(***updated September 2026***)

Operation Guide for the RGC Research Fellow Scheme (RFS) and RGC Senior Research Fellow Scheme (SRFS)

This Operation Guide sets out the implementation principles and detailed guidelines of the Research Grants Council (RGC) Research Fellow Scheme (RFS) and RGC Senior Research Fellow Scheme (SRFS).

Objectives

2. The RFS and SRFS aim at providing sustained research support integrated with relief from teaching and administrative duties for outstanding mid-career and senior academics respectively at University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded Universities in Hong Kong. The Fellowships aim to facilitate academics to dedicate their career to research and development (R&D) over a period of 60 months. One important focus of both Fellowship schemes is to afford the awardee with the time and resources to nurture and train the next generation of postgraduate, doctoral and postdoctoral researchers for Hong Kong, delivered through a programme of internationally leading research.

3. In each round of the annual exercise, sustained support (normally) will be provided to ten RFS awardees at Associate Professor rank/level and ten SRFS awardees at full Professor rank/level for a period of 60 months at UGC-funded Universities. The Fellowship grant may be used for relief from teaching and administrative duties, as well as for research funding support covering salary costs for relief teachers and support for the research project including resources for staff, equipment, travel, subsistence and dissemination costs.

Coverage and Eligibility

4. Both RFS and SRFS will provide awards encompassing all academic disciplines grouped into two broad academic streams as follows –

(i) Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies (H disciplines); and

(ii) Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Technology (S disciplines)

Supporting University

5. All eight UGC-funded Universities are eligible to nominate up to six candidates (at Associate Professor rank) for RFS and six candidates (at full Professor rank) for SRFS, in each exercise. Each nomination should include the research proposal of the project to be undertaken by the nominated candidate during the Fellowship period.

RGC Research Fellow Candidate

6. To qualify for the Fellowship, the RFS candidate must –

(a) have a legal right to work and reside in Hong Kong during the Fellowship period;

(b) have a full-time [1] academic appointment at a UGC-funded University proper [2] at the time of nomination and during the Fellowship period;

(c) have been serving the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2] on a full-time[1] basis for not less than three years continuously, at the time of nomination;

(d) be appointed at the rank of Associate Professor on tenure/substantiation terms at the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2] at the time of nomination;

(e) be primarily engaged in and spending at least 80%[3] of time in degree or higher degree work at the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2]; and

(f) have his/her salary wholly funded by the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2].

7. By the end of the year of nomination, the candidates should either not have reached the age of 55, or they should have a minimum of 5-year tenure period remaining, prior to the supporting UGC-funded University's official retirement age[4]. Accordingly, the remaining years of service at the supporting

[1] not including visiting or honorary appointment

[2] excluding schools/arms of continuing education and professional training and other analogous outfits

[3] The percentage concerned may be subject to review and revision as and when required.

[4] The official retirement age should generally apply to all Faculty Members. In all cases where the nominee has been offered by the University, at the time of nomination, an extension of retirement/appointment beyond the official retirement age, this latter retirement date should apply. If, at the time of nomination, such an extension of retirement/appointment beyond the official retirement age is required and has been offered (in order to complete the full Fellowship, if granted), then documentary evidence (which would preferably be a letter confirming a conditional offer of employment extension) should be issued at the Vice-President level or above, on behalf of the University, and should accompany the nomination. If the nominee is subsequently selected for the Fellowship award, upon receiving the selection result, the Supporting University must submit evidence, in the form of a secured appointment letter for the awardee, covering the extension of employment for the full Fellowship award period, prior to any confirmation of acceptance of the award.

UGC-funded University should be sufficient for the awardee to complete the full course of the 60-month Fellowship, prior to retirement.

8. Subject to exceptional consideration on a case-by-case basis, the requirements above (detailed in paragraphs 6 and 7) may be relaxed for Hong Kong talent working overseas so that they are incentivised to return to Hong Kong and take up the Fellowship. In this connection, an RFS overseas candidate nominated by a UGC-funded University would be eligible for consideration if he/she:

(a) is a Hong Kong permanent resident with the right of abode in Hong Kong as defined under the Immigration Ordinance[5];

(b) is a researcher at a University/Institute outside Hong Kong at the time of nomination with academic/research profile equivalent to Associate Professor; and

(c) has warranted support by a UGC-funded University proper[2] at which he/she will hold the Fellowship, with a tenured/substantiated full-time[1] appointment [6] at the rank of Associate Professor commencing within the following year after the close of nomination.

