

本署檔號 OUR REF.: UGC/GEN/233/13/2026

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23 May 2023

[Similar Letters to Heads of Universities]

Dear President/Vice-Chancellor,

**Research Assessment Exercise 2026
Consultation on Proposed Framework and
Nominations for Panel Membership**

I am writing to formally seek the views of your university on the proposed Framework for the next Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2026, and invite your nomination/advice on panel membership for consideration by the University Grants Committee (UGC) in the formation of the 13 RAE subject panels.

Background

RAE is part of UGC's commitment to assessing the performance of the UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong. Over the years, the outcome of RAE has provided guidance for universities' developments in pursuing research excellence. Universities' performance in RAE also informs the allocation of part of the Research Portion of the Block Grant.

The encouraging outcome of RAE 2020 demonstrated that our universities have made great strides in research. Apart from identifying the strength of individual academic disciplines of ourselves as compared with other universities/partners around the world, the RAE results, in particular, the impact case studies and research environment submissions, are important in showcasing the research excellence of Hong Kong to the rest of the world, which would help attract research talents.

With the positive feedback from the community, the UGC considered the future of research assessment in Hong Kong and exchanged views with Heads of Universities (HoUs) at their meetings with the Chairman of the UGC in July and October 2022.

Proposed Framework

With the support of the HoUs, the UGC is actively planning the next RAE in 2026. We are mindful that the implementation details for the next RAE must take into account Hong Kong's research landscape, as well as the costs and burden on universities. In light of this, we are consulting our stakeholders on the proposed Framework for RAE 2026 at **Enclosure 1** which includes proposals on the key features and parameters of the exercise.

The proposed Framework incorporates the principles, objectives and broad direction for RAE 2026 as approved by the UGC. In drawing up the proposed Framework, we have made reference to, amongst others, the comments and feedback from various parties in RAE 2020, and the research assessment frameworks in other jurisdictions, such as the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Italy, Poland, etc.

Research impact (IM) and research environment (EN) are gaining more importance and attention internationally. For research impact, the assessment in RAE 2020 (likewise in other jurisdictions), and as shown in the reports by Clarivate Analytics (UK) Ltd. released yesterday, has provided strong and scientific evidence on the benefits of research to the wider society and the results have enhanced confidence on the investment in research. To step up our effort in encouraging impactful research, it is proposed to increase the weighting of research impact by five percentage points to 20% while keeping that of research environment at 15%. The proposed weightings for the three assessment elements for RAE 2026 is 65:20:15 (RO:IM:EN)¹.

In order to explain impact to the general public more effectively, it is proposed that each impact case study may be supplemented with an optional

¹ RO – Research Outputs; IM – Research Impact; EN – Research Environment.

video of not more than three minutes describing the pathway and story of the impact case. While panel's assessment will be solely based on the four-page impact case studies submissions, the video will be made available for RAE panels' information and uploaded to the UGC's website together with the impact case studies after the results announcement. The UGC believes that the video will enable panel members, in particular lay members, as well as the members of public to understand the impact enabled by our academic research. As a general principle, the content in the video should describe the impact case studies as submitted to the RAE and should not contain information in addition to the written submission.

Also, the Research Strategy Statement, Impact Overview Statement and Environment Overview Statement as required in RAE 2020 are combined to a University-level Environment Overview Statement and a Unit of Assessment (UoA)-level Environment Overview Statement, in which universities are expected to cover their research and impact strategy and other issues including research culture, integrity and ethics, equality and diversity, sustainability development goals, research student development and training, etc.

We welcome your views and comments on the proposed Framework, in particular the major changes as outlined above, by 7 July 2023 using the reply form at **Enclosure 2**.

Nominations for Panel Membership

Separately, as you may note from the proposed Framework, there will be 13 subject panels in RAE 2026 to be formed. The membership of each RAE panel will comprise –

- (a) a Convenor who is a non-local academic;
- (b) a Deputy Convenor who is also a non-local academic;
- (c) a number of panel members, with a majority being non-local academics; and
- (d) lay member(s) who are local “research end-users” or professionals in respective fields who need not be academics. They will take part in the assessment of research impact.

To ensure a rigorous and credible process of RAE, panel membership is a crucial element. As primary criteria, candidates nominated to serve in the panels should possess exceptional academic standing, research strength and reputation. The UGC expects that the Convenors and Deputy Convenors of all the 13 panels should be distinguished scholars with prior

experience in research assessment exercises and should possess the appropriate standing in the higher education community.

