

## Framework for Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020

(A) Overall			
Item	Subject	Description	Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document
(1)	Primary purpose/ Objectives	<p>The RAE is part of the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s commitment to assessing the research performance of UGC-funded universities. The objectives of the RAE 2020 as approved by the UGC are to –</p> <p>(a) assess the research quality of UGC-funded universities to provide assurance of their research performance using international standards;</p> <p>(b) identify excellent research across the spectrum of submissions made by universities in order to drive excellence and encourage world-class research;</p> <p>(c) produce assessment outcomes to inform the distribution of part of the Research Portion of the UGC Block Grant in a publicly accountable manner, and provide direction to develop/enhance the research funding schemes administered by the UGC/Research Grants Council (RGC);</p> <p>(d) provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment;</p> <p>(e) provide robust benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks for use within the UGC sector and for public information; and</p> <p>(f) delineate universities' areas of relative strength and identify emerging research areas and opportunities for development.</p>	-
(2)	Principles	<p>The principles for the RAE 2020 as approved by the UGC are –</p> <p>(a) <b>International standards</b> – The RAE is a criterion-referenced exercise against quality levels as defined by international standards of research excellence. To maintain the credibility of the assessment process, international experts and members with discipline-specific expertise and knowledge of local conditions will be</p>	Textual refinement to (e) to reflect the adoption of units of assessment in place of cost centres for the RAE 2020.

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
		<p>engaged;</p> <p>(b) <b>Fairness</b> – The RAE adopts a single framework which underpins the submission and assessment process across all disciplines, with common rules and procedures, standard definitions, and broad generic criteria. The quality of each submission will be judged on its own merit and not in terms of its category, medium or language. All types of research will be treated equally;</p> <p>(c) <b>Consistency</b> – The assessment founded upon rigorous expert review will apply the same quality standards across and within panels. Panels’ professional judgement should be consistent within the overall framework of assessment, and complemented by calibration and development of panel-specific assessment criteria and working methods with respect to the differences in the nature of research across the disciplinary spectrum;</p> <p>(d) <b>Inclusiveness</b> – It is important to maintain an inclusive view on the scope of research. The RAE should include elements that appropriately measure the quality of a broad range of research in the sector, impact of research in a wider socio-economic context, and research environment taking into account the universities’ strategy, resources and infrastructure that support research;</p> <p>(e) <b>Differentiation</b> – The RAE measures the research quality of universities by unit of assessment, not individual staff, in a comparable discipline. The measurement should be sharpened to differentiate excellence at the top end, and to delineate universities’ relative research strengths and areas for further improvement;</p> <p>(f) <b>Efficiency</b> – The methodology and implementation of the RAE should be as effective and efficient as possible with a view to minimising the costs, both to the universities and the Government, and burden of the exercise while delivering a</p>	

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
		<p>robust and defensible process;</p> <p>(g) <b>Transparency</b> – The credibility of the RAE should be reinforced by transparency in the process through which decisions are made. Relevant stakeholders will be duly consulted and informed throughout the exercise. In line with the principle of public accountability, the operational details, such as the assessment methodology and criteria, and the results will be published for public access; and</p> <p>(h) <b>Validity and Reliability</b> – The exercise should aim to reach standards of validity and reliability expected by the Hong Kong academic and research community.</p>	
(3)	Scope of research	<p>The RAE 2020 maintains an inclusive view on the scope of research. The broadened meaning of scholarship as defined by the Carnegie Foundation continues to be a guiding reference – that is the discovery of knowledge, the integration of knowledge, the application of knowledge and the sharing of knowledge through teaching which are regarded as different forms of scholarship on par with each other – so that high quality research in all forms of scholarship will be encouraged and assessed as equally important across a broad front.</p> <p>In the context of the RAE 2020, research is defined as the process leading to new knowledge, insights, methodologies, solutions and/or inventions. It may involve systematic investigation, use of existing materials, synthesis, analysis, creation of artefacts or concepts, design, performance, and/or innovation.</p>	Textual refinements to the second paragraph for clarity.

