

**Research Assessment Exercise 2026**  
**Panel 10 – Social Sciences**  
**Panel-specific Guidelines on**  
**Assessment Criteria and Working Methods**  
(October 2024)

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## Introduction

1. This document sets out the assessment criteria and working methods that the Social Sciences Panel of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2026 will apply. It should be read alongside the General Panel Guidelines of the exercise. The provisions set out in this document serve as further elaboration and amplification on the assessment criteria and working methods as applied to the Social Sciences Panel. In areas where no additional information has been specified, the provisions in the General Panel Guidelines will prevail and apply in the assessment process of the Panel. These guidelines do not replace or supersede the requirements for submissions that are set out in the Guidance Notes for RAE 2026.

2. This document describes the criteria and methods for assessing submissions in the Social Sciences Panel. It provides guidance on the type of information required in the submissions. It also provides a single, consistent set of criteria that will be applied by the Panel and sub-group(s)/sub-panel(s), if any, when undertaking the assessment having regard to any differences in the nature of disciplines of respective units of assessment (“UoAs”) under purview. It also provides a common approach to the working methods applied within the Panel.

## **Section A: Submissions**

### **UoAs under the Panel**

3. The Social Sciences Panel will assess universities' submissions from the following UoAs –

<u>Code</u>	<u>UoAs</u>
24	psychology
25	political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)
26	geography
27	sociology & anthropology
28	social work and social policy
29	communications & media studies

4. The Panel expects to receive submissions whose primary research focus falls within the respective remit of the above UoAs. The UoAs under the Panel's remit cover the full spectrum of the Social Sciences. Social science is the study of society and the way people behave and influence the world around us. Social science tells us about the world beyond our immediate experience and can help explain how our own society works – from the causes of unemployment or what helps economic growth, to how and why people vote, or what makes people happy. It provides vital information for governments and policymakers, non-governmental organisations and others. Social science involves acquisition of knowledge through rigorous investigation, using many different methodologies. All the UoAs listed above engage in selected fields of social science.

Unit of assessment descriptors and boundaries

#### **Unit of Assessment 24: psychology**

4.1 The UoA includes research into all aspects of psychology. The Panel expects submissions covering the full range of the discipline from all areas of psychology, including theoretical and translational work. Sub-disciplines include: developmental

psychology, educational psychology, clinical psychology, social psychology, biological psychology (including neuroscience and physiology), neuropsychology, cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, cross-cultural psychology, psychology of aging, counselling psychology.

4.2 Animal or human studies to understand brain, psychological and mental functioning may employ a range of research designs and methodologies including, but not limited to, controlled experiments, neuro-imaging paradigms, technological assays, computer simulation, statistical inference, meta-analysis, qualitative, interpretative and descriptive research. These methods may be applied in a variety of applications, covering psychometric assessment, therapy and education for the promotion of well-being and mental health, public health policies and public administration. The Panel is aware of the breadth of this remit, which will cover submissions that inform, or have the potential to inform, practice as well as submissions reporting theoretical and methodological advances in basic research.

4.3 Note that research outputs primarily within the field of clinical psychology are appropriate for this panel (Panel 10 – Social Sciences), whereas research outputs primarily within the field of psychiatry should be submitted to Panel 2 – Health Sciences.

Unit of Assessment 25: political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)

4.4 The UoA includes research into comparative, regional, national and subnational politics; public policy and administration studies; political behaviour and political sociology; political economy; ethnicity, gender and politics; political theory and philosophy, including history of political thought; international relations, including strategic, war and peace studies, military technology, international history, international political economy and foreign policy analysis; methods in political studies; studies of philanthropy and non-profit policy and management. A wide range of methods are used in researching these topics, ranging from philosophical argument about the nature and justification of political systems to detailed statistical studies of elector behaviour,

archival research into the decisions of governments and other institutions.

4.5 Work in this UoA may overlap with, in this Panel (political) sociology, communication and media studies, social policy and elsewhere in the Humanities Panel. These submissions will be assessed using joint assessors within the Panel or through cross-referral to other panels.

