, as a whole, is made aware of the contents thereof.

In our view, Semesters I, II, III and IV are the formative semesters of a law student’s learning of the law. The subjects that teach in these semesters provide the foundation for his/her future, in postgraduate legal studies and practice at the Bar. Offering a ‘Research Methodology’ program in the Semester V also noted as a worthy idea to train them for engaging in innovative research, which is an integral aspect of an academic program.

The review panel has engaged in several discussions with the academic staff and students, separately, about the contents of the curriculum. Some staff members were displeased to certain extent about the “congested nature” of the subjects due to the holistic approach of teaching all the law subjects as CC subjects. This may lead to a surfacing touching approach rather than a deep learning/teaching of a subject. Therefore, when the time tables are prepared

this fact should be taken into consideration in order to avoid unwarranted pressure on both the teachers and the students.

The panel found that the staff mostly comprised of junior academics without postgraduate research degrees on specific areas may affect the quality of teaching though they take best of their effort to overcome such difficulties using the available facilities, i.e., law related modern databases and library facilities. Inadequate staff may be overloaded with the large heap of subjects to be covered in one semester together with the marking of continuous assessments, examination of the semester answer scripts and their own postgraduate teaching. Nevertheless, the panel received positive comments from the staff and the students about their teaching-learning endeavor based on the existing curriculum.

It is advised to maintain periodic curriculum development and review procedures in order to keep abreast with the contemporary developments in the field of law and to provide an updated program to the students of law. Keeping close links with other reputed law teaching institutions at the national and international levels is of utmost importance. To reduce the burden of students and the staff it is recommended to prepare a subject guide and a study pack for each and every subject in consultation with the experts on those subjects. Having a Course Web and uploading relevant and updated study material by the respective teachers would be another remedy. As a whole, the panel is happy with the wide ranging subjects, the curriculum and the course contents, which offer students a high quality and overarching undergraduate program of law.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Curriculum is comprehensive and designed to cover all the major areas of law, inclusive of both substantive and procedural laws.
- Students are allowed to learn all the law subjects without giving a choice to select.
- ‘Research methodology’, ‘Internship’ and ‘Legal Clinics’ are introduced as subjects to the curriculum to make equilibrium between academic and practical subjects, which is exclusively adopted only by this LL.B Program in Sri Lanka.
- ‘International relations’ is taught, which encourages the students to hold positions at inter-state level and diplomatic missions.

Weaknesses

- Due to the heaviness of the degree program, staff and students may find it difficult to cope up with the workload, especially when the staff-student ratio is, at present, recorded as below the accepted norms.

Recommendations

- To have flexible time tables for the students.
- Preparation of a subject guide, study pack, and the availability of resource materials.
- Maintaining a “Course Web” and uploading resource materials for easy reference.
- Arrange a series of well organized guest lectures and seminars throughout the degree program, which are conducted by experienced academics and professionals.
- Conducting tutorial classes for smaller groups enabling students to learn the subject matter more interactively.

4.2 Teaching and Learning

Members of the panel had broad and fruitful discussions, with the Dean, Head of the Department, and the academic staff of the Faculty, students from the first to the third years, on a range of matters pertaining to teaching and learning methods. This was with a view to making an assessment of the current situation and making specific recommendations for the further enhancement of skills of teachers and students wherever necessary. It was noted that this was a timely exercise, as the Faculty is currently engaged in a process of obtaining the accreditation from the Sri Lanka Legal Council.

Overall, the panel was impressed with the deep sense of commitment shown by the academic staff in teaching process and a similar commitment shown by the students at learning process. The panel was able to make an assessment of several areas pertaining to teaching and learning methods, which require attention and further improvement, in the overall academic environment to enable students to derive maximum benefits from the pursuit of the LL.B degree program.

At present, the Faculty comprises eleven academic staff (11) members, who have joined KDU as permanent staff, in addition to the Dean of the Faculty. The Dean of the Faculty is on contract basis. A senior academic staff member holds the post of the Head of the Department. There is only one Department to the Faculty at present. There are around 337 students, and according to the accepted norms of Student: Teacher ratio in the Faculties of Social Science, the Faculty should satisfy the ratio of 20:1. Highly reputed professionals work as visiting lecturers to the Faculty, and which can be considered as a remarkable practice, since by having these professionals as visiting and guest lectures, students can share their experiences rigorously.