RGC Senior Research Fellow Candidate

9. To qualify for the Fellowship, the SRFS candidate must –

(a) have a legal right to work and reside in Hong Kong during the Fellowship period;

(b) have a full-time[1] academic appointment at a UGC-funded University proper[2] at the time of nomination and during the Fellowship period;

(c) have been serving the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2] on a full-time[1] basis for not less than three years continuously at the time of nomination;

(d) be appointed at the rank of full Professor on tenure/substantiation terms at the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2] at the time of nomination;

(e) be primarily engaged in and spending at least 80%[3] of time in degree or higher degree work at the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2]; and

[5] For definition of Hong Kong permanent residents under the Immigration Ordinance, please refer to https://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/roa/eligible.html.

[6] The full-time appointment concerned shall be primarily engaged in and spending at least 80%[3] of time in degree or higher degree work at the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2], with salary wholly funded by the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2].

(f) have his/her salary wholly funded by the supporting UGC-funded University proper[2].

10. By the end of the year of nomination, the candidates should either not have reached the age of 55, or they should have a minimum of 5-year tenure period remaining, prior to the supporting UGC-funded University's official retirement age[4]. Accordingly, the remaining years of service at the supporting UGC-funded University should be sufficient for the awardee to complete the full course of the 60-month Fellowship, prior to retirement.

11. Subject to exceptional consideration on a case-by-case basis, the requirements above (detailed in Paragraphs 9 and 10) may be relaxed for Hong Kong talent working overseas so that they are incentivised to return to Hong Kong and take up the Fellowship. In this connection, an SRFS overseas candidate nominated by a UGC-funded University would be eligible for consideration if he/she:

(a) is a Hong Kong permanent resident with the right of abode in Hong Kong as defined under the Immigration Ordinance[5];

(b) is a researcher at a University/Institute outside Hong Kong at the time of nomination with academic/research profile equivalent to full Professor; and

(c) has warranted support by a UGC-funded University proper[2] at which he/she will hold the Fellowship, with a tenured/substantiated full-time[1] appointment[6] at the rank of full Professor commencing within the following year after the close of nomination.

12. An awardee can only benefit from either RFS or SRFS at any one time. Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme (HSSPFS) award holders may be nominated for RFS/SRFS, provided that the awardees concerned will <u>not</u> be holding the two types of Fellowship concurrently (i.e. HSSPFS holders can sequentially be awarded RFS/SRFS).

Fellowship Award

13. Each RFS awardee will be conferred the title "RGC Research Fellow (研資局研究學者)", and the Supporting University will receive a Fellowship grant equivalent to 60-month aggregate total of basic salary at mid-point of Staff

Grade "G", over a period of 60 months[7], where a uniform rate[8] is applied for both non-clinical and clinical academics. The amount of the Fellowship grant may be reviewed in future exercises with reference to the adjustment of basic salary of academic staff at Staff Grade "G".

14. Each SRFS awardee will be conferred the title "RGC Senior Research Fellow (研資局高級研究學者)", and the Supporting University will receive a Fellowship grant equivalent to 60-month aggregate total of basic salary at mid-point of Staff Grade "B", over a period of 60 months, where a uniform rate[8] is applied for both non-clinical and clinical academics. The amount of the Fellowship grant may be reviewed in future exercises with reference to the adjustment of basic salary of academic staff at Staff Grade "B".

15. As stated, the Fellowship grant can be used to cover salary costs for relief teachers, and support for the research project including resources for staff, equipment, travel, subsistence and dissemination costs, etc. Candidates should however note that the award does not cover "on-costs"[9]. For both RFS and SRFS, awardees shall be allowed to be relieved from teaching and administration duties (not including supervision of research postgraduate students) to conduct research during the 60-month Fellowship period, with the actual duration of relief subject to mutual agreement between the awardee and the Supporting University.