#### Unit of Assessment 26: geography

4.6 The UoA includes research into all aspects of research – conceptual, methodological, substantive and applied – conducted within the discipline of geography including environmental studies. This research embraces a wide range of enquiries into natural, environmental and human phenomena, and their interrelationships in systems, contexts, periods and locations. The Panel expects submissions from all fields of human geography, including: environmental change, environmental geography, behavioural geography, development geography, economic geography, health geography, political geography, population geography, historical geography, social geography, cultural geography, urban and rural geography, transport geography, geospatial information sciences.

4.7 The UoA includes work that combines any of these sub-fields; and work that uses a wide range of available methods, from those based on quantitative and statistical evidence to humanistic and participatory, from the abstract to the experimental and field-based. Submitted research may include, in addition to the list above, work in governance, management and policy, conservation, environmental pollution, and resource management. The UoA also includes work on geographical and environmental techniques, including remote sensing and geospatial analyses.

4.8 Given the breadth of the subject matter of geography there are likely to be some overlaps with other UoAs. The expectation is that submissions to UoA 26 that overlap with cognate fields will normally involve research in such areas that are integral to research programmes and research environments in

geography. Where a submission's main research emphasis lies elsewhere, it should be submitted in a more appropriate UoA. Where there is significant overlap between UoA 26 and another UoA not included in the remit of Social Sciences Panel, it is expected that whole submissions will be made in the UoA appropriate to the academic context and research environment in which the research was undertaken, and with the most appropriate range of expertise for the body of work.

### Unit of Assessment 27: sociology & anthropology

4.9 The UoA includes research into all topics of research within the disciplines of sociology and anthropology, including research that is conceptual, theoretical, empirical, applied, strategic and practice-based. Research includes empirical and theoretical study of the structures, cultures and everyday practices of societies, including life-styles and material standards of living, opinions, values and institutions; social and anthropological theory and philosophy; historical and comparative studies; and research on pedagogy.

4.10 The Panel recognises that this UoA covers two broad fields of research which are often distinct both organisationally and academically: sociology and anthropology. The Panel welcomes submissions that reflect this. It also recognises that the activities are often rooted in quite distinct research traditions or infrastructures. It will assess research on its merits in both broad fields.

4.11 The Panel expects submissions from all fields of enquiry in sociology including, research on cultures, economies, and politics; stratification and mobility; class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, and age; their intersections; religion, education, health and medicine, family, media, welfare institutions, work and employment; environment, technology, and climate change; the body, interpersonal and inter-group relations, violence; urban and rural issues; language and social interaction; political sociology, public policy, and social movements; political economy, globalisation, development, migration, and diaspora;

comparative studies of societies of all kinds, including work on transnational structures and agencies.

4.12 Anthropological enquiry includes the fields of biological anthropology, social anthropology, cultural anthropology and archaeology, economic and political anthropology; kinship, gender and relatedness; religion and cognition; medical anthropology; environment, conservation and biodiversity; the anthropology of development; visual anthropology; ethnomusicology and performance; and material culture. Biological anthropology includes human and non-human primate evolution and adaptation; palaeoanthropology; human behaviour, growth and development; health and disease; ecology, conservation, genetics, demography; and forensic applications.

4.13 Sociology and anthropology draw on a range of methodologies including qualitative, quantitative, visual, field-based, laboratory-based, experimental, participatory, evaluative, visual and comparative.

4.14 The Panel welcomes sociological and anthropological research in such inter-disciplinary fields as: criminology and socio-legal studies; media and cultural studies; demography; socio-linguistics, psychosocial studies; studies of science and technology; women's studies; and studies of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and inter-sex communities. Such work may overlap with the remit of other disciplines and will be assessed using joint assessors within the Panel or through cross-referral to other panels.