However, the majority of the permanent staff is young and less experience. The merit point of this Faculty is that the KDU administration had selected a high caliber professional in the field of law education in the country as the Dean of the Faculty. Nevertheless, it is proposed by the team to introduce a 'system of co-lectures' with the practitioners in these fields focusing on the practical aspects and the academic staff concentrating on the academic aspects. Such a system would ensure that the students receive the benefit of the practical experience of the practitioners, and prepare them to enter the legal profession with confidence, and at the same time, the young academic staff may able to share the experiences and professionalism of these practitioners

At present, all the physical facilities belonging to the Faculty, including its lecture rooms, are located in the forth flour of the Medical Faculty building of the KDU, but there is plan to shift the Faculty to its own building within a short period of time. The panel has observed that sufficient separate spacious lecture rooms have been reserved for law students. Altogether, there will be four lecture rooms permanently reserved for the law students of level I, II, III and IV. Additionally, there are two auditoriums and a mini theatre, which are used for the purposes of conducting seminars, workshops and invited lectures etc.

The KDU Library is fairly well-equipped with a wide range of books and journals. There are sufficient number of textbooks in the library, generally three copies of each, on most of the law related subjects offered in the degree program. They are made available in the Main

Library for lending, as well as for reference, within the library hours as provided in the weekly time table. Additionally, students can use the library at any other time convenient to them. However, there appears to be a need for regular up-dating to the stock of materials so that students have access to the current editions. The reading rooms are spacious and provide an appropriate environment to engage in research and other academic activities. Space for reading has been provided inside the library. It is open from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on working days and on Saturdays with potential extended hours during end semester exams period.

Audio-visual devices for learning are provided in lecture rooms to facilitate different modes of teaching (e.g. MS Power Point® presentations), which are used by most of the lecturers. The Training Support Officer (TSO) and his staff closely supervise technical assistance so as to avoid any interruption in the conduct of lectures. Every student on his admission to the Faculty is provided with a laptop computer free of charge. They are permitted to access to the Internet for academic and research purposes. Academic staff rooms also facilitated with the Internet facilities. Further, all the rooms are air-conditioned, and provided with the required office equipment to facilitator their work. A common vehicle is available for the members of academic staff to facilitate their transportation for official work.

A modern Language Laboratory is available for the University, and the Law students utilize it for their English language learning purposes. Also, there are modern Computer Laboratories to facilitate ICT education for the students. It is notable that students were given handouts either e-version or hard copies. Some teachers have given handouts in both formats. While all the students have laptop computers and Wi-Fi facilities in the classrooms, they can use those e-versions without problems. Junior staff should be advised and guided by the senior staff in selecting their specialization areas. There should be a plan for staff development and due regard should be paid to the areas of specialization/expertise of a staff member in the allocation of subjects.

Teaching methods used by senior staff is highly appreciated. Nevertheless, the junior staff is required to train further on appropriate teaching methods so that they can use them effectively in the class. Every encouragement should be given to the academic staff to create conducive academic environment, and in particular, the junior staff to engage in acquiring postgraduate qualifications, such as completing a Master of Philosophy degree within 2 to 3 years, and thereafter, proceed to a Doctor of Philosophy degree. Academics should be encouraged to continue research activities after confirmation and promotion. Engagement in continuous research would enhance the teaching quality of the Faculty. It must also be noted that the Faculty has taken necessary steps to publish a Law Journal.

Students are effectively engaged in the learning process. The panel observed that students' presentation skills are very good and they are involved in interactive learning process by clarifying unclear points from the teachers during the lectures.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Together with the Dean of the Faculty, who is a well experienced university academic, two other well experienced senior members guide the junior academic staff of the Department satisfactorily.

- Lecture rooms are well equipped with the modern equipments to facilitate Learner-Centered Teaching.
- Students are provided with a lap top computer for learning purposes.
- Wi-Fi internet facility is available.
- Sufficient number of textbooks in law is available in the library.
- Facilities for English language learning is in high quality; i.e. high quality language laboratory and standard learning materials etc. are available
- Facilities for IT learning is commendable, including a high quality computer laboratory
- Students are provided with electronic or hard copies of handouts by the lecturers.
- Students are aware on the ILOs of the course units.
- Initiatives are taken to publish a Law Journal.

Weaknesses

- Lack of course manuals and detailed syllabus for each and every subject.
- Presentation skills of the weaker students are needed to be improved so that they can be in line with those who are competent.

