Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

Policy No: Policy / SUSL / Curr Desig & Devp / 01

POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PROGRAMME APPROVAL AND MONITORING

SECTION 1: PRILIMINARY

1. **Name of the Policy:** Programme approval and monitoring Policy of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka.

2. **Purpose:** This Policy aimed at ensuring that all academic programs offered by the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka are well conceived and designed, are subject to rigorous scrutiny and approval before they are actually offered to students, are regularly monitored and reviewed by teaching staff and are responsive to student feedback.

3. **Overview:**

The academic programmes offered by the SUSL should reflect the commitment of SUSL in maintaining the highest academic standards to ensure quality. To support this, the University, must be able to approve proposals for new degree programs based on sound and rational principles defined in the policy as well as a Standard Operating Procedure. This policy facilitates the development and approval of proposals for new degree programmes and major revisions to the existing curricula while taking into account the University's strategic plans for academic development, the quality control measures adopted by the University and external regulatory authorities such as QAC of UGC.

4. **Definitions and Abbreviations**

Award: An academic qualification such as degree, diploma or certificate conferred in recognition of the successful completion of a higher education programme of study, either at undergraduate or postgraduate level, and issued by a recognized awarding body.

Course: A complete set of modules with an approved curriculum and assessment lasting one or more academic years

Curricula: All the courses given in a particular course of study

Major changes: Changes to any of the following are considered major changes. Name of the programme; overall content of the programme; overall approach to the assessment of the programme; structure of the programme; mode, place and period of study

Minor changes: Any other changes that are under major changes are minor changes

Academic Programme: A set of modules, courses or course options that lead to an academic award

Module / Unit: A building block of a course. Modules are independent units of teaching, learning and assessment on particular topics with defined academic credit values, learning outcomes, modes of delivery and assessment schemes. Students are required to pass a defined number of module credits in order to progress and to attain an award.

IQAU: Internal Quality Assurance Unit

SLQF: Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework

UGC: University Grants Commission

QAC: Quality Assurance Council

5. **Policy statement**: Sabaragamuwa University adopts a policy on Programme approval and monitoring, to ensure that all degree programs offered by the University are well conceived and designed, are subject to rigorous scrutiny and approval and, are regularly monitored following the code of practices mentioned under section 2 of this document.

6. **Supporting Documents :** Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF), Study Guides, Faculty handbooks, Subject benchmark statements

7. **Policy Binding :** University, staff, students and affiliates

SECTION 2: CODE OF PRACTICE FOR PROGRAMME APPROVAL AND MONITORING

A. **Curriculum Design and programme Development:**

1. Consideration should be given for following criteria when Design of curricula and programmes:

   1.1. **Programme Intent**: Programme should be consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of the Sabaragamuwa University while meeting the needs of all stakeholders, national, regional and global requirements, and to reflect latest developments and practices in the field of study.

   1.2. **Aligning with Academic standard**: Curriculum and Programme design should have clear aims and objectives and should meet with the academic standards set for the programme, while facilitating student progression.

   1.3. **Alignment with SLQF and subject benchmarking**: Programme should comply with the SLQF with respect to the title of the award, volume of learning, level descriptors and qualification descriptors, and is also guided by other external reference points such as Subject Benchmark Statements and requirements of relevant professional bodies.

1.4. Alignment with Graduate profile: The programme ILOs should be developed in alignment with graduate profile.

1.5. Balance of courses: Consideration should be given to organize courses/modules which incorporate required sequential core and optional elements and maintains an appropriate balance of theoretical, practical, and experiential knowledge aiming to impart competencies at the appropriate level of study as per SLQF.

1.6. Progression: Consideration should be given to the way in which the curriculum promotes an organized progression through a programme so that the demands on the learner in respect of intellectual challenge, skills, knowledge, conceptualization and learning autonomy increase over time. Thus Courses/ modules of the programme should be structured in a manner to progressively increase the challenges on students intellectually in terms of skills, knowledge, conceptualization and autonomy of learning, to promote progression of students from one level to the other.

1.7. Inclusion of necessary skill development components: Curriculum of the programme encourages creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning, interpersonal and communication skills; appropriate strategies such as experiential and reflective learning, collaborative learning, and self-learning are incorporated into the curriculum of the programme and courses/modules.

1.8. Outcome based education (OBE) and student centered Learning: Outcome based education and student centered Learning approach should be practiced where teaching learning activities and assessment strategies are concerned.

1.9. Recognition of diversity among students: Where relevant, curriculum should recognizes diversity among students and addresses issues of gender, cultural and social diversity, equity, social justice and ethical values.