Universities are welcome to nominate potential candidates, local or non-local, academics or professionals in other sectors for consideration by UGC in the formation of the 13 panels. In making your nominations, you are also invited to take note of the guiding principles as set out at **Enclosure 3**. The nominees for Convenors and Deputy Convenors should have prior experience in research assessment in other jurisdictions or Hong Kong RAE(s). The panel member nominees who have similar research assessment experience would be preferred. If your university wish to put forward names for our consideration, please provide relevant information by filling in the electronic proforma as attached at **Enclosure 4** and return it on or before the respective closing dates as set out below –

Convenors/Deputy Convenors : 23 June 2023
Members/Lay Members : 30 September 2023

In making nominations, universities are advised to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest. The UGC will consider the nominations and approach the nominees directly as appropriate.

List of Professional Bodies and Learned Societies

Separately, in order to broaden the scope of nominations of panel members, the UGC will extend invitation for nominations for RAE 2026 to professional bodies and learned societies, similar to the arrangement of RAE 2020, with a view to engaging research end-users and professionals to take part in RAE 2026 as lay members for assessing impact case studies primarily. We should be grateful for your suggestions on a list of such bodies and/or societies by completing the reply form at **Enclosure 5** by 30 September 2023.

After the list of professional bodies and learned societies is finalised, the Secretariat will invite those bodies/societies on the list to make nominations for RAE panel membership.

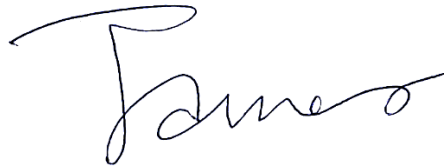
Nominations for a University's Representative and a General Contact Point

To facilitate coordination and implementation of RAE 2026, I would like to invite you to nominate a representative at appropriate level (e.g. Vice President or Associate Vice President or equivalent) to be responsible for the coordination of this exercise in your university, and a contact point

(e.g. Head of Research Office or equivalent) for handling general matters. Please let us have the names and contact information of the representative and the general contact point respectively on or before 23 June 2023.

Thank you in advance for your support to RAE 2026. We look forward to building on the high degree of validity and reliability of the previous RAEs. Please feel free to contact my colleagues Cyprian Chan, Assistant Secretary-General (Research) 2 (email: cyprianchan@ugc.edu.hk / tel.: 2844 9916) or Miss Wendy Chan, Senior Research Administrator (email: wendychan@ugc.edu.hk / tel.: 3793 4146) for any enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James', written in a cursive style.

(Professor James Tang)
Secretary-General

c.c. Council Chairman, [Name of University]

Encls.

Proposed Framework for Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2026

Note:

Changes compared to the RAE 2020 Framework are underlined.

(A) Overall			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
(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>	<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 RAE 2026 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, <u>and enhance the international profile of Hong Kong's research;</u></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 <u>how this investment translate into benefits and impact beyond academia, thereby gaining public understanding of and support for research activities;</u></p> <p>(e) provide robust benchmarking information and establish reputational yardsticks for use within the UGC sector and for public information;</p>

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			<p>(f) delineate universities' areas of relative strength and identify emerging research areas and opportunities for development; and</p> <p>(g) <u>provide evidence on the quality of research environment of UGC-funded universities in order to attract worldwide research talents to Hong Kong.</u></p>
(2)	Principles	<p>The principles for the RAE 2020 as approved by the UGC are –</p> <p>(a) International standards – 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 engaged;</p> <p>(b) Fairness – 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) Consistency – 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</p>	<p>The principles for the RAE 2026 as approved by the UGC are –</p> <p>(a) International standards – 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 engaged;</p> <p>(b) Fairness – 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) Consistency – 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</p>

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		<p>research across the disciplinary spectrum;</p> <p>(d) Inclusiveness – 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) Differentiation – 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) Efficiency – 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 robust and defensible process;</p> <p>(g) Transparency – 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) Validity and Reliability – The exercise should aim to reach</p>	<p>research across the disciplinary spectrum;</p> <p>(d) Inclusiveness – 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) Differentiation – 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) Efficiency – 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 robust and defensible process;</p> <p>(g) Transparency – 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) Validity and Reliability – The exercise should aim to reach</p>

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Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		standards of validity and reliability expected by the Hong Kong academic and research community.	standards of validity and reliability expected by the Hong Kong academic and research community.
(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>	<p>The RAE <u>2026</u> 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 <u>2026</u>, 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>