<b>(A) Overall</b>											
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>								
(4)	Elements of assessment and respective weightings	<p>All elements to be assessed on unit of assessment (UoA) basis.</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Element</u></th> <th><u>Weighting</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>• Research outputs }</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Impact }</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Environment }</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(RAE panels may decide to attach a weighting for individual aspects within the environment element (e.g. strategy, resources, esteem, etc.))</p>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	• Research outputs }	70%	• Impact }	15%	• Environment }	15%	Revised weightings taking into account universities' comments in response to the consultation.
<u>Element</u>	<u>Weighting</u>										
• Research outputs }	70%										
• Impact }	15%										
• Environment }	15%										
(5)	Period of assessment	<p>Six years from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019.</p> <p>For the submissions and reporting of data by universities, the period of assessment for respective elements are as follows –</p> <p>(a) Research outputs – 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019;</p> <p>(b) Impact – 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019, underpinned by research undertaken at, or significantly supported by, the submitting university during the period from 1 January 2000 to 30 September 2019; and</p> <p>(c) Environment – 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019.</p> <p>Census date for reported data: 30 September 2019.</p>	-								
(6)	Number of universities covered	Eight UGC-funded universities	-								

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(7)	Number of units of assessment and RAE panels	<p>To –</p> <p>(a) adopt 41 units of assessment (in place of 68 cost centres) with a view to reducing burden on universities and minimising the fluidity of boundaries between cost centres as far as practicable;</p> <p>(b) use the term “unit of assessment” in place of “cost centre” to enable clear differentiation between units for the purpose of research assessment and those for other cost-related purposes;</p> <p>(c) retain the number of panels at 13;</p> <p>(d) continue the arrangement in the RAE 2014 that the RAE panels may consider setting up sub-groups/sub-panels under their panels for the assessment of submissions;</p> <p>(e) invite universities to indicate their submission intentions and provide estimations in finer details, e.g. estimated number of submissions and eligible staff, main areas/keywords of their research submissions, and likely volume of submissions in languages other than English, under each unit of assessment, so as to facilitate panel formation with a view to matching the panel expertise with the submissions as far as possible; and</p> <p>(f) enable setting up inter-disciplinary sub-panel(s) under RAE panels, recruit panel members of relevant expertise to serve on more than one RAE panel, and nominate at least one member in each RAE panel to be the “inter-disciplinary champion” with specific role to “manage” inter-disciplinary submissions, with a view to addressing inter-disciplinary research, where appropriate.</p> <p>Details of the list and mapping of units of assessment are at <b><u>Appendix 1</u></b>.</p>	<p>Finalised list and mapping of units for assessment at <b><u>Appendix 1</u></b>, together with suitable revisions to the description, in view of the comments from universities while recognising the challenges inherent in any such mapping exercise, the ability to establish sub-panels to deal with significant disciplinary differences, and other measures in relation to inter-disciplinary research.</p>

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(8)	Composition of RAE panels	<p>To –</p> <p>(a) increase the total number of RAE panel members by about 20% in view of the expanded scope and increased complexity of submissions;</p> <p>(b) continue the arrangement in the RAE 2014 that the majority of RAE panel membership (about 70%) be composed of international non-local scholars/experts, and that the Convenors and Deputy Convenors of the RAE panels be non-local, to ensure independent and fair assessment according to international standards;</p> <p>(c) engage local “research end-users” or professionals in respective fields (who need not be academics) as lay members to take part in the assessment of impact; and</p> <p>(d) continue the arrangement in the RAE 2014 that nominations for the RAE panel membership be invited from universities, and broaden the scope of invitation for nominations to include professional bodies and learned societies. Nominating parties will be asked to specify if the nominees have any potential conflict of interest, joint collaboration and/or association with the nominating parties.</p>	Incorporation of the UGC’s decision to broaden the scope of nominations for RAE panels.
(9)	Panel assessment method	The RAE 2020 will continue to be an expert review exercise. Panels will be advised not to adopt a mechanical approach to the assessment. In line with the assessment criteria and procedures to be set out in the general panel guidelines, individual RAE panels will exercise collective professional judgments and develop working methods and discipline-specific criteria for their panels, within the overall framework and guidance for assessment.	-
(10)	External reviews by non-RAE panel members	Expert advice and evaluations from external reviewers may be sought as necessary.	-