#### Unit of Assessment 28: social work and social policy

4.15 The UoA expects to receive all forms of research in social work, social policy and administration criminology and social gerontology, including those in governmental, voluntary and community, private for profit and not for profit areas. The field includes: (a) theory, methodology, empirical research, ethics and values, and pedagogy as they apply to social work, social care, social policy, criminology and criminal justice policy, gerontology and substantive issues in these areas of study; (b) social work practice with children and families, older people, people with

disabilities, mental health issues and learning disabilities; (c) methods of social interventions from “clinical” social work to community work, (d) comparative research and research into international institutions, policy and practice; (e) research that uses a range of disciplinary approaches including (but not exclusively) the following: business and management, demography, development studies, economics, education, geography, health studies, history, law, politics, psychology and sociology; (f) research in collaboration with other stakeholders, professionals, service users and carers; and (g) policy-making processes, practice, governance and management, service design, delivery and use, and inter-professional relationships.

4.16 Social work, social policy and administration, and criminology are essentially multidisciplinary subjects and are closely related to a range of other disciplines within the social sciences. Work in this UoA will overlap with the remit of other disciplines, particularly sociology, and also psychology, and political science (public policy) and this will be assessed using joint assessors within the Panel or through cross-referral to other panels. Submissions concerning the integration of social work and social care with health services will be considered as interdisciplinary; those focused on health and alternative medicine (e.g. acupuncture) will be referred to the Health Sciences Panel.

#### Unit of Assessment 29: communications & media studies

4.17 The Panel recognises the rich diversity of research in communications and media studies and welcomes all outputs arising from this research, in whatever genre or medium, that can be demonstrated to meet the definition of research set out in the General Panel Guidelines. The Panel recognises that UoA 29 covers two broad fields of research which are often distinct both organisationally and academically: communications and media studies. The Panel welcomes submissions that reflect this. It also recognises that the activities are often rooted in quite distinct research traditions or departments.

4.18 The UoA includes research that addresses or deploys theory, history, institutional, policy, textual, critical and/or



empirical analysis, or practice within communication, culture, media (including social media), journalism and film studies. This work is likely to emanate from units in communication studies, cultural studies, media studies, journalism, or film and television studies. This work will include research on print media, broadcasting and the moving image, and will include computer-mediated communication, popular culture, and diverse information and communication technologies, which will be variably titled and organised. Much will also be conducted in units or departments situated elsewhere within the social sciences, arts or humanities.

4.19 The Panel will assess research which addresses (but is not confined to): policy for regulation of culture and the media; the organisation, institutions, political economy and practice of cultural production; media and cultural texts, forms and practices; and media and cultural audiences, consumption and reception, including questions of power, identity and difference.

4.20 UoA 29 also includes research concerned with the management of information and knowledge in all formats, namely librarianship and information science, archives and records management, and information systems. This may include: research on the generation, dissemination and publication, exploitation and evaluation of information and knowledge; information policy; information media; information literacy; systems thinking; systems development; knowledge management systems; information retrieval; preservation and conservation; impact assessment; digital humanities; and historical and cultural aspects of the disciplines.

## **Inter-disciplinary Research**

5. The Panel recognises that certain aspects of research are naturally inter-disciplinary or span the boundaries between individual UoAs, whether within the panel or across panels. The Panel will adopt the arrangements for assessing inter-disciplinary submissions as set out in paragraphs 39-40 of the General Panel Guidelines.



6. The Panel will have members who cover the fields of all UoAs listed in paragraph 3, so that inter-disciplinary research combining any of the UoAs can be considered by members from appropriate disciplines. Possible areas of overlap between the Panel's UoAs and UoAs outside of the Panel's remit may require cross-referral to another panel. The area of inter-disciplinary research relevant to the Social Sciences Panel include, but not restricted to, the following:

6.1 For psychology (UoA 24), there may be overlaps with UoAs in Panel 1 – Biology or Panel 2 – Health Sciences.

6.2 For political science (UoA 25), there may be overlaps with UoAs in Panel 8 – Law.

6.3 For geography (UoA 26), there may be overlaps with UoAs in Panel 1 – Biology, Panel 3 – Physical Sciences especially UoA 10 (earth sciences), Panel 7 – Built Environment especially UoA 18 (planning and surveying), with Panel 11 – Humanities especially with UoA 34 (history) or UoA 35 (area studies).