Recommendations

- Junior academic staff must be provided with an opportunity to carry out their postgraduate studies within the shortest possible time so that they can become senior members of the Faculty and specialists in the field of law.
- Must take actions to improve teaching skills of the junior academic staff through proper training and exposure.
- Students must be offered with a reasonable time to have their tea and lunch comfortably, since it promotes interrelationships amongst the students.
- It is suitable to give a set of textbooks to students, may be e-versions or reasonably priced, so that students can follow certain courses systematically from the beginning of the semester.
- Communication skills, especially on the delivery of an effective presentation, of the weaker students are needed to be improved.
- Detail course manuals/lesson plans for each subject should be developed using a standard format so that curriculum is aligned with the mode of delivery.

4.3 Assessment Methods

Both formative and summative assessment methods are used by the Faculty to assess the performance of their students. Formative assessment methods are practiced during the semester on regular basis, which includes assignments, in-class uninformed quizzes, individual presentations etc. Summative assessments are characterized by the End Semester Examination, which uses standard multiple choice, structured essay, and essay questions in a 3-hour examination, as well as designated project reports for certain subjects etc. The End Semester Examination for a particular subject carries 70% marks, while two tests supporting continuous assessment carry the remaining 30%. The pass mark is 45% for the GPA as well as NGPA subjects.

Those students who are not successful at the regular examinations are provided with an opportunity to sit for supplementary examination in the following semester. The results are usually released within maximum of 4 weeks after the examination. The End Semester Examination papers are moderated by the respective senior academic staff members of the Faculty. However, there is no second marking system is in place. The Deputy Registrar (Examination) is responsible for the examination procedures in the whole University, and the examinations are administered centrally through this office. Students are provided with an opportunity to look into their answer scripts after marking. Students, in general, are satisfied with assessment criteria including the conduct of examinations, and no serious cases are reported with regard to marking of examination papers.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Teaching-learning activities and assessment methods are constructively aligned to ensure that the Intended Learning Outcomes are achieved.
- Both formative and summative assessment methods are in place that, in turn, ensures learner-centered culture.
- The Faculty follows the standard GPA system for evaluation.
- Examination papers are moderated by the senior staff.
- Examination results are released within the shortest possible time period, mostly within 4 weeks.
- Answer scripts are given to the students for observation after marking.

Weaknesses

- Lack of second marking system is in place.

Recommendations

- Introduction of second marking system is essential to enhance the quality of marking.
- Marks allocated for continuous assessment for certain practical oriented subjects may be increased up to 50% so that student work more during the class hours.

4.4 Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement

The Faculty commenced its academic programs in 2011 with the 1st Intake, which has not yet completed the degree program. The 1st Intake consists of the Cadet Officers only. Since then, both Day Scholars and Cadet Officers were enrolled. With the 3rd Intake, 10 Police Officers were also taken to follow LLB degree.

The University follows a very open and transparent method in selection of students for the particular degree programs. It is taken place under the direction of Ministry of Defence. Three categories of candidates are considered in the admission process, Including: Local Candidate to be enlisted as Officer Cadets; Overseas Students as Foreign Officer Cadets, and Fee Levying Students as Day Scholars

Most of the candidates are local candidates, while few come from overseas (mainly from SAARC countries such as Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal etc.).

The initial step towards student admission is publication of an advertisement in national newspapers, the KDU website and the Government Gazette. To be enrolled, a local candidate should:

- Be a citizen of Sri Lanka.
- Be not less than 18 years and not more than 22 years of age on the closing date of applications.
- Be eligible for the university admission (under UGC) and have fulfilled the following requirements;
 - i. Have offered three (03) subjects at the G.C.E (A/L) Examination held under the new scheme and obtained;
 - At least a “S” grade for all three approved subjects.
 - “A” pass in the Common General Paper.
 - ii. Minimum of a Credit Pass in English at the G.C.E. (O/L) Examination
- Be unmarried.
- Satisfy the minimum physical standards.

There are 3 different interviews and a medical test conducted in order to select the suitable candidates such as:

1. Preliminary Interview: Focuses mainly on ascertaining the educational qualifications, physical standards and the personality qualities
2. Second Interview and the Officer Quality Test: This is designed to test the physical and mental abilities. Applicant is required to perform activities decided by the Interview Board within a stipulated time. Further, the communication ability in English (both oral and written) is also tested at this interview. A preliminary Medical Test too is conducted.
3. Final Interview: Those who reach the required standards are interviewed by a Selection Committee appointed by the Ministry of Defence.
4. Medical Test: Finally, a medical test is conducted to ensure that the applicants possess the required medical standards of the service.