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(11)	Staff eligibility	<p>To maintain similar criteria and arrangements as in previous RAEs by adopting a census date of 30 September 2019 for defining staff eligibility and taking into account all eligible academic staff in the RAE –</p> <p><u>Eligibility criteria</u></p> <p>Academic staff in each unit of assessment must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for submitting research outputs for the RAE 2020 –</p> <p>(a) holding a full-time paid appointment at a UGC-funded university for a continuous period of at least 36 months covering the census date, i.e. 30 September 2019, provided that the employment start date was no later than 1 September 2017; and</p> <p>(b) wholly funded by the university proper<sup>#</sup> for degree or higher degree work within staff grades of “Professor” to “Assistant Lecturer”, or corresponding to Staff Grades “A” to “T” as defined for the purpose of the UGC Common Data Collection Format (CDCF).</p> <p><sup>#</sup> Excluding schools/arms of the continuing education and professional training and other analogous organisations.</p> <p>Universities are required to submit a list of all academic staff who meet the eligibility criteria regardless of whether they intend to submit items for assessment, and/or whether they are research active. All eligible academic staff of a university will be taken into account in the university’s results in the RAE 2020.</p> <p><u>Assignment of eligible academic staff in each unit of assessment</u></p> <p>Universities are required to assign each of their eligible full-time academic staff (including those staff on joint appointment by two or more departments in the same universities) to a primary unit of assessment by head count in accordance with the mapping of their academic departments and research units. Each eligible staff member reported will be counted as a whole unit “1” against the unit of assessment to</p>	<p>The UGC deliberated on issues of staff eligibility in depth alongside item (14) on the submission of research outputs in respect of eligible academic staff.</p> <p>Having regard to the decision under item (14), staff mobility and relatively small scale of the local sector, the responses of universities and the experience in previous RAE, the UGC decided to refine the commencement date of employment in the staff eligibility criteria with a view to addressing any (potential) occurrence of recruiting staff solely for the purpose of making submissions for the RAE 2020 as raised in the consultation. Agreement had been reached with the Heads of Universities to refine the commencement date of employment in the staff eligibility criteria from “1 October 2018” to “1 September 2017”.</p>

<b>(A) Overall</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
		<p>which he/she is assigned. The number of eligible academic staff in a university's unit of assessment must be three or more.</p> <p>Universities' assignment of eligible academic staff to respective units of assessment can be subject to the UGC's re-assignment in case of an anomaly.</p> <p><u>New researchers</u></p> <p>Eligible academic staff who first took up a full-time academic appointment (in Hong Kong or elsewhere) on or after 1 August 2015 are regarded as "new researchers" and given special consideration.</p> <p><u>Eligible academic staff on paid/unpaid leave</u></p> <p>So long as an academic staff member who meets all the eligibility criteria is in a full-time paid appointment, he/she will be regarded as an eligible academic staff irrespective of any paid or unpaid leave taken during the period.</p> <p>(In exceptional cases, special consideration/exemption may be granted by the UGC to eligible academic staff who have been absent for a prolonged period, including those on leave for health or parental reasons, on a case by case basis.)</p>	
(12)	Research Strategy Statements	<p>To –</p> <p>(a) maintain the submission requirement of University's Research Strategy Statement to provide a context for panels' assessment and that the statement will not be assessed; and</p> <p>(b) replace the Cost Centre's Research Strategy Statement with the overview statements in impact and environment submissions as outlined in items (21) and (26) below respectively to reduce the burden and workload of universities.</p>	-
(13)	Submission format	Electronic format in principle, with details on the accessibility of research outputs and other submissions to be worked out in consultation with universities.	-

<b>(B) Assessment of Research Outputs</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(14)	Definition of research output	<p>All research outputs submitted for the RAE 2020 must meet all of the following criteria –</p> <p>(a) the output contains an element of new insights or innovation;</p> <p>(b) the output and its process contribute to scholarship or transfer of knowledge, generating impact to academia or society at large; and</p> <p>(c) the output is publicly accessible or effectively shared in the profession.</p> <p>Provided that all the above criteria are fully met, it does not matter whether or not: (i) the research activities leading to the output items submitted for assessment are funded by the UGC; and (ii) the output items were produced in or outside Hong Kong and/or whether the eligible staff concerned were employed by the submitting universities at the time of publication or production of the outputs.</p> <p>The following cases are considered to be falling in the research outputs as defined above –</p> <p>(a) any publication, patent awarded or published patent applications, artefact, etc, provided it was –</p> <p>(i) published or made publicly available in other form within the assessment period; or</p> <p>(ii) not yet published, but officially accepted for publication (without any prior condition for its publication) within the assessment period, and supported by a letter of acceptance; or</p> <p>(b) other forms of output that may or may not be published, e.g. performance recording, video tape, computer software programme, architectural drawings, or any creative work, that can be evaluated for merit and an assessment obtained.</p> <p>Proprietary research that does not result in output that is accessible to the public and the profession is <u>not</u> accepted as an output for</p>	<p>The UGC revisited the issue and maintained the definition of research output with textual refinements to the first and fourth paragraphs, having considered the recent development and complexity in transitioning to non-portability of research outputs in the United Kingdom (i.e. the outputs should be substantially generated by submitting institutions and not transferred by academics), the grounds for portability and non-portability of research outputs, operational practicality and burden on universities while balancing the sustainability of universities' research capacity and the significant changes made between the RAE 2020 and previous exercise (i.e. the introduction of impact and environment as new elements of assessment).</p>