16. In this context it should be noted that UGC and RGC place great importance on the nurturing of young researchers and educating University students, and this should *not be compromised in any way* by taking-up an award. Salaries for relief teachers, who are taking up purely teaching duties, should not exceed the salary of Staff Grade "G" of the Supporting University concerned.

17. There should not be duplicated funding (expenditure) on *the same research work* undertaken for the RFS/SRFS research proposal/project and for research proposals/projects or funded awards under another RGC research funding scheme. However, awardees are allowed to hold concurrent grant(s) awarded by the UGC/RGC or other funding agencies during the Fellowship period. If an awardee, as declared on the nomination form, has secured or will secure other funds for research work *that are related* to the RFS/SRFS research

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[7] In case an RFS awardee is promoted to full Professor rank during the Fellowship period, there will be no change in the amount of grant disbursed to him/her, since the Fellowship is awarded in accordance with his/her profile (and academic rank) at the time of nomination. RFS awardees who are promoted to full Professor rank are welcome to be nominated for SRFS upon completion of RFS Fellowship.

[8] Please refer to the *Guidance Notes (RFS-SRFS-2)* for the amount of Fellowship grant to be received by the Supporting University for each RFS/SRFS awardee.

[9] Supporting Universities are required to make their own provision for "on-costs".

proposal/project, then the other funds should only be spent to complement or supplement the research work related to the RFS/SRFS research proposal/project.

18. In cases the awardees are successful in securing teaching relief for an activity of different scope under another RGC research funding scheme (e.g. General Research Fund (GRF)) during the same funding cycle, they can begin the teaching relief under RFS/SRFS after the expiration of teaching relief under the other RGC research funding scheme.

19. Awardees will be allowed to hold other Fellowship(s) concurrently (not applicable to HSSPFS) during the RFS/SRFS Fellowship period only if prior approval of the UGC Secretariat, on a case-by-case basis, has been obtained (see Paragraph 20 below). Specifically, there must not be any overlapping of teaching relief under any approved concurrent Fellowship(s) within the RFS/SRFS Fellowship period. If the awardee is in receipt of funding under approved concurrent Fellowship(s), and it is supporting a different research project or on a project that can be said to complement or supplement the research work related to the RFS/SRFS research proposal/project, this should be declared/clarified in writing to the UGC Secretariat (see Paragraph 20 below).

20. An awardee may submit request for prior approval to hold a concurrent Fellowship during the RFS/SRFS Fellowship period only if:

(a) the other Fellowship(s) is/are only honorary in nature, and awardees are retaining only the title of the other Fellowship(s) but not receiving financial consideration of the other Fellowship(s) during the RFS/SRFS Fellowship period; **or**

(b) the funding under the other Fellowship(s) is supporting a different research project or is spent on a project that can complement or supplement the research work related to the RFS/SRFS research proposal/project, and there must be no overlapping of teaching relief under the other Fellowship(s).

Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Selection Panel Chair concerned. Any request should reach the UGC Secretariat at least four weeks in advance of the commencement date of the other Fellowship(s). Cases seeking retrospective approval will not be considered.

21. Awardees accepting the RFS/SRFS Fellowship shall not compete again in future exercises. Universities may, however, make repeated nominations for non-selected candidates.

Nomination Process

22. For each round of selection exercise, a call letter will be issued to Heads of Universities by September of the current year of the call, for nominations to reach the UGC Secretariat by the end of November of the same year. RFS/SRFS nominations should be made by Supporting Universities through their Research Office via the electronic system, and RFS/SRFS candidates should include their research proposal detailing the research project with proposed budget to be undertaken within the Fellowship period. Further details and guidance notes of the nomination process are provided on the RGC website at https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/funding_opport/rrfs/. Candidates submitting application direct to the UGC Secretariat will not be considered.