Overseas Cadets possessing equivalent qualifications also get an opportunity to enter the KDU applying through the Foreign Ministry and respective Foreign Missions in Sri Lanka.

The KDU also follows the UGC guidelines in recruiting students, i.e. both Cadet Officers and Day Scholars to the Faculty. Students have to go through series of interviews in selection process and team has noticed that Z score of the students is in higher levels. Through the discussions had with the students belonging to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th intakes of the Faculty, the review panel identified that their soft skills, especially communication, language (English, Sinhalese), and ICT are in high standards. The students’ involvement in extra-curricular activities is highly appreciated, and many are involved with different types of sports, including cricket, tennis, netball, basketball, etc. and some students are, of course, national level players.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Student selection criteria and method is very transparent and systematic.
- Observations made into the examinations results revealed that nearly 95% students are above the “pass” grade.
- Students possess high level of soft skills developed through the program.
- Students’ engagement in extra-curricular activities, especially in sports is commendable.

Weaknesses

- No significant comments.

Recommendations

- Provide more opportunities for Police Officers to study this degree program in every intake.

4.5 Generic Skills Development

The legal profession requires certain special skills, that would include the abilities to make, apply and criticize and make precise distinctions; separate rapidly the relevant from the irrelevant; think logically; think critically; research; plan; communicate; argue fluently, concisely and persuasively both orally and on paper; good communicative skills include the ability to listen, speak and write, and to use the skills to analyze and solve problems.

The Faculty has addressed most of these factors through the introduction of skill generating subjects, such as, Communication Skills, Basic and Advanced Study Skills (Law), Research Methodology and Research Project. Introduction to Information Technology, Internship and Legal Clinics as subjects of the Curriculum would help the development of the above stated generic skills of students. The Faculty should focus on introducing more activities which will train and assess in the acquisition of skills and the program offered by the Faculty should incorporate them as well. That will help the students to acquire skills needed for a Law Graduate and a Practitioner in Law to function effectively.

More opportunities should be looked for, to train the students through the participation of Moot Court Competitions, Debating Competitions, and Address to the Jury Competition with other law teaching institutions locally and internationally. The review panel was happy to see the building up of a Moot Court Structure in the new Law Faculty Building and the achievements of the students up to date. At least twice a year mock trial competition must be conducted by the Faculty. However, if they could carve out sometime during the course of the program to encourage them to participate in these activities, it will help them to gain skill training in art of advocacy. It was transpired during the discussion with the students that they have participated in such activities in the past.

There should be more interaction between the highly qualified academics, scholars, judges of apex courts and high caliber professionals of law from other institutions and the field, to ensure that the students do not only get the necessary knowledge, but also are exposed to real

life situations which will train them to develop the necessary skills to face such prospects and develop the necessary skills. The Review panel learned that the Judges of the Supreme Court, President's Counsels are visiting the Faculty and deliver sessions of academic and practical importance, which is appreciated. The Dean of the Faculty has the experience of working with other reputed law teaching institutions of the country and has dynamic relationship and connections with the experts in the field. In light of this, the panel noted with appreciation the efforts he has taken meticulously to improve the design and the contents of the curriculum. Organizing special days of academic significance, for example, "Human Rights Day", "Environmental Day" with the participation of social organizations, having special competitions to celebrate such events would be another recommendation.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Introduction of subjects that help to generate soft skills amongst the students (e.g. Communication skills, Basic and advanced study skills (Law), Research methodology and Research project).
- Inclusion of subjects like: 'Introduction to Information Technology', 'Internship' and 'Legal Clinics' as subjects of the curriculum.
- Teaching all the subjects in English, whereas Sinhala and Tamil languages are taught for beginners of those subjects.
- Moot court and debating competitions are held.
- Extra-curricular activities are frequently organized and the participation for such activities and events has become an integral component of the program.

Weaknesses

- Current level of association with other law teaching institutions should be further strengthened.

Recommendations

- More and closer links should be developed and maintained with other law teaching institutions.
- While appreciating the current efforts, students should be further encouraged and incentivized to participate in various activities, in particular to moot court competitions, debates etc.
- "Address to the Jury Competition" sort of activities should be introduced.
- Publishing a law related student magazine.