<b>(B) Assessment of Research Outputs</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
		<p>assessment. However, output items of exhibitions and demonstrations relating to proprietary research which: (i) are accessible to the public or the profession; (ii) are non-traditional output for assessment; and (iii) contain enough information for evaluation, may be submitted for assessment.</p> <p>PhD dissertations are <u>not</u> accepted as outputs for assessment.</p> <p>Individual panels would decide, by exercising their professional judgement and having regard to the definition of research output, whether a submission, be it a review article, translation or textbook, would be accepted on the basis of the above criteria.</p>	
(15)	Assessment period	1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019	-
(16)	Submission requirements	<p>Four research outputs per eligible academic staff.</p> <p>In the event that fewer than four research outputs were submitted for the RAE 2020 in respect of individual eligible staff, the missing item(s) will be counted as “unclassified”.</p> <p>The number of research outputs to be submitted in respect of individual new researchers may be reduced according to the time when they first took up a full-time academic appointment (in Hong Kong or elsewhere) before the census date without the reduced item(s) being regarded as missing and deemed as “unclassified”. However, a university may submit up to four research outputs in respect of a new researcher. Details will be developed at a later stage.</p>	-

<b>(B) Assessment of Research Outputs</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(17)	Assessment criteria	<p>Research outputs will be assessed in terms of their originality, significance and rigour with reference to international standards.</p> <p>In principle, the quality of each item is judged on its own merit and not in terms of its publication category (e.g. a journal paper is not necessarily of higher or lower merit than a book chapter), medium or language of publication.</p> <p>Panels will be requested to examine each item in detail for assessment. Panels may decide to use metrics or citation data to inform their assessment. However, such metrics and data will not be used in any algorithmic or deterministic way for the evaluation of research quality. Panels will be advised to take note of the limitations of metrics and citation data, in particular their variability within as well as between disciplines, and the need to consider that some excellent work takes time to achieve its full impact.</p> <p>In the event that a submission is deemed to fall into the expertise of other unit(s) of assessment (under the same or different panel), as in the case of inter-disciplinary outputs, the subject RAE panel of the submission will make referral to other unit(s) of assessment with the relevant expertise for assessment. The final judgment on cross-panel referral should rest with the Convenor of the RAE panel to which the submission is submitted. The final rating of the submission will be logged into the primary unit of assessment of the submission.</p>	Textual refinement to the fourth paragraph for clarity.

<b>(B) Assessment of Research Outputs</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(18)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>	Textual refinement to the definition of unclassified (u/c) category.
		4 star (4*)	World leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	
		3 star (3*)	Internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	
		2 star (2*)	International standing in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	
		1 star (1*)	Research outputs of limited originality, significance and rigour.	
		unclassified (u/c)	Not reaching the standard of 1 star; or not regarded as research outputs in the RAE 2020; or missing item in the submission.	

<b>(C) Assessment of Research Impact</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(19)	Definition of impact	<p>For the purpose of the RAE 2020, impact is defined as the demonstrable contributions, beneficial effects, valuable changes or advantages that research qualitatively brings to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life; and that are beyond the academia.</p> <p>Academic impact, while being valuable, will be more appropriately assessed through the research output and environment elements in the RAE 2020.</p>	<p>Textual refinement to the first paragraph to reflect the beneficial nature of impact for the purpose of the RAE 2020.</p> <p>Further elaboration on the definition of impact will be provided in the draft Guidance Notes, which will be issued for consultation in due course.</p>
(20)	Assessment period	1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019, in which the impact must be underpinned by research undertaken at, or significantly supported by, the submitting university during the period from 1 January 2000 to 30 September 2019.	Textual refinement to the description for clarity.
(21)	Submission requirements	<p>Submission will be made on unit of assessment (UoA) basis by the university in which the underpinning research has been conducted.</p> <p>Each unit of submission comprises the following –</p> <p>(a) one impact overview statement describing the submitting unit’s approach during the assessment period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019, to enabling impact from its research, and</p> <p>(b) impact case studies describing specific examples of impacts achieved during the assessment period by the submitting university, underpinned by research, research activity or a body of work (as equivalent to at least 2 star (2*) quality), undertaken at, or significantly supported by, the submitting university in the period from 1 January 2000 to 30 September 2019.</p> <p>Templates for (a) and (b) above are at <b><u>Appendices 2 and 3</u></b>.</p> <p>The number of impact case studies required in each unit of submission is as follows –</p>	<p>Textual revisions to (b) to reflect and clarify on the impact cases and quality standard of underpinning research.</p> <p>Revisions to the “number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA” in the table on number of case studies required and page limit for enhancing consistency across intervals.</p> <p>Incorporation of detail on the “total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA” in the impact overview statement at <b><u>Appendix 2</u></b> as contextual information for panels’ reference.</p>