23. Normally it is expected that the scope of a proposal submitted under the RFS/SRFS should be more ambitious than a similar proposal submitted under GRF, with an expectation of pursuing research at a higher level and progressing/developing the subject on a broader, internationally-leading stage. Candidates are reminded that the research project must have sufficient depth and breadth to justify a full period of five years of Fellowship. RFS candidates are expected to possess adequate tenure experience at the rank of Associate Professor and show sufficient depth of excellence.

24. Re-submission of aspects of a proposal not supported by UGC/RGC/other research funding agency, as part of the Fellowship programme, is allowed. The RFS and SRFS schemes are not only intended to solely develop a new research project, and a proposal that builds on an existing research initiative, that is already defined and developed, and takes it in distinctly new directions or markedly expands its reach and scope, may also be considered, although the candidate should ensure that there is clearly defined and demonstrable novelty in integrating these activities.

Selection Panel and Criteria

25. For assessment of nominations and selection of awardees, two Selection Panels are formed, i.e. Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies Selection Panel (H-Panel) and Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Technology Selection Panel (S-Panel). The two Panels, each comprising a Panel Chair and Panel Members who are academic experts, will evaluate the merit of the candidates in the two broad academic streams (disciplines) separately. Non-local expert Panel Members will be invited to ensure impartiality and minimise

conflicts of interest during the selection process. RFS and SRFS will be assessed concurrently in each Selection Panel.

26. Increasingly, challenge-led research crosses disciplines, bringing together different subjects (e.g. medicine and engineering or climate science and economics). Nominees who feel that their work crosses the expertise and remits of the S and H Panels may, prior to submission of nomination, consult the UGC Secretariat via the Supporting University on which Panel is most appropriate to identify with, on the administrative forms. For such interdisciplinary projects, experts from the other Panel might be involved should the Panel Chair recommend this.

27. The H-Panel is formed by non-local Members preferably from each of the relevant RGC subject Panels/Sub-Panels, i.e. from the Business Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines. The composition for the H-Panel is as follows:

(a) Chairman
preferably a non-local RGC Member from the H disciplines

(b) Members
non-local representatives preferably from respective RGC subject Panels (or Sub-Panels)

- Business Studies
- Humanities and Social Sciences (comprising four Sub-Panels):
  (i) Psychology and Linguistics
  (ii) Social and Behavioural Sciences
  (iii) Humanities and Arts
  (iv) Education

28. The S-Panel is formed by non-local Members preferably from each of the relevant RGC subject Panels/Sub-Panels, i.e. from the Biology, Medicine, Engineering and Physical Sciences disciplines. The composition for the S-Panel is as follows:

(a) Chairman
preferably a non-local RGC Member from the S disciplines

(b) Members
non-local representatives preferably from respective RGC subject Panels (or Sub-Panels)

- Biology and Medicine
- Engineering (comprising two Sub-Panels):
  - (i) Computing Science/Information Technology and Electrical/Electronic Engineering
  - (ii) Civil Engineering/Surveying/Building & Construction and Mechanical/Production/Industrial Engineering
- Physical Sciences

29. Selection is based on:

(a) the candidate's qualifications and research capability;

(b) the candidate's proven research track record to date;

(c) the candidate's leadership quality and vision in the chosen area of research (including his/her track record and future plans in supporting the training and progression of early career researchers (see Paragraph 30 below));

(d) the merit of the research proposal, including methodology, scope, theoretical framework, etc.;

(e) the feasibility of the proposed research project including planning, management and resources;

(f) the contribution and potential impact of the proposed research project, including knowledge transfer and research impact; and

(g) the nature of any University support offered.

30. In the course of assessing a candidate's leadership quality and vision, particular regard will be given to a candidate's mentoring success and past experience in developing Research Postgraduate (RPg) students and junior researchers (including Postdoctoral Fellows, if any), as well as the candidate's clear engagement plan to train and nurture the next generation of research talent/early career researchers via the proposed research project under the Fellowship. As senior academics should have more experience in nurturing and mentoring early career researchers, the weighting accorded in the assessment metrics on leadership will be more for SRFS candidates than that for RFS candidates.