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(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% (RAE panels may decide to attach a weighting for individual aspects within the environment element (e.g. strategy, resources, esteem, etc.))</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	• Research outputs	• 70%	• Impact	• 15%	• Environment	• 15% (RAE panels may decide to attach a weighting for individual aspects within the environment element (e.g. strategy, resources, esteem, etc.))	<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>• <u>65%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Impact</td> <td>• <u>20%</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Environment</td> <td>• 15% (RAE panels may decide to attach a weighting for individual aspects within the environment element (e.g. strategy, resources, esteem, etc.))</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Element</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	• Research outputs	• <u>65%</u>	• Impact	• <u>20%</u>	• Environment	• 15% (RAE panels may decide to attach a weighting for individual aspects within the environment element (e.g. strategy, resources, esteem, etc.))
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(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>	<p>Six years from 1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>.</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 <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>;</p> <p>(b) Impact – 1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>, underpinned by research undertaken at, or significantly supported by, the submitting university during the period from 1 January <u>2006</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>; and</p> <p>(c) Environment – 1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>.</p> <p>Census date for reported data: 30 September <u>2025</u>.</p>																
(6)	Number of universities covered	Eight UGC-funded universities	Eight UGC-funded universities																

(A) Overall			
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(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-</p>	<p>To –</p> <p>(a) adopt 41 units of assessment (UoAs), <u>with the renaming of the following two UoAs:</u></p> <p>(i) UoA 5 - nursing, optometry, rehabilitation sciences and other health care professions (<u>incl. pharmacy</u>);</p> <p>(ii) UoA 18 as planning and surveying (land, <u>geo-spatial</u> and other);</p> <p>(b) retain the number of panels at 13;</p> <p>(c) continue the arrangement in RAE <u>2020</u> that the RAE panels may consider setting up sub-groups/sub-panels under their panels for the assessment of submissions;</p> <p>(d) <u>continue the arrangement in RAE 2020 of</u> inviting 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>(e) <u>continue the arrangement in RAE 2020 of</u> enabling 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</p>

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		disciplinary research, where appropriate. Details of the list and mapping of units of assessment are at <u>Appendix 1</u> .	inter-disciplinary research, where appropriate. Details of the list and mapping of units of assessment are at <u>Appendix 1</u> .
(8)	Composition of RAE panels	To – (a) increase the total number of RAE panel members by about 20% in view of the expanded scope and increased complexity of submissions; (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; (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 (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.	To – (a) increase the total number of RAE panel members by about <u>10%</u> in view of the expanded scope and increased complexity of submissions; (b) increase the number of RAE local panel members to <u>35%</u> while maintaining that the majority of RAE panel membership (about <u>65%</u>) 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; (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 (d) continue the arrangement in the RAE <u>2020</u> 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.
(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	The RAE <u>2026</u> 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

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		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.	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.	Expert advice and evaluations from external reviewers may be sought as necessary.
(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[#] for degree or higher degree work within staff grades of “Professor” to “Assistant Lecturer”, or corresponding to Staff Grades “A” to “I” as defined for the purpose of the UGC Common Data Collection Format (CDCF).</p> <p>[#] Excluding schools/arms of the continuing education and professional training and other analogous organisations.</p>	<p>To maintain similar criteria and arrangements as in previous RAEs by adopting a census date of 30 September <u>2025</u> 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 <u>2026</u> –</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 <u>2025</u>, provided that the employment start date was no later than 1 September <u>2023</u>; and</p> <p>(b) wholly funded by the university proper[#] for degree or higher degree work within staff grades of “Professor” to “Assistant Lecturer”, or corresponding to Staff Grades “A” to “I” as defined for the purpose of the UGC Common Data Collection Format (CDCF).</p> <p>[#] Excluding schools/arms of the continuing education and professional training and other analogous organisations.</p>

(A) Overall			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		<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 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>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 <u>2026</u>.</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 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 <u>2021</u> 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>

(A) Overall			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		(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.)	(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.)
(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>	<p>To reduce universities’ burden in preparing for RAE 2026, and for simplicity, it is proposed that (i) University’s Research Strategy Statement be incorporated into the new University-level Environment (EN) Overview Statement, and (ii) Impact (IM) Overview Statement be combined with the existing UoA-level EN Overview Statement. The two EN Overview Statements (one at University level and the other at unit of assessment level) will provide an overview of the university’s context and mission, strategy for research and enabling impact, research culture, institutional-level resources and facilities available to support research and impact, etc. Please refer to Item 26 for details.</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.	Electronic format in principle, with details on the accessibility of research outputs and other submissions to be worked out in consultation with universities.