<b>(C) Assessment of Research Impact</b>																								
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>			<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>																			
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b></th> <th><b>Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA</b></th> <th><b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement</b></th> <th><b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 – 15</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 – 30</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 – 45</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>46 or more</td> <td>4, plus 1 further case study per additional 40 staff (headcount)</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study</b>	3 – 15	1	2	4	16 – 30	2	2	4	31 – 45	3	2	4	46 or more	4, plus 1 further case study per additional 40 staff (headcount)	3	4		
<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study</b>																					
3 – 15	1	2	4																					
16 – 30	2	2	4																					
31 – 45	3	2	4																					
46 or more	4, plus 1 further case study per additional 40 staff (headcount)	3	4																					
(22)	Assessment criteria	<p>The criteria for assessing research impacts are “reach and significance”.</p> <p>Panels will assess the “reach and significance” of impacts on the economy, society and/or culture that were underpinned by research conducted in, or significantly supported by, the submitting unit/university, as well as the submitting unit’s approach to enabling impact from its research.</p> <p>In assessing the impact described within a case study, the panel will form an overall view about its “reach and significance” taken as a whole, rather than assess “reach and significance” separately. In assessing the impact overview statement, the panel will consider the extent to which the unit’s approach described in the overview statement is conducive to achieving impacts of “reach and significance”.</p> <p>Submissions would be assessed having regard to disciplinary differences.</p>			<p>Textual refinement to the second paragraph for clarity.</p> <p>Further elaboration on the evaluation criteria of “reach” and “significance” will be provided in the draft Guidance Notes (to be issued for consultation shortly) and, where necessary, be further elaborated in the guidelines of specific criteria and working methods of respective panels (to be issued for consultation after the Guidance Notes has been finalised).</p>																			

<b>(C) Assessment of Research Impact</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>		<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(23)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u> 4 star (4*) 3 star (3*) 2 star (2*) 1 star (1*) unclassified (u/c)	<u>Definition</u> Outstanding impacts in terms of their reach and significance. Considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance. Some impacts in terms of their reach and significance. Limited impacts in terms of their reach and significance. The impact is of either no reach or no significance; or the impact was not eligible; or the impact was not underpinned by research produced by the submitting unit; or nil submission.	Textual refinement to the definition of unclassified (u/c) category.

<b>(D) Assessment of Research Environment</b>													
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>										
(24)	Definition of environment	For the purpose of the RAE 2020, research environment refers to the strategy, resources (e.g. grants obtained, people) and infrastructure that support research giving rise to collaborations, esteem and contributions to the discipline or research base.	Further elaboration on the definition of environment will be provided in the draft Guidance Notes, which will be issued for consultation in due course.										
(25)	Assessment period	1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019	-										
(26)	Submission requirements	<p>Submission will be made on unit of assessment (UoA) basis.</p> <p>Each unit of submission comprises the following –</p> <p>(a) one environment overview statement describing the submitting unit’s research strategy; its support for research staff and students; its research income, infrastructure and facilities; its research collaborations, esteem and wider contributions to the discipline or research base during the assessment period, i.e. from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019; and</p> <p>(b) data on staff, graduates of research postgraduate (RPg) programmes and research grants/contracts from different sources of funding etc. during the assessment period, i.e. from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019.</p> <p>Templates for (a) and (b) above are at <b><u>Appendices 4 and 5</u></b>.</p> <p>Page limit for each environment overview statement is as follows –</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b></th> <th><b>Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 – 15</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 – 30</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 – 45</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>46 or more</td> <td>10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement</b>	3 – 15	4	16 – 30	6	31 – 45	8	46 or more	10	<p>Revisions to the “number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA” in the table on page limit, in line with similar revisions to the intervals for impact submission in item (21).</p> <p>Incorporation of detail on the “total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA” in the environment overview statement at <b><u>Appendix 4</u></b> as contextual information for panel’s reference</p> <p>Revisions to the coverage periods of various environment data in <b><u>Appendix 5</u></b> in line with the relevant cut-off dates of the UGC Common Data Collection Format (CDCF) returns, with a view to reducing universities’ administrative burden.</p>
<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement</b>												
3 – 15	4												
16 – 30	6												
31 – 45	8												
46 or more	10												