31. In order to build up a pool of local research talent to sustain Hong Kong's international competitiveness and drive the development of our higher education sector, the schemes are primarily directed at local researchers who can

benefit from the RFS and SRFS Fellowship awards. Whilst RFS candidates might be expected to demonstrate exceptional promise and potential to be international leaders, SRFS candidates should already have demonstrated metrics and characteristics consistent with being internationally leading researchers.

32. The two schemes are highly competitive in nature, and a quota of half of the awardees is reserved for each scheme, for the most promising local candidates in each exercise (i.e. five RFS awardees at Associate Professor rank/level and five SRFS awardees at full Professor rank/level) who are, at the time of nomination, Hong Kong permanent residents with the right of abode in Hong Kong, as defined under the Immigration Ordinance[5]. Under the principle of merit-based selection, should the quota for local candidates of either scheme not be fully utilised in a particular exercise, after exhausting every effort in selecting local candidates, consideration will be given to release the quota for suitable non-local candidates. This arrangement will be subject to review as and when required.

Assessment Process by the RGC

33. The UGC Secretariat will undertake initial vetting of the nominations received and seek clarifications from Universities as necessary. Vetted nominations will then be forwarded to the relevant Panel Chair who will, for each nomination/proposal, assign the first reader and second reader among the Panel Members, taking into account their expertise. The first reader will subsequently be invited to nominate several external reviewers to conduct the preliminary assessment of nominations. For each nomination/proposal, at least three external reviewers shall provide a preliminary assessment, independently of each other. Having received the reviews from external reviewers, the first and second readers on the Panel will be required to give independent assessments of the nominations/proposals.

34. The UGC Secretariat will then consolidate all the assessments received from external reviewers and (the first and second) readers. The Panel Chair will shortlist nominees as finalists to be interviewed by the Selection Panel concerned for further consideration for awarding the RFS/SRFS Fellowship. The Secretariat will invite shortlisted finalists to attend interview accordingly in late May/early June.

35. In-person interviews will be arranged, and nominees should take note of the interview schedule as remote arrangements for interviews normally will not

be considered. Panel discussion after the interview, if applicable, will be moderated by the Panel Chair at the Selection Panel meeting. During the assessment period (i.e. after nominations close and before the announcement of results), any request for transferring a nomination from the Supporting University to another UGC-funded University will not be considered. Announcement of results will be made to the Universities following the approval by the RGC.

Time Table/Processing Cycle of RFS and SRFS (for reference only)

Timeline	**Milestone**
September (*Year n*)	• Call for nominations
October (*Year n*) to February (*Year n+1*)	• Formation of H and S Selection Panels
end-November (*Year n*)	• Close of nominations from Universities
February (*Year n+1*)	• Assignment of nominations to the first and second readers (who are Panel Members) by Panel Chair • The first reader to nominate external reviewers
March – April (*Year n+1*)	• Preliminary assessment of nominations by at least three external reviewers
April – May (*Year n+1*)	• Assessment of nominations by the first and second readers • The Panel Chair to shortlist nominees as finalists for interview and further consideration
late May – early June (*Year n+1*)	• In-person interview of shortlisted finalists by the Selection Panel
June (*Year n+1*)	• Final discussion of shortlisted nominations, if applicable, at Selection Panel meetings • Consideration and approval of selection results by the RGC
July (*Year n+1*)	• Announcement and notification of RFS and SRFS results
1 January (*Year n+2*)	• RFS and SRFS awardees to start their research projects (and teaching relief/research leave if applicable)

Notification and Undertaking

36. Receiving the result notification via the Supporting University, the RFS/SRFS awardee will be required to sign an undertaking to confirm acceptance of the Fellowship, and then undertake and start the 60-month Fellowship period at the Supporting University. The Supporting University will sign a fund undertaking and agree to abide by all the relevant UGC/RGC guidelines, applicable laws, health and safety guidelines and ethical standards, including but not limited to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, for managing the Fellowship.

37. Further, to support the primary objective of RFS/SRFS (i.e. for RFS/SRFS awardees to dedicate a period predominately to research and development, as well as to nurture early career research talent), relevant Universities are required to undertake that the amount of time to be spent by the awardee on the RFS/SRFS research will not be less than that specified in the nomination form or as agreed by the RGC[10].