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
(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</p>	<p>All research outputs submitted for the RAE <u>2026</u> 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</p>

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		<p>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 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>	<p>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 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	1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>
(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</p>	<p>Four research outputs per eligible academic staff. <u>For each research output, a brief statement of 100 words will be required to specify the originality and significance of the output, including the amount and nature of overlaps between ROs.</u></p> <p>In the event that fewer than four research outputs were submitted for the RAE <u>2026</u> 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</p>

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		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.	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.
(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.</p>	<p>Research outputs will be assessed in terms of their originality, significance and rigour with reference to international standards.</p> <p><u>Originality will be understood as the extent to which the output makes an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge in the field. Research outputs that demonstrate originality may do one or more of the following: produce and interpret new empirical findings or new material; engage with new and/or complex problems; develop innovative research methods, methodologies and analytical techniques; show imaginative and creative scope; provide new arguments and/or new forms of expression, formal innovations, interpretations and/or insights; collect and engage with novel types of data; and/or advance theory or the analysis of doctrine, policy or practice, and new forms of expression.</u></p> <p><u>Significance will be understood as the extent to which the work has influenced, or has the capacity to influence, knowledge and scholarly thought, or the development and understanding of policy and/or practice.</u></p> <p><u>Rigour will be understood as the extent to which the work demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, sources, theories and/or methodologies.</u></p>

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
		<p>The final rating of the submission will be logged into the primary unit of assessment of the submission.</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>

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs					
Item	Subject	RAE 2020		Proposal for RAE 2026	
		<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>
(18)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	4 star (4*)	World leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.	4 star (4*)	World leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
		3 star (3*)	Internationally excellent 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.	2 star (2*)	International standing in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
		1 star (1*)	Research outputs of limited 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.	unclassified (u/c)	Not reaching the standard of 1 star; or not regarded as research outputs in the RAE <u>2026</u> ; or missing item in the submission.

(C) Assessment of Research Impact			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
(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>For the purpose of the RAE <u>2026</u>, 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 <u>2026</u>.</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.	1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u> , in which the impact must be underpinned by research undertaken at, or significantly supported by, the submitting university during the period from 1 January <u>2006</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u> .
(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</p>	<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 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 <u>2006</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>. A template is at <u>Appendix 2</u>.</p> <p><u>For each impact case studies, the UoA may supplement a video of not more than three minutes describing the pathway and story of the impact case. If submitted, the video will be submitted to the RAE panels for information and uploaded to the UGC’s website after the RAE results announcement together with the impact case studies for the purpose of</u></p>

(C) Assessment of Research Impact																																						
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026																																			
		<p>2019.</p> <p>Templates for (a) and (b) above are at <u>Appendices 2 and 3</u>.</p> <p>The number of impact case studies required in each unit of submission is as follows –</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</th> <th>Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study</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>	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each impact overview statement	Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study	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	<p><u>enhancing public understanding on the contributions of the research community to the society.</u></p> <p>The number of impact case studies required in each unit of submission is as follows –</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</th> <th>Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 – 15</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 – 30</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 – 45</td> <td>3</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>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Number of case study(ies) required for submission to the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each impact case study	3 – 15	1	4	16 – 30	2	4	31 – 45	3	4	46 or more	4, plus 1 further case study per additional 40 staff (headcount)	4
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31 – 45	3	2	4																																			
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16 – 30	2	4																																				
31 – 45	3	4																																				
46 or more	4, plus 1 further case study per additional 40 staff (headcount)	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>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><u>Reach will be understood as the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, as relevant to the nature of the impact. Reach will be assessed in</u></p>																																			

(C) Assessment of Research Impact

Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
			<p><u>terms of the extent to which the potential constituencies, number or groups of beneficiaries have been reached; it will not be assessed in purely geographic terms, nor in terms of absolute numbers of beneficiaries. The criteria will be applied wherever the impact occurred, regardless of geography or location, and whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere.</u></p> <p><u>Significance will be understood as the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance, policies, practices, products, services, understanding, awareness or wellbeing of the beneficiaries.</u></p> <p>Submissions would be assessed having regard to disciplinary differences.</p>

(C) Assessment of Research Impact					
Item	Subject	RAE 2020		Proposal for RAE 2026	
		<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Category</u> <u>(Abbreviation)</u>	<u>Definition</u>
(23)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	4 star (4*)	Outstanding impacts in terms of their reach and significance.	4 star (4*)	Outstanding impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
		3 star (3*)	Considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.	3 star (3*)	Considerable impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
		2 star (2*)	Some impacts in terms of their reach and significance.	2 star (2*)	Some impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
		1 star (1*)	Limited impacts in terms of their reach and significance.	1 star (1*)	Limited impacts in terms of their reach and significance.
		unclassified (u/c)	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.	unclassified (u/c)	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.