<b>(D) Assessment of Research Environment</b>															
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>												
(27)	Assessment criteria	<p>The criteria for assessing research environment are “vitality and sustainability”.</p> <p>Panels will assess the research environment in terms of its “vitality and sustainability”, including its contribution to the “vitality and sustainability” of the wider discipline or research base.</p> <p>Panels may decide on whether to assess each environment submission as a whole, or to attach weighting to individual aspects within the environment element in their assessment.</p>	<p>Further elaboration on the evaluation criteria of “vitality” and “sustainability” will be provided in the draft Guidance Notes (to be issued for consultation shortly) and, where necessary, be further elaborated in the guidelines of specific criteria and working methods of respective panels (to be issued for consultation after the Guidance Notes has been finalised).</p>												
(28)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u></th> <th><u>Definition</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4 star (4*)</td> <td>An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 star (3*)</td> <td>An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 star (2*)</td> <td>An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 star (1*)</td> <td>An environment that is conducive to producing research of limited quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>unclassified (u/c)</td> <td>An environment that is not conducive to producing research of 1 star quality; or nil submission.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>	4 star (4*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.	3 star (3*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.	2 star (2*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.	1 star (1*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of limited quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.	unclassified (u/c)	An environment that is not conducive to producing research of 1 star quality; or nil submission.	-
<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>														
4 star (4*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.														
3 star (3*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.														
2 star (2*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.														
1 star (1*)	An environment that is conducive to producing research of limited quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability.														
unclassified (u/c)	An environment that is not conducive to producing research of 1 star quality; or nil submission.														

<b>(E) RAE Results</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Remarks / Changes as compared with the May 2017 Consultation Document</b>
(29)	Overall quality profile	<p>An RAE Panel will produce an overall quality profile by assessing three elements of a unit of assessment's submission – research outputs, impact and environment – to produce a sub-profile for each element. The three sub-profiles will be aggregated to form the overall quality profile for the unit of assessment. The overall quality profile shows the proportion of research activity in the submission of a unit of assessment judged to meet the definitions of starred levels, as follows –</p> <p>4 star (4*) - world leading  3 star (3*) - internationally excellent  2 star (2*) - international standing  1 star (1*) - limited standing  unclassified (u/c)</p>	-
(30)	Release of RAE results	<p>Results in the form of overall quality profiles and sub-profiles of individual elements of assessment will be published by unit of assessment and by panel at both university's level and sector-wide level.</p> <p>The same set of results will be released to universities and the public.</p> <p>In addition to the published results, each university will receive their own RAE results confidentially in respect of research outputs at research area level.</p>	Incorporation of a provision on the release of RAE results in the third paragraph, with a view to providing finer information to the universities on their RAE performance among disciplinary areas.
(31)	Translating RAE results into funding decision	The UGC will decide on the funding methodology after the completion of the RAE 2020. Universities will be informed of the method used after the funding recommendations are accepted by the authorities.	-

**List and Mapping of Units of Assessment and Subject Panels  
for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020**

<b>Panel (Total: 13)</b>	<b>Cost Centre in RAE 2014 (code &amp; name) (Total: 68)</b>		<b>Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code &amp; name) (Total: 41)</b>	
Biology	6	biological sciences	1	biological sciences (incl. environmental biology, biotechnology, agriculture & food science, veterinary studies)
	9	other biological sciences (incl. environmental biology)		
	10	agriculture & food science		
	22	biotechnology		
			2	pre-clinical studies
Health Sciences	1	clinical medicine	3	clinical medicine
	2	clinical dentistry	4	clinical dentistry
	4	nursing	5	nursing, optometry, rehabilitation sciences and other health care professions
	5	other health care professions		
	62	optometry		
	63	rehabilitation sciences		
	60	Chinese medicine	6	Chinese medicine
	3	clinical veterinary studies		
	7	pre-clinical studies		
Physical Sciences	11	physics & astronomy	7	physics & astronomy
	13	materials science	8	materials science and materials technology
	12	chemistry	9	chemistry
	14	earth sciences (incl. oceanography, meteorology)	10	earth sciences (incl. oceanography, meteorology) and other physical sciences (incl. environmental science)
	15	other physical sciences (incl. environmental science)		
	32	mathematics & statistics	11	mathematics and statistics
Electrical & Electronic Engineering	17	electrical engineering	12	electrical & electronic engineering
	18	electronic engineering		
Computer Science / Information Technology	33	computer studies/science (incl. information technology)	13	computer studies/science (incl. information technology)