4.6 Academic Guidance and Counseling

Academic guidance and student counseling constitutes an important aspect of the student life of any university. Structured mechanisms for guidance and counseling and training of counselors in the discipline of counseling are vital components of a successful program of academic counseling and guidance from which students could derive maximum benefits. There should be a structured system with adequate facilities to enable students to freely discuss their problems with the staff and also designated areas and specifically allocated times (to be applied flexibly) for such interaction.

The review panel is satisfied with the system in place to guide students, in general. Having an expertise Senior Student Counselor is appreciated. It is good that the faculty seek necessary guidance in this respect from the academic staff attached to the Faculty of medicine. Teachers are available for consultation and advice throughout the day, although for all 337 students, one Counselor is not sufficient to deal with all issues to a depth.

It is good to introduce a system of personal tutors for each student so that they may feel free to approach to the designated tutor to get advice when needed and necessary. Nevertheless, such appointed student counselors or personal tutors should be given a prior training as to how they should help the needy students in particular about psychological matters. The duties and functions of student counselors/personal tutors are spelt out, but further training on this area would have both short and long term benefits to the faculty from the students' welfare point of view. The building-in of a component of career guidance into the program would assist students in making their professional choices as they leave the university. Regular dialogue and interaction between counselors and the Dean and the staff of the Faculty enhance and strengthen the academic guidance and counseling program.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Having an expert Senior Student Counselor.
- Openness on the part of the Lecturers to discuss students' matters and their availability throughout the semester.
- Time slot is available in the time table to meet academic staff members to discuss any issues / grievances.

Weaknesses

- Not having a sufficient number of trained student counselors at the Faculty level to match the numbers of student population.

Recommendations

- Introducing a system of Academic Advisors for each student
- Appoint more student counselors, and such appointed members should be given a prior training on dealing with sensitive and psychological issues.
- The duties and functions of student counselors/personal tutors should be clearly spelt out.
- Introduction of Career Guidance into the program.

4.7 Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Obtaining regular student feedback in standard formats in a systematic way is essential to identify the strengths and weaknesses, if any, in the teaching – leaning environment, and in turn, to come up with appropriate ways and means to create an effective learner-centered teaching environment. It is a pleasure to observe that the Faculty of Law is currently working bearing that in mind, i.e. importance of student feedback to assure quality of the teaching

learning process, and placing the right amount of available manpower and resources to achieve this purpose.

We have realized that there is a systematic process in effect to obtain student feedback from both Day Scholars and Cadets by providing them with equal opportunities to express their views. A structured questionnaire prepared and approved by the Faculty and the University also is in use to obtain information with regard to both “positive” and “negative” factors of the teaching involvements (i.e. lecturing, practical, academic counseling etc.) of individual teachers. This questionnaire is given to the students at the end of each semester. In fact, it was the responsibility of individual teachers to operationalize this specific feedback form at the right time.

Each teacher, in light of the comments provided by the students, is assessed on his/her involvement in teaching and other related activities using a Likert-scale on which the students place their respective preferences. Later, these are collected and provided to teachers to assess how he/she has performed. Also, certain teachers, beyond this, practice taking further formal and informal comments about their teaching in more descriptive manner in writing on piece of paper and keep them as records.

We must appreciate the fact that, the lecturers have taken these comments positively and constructively and have tried to rectify their own weaknesses, especially in their teaching learning delivery process. As an outcome of this positive learning environment maintained at the Faculty, students, unlike in certain traditional learning systems, are not reluctant to express their true feelings about the what they learn, what they want to learn etc., as they believe that their grievances and concerns are adequately answered by the teachers or administration.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- A structured questionnaire approved by the Faculty is in use to obtain student feedback and report back to the teacher.
- The comments obtained through students are discussed at the teachers level as well as at the Faculty meetings.
- Teachers highly respect to the system in use to obtain student feedback and believe that “it must be there” (i.e. positive attitudes).
- Several different modes (e.g. cordial discussions with students, writing students true feelings on a note) etc. are used by junior academics.

Weaknesses

- Instead of presence of the teacher in concern at the time of getting the feedback, it can be made more independent, if the Assistant Registrar is directly involved with taking the feedback forms.

Recommendations

- In its capacity, the Faculty of Law, in particular, and the KDU in general, can develop a mechanism to systematically code and assess objectively the feedback using these scores given on the likert-scale.

4.8 Peer Observation

Peer observation can be considered a powerful tool for developing a culture of good practices in an educational institution; since it allows identifying the “good and bad” points involved with its teaching – learning process, and further, to “share” those good practices amongst the potential uses to make the whole system effective.