(D) Assessment of Research Environment													
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026										
(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.	For the purpose of the RAE <u>2026</u> , 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.										
(25)	Assessment period	1 October 2013 to 30 September 2019	1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>										
(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 <u>Appendices 4 and 5</u>.</p> <p>Page limit for each environment overview statement is as follows –</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement</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>	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement	3 – 15	4	16 – 30	6	31 – 45	8	46 or more	10	<p>Submission will be made on unit of assessment (UoA) basis.</p> <p>Each unit of submission comprises the following –</p> <p>(a) <u>one university-level overview statement* setting out the university’s context and mission, strategy and resources to support research and enable impact, research culture, etc. during the assessment period, i.e. from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2025;</u></p> <p>(b) one <u>UoA-level</u> environment overview statement describing the submitting unit’s research strategy; research culture; 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, etc. during the assessment period, i.e. from 1 October <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>; and</p> <p>(c) 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 <u>2019</u> to 30 September <u>2025</u>.</p>
Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement												
3 – 15	4												
16 – 30	6												
31 – 45	8												
46 or more	10												

* This will provide a context for the RAE panels’ assessment of the UoA-level information, but will not be separately scored.

(D) Assessment of Research Environment																							
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026																				
			<p>Templates for (a), (b) and (c) above are at <u>Appendices 3 (Parts (a) & (b)) and 4.</u></p> <p><u>Page limit for each university-level environment overview statement is as follows –</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in university</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each <u>university-level environment overview statement</u> (including one page for attachment)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 – 300</td> <td><u>6</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>301 – 600</td> <td><u>7</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>601 – 800</td> <td><u>8</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>801 or more</td> <td><u>9</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Page limit for each <u>UoA-level environment overview statement is as follows –</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA</th> <th>Page limit (A4 size) for each <u>UoA-level environment overview statement</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 – 15</td> <td><u>6</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>16 – 30</td> <td><u>8</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>31 – 45</td> <td><u>10</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>46 or more</td> <td><u>13</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in university	Page limit (A4 size) for each <u>university-level environment overview statement</u> (including one page for attachment)	3 – 300	<u>6</u>	301 – 600	<u>7</u>	601 – 800	<u>8</u>	801 or more	<u>9</u>	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each <u>UoA-level environment overview statement</u>	3 – 15	<u>6</u>	16 – 30	<u>8</u>	31 – 45	<u>10</u>	46 or more	<u>13</u>
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(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>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><u>Vitality will be understood as the extent to which a unit supports a thriving and inclusive research culture for all staff and research students, that is based on a clearly articulated strategy for research and enabling its impact, is engaged with the local and international research and user communities and is able to attract excellent postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers.</u></p> <p><u>Sustainability will be understood as the extent to which the research environment ensures the future health,</u></p>																				

(D) Assessment of Research Environment																											
Item	Subject	RAE 2020		Proposal for RAE 2026																							
				<p><u>diversity, wellbeing and wider contribution of the unit and the discipline(s), including investment in people and in infrastructure.</u></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>																							
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(E) RAE Results			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
(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>	<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>	<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><u>Sector-wide comments by each of the panels will be published, whilst each university will continue to receive their own RAE results confidentially in respect of research outputs at research area level.</u></p> <p><u>Submitted impact cases studies and videos (if the proposal is adopted), save for those exempted or information approved by the UGC for redaction, will be published on UGC's website as in RAE 2020. UGC will also publish the same information as a searchable database.</u></p>

(E) RAE Results			
Item	Subject	RAE 2020	Proposal for RAE 2026
(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.	UGC will decide on the funding methodology after the completion of the RAE 2026. Universities will be informed of the method used after the funding recommendations are accepted by the authorities.

RESTRICTED

Proposed Mapping of Units of Assessment and Subject Panels for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2026

