Open Forum on RAE 2026 Assessment Criteria

UGC 大學教育資助委員會
University Grants Committee

研究評審工作
Research **A**ssessment **E**xercise **2026** HONG KONG

大學教育資助委員會
UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE

Brief Overview of Assessment Guidelines

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RAE 2026

- Expert review exercise using *international benchmarks* to assess the research quality of universities and delineate their areas of relative strengths

- 13 assessment panels to conduct the expert review of submissions on *research outputs, impact* and *environment*

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RAE 2026 Guidelines

- **Framework** – sets out the constitutional structure of the RAE [announced in October 2023];

- **Guidance Notes** – for universities making submissions [announced in July 2024];

- **General Panel Guidelines** – guidance and instructions to all the 13 assessment panels; and

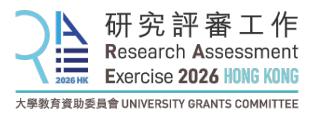- **Panel Specific Guidelines** – lay down the working methods specific to individual panels.

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Assessing ROs

➤ Criteria of RO in GPG#15;

> contains an element of **new insights or innovation**

> contribute to **scholarship** or transfer of **knowledge**

> **publicly accessible or effectively shared** in the profession

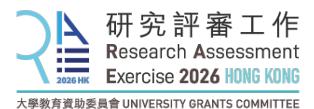➤ Panels will further specify in PSG#11-13 whether an item would be accepted (or not).

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Assessing ROs

Originality	Significance	Rigour

- GPG#19: Originality, Significance, Rigour;
- Panels to exercise professional judgement, with regard to the quality pitching at the **best international norms** and the standards of scholarship expected internationally;
- Individual assessors to grade and panels to make a collective decision on the final grading (viz. 4*, 3*, 2*, 1*, u/c).

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Assessing ROs - Considerations

➢ NOT to adopt a mechanical approach during assessment;

➢ limitations and variability of citation data/metrics within and between disciplines;

➢ Citation data/metrics, if used as <u>secondary</u> information, should be specified in the PSG for universities' information.

Assessing IM

✓ **Wide range of impact areas beyond academia**

- RAE 2020 Impact Database (impact. ugc.edu.hk)

- UK REF 2021

- **Panels will give further examples in PSG#30**

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Assessing IM

✓ Evidence of Impact

➢ **Panels will provide examples in PSG#30**

➢ **Examples:**

Quantitative Indicators (publication and sales figures, etc.)	**Critiques or Citations in users documents**	**Public Engagement (media coverage, etc)**
Policy Engagements (influence on public policy debate and practice, etc.)	**Independent Testimony (acknowledgement in publications, etc.)**	**Formal Evaluations (professional evaluation, formal peer review, etc.)**

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Assessing IM

Reach	Significance

- GPG#53: Reach and Significance;
- Panels to form an overall view of reach and significance **as a whole**;
- Having regard to disciplinary differences and NOT in terms of the type of research underpinning the impact cases;
- Collective profile rating (viz. 4*, 3*, 2*, 1*, u/c) on the merits of each submission

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Assessing EN – Aspects in the UoA EN Statement

- **research and impact strategy:**
  - achievement of strategic aims for research and impact
  - current/future strategic aims & goals
  - how these relate to the structure of the unit; and
  - how they will be taken forward.
- **research integrity and research ethics:**
  - highlights of success and challenge with the UoA; and
  - mechanisms by which standards of research quality and integrity are maintained.

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Assessing EN – Aspects in the UoA EN Statement

➢ **people:**
  ➢ evidence about staffing strategy, staff development and training, etc.
➢ **income, infrastructure and facilities**

  [Note: not measuring the scale of the universities, but how best they are using the resources available]

➢ **collaborations**

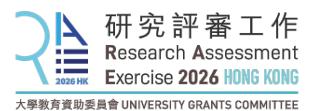➢ **esteem**

➢ **contribution to the discipline or research base**

Assessing EN

Vitality	Sustainability

- ➢ GPG#63: Vitality and Sustainability;
- ➢ Panels to decide whether to assess as a whole or to attach weighting to aspects within EN;
- ➢ Give profile rating (viz. 4*, 3*, 2*, 1*, u/c) on the whole or individual aspects;
- ➢ NOT judge automatically in terms of scale. Suitable level of diversity will be regarded positively.

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Thank You