Disbursement Arrangements

38. By accepting the Fellowship, the Fellowship grant will be allocated to the Supporting University concerned to a designated bank account by two instalments, with issuance of the first instalment within the year of award and the second instalment subject to satisfactory assessment of the second annual progress report submitted by the awardee. The Supporting University concerned shall also continue the awardee's substantive academic appointment with salary, fringe benefits and other terms and conditions throughout the 60-month Fellowship period.

39. Any unspent balance of and interest income from the Fellowship grant should be returned to the UGC Secretariat in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangements for Funding Schemes Administered by the Research Grants Council (DAMA).

[10] In case the Supporting University's abiding by this understanding is in doubt and there is potential deviation from the understanding without agreement by the RGC, the Secretariat may request clarification from the Supporting University and awardee. If there is any deviation from this process/conditions, RGC reserve the right to withdraw the relevant Fellowship award.

Fellowship Early-Ending or Transfer (where applicable)

Early-Ending

40. In cases where an awardee resigns from his/her academic appointment or it is terminated by the Supporting University concerned before the end of the Fellowship period, the Fellowship shall prematurely end, as it is only designated for the related academic appointment and cannot be transferred between persons. The Supporting University concerned shall return the unspent balance of the Fellowship grant together with the Statement of Accounts to the UGC Secretariat within six months from the early-ending date of the Fellowship, in accordance with the requirements stipulated in DAMA. The awardee shall submit a concluding report through the Supporting University concerned to the UGC Secretariat not later than six months from the early-ending date of the Fellowship.

Transfer

41. If an awardee changes his/her appointment from the Supporting University concerned to another UGC-funded University, the Fellowship cannot be transferred unless prior approval of the UGC Secretariat has been obtained. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that the Supporting University has reached a mutual consensus with the Receiving University, and an undertaking has been made by the Receiving University (template in **Annex**) to confirm that it will manage the Fellowship based on the same research project and associated commitments. To facilitate the UGC Secretariat's consideration, the undertaking made by the Receiving University will preferably also mention the following:

(a) that arrangements for auxillary staff, postgraduate students and other personnel associated with the original proposal have been duly made by the Receiving and Supporting Universities;

(b) that the resourcing of changes in the teaching arrangements within the Supporting University are considered, and the employment of the relief teacher concerned, if any, will not be affected by the transfer when the awardee's support/resource moves to the Receiving University; and

(c) that the awardee will continue to meet all eligibility requirements of the RFS/SRFS.

42. To indicate a consensus/agreement has been reached, the Supporting

University should provide an agreement on the arrangements as set out in the undertaking from the Receiving University, or, alternatively, co-sign on the undertaking from the Receiving University. The Supporting University should report the change in appointment status of the awardee and submit the request for transfer to the UGC Secretariat for consideration and approval at least two months prior to the effective date of the change. Subject to approval, the Fellowship will then be allowed to transfer with the awardee to the Receiving University. However, the Fellowship cannot be transferred if an awardee changes his/her appointment from the supporting UGC-funded University to a self-financing local degree-awarding institution or a non-local institution.

Monitoring/Reporting Requirements

43. By accepting the Fellowship, an awardee shall start the research project (and teaching relief/research leave if applicable), on which the award is conferred, on 1 January of the year following notification of the award, unless the awardee advises an alternative date to commence, with prior approval by the UGC Secretariat. An awardee will be required to submit –

(a) annual progress reports – on the on-going research project through the Supporting University concerned to the UGC Secretariat for monitoring. The reporting period should end every 12 months after the start of the Fellowship. Annual progress reports should reach the UGC Secretariat within three months from the end of the reporting period. Each annual progress report will be assessed by Members of the appropriate discipline Panel (with outcomes moderated by the Panel Chair). The Supporting University should take immediate action to freeze the project account concerned if any annual progress report is overdue;

(b) a completion report – through the Supporting University to the UGC Secretariat upon completion of the 60-month Fellowship period, not later than 12 months from the end of the Fellowship.