We have realized that academic and administrative staff members of the Faculty are satisfied with cooperation received from their colleagues to carry out their duties, including teaching and examination related work. As mentioned elsewhere, the majority of staff members in the Faculty is in their probationary period / junior lecturers, and has joined the KDU recently. In this shed of light, it must be appreciated that they work in this caliber to achieve institutional goals voluntarily.

A peer evaluation questionnaire is in use and the comments received from fellow staff members, especially from the senior members are recorded. It is a good practice that Dean personally involves with observing teaching exercises of his staff and gives comments to improve. All junior academic staff members appreciate this. Also, other senior staff members, as time permits, are also involved with observing teaching of their junior staff. However, unfortunately, the "reverse" is not seen, i.e. junior members are still reluctant to enter into the classes of their senior members for regular observation of how they carry out their role of teaching in the class.

Staff members had an opportunity to discuss about the assessment criteria with both students and fellow staff during the time the students look for their examination grades. That way, the system helps academics to think critically on their assessments and learn from others. Also, the way staff rooms and their facilities are set up help them to communicate openly and directly with each other and to share ideas / opinions.

Strengths/Good Practices

- Teachers have a strong feeling about the importance of having a mechanism for peer review
- Examination procedure is well established and monitored by the responsible staff members
- Junior lecturers discuss their positive practices and possible deficiencies in teaching and assessment amongst themselves and with students during their leisure time etc.

Weaknesses

- Like in many higher educational institutions, junior lecturers have some resistance to observe their senior members by entering into their teaching sessions.

Recommendations

- Develop a Common Staff Room and Study Room, separately, with required physical infrastructure to promote and sustain cordial discussions amongst the academic staff and promote mutual learning.

4.9 Postgraduate Studies

The Faculty of Law in collaboration with the Faculty of Graduate Studies offers the Master of Laws (LL.M) degree. This can be considered as a great achievement of the Faculty given its comparatively short history since the inception of the Faculty. The curricular of the program is well set with right academic standards to which the assistance of experts were obtained. A properly documented Prospectus is available and it contains almost all the information about the courses, their learning outcomes, assessment criteria, etc. and other relevant facts and figures.

A qualified panel of teachers, including the internal senior staff members, is involved with teaching, assessment and other related work, the quality of candidates enrolled to this program is high, i.e. those include the Senior Judges and law related personal. In addition, the Faculty offers an Advanced Diploma in Human Rights to which graduates are enrolled. A well structured curricular is in place with a commendable teaching learning environment. We have observed that there is very high demand for these courses and the candidates are carefully selected through proper interview procedures.

Further, research has been considered as an integral part of academic life in the KDU and allocates sufficient funds and other facilities to make sure to develop a research culture within the University. KDU appoints Deputy Vice-Chancellors to look after its research activities. Academic staff is motivated to do research and publish and is provided with necessary infrastructure and funds to carry out research dissemination both locally and internationally. Academic staff is highly enthusiastic about those facilities and opportunities provided to them to develop their career.

Strengths/ Good Practices

- Having a Deputy Vice-Chancellor in Research.
- Well designed postgraduate programs are in use.
- Established links with respective universities/institutions to offer its PG programs.
- Postgraduate by-Laws, Handbook etc. developed/available for every candidate.
- Junior lecturers are allowed to teach in the Advanced Diploma program.
- Obtain the service of a qualified teaching panel (both internal / external).
- Academic staff is provided with facilities to carry out their research work.

Weaknesses

- Recruit few senior academics to the Department (permanent / contract basis) to enhance its already existing and emerging research culture to its maximum potential level within the shortest possible time.

Recommendations

- Maintain the high academic and professional quality of postgraduate programs what it maintains at now without compromise it for “money”.
- Have a side-by-side professional soft skills development program for postgraduate courses also.

Based on the observations made during the visit by the Review Team and discussed above, the nine aspects were judged as follows:

Aspects Reviewed	Judgment Given
1. Curriculum design, content and review	Excellent
2. Teaching and learning	Good
3. Assessment methods	Good
4. Quality of students, including student progress and achievement	Excellent
5. Generic skills development	Excellent
6. Academic guidance and counseling	Excellent
7. The extent of student feedback	Excellent
8. Peer observation	Good
9. Postgraduate studies	Excellent

Considering the judgments given for the nine different aspects, the reviewers are able to give an overall judgment of: **“EXCELLENT”** for the **Bachelor of Law degree program** offered by the **Department of Law** of the **Faculty of Law** of the **General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University**.