2. Process of Programme Design and Development:

2.1. The Faculties should adopt a participatory approach inclusive of academic staff, nonacademic/ technical staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders (e.g., industry and professional bodies) at key stages of the design and approval of programme and courses. Stakeholder Need Analysis should also be conducted prior to programme design.

2.2. The curriculum committees of the faculties are responsible for the planning, design, organization, and improvement of the programme/ curriculum is in place.

3. Programme validation and recommendations for approval

3.1. Programmes should be subject to explicit and systematic scrutiny before they are approved by the Senate. Such scrutiny is often aimed at validating programme's aims, curriculum and arrangements for teaching and assessment with reference to clear criteria and subject benchmarks.

3.2. Programme validation and recommendations for approval should be undertaken by an authoritative and expert panel, drawing on appropriate expertise within and outside the university. Programme approval panel should include external peer from outside the institution, selected to provide an independent view of the proposed programme, and informed by academic and (where appropriate) professional standards as recognized nationally in Sri Lanka and as appropriate Internationally.

3.3. Guidelines for validation approval of new programmes:

- Evaluation of Intended Learning outcomes
- Curriculum Design and Achievement of Intended Learning outcomes
- Communication of intended learning outcomes to students and external assessors
- Evaluation of the assessment process and the standard it demonstrates
- Reviewing and improving standards achieved by students
- Quality of teaching provided and student learning opportunities
- Student progression and academic support
- Learning resources and their development

4. Approval:

The programme needs duly approved by Faculty/Senate/ Council / IQAC/QAC/UGC.

5. Promulgation:

Programme specifications should be published with course specifications which include the ILOs in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and mindset; teaching learning methods that enable the outcomes to be achieved; assessment methods that enable the outcomes to be demonstrated; teaching learning resources; and compatibility of the programme with the SLQF, Subject benchmarks and to any other relevant professional accreditation requirements.

The programme information prospectus should be made available and accessible in print and/or electronic forms. It needs including the entry requirements (including lateral entry if applicable), programme specification along with course specifications, credit hours, course contents, and recommended and supplementary readings, exit points, fallback options.

B. Programme monitoring and review:

Academic programmes should be regularly monitored, evaluated and reviewed, to ensure that the programme remains current and valid in the light of emerging knowledge in the discipline, effective in delivery and assessment; information is used for continuous quality improvement.

Annual Monitoring:

All programs should be monitored at least once a year to check that programme, aims, Management of programme delivery, intended student learning and progression, and assessment outcomes match planned observations. Regular monitoring of programmes should aim to gather information about the programme in operation, as experienced by students and staff. It should address matters as

- Programme organization and administration
- Delivery of teaching and its evaluation by peers
- Support for student learning
- Availability of facilities and resources
- Assessment and examining processes
- External examiners comments on the programme and conduct of assessments
- Student feedback obtained during and at the end of monitoring period, including student evaluation of teaching
- Any staff development issues arising

The Faculties should annually collects and records information about students' destination after graduation (tracer studies) and uses this data for continuous improvement of the programme.

Programme monitoring reports should always lead to agree action plans to remedy any deficiencies identified and promote improvement.

Curriculum revision at periodic intervals:

In addition to annual monitoring, programmes should be reviewed in greater depths, periodic intervals, normally not exceeding five years. Periodic programme reviews encourage programme teams to stand back and reflect on programme objectives, on the scope and depth of student learning and "market/ employment requirements.

1. The Faculty adopts a participatory approach inclusive of academic staff, nonacademic/ technical staff, students, alumni and external stakeholders (e.g., industry and professional bodies) curriculum revision process.

2. Curriculum committees are responsible for the planning, design, organization, and improvement of the programme/ curriculum is in place. The curriculum committee should be appointed by the Faculty Board. Generally the committee consists panel drawn from staff representing the department/Faculty offering the programme, staff outside the department/faculty and

independent peers from outside the university, drawing in representatives of professional and other external bodies with an interest in the standards and quality of graduates. Such reviews aim to:

- Stand back from the immediacy of programme delivery and management
- Consider whether the curriculum and teaching and learning styles remain valid and appropriate in the light of developing knowledge in the discipline
- Consider changes affecting student entry patterns and demand including the specified entry requirements to the programm
- Consider student feedback from students at different points on programme.

Termination of a programme/ specialization/ module

(a) Programme/ specialization/ module will be terminated with the approval of the relevant Faculty Board, Senate and the Council. (b) Examinations for such terminated programs should be conducted for a period of at least three (3) years for the benefit of the repeaters.

The Curriculum revisions needs duly approved by Faculty/Senate/Council depending of the nature of the review.

*****This policy has been approved at 236ᵗʰ Senate and 257ᵗʰ Council**