Panel in RAE 2020 and proposed for RAE 2026 (Total: 13)	Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code & name) (Total: 41)		Proposed Unit of Assessment for RAE 2026 (code & name) (Total: 41) (with refinements in blue)		No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	% / Total No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	No. of Submitting University (ies) in RAE 2020
Biology	1	biological sciences (incl. environmental biology, biotechnology, agriculture & food science, veterinary studies)	1	biological sciences (incl. environmental biology, biotechnology, agriculture & food science, veterinary studies)	148	3.50%	6
	2	pre-clinical studies	2	pre-clinical studies	97	2.30%	3
			Sub-total :		245	5.80%	
Health Sciences	3	clinical medicine	3	clinical medicine	372	8.81%	2
	4	clinical dentistry	4	clinical dentistry	35	0.83%	1
	5	nursing, optometry, rehabilitation sciences and other health care professions	5	nursing, optometry, rehabilitation sciences and other health care professions (incl. pharmacy)	135	3.20%	3
	6	Chinese medicine	6	Chinese medicine	35	0.83%	3
			Sub-total :		577	13.66%	
Physical Sciences	7	physics & astronomy	7	physics & astronomy	93	2.20%	5
	8	materials science and materials technology	8	materials science and materials technology	42	0.99%	2
	9	chemistry	9	chemistry	120	2.84%	6
	10	earth sciences (incl. oceanography, meteorology) and other physical sciences (incl. environmental science)	10	earth sciences (incl. oceanography, meteorology) and other physical sciences (incl. environmental science)	46	1.09%	4
	11	mathematics and statistics	11	mathematics and statistics	185	4.38%	7
			Sub-total :		486	11.51%	
Electrical & Electronic Engineering	12	electrical & electronic engineering	12	electrical & electronic engineering	182	4.31%	5
			Sub-total :		182	4.31%	
Computer Science / Information Technology	13	computer studies/science (incl. information technology)	13	computer studies/science (incl. information technology)	183	4.33%	7
			Sub-total :		183	4.33%	

RESTRICTED

Appendix 1

Panel in RAE 2020 and proposed for RAE 2026 (Total: 13)	Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code & name) (Total: 41)		Proposed Unit of Assessment for RAE 2026 (code & name) (Total: 41)		No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	% / Total No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	No. of Submitting University (ies) in RAE 2020
Engineering	14	mechanical engineering, production engineering (incl. manufacturing & industrial engineering), textile technology and aerospace engineering	14	mechanical engineering, production engineering (incl. manufacturing & industrial engineering), textile technology and aerospace engineering	193	4.57%	5
	15	chemical engineering, biomedical engineering, other technologies (incl. environmental engineering & nautical studies) and marine engineering	15	chemical engineering, biomedical engineering, other technologies (incl. environmental engineering & nautical studies) and marine engineering	56	1.33%	4
			Sub-total :		249	5.90%	
Built Environment	16	civil engineering (incl. construction engineering & management) and building technology	16	civil engineering (incl. construction engineering & management) and building technology	145	3.43%	4
	17	architecture	17	architecture	35	0.83%	3
	18	planning and surveying (land and other)	18	planning and surveying (land, geo-spatial and other)	57	1.35%	3
			Sub-total :		237	5.61%	
Law	19	law	19	law	95	2.25%	3
			Sub-total :		95	2.25%	
Business & Economics	20	accountancy	20	accountancy	105	2.49%	7
	21	economics and finance	21	economics and financ	220	5.21%	7
	22	business	22	business	295	6.99%	7
	23	hotel management & tourism	23	hotel management & tourism	39	0.92%	1
			Sub-total :		659	15.61%	

RESTRICTED

Appendix 1

Panel in RAE 2020 and proposed for RAE 2026 (Total: 13)	Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code & name) (Total: 41)		Proposed Unit of Assessment for RAE 2026 (code & name) (Total: 41)		No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	% / Total No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	No. of Submitting University (ies) in RAE 2020
Social Sciences	24	psychology	24	psychology	71	1.68%	5
	25	political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)	25	political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)	105	2.49%	7
	26	geography	26	geography	44	1.04%	4
	27	sociology & anthropology	27	sociology & anthropology	81	1.92%	7
	28	social work and social policy	28	social work and social policy	108	2.56%	6
	29	communications & media studies	29	communications & media studies	55	1.30%	4
				Sub-total :	464	10.99%	
Humanities	30	Chinese language & literature	30	Chinese language & literature	100	2.37%	7
	31	English language & literature	31	English language & literature	68	1.61%	6
	32	translation	32	translation	22	0.52%	3
	33	linguistics & language studies	33	linguistics & language studies	85	2.01%	5
	34	history	34	history	61	1.44%	7
	35	area studies (e.g. Japanese studies, European studies, etc.), cultural studies and other arts/humanities	35	area studies (e.g. Japanese studies, European studies, etc.), cultural studies and other arts/humanities	88	2.08%	7
	36	philosophy	36	philosophy	32	0.76%	3
	37	religious studies	37	religious studies	28	0.66%	3
			Sub-total :	484	11.46%		
Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Design	38	visual arts, design, creative media, other creative arts and creative writing	38	visual arts, design, creative media, other creative arts and creative writing	103	2.44%	7
	39	music and performing arts	39	music and performing arts	29	0.69%	4
				Sub-total :	132	3.13%	