<b>Panel (Total: 13)</b>	<b>Cost Centre in RAE 2014 (code &amp; name) (Total: 68)</b>		<b>Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code &amp; name) (Total: 41)</b>	
Engineering	16	mechanical engineering	14	mechanical engineering, production engineering (incl. manufacturing & industrial engineering), textile technology and aerospace engineering
	20	production engineering (incl. manufacturing & industrial engineering)		
	24	textile technology		
	19	chemical engineering	15	chemical engineering, biomedical engineering, other technologies (incl. environmental engineering & nautical studies) and marine engineering
	21	marine engineering		
	26	other technologies (incl. environmental engineering & nautical studies)		
	65	biomedical engineering		
	23	materials technology		
Built Environment	25	civil engineering (incl. construction engineering & management)	16	civil engineering (incl. construction engineering & management) and building technology
	28	building technology		
	27	architecture	17	architecture
	29	planning	18	planning and surveying (land and other)
	30	surveying, land		
	31	surveying, other		
Law	34	law	19	law
Business & Economics	35	accountancy	20	accountancy
	40	economics	21	economics and finance
	66	finance		
	37	business	22	business
	39	hotel management & tourism	23	hotel management & tourism
Social Sciences	8	psychology	24	psychology
	36	political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)	25	political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)
	41	geography	26	geography
	61	sociology & anthropology	27	sociology & anthropology
	42	social work	28	social work and social policy
	43	other social studies		
	49	communications & media studies	29	communications & media studies

<b>Panel (Total: 13)</b>	<b>Cost Centre in RAE 2014 (code &amp; name) (Total: 68)</b>		<b>Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code &amp; name) (Total: 41)</b>	
Humanities	44	Chinese language & literature	30	Chinese language & literature
	45	English language & literature	31	English language & literature
	48	translation	32	translation
	69	linguistics & language studies	33	linguistics & language studies
	50	history	34	history
	51	other arts/humanities	35	area studies (e.g. Japanese studies, European studies, etc.), cultural studies and other arts/humanities
	67	area studies (e.g. Japanese studies, European studies, etc.)		
	70	cultural studies		
	68	philosophy & religious studies	36	philosophy
37			religious studies	
Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Design	52	visual arts	38	visual arts, design, creative media, other creative arts and creative writing
	55	other creative arts		
	56	design		
	64	creative media		
	53	performing arts	39	music and performing arts
	54	music		
Education	58	physical education & sports science	40	physical education, sport, recreation & physical activities
	71	curriculum & instruction	41	education (incl. curriculum & instruction, education administration & policy and other education)
	72	education administration & policy		
	73	other education		

**Research Assessment Exercise 2020**  
**Impact Overview Statement**<sup>1</sup>

**University:**

**Unit of Assessment (UoA):**

**Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA:**

- (1) **Context** – context for the individual case study(ies)
- (2) **Approach to impact** – the unit’s approach to impact during the assessment period for impact
- (3) **Strategy and plans** – strategy and plans for supporting impact
- (4) **Relationship to case studies** – the relationship between the unit’s approach to impact and the submitted case studies

---

<sup>1</sup> Maximum length and page format for submissions are prescribed below –

(a)	<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement</b>
	3 – 45	2
	46 or more	3

(b) 12 point size in Times New Roman, single-line spacing, 2 cm margin all around.

**Research Assessment Exercise 2020**  
**Impact Case Study**<sup>1</sup>

**University:**

**Unit of Assessment (UoA):**

**Title of case study:**

- (1) **Summary of the impact** (indicative maximum 100 words)
  
- (2) **Underpinning research** (indicative maximum 500 words)
  
- (3) **References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)
  
- (4) **Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)
  
- (5) **Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

---

<sup>1</sup> Maximum length: four A4 size pages; and prescribed format: 12 point size in Times New Roman, single-line spacing, 2 cm margin all around.