44. In cases where the assessment of annual progress report(s) submitted by the awardee is deemed unsatisfactory, the Fellowship may be terminated before the end of the Fellowship period. The Fellowship can also be terminated when the awardee fails to submit required progress report by the due date specified by the UGC Secretariat. For these cases, the Supporting University concerned shall return the unspent balance of the Fellowship grant together with the Statement of Accounts to the UGC Secretariat within six months from the termination of Fellowship, in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the

DAMA. The awardee shall submit a concluding report through the Supporting University to the UGC Secretariat not later than six months from the termination of Fellowship.

45. For cases where the awardee will become ineligible for the Fellowship (e.g. on prolonged leave/leaving Hong Kong/incapable of managing the research project) after commencement of the Fellowship, the awardee is required to seek RGC's approval in advance for temporary waiver of eligibility requirements. The Fellowship may continue subject to grant of approval. Otherwise, the Fellowship will be terminated and the Supporting University will freeze the project account at the same time.

Others

46. In the event that any misrepresentation, fraudulent, and non-disclosure of information during the nomination stage/Fellowship period is detected, the Fellowship shall be terminated immediately and the awardee concerned is liable to refund in full the Fellowship grant paid under the RFS/SRFS.

47. The Supporting University and the awardee shall bear the responsibility to ensure that the research project is carefully monitored for its compliance with applicable laws, health and safety guidelines and ethical standards, including but not limited to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

48. This Operation Guide may be updated/revised from time to time by the RGC. In the event that changes are made, the updated Operation Guide will always supersede earlier versions.

UGC Secretariat
September 2026 (updated)

RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL

RGC Research Fellow Scheme (RFS) and RGC Senior Research Fellow Scheme (SRFS)

University's Undertaking – Transfer

[Please sign this Undertaking by Vice-President (Research)]

I refer to the awardee of the Research Grants Council (RGC) Research Fellow Scheme (RFS)/RGC Senior Research Fellow Scheme (SRFS) below, regarding his/her transfer of Fellowship from original Supporting University to another (Receiving) University.

RFS/SRFS Cohort (e.g. 2027/28):	
Name of Awardee:	
RGC Ref. No.:	
Effective Date of Transfer:	
Original Supporting University:	
Receiving University:	
RFS/SRFS Project Title:	

2. On behalf of **(name of University)**, I confirm that :

(a) the University agrees on the transfer of the Fellowship;

(b) the University accepts the Fellowship grant;

(c) the University will manage the Fellowship based on the above research project;

(d) arrangements for auxiliary staff, post-graduate students and other personnel associated with the original proposal, if any, have been duly made;

(e) proper arrangement for the employment of the relief teacher concerned has been duly made and will not be affected by the transfer when the awardee's support/resource moves to the Receiving University;

(f) the awardee will continue to meet all the eligibility requirements of the RFS/SRFS;

(g) the University undertakes to comply with –

(i) the funding terms and conditions laid down in the original result letter and its Annexes;

(ii) the Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangements for Funding Schemes Administered by the Research Grants Council (DAMA) as well as the Specific Guidelines Applicable to RFS/SRFS;

(iii) any other prevailing accounting and monitoring guidelines as issued by the Research Grants Council from time to time;

(iv) any applicable laws, health and safety guidelines and ethical standards, including but not limited to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding

National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; and

(h) the University undertakes to take appropriate measures to ensure that –

(i) the RFS and SRFS awardee(s) maintain(s) an appropriate balance between their research time for RFS and SRFS, and other duties assigned in their broader career, without compromising their primary focus on research during the Fellowship period; and

(ii) the amount of time to be spent by the RFS and SRFS awardee(s) on the RFS/SRFS research project is not less than that specified in the nomination form or as agreed by the RGC[1].

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Post: _____

University: _____

Date: _____

The above transfer request is endorsed, and the above-mentioned arrangements are agreed by:

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Post: _____

University: _____

Date: _____

[1] In case the Supporting University's abiding by this understanding is in doubt and there is potential deviation from the understanding without agreement by the RGC, the Secretariat may request clarification from the Supporting University and awardee. If there is any deviation from this process/conditions, RGC reserve the right to withdraw the relevant Fellowship award.