RESTRICTED

Appendix 1

Panel in RAE 2020 and proposed for RAE 2026 (Total: 13)	Unit of Assessment for RAE 2020 (code & name) (Total: 41)		Proposed Unit of Assessment for RAE 2026 (code & name) (Total: 41)		No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	% / Total No. of Eligible Staff in RAE 2020	No. of Submitting University (ies) in RAE 2020
Education	40	physical education, sport, recreation & physical activities	40	physical education, sport, recreation & physical activities	30	0.71%	3
	41	education (incl. curriculum & instruction, education administration & policy and other education)	41	education (incl. curriculum & instruction, education administration & policy and other education)	200	4.74%	5
				Sub-total :	230	5.45%	
				Total :	4223	100%	

Research Assessment Exercise 2026
Impact Case Study¹

University:

Unit of Assessment (UoA):

Title of case study:

Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in RAE 2020? Y/N
(if yes, please in particular specify the impact enabled in the assessment period)

- (1) Summary of the impact** (indicative maximum 100 words)

- (2) Underpinning research** (indicative maximum 500 words)

- (3) Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:**

- (4) References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

- (5) Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

- (6) Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

¹ 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 2026
University-level
Environment Overview Statement¹

University:

Total number of eligible staff of the university:

- (1) **Context and mission** (an overview of the size, structure, mission, and stage of development of the university in view of your role statement at Attachment 1)
- (2) **Research policy and strategy** (including for example: the institutional strategy for research (including what are the research strengths, research focus areas and the distribution of research activities across research areas), enabling impact, developing a sustainable research culture (including open access and open data policies, approach to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals, how interdisciplinary and collaborative research has been supported, how are research integrity and research ethics embedded in the institution), and how the overall institutional policy and strategy contribute to government priorities)
- (3) **People** (including (i) institutional staffing strategy, staff development and training (e.g. leave policies, equality and diversity agenda, measures/facilities for early career researchers/junior scholars/research students, etc.); and (ii) research student development and training)
- (4) **Research funding sources** (with breakdown by funding source as a percentage total of overall funding, and university-level resources, infrastructure, and facilities available to support research and impact)

¹ Maximum length and page format for submissions are prescribed below –

(a)

Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in university	Page limit (A4 size) for each university-level environment overview statement (including one page for attachment)
3 – 300	6
301 – 600	7
601 – 800	8
801 or more	9

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

Role Statement – Attachment 1²

University:

.....
.....
.....

² Maximum length and prescribed format: one A4 page per attachment, 2 cm margin all round.

Research Assessment Exercise 2026
Unit-of-Assessment-level
Environment Overview Statement¹

University:

Unit of Assessment (UoA):

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

- (1) UoA context and structure**

- (2) Research and impact strategy** (in the context to the above University policies provide evidence of the achievement of strategic aims for research and impact, with reference to the impact case studies submitted, during the assessment period; current/future strategic aims and goals for research and impact; how these relate to the structure of the unit; and how they will be taken forward)

- (3) Research integrity, research ethics and research culture** (highlighting specific examples of success and challenge with the UoA)

- (4) People** (including (i) evidence about staffing strategy, staff development and training within the submitted UoA (e.g. leave policies, equality and diversity agenda, measures for junior scholars, etc.); and (ii) support measures/facilities for research student development and training)

(Please also provide explanation in this section if there are any missing outputs in the UoA.)

- (5) Income (e.g. grants received), infrastructure and facilities**

- (6) Collaborations**

- (7) Esteem**

- (8) Contribution to the discipline or research base**

¹ Maximum length and page format for submissions are prescribed below –

(a)	Number of eligible academic staff (headcount) in the UoA	Page limit (A4 size) for each environment overview statement
	3 – 15	6
	16 – 30	8
	31 – 45	10
	46 or more	13

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

Research Assessment Exercise 2026
Environment Data

University:

Unit of Assessment (UoA):

(A) Staff Employed by the University Proper¹ of the UGC-funded University

(full time equivalent)	2019/20 (as at 31.10.2019)	2020/21 (as at 31.10.2020)	2021/22 (as at 31.10.2021)	2022/23 (as at 31.10.2022)	2023/24 (as at 31.10.2023)	2024/25 (as at 31.10.2024)
Wholly Funded by General Funds²						
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						
Partially Funded by General Funds² or Wholly Self-financed						
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						
Total						

(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.)