**Research Assessment Exercise 2020  
Environment Overview Statement<sup>1</sup>**

**University:**

**Unit of Assessment (UoA):**

**Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA:**

- (1) Overview**
  
- (2) Research strategy**
  
- (3) People, including (i) staffing strategy and staff development; and (ii) research students**
  
- (4) Income e.g. grants received**
  
- (5) Infrastructure and facilities**
  
- (6) Collaborations**
  
- (7) Esteem**
  
- (8) Contribution to the discipline or research base**

---

<sup>1</sup> Maximum length and page format for submissions are prescribed below –

(a)	<b>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</b>	<b>Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement</b>
	3 – 15	4
	16 – 30	6
	31 – 45	8
	46 or more	10

(b) 12 point size in Times New Roman, single-line spacing, 2 cm margin all around.

**Research Assessment Exercise 2020**  
**Environment Data**

**University:**

**Unit of Assessment (UoA):**

**(A) Staff Employed by the University Proper<sup>1</sup> of the UGC-funded University**

<b>(full time equivalent)</b>	<b>2013/14 (as at 31.10.2013)</b>	<b>2014/15 (as at 31.10.2014)</b>	<b>2015/16 (as at 31.10.2015)</b>	<b>2016/17 (as at 31.10.2016)</b>	<b>2017/18 (as at 31.10.2017)</b>	<b>2018/19 (as at 31.10.2018)</b>
<b>Wholly Funded by General Funds<sup>2</sup></b>						
Academic staff primarily undertaking work at degree or higher level						
Academic staff not primarily undertaking work at degree or higher level						
Academic supporting staff and technical research staff						
Administrative, technical and other staff						
<b>Partially Funded by General Funds<sup>2</sup> or Wholly Self-financed</b>						
Academic staff primarily undertaking work at degree or higher level						
Academic staff not primarily undertaking work at degree or higher level						
Academic supporting staff and technical research staff						
Administrative, technical and other staff						
<b>Total</b>						

(Note: Based on the list of eligible academic staff and associated data submitted by the university, the panels will separately be provided with a profile of eligible academic staff of the unit of assessment by rank and experience of eligible appointment at the submitting institution.)

<sup>1</sup> Excluding schools/arms of continuing education and professional training and other analogous outfits.

<sup>2</sup> General Funds comprise the total income received by the university, except that from specific funds (which include income received for specific or designated purposes, examples of which are earmarked grants and RGC research grants). General Funds include income from the UGC block grant, tuition fees, interest and investment income, donations for general purpose, etc.

**(B) Graduates of Research Postgraduate (RPg) Programmes**

(headcount)	1.9.2013 – 31.8.2014	1.9.2014 – 31.8.2015	1.9.2015 – 31.8.2016	1.9.2016 – 31.8.2017	1.9.2017 – 31.8.2018	1.9.2018 – 31.8.2019
<b>UGC-funded Programmes</b>						
Graduates of RPg programmes – doctoral degree						
Graduates of RPg programmes – master’s degree						
<b>Non-UGC-funded Programmes</b>						
Graduates of RPg programmes – doctoral degree						
Graduates of RPg programmes – master’s degree						

**(C) On-going Research Grants/Contracts****(i) By Source of Funding**

(HK\$ million)	1.7.2013 – 30.6.2014	1.7.2014 – 30.6.2015	1.7.2015 – 30.6.2016	1.7.2016 – 30.6.2017	1.7.2017 – 30.6.2018	1.7.2018 – 30.6.2019
<b>Research Grants</b>						
Funded by UGC/RGC						
HKSAR Government and Government-related organisations <sup>3</sup>						
HK private funds						
Non-HK <sup>4</sup>						
<b>Research Contracts</b>						
HKSAR Government and Government-related organisations <sup>3</sup>						
HK private funds						
Non-HK <sup>4</sup>						

**(ii) By Role of University**

(aggregate %)	1.7.2013 – 30.6.2014	1.7.2014 – 30.6.2015	1.7.2015 – 30.6.2016	1.7.2016 – 30.6.2017	1.7.2017 – 30.6.2018	1.7.2018 – 30.6.2019
<b>Research Grants/Contracts</b>						
Coordinating						
Participating for joint research or others						

<sup>3</sup> Such as the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF), Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF), Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF), Quality Education Fund (QEF), etc.

<sup>4</sup> Including research grants/contracts from sources outside Hong Kong which are under the control of the submitting university, i.e. the university concerned has the authority to approve the use of funds for the research grants/contracts, while funds may not necessarily be transferred to the university for use in Hong Kong. Examples include the National Natural Science Foundation (NSFC) of China, European Commission, National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the United States of America, etc.