

Chapter 6 – Data Collection and Returns

Introduction

6.1 The UGC requires information about the activities of the UGC-funded institutions for a variety of purposes, including assessment of recurrent and capital funding requirements, monitoring progress, advising on academic developments generally, monitoring of recurrent and capital expenditure, monitoring progress and expenditure on RGC-funded research projects, reporting to the Government, the Legislature and the public, *etc.* Much of this information is statistical in nature and the UGC has accordingly developed a Common Data Collection Format (CDCF), which is designed to collect statistical data from the UGC-funded institutions in a common, computer-processable form for all UGC and RGC purposes. The data so collected also enables many ad hoc questions to be answered without further enquiry with the institutions.

6.2 In addition to the provision of statistical data to the UGC via the CDCF, the institutions are also required to submit certain periodic financial returns in respect mainly of their publicly funded activities. All institutions are also legally obliged to produce and publish audited annual accounts.

6.3 As far as possible, the UGC does not call for additional information from the institutions unless such information is required for a specific purpose.

Common Data Collection Format

6.4 In order to streamline the CDCF data collection and processing, and reduce the administrative burden on institutions, a CDCF Datamart computer software has been developed. Under the CDCF datamart, institutions submit computer-processable forms to the Secretariat via a web-based interface and the data are then validated and processed by the system automatically.

6.5 The CDCF consists of the following 5 series of tables:

- (a) General tables
- (b) Staff tables
- (c) Student tables
- (d) Finance tables
- (e) Research tables

The coverage, definitions and classifications of the data in different series of tables are reviewed on an annual basis so as to provide the data needed for the development of the

UGC sector. Consequential to each annual review, the list of tables for each series together with the schedule for submission, the information required for each table and the definitions and classifications will be updated and provided to the institutions for data collection.