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

² 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)	1.9.2019 – 31.8.2020	1.9.2020 – 31.8.2021	1.9.2021 – 31.8.2022	1.9.2022 – 31.8.2023	1.9.2023 – 31.8.2024	1.9.2024 – 31.8.2025
UGC-funded Programmes						
Graduates of RPg programmes – doctoral degree						
Graduates of RPg programmes – master’s degree						
Non-UGC-funded Programmes						
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)	1.7.2019 – 30.6.2020	1.7.2020 – 30.6.2021	1.7.2021 – 30.6.2022	1.7.2022 – 30.6.2023	1.7.2023 – 30.6.2024	1.7.2024 – 30.6.2025
Research Grants						
Funded by UGC/RGC						
HKSAR Government and Government-related organisations ³						
HK private funds						
Non-HK ⁴						
Research Contracts						
HKSAR Government and Government-related organisations ³						
HK private funds						
Non-HK ⁴						

(ii) By Role of University

(aggregate %)	1.7.2019 – 30.6.2020	1.7.2020 – 30.6.2021	1.7.2021 – 30.6.2022	1.7.2022 – 30.6.2023	1.7.2023 – 30.6.2024	1.7.2024 – 30.6.2025
Research Grants/Contracts						
Coordinating						
Participating for joint research or others						

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

⁴ 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.

**Consultation on Proposed Framework for
Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2026****Reply Form****Name of University :** _____**Contact Person and Details :**
(Name, Post, Telephone No. and
Email Address) _____

(Please return by 7 July 2023 the completed reply form to the UGC Secretariat in softcopy in MS Word format (email address: wendychan@ugc.edu.hk).)

(A) Overall		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(1)	Primary purpose/ Objectives	
(2)	Principles	
(3)	Scope of research	
(4)	Elements of assessment and respective weightings	
(5)	Period of assessment	
(6)	Number of universities covered	
(7)	Number of units of assessment and RAE panels	
(8)	Composition of RAE panels	

(A) Overall		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(9)	Panel assessment method	
(10)	External reviews by non-RAE panel members	
(11)	Staff eligibility	
(12)	Research Strategy Statements ¹	
(13)	Submission format	

(B) Assessment of Research Outputs		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(14)	Definition of research output	
(15)	Assessment period	
(16)	Submission requirements	
(17)	Assessment criteria	
(18)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	

¹ Please refer to Enclosure 1 for details.

(C) Assessment of Research Impact		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(19)	Definition of impact	
(20)	Assessment period	
(21)	Submission requirements	
(22)	Assessment criteria	
(23)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	

(D) Assessment of Research Environment		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(24)	Definition of environment	
(25)	Assessment period	
(26)	Submission requirements	
(27)	Assessment criteria	
(28)	Categories and definitions of quality levels	

(E) RAE Results		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(29)	Overall quality profile	

(E) RAE Results		
Item	Subject	Views / Comments
(30)	Release of RAE results	
(31)	Translating RAE results into funding decision	

**Research Assessment Exercise 2026
Nominations for Panel Membership**

(A) Guiding Principles

- (I) Nominees should have –
- (a) exceptional academic standing, research strength and reputation;
 - (b) research expertise in the related fields;
 - (c) expertise in commissioning, applying or making use of research;
 - (d) understanding of research quality standards internationally; and preferably the experience of research assessment in Hong Kong and/or other jurisdictions;
 - (e) impartiality; and
 - (f) open-mindedness.
- (II) For Panel Convenors and Deputy Convenors
- In addition to the criteria in (a) to (f) above, Panel Convenors and Deputy Convenors should have experience of chairing committees/groups, ability to lead the panel, and appropriate standing in the higher education community, from outside Hong Kong (i.e. non-local).
- (III) Nominations should exclude academics holding position at deanship or above in the UGC-funded universities from being appointed as members of RAE panels to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest.
- (IV) It is strongly recommended that universities should strive for a diversity of nominees, in particular of gender and representation from Asia.

(B) Information Required for the Nominations

- (a) Name, post title and organisation;
- (b) nominated role, including Panel Convenor/Deputy Convenor/Member and whether can serve the role as research end-user in making assessment of research impact;
- (c) nominated panel/unit of assessment*;
- (d) contact details;
- (e) academic/non-academic;
- (f) areas of expertise;
- (g) inter-disciplinary expertise;

* Please refer to the list of panels and units of assessment attached to the Framework for the Research Assessment Exercise 2026.

- (h) experience of research assessment in Hong Kong and/or other jurisdictions;
and
- (i) any potential conflict of interest of the nominees, joint collaboration and/or association of the nominees with the nominating parties.

**Research Assessment Exercise 2026
List of Professional Bodies and Learned Societies
to be Invited for Nomination for Panel Membership**

Reply Form

Name of University :

**Contact Person and Details :
(Name, Post, Telephone No. and
Email Address)**

Please return the completed reply form to the UGC Secretariat by 30 September 2023 in softcopy in MS Word format (email address: wendychan@ugc.edu.hk).

Proposed List of Professional Bodies and Learned Societies

Names	Details (e.g. website URL, contact details, etc.)