

Framework for 2014 RAE

Item	Feature	Description	Changes as compared with the September 2011 Consultation Document
(A)	Primary Purpose	To assess the quality of research of UGC-funded institutions on a sharpened basis by cost centre to drive excellence, using outputs, inputs and esteem measures as key factors for allocating the research portion of the institutional recurrent grant in a publicly accountable way. Essentially, cost centres of similar disciplines will be compared (e.g. History with History, but not History with Chemistry.) Results will be communicated on a cost centre basis without disclosing the identity of individual academic staff.	Other than outputs and inputs, esteem measures are also assessed.
(B)	No. of institutions covered	8	
(C)	No. of cost centres covered	Estimated that around 55 of the 64 cost centres will have eligible staff	Institutions may propose changes in response to the Secretariat's consultation on the Common Data Collection Format (to be launched around May 2012).
(D)	Staff eligible to make submission	Same as 2006 RAE, except that only full time staff are included, and the requirement for 24 months of continuous appointment be extended to 36 months. Staff have to be in post for at least 12 months before the census date of 30 September 2013.	

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(E)	No. of staff submitting outputs for assessment	Maintain the 2006 RAE practice that each institution may decide which eligible staff to submit research outputs for assessment.	In view of comments from institutions, UGC considers it appropriate to revert to the 2006 RAE practice in that all eligible staff are expected (though not a mandatory requirement) to submit research outputs for assessment.
(F)	No. of assessment Panels	Around 13	
(G)	No. of Panel members	A majority of Panel members will be non-local, with an appropriate increase of the number of total Panel members to deal with the volume of submissions in a cost-effective manner.	
(H)	Categorization of the quality of research outputs	<p>Taking reference from the UK 2008 RAE, to rate individual outputs instead of following the Hong Kong 2006 RAE practice of rating individual researchers, and to sharpen measurement by categorizing research outputs as follows:</p> <p>(a) 4 star: world leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour;</p> <p>(b) 3 star: internationally excellent;</p> <p>(c) 2 star: international standing; and</p> <p>(d) 1 star: regional standing.</p> <p>Outputs that do not fall within the above categories will be deemed unclassified.</p>	Minor amendments in respect of (c) & (d) for clarity. Also, “4 star”, “3 star” etc have been added for construction of an overall quality profile together with inputs and esteem measures.

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(I)	External reviews by non-Panel members	Expert advice from external reviewers may be sought as necessary.	
(J)	Assessment method	<p>The Panels are to be instructed not to adopt a mechanical approach to the assessment. Output items are judged on their own merits rather than simply on their category or medium of publication.</p> <p>Metrics may be used to inform the peer review process only if the relevant Panel so decides and notifies institutions in advance.</p>	In light of comments from institutions, UGC considers it appropriate for individual Panels to decide whether metrics are to be used (as against the previous proposal of using them for publications in science and social science journals).
(K)	No. of outputs submitted	4 per eligible researcher. Allow one out of the 4 items in the gap years (between 6 to 7.75 years).	The flexibility for each academic to submit one output item in the gap years has been introduced in light of comments from institutions.
(L)	Period of assessment for outputs	The assessment period is 6 years.	
(M)	Definition of research and four categories of scholarship	Continue to adopt the Carnegie Foundation's four categories of scholarship to give a broad definition to research to guard against bias against applied and interdisciplinary research.	
(N)	Submission format	Electronic format: full version of outputs (either the published version or final accepted version after peer-review) to be placed in an electronic repository of each institution, with flexibility on items that cannot be accessed through electronic repositories.	Flexibility to submit print copies has been added in light of discussion with institutions.

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(O)	Dimension of assessment	<p>The dimension is broadened in that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 80% of the weighting is based on the quality of outputs (past practice as modified by (H) above); and (b) 20% of the weighting correlates with other assessments on a cost-centre basis (also over a six-year period): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the number and magnitude of competitive peer-reviewed external research grants received; and (ii) “esteem” measures (e.g. awards and editorship in prestigious academic publications). <p>Institutions are required to provide contextual/background information on a cost centre, or on the discipline relevant to the cost centre, although this will not be assessed.</p>	<p>Distribution of weighting is specified pursuant to comments from and further consultation with institutions. The assessment period for grants and esteem measures has been lengthened from 3 years to 6 years to tie in with that for outputs. Lastly, research strategy is not assessed in light of comments from institutions.</p>												
(P)	Grading scale on a cost centre basis	<p>In respect of (O)(b) above, each cost centre of an institution will be categorized as follows. This will measure one cost centre in an institution as compared with other cost centres in the same Panel.</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Grade</u></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><u>Description</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4 star</td> <td>: Exceptional</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 star</td> <td>: Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 star</td> <td>: Very Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 star</td> <td>: Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>: Unclassified</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>	4 star	: Exceptional	3 star	: Excellent	2 star	: Very Good	1 star	: Good		: Unclassified	<p>The grades have been revised to align with (H) above.</p>
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>														
4 star	: Exceptional														
3 star	: Excellent														
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	: Unclassified														

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(Q)	Role of non-local Panel members	<p>Enhance their significance as compared with 2006 RAE by making them a majority (see (G) above), and ensuring that they play a dominant role both in setting the ground rules; in assessing research performance of cost centres ((O)(b) refers); and in making final judgement in doubtful cases in assessing the quality of outputs ((O)(a) refers).</p> <p>Both Convenors and Deputy Convenors of Panels will be non-local.</p>	<p>UGC considers that both Convenors and Deputy Convenors should be non-local. Efforts will be made to ensure that either the Convenor or the Deputy Convenor has a good knowledge of Hong Kong for disciplines requiring such knowledge.</p>
(R)	RAE results to inform funding decision	<p>UGC to decide on the detailed funding weighting after the 2014 RAE has been completed. The method used will be made public after the funding results have been accepted by the Government.</p>	