6.4 For sociology & anthropology (UoA 27) there may be overlaps with UoAs in Panel 2 – Health Sciences or Panel 9 – Business & Economics especially UoA 21 (economics and finance). In the field of gender and women's studies, there may be considerable overlaps with humanities and history as well as within the Panel with social work and social policy, psychology and political science.

6.5 For social work and social policy (UoA 28), there may be overlaps with Panel 2 – Health Sciences or Panel 8 – Law and within the panel, with sociology and anthropology,

6.6 For communications & media studies (UoA 29), there may be overlaps with Panel 11 – Humanities or Panel 12 – Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Design.

6.7 Social gerontology, is a strongly inter-disciplinary field, which may be presented under social work and social policy, sociology / medical sociology and psychology. It may also be presented in Panel 2 – Health Sciences, medicine and nursing, and

other disciplines.

6.8 Criminology and criminal justice research straddles social work and social policy, sociology, psychology and law (socio-legal studies).

### Assignment of Eligible Academic Staff in Each UoA

7. Pursuant to paragraphs 7-11 of the General Panel Guidelines, the Social Sciences Panel expects to receive information on any sub-discipline(s) under a research area that each eligible staff member and respective research output(s) belong to. With reference to the list of sub-disciplines below, each eligible staff member could have up to four sub-disciplines applied, or the number of sub-discipline(s) equivalent to the number of his/her submitted output(s), whichever is lower. An output could have one sub-discipline applied, which must be one of the staff member's sub-discipline(s).

7.1 The list of sub-disciplines provided is not exhaustive, neither are the sub-disciplines precisely defined. If universities or eligible staff members are uncertain about the research area or sub-discipline that should be assigned to an output, the Panel Convenor and Deputy Convenor will exercise their discretion in allocating that output for assessment to the most appropriate panel members.

#### List of Sub-disciplines of UoAs 24 - 29

<u>UoAs</u> <u>(Research Areas)</u>	<u>Sub-disciplines</u>	
24 psychology  (24a psychology)	24a-01	developmental psychology
	24a-02	educational psychology
	24a-03	clinical psychology
	24a-04	counselling psychology
	24a-05	social psychology
	24a-06	occupational psychology
	24a-07	industrial organisational psychology
	24a-08	biological psychology (including neuroscience and physiology)

<u>UoAs</u> ( <u>Research Areas</u> )	<u>Sub-disciplines</u>	
	24a-09	neuropsychology
	24a-10	cognitive psychology
	24a-11	psycholinguistics
	24a-12	cross-cultural psychology
	24a-13	psychology of aging
	24a-14	other psychology
25 political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations)  (25a political science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations))	25a-01	comparative politics
	25a-02	regional politics <sup>1</sup> and national politics
	25a-03	local and urban politics
	25a-04	public policy & administration studies
	25a-05	political behaviour and political sociology
	25a-06	national and international political economy
	25a-07	ethnicity, gender and politics
	25a-08	political theory and philosophy
	25a-09	international relations (including strategic)
	25a-10	war and peace studies (including military technology)
	25a-11	foreign policy analysis
	25a-12	methods in political studies
	25a-13	philanthropy and non-profit policy and management
	25a-14	other political science
26 geography  (26a geography)	26a-01	environmental change
	26a-02	environmental geography
	26a-03	behavioural geography
	26a-04	development geography
	26a-05	economic geography
	26a-06	health geography
	26a-07	political geography
	26a-08	population geography

<sup>1</sup> East Asia, South and Southeast Asia, Oceania, Middle East and North Africa and Central Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America

<u>UoAs</u> ( <u>Research Areas</u> )	<u>Sub-disciplines</u>	
	26a-09	historical geography
	26a-10	social geography
	26a-11	cultural geography
	26a-12	urban and rural geographies
	26a-13	transport geography
	26a-14	geographical information sciences
	26a-15	other geography
27 sociology & anthropology  (27a sociology & anthropology)	27a-01	crime and deviance
	27a-02	sociology of culture
	27a-03	sociology of education
	27a-04	economic sociology (including economic transition, labour, and organisations)
	27a-05	environmental sociology
	27a-06	sociology of gender and sexuality
	27a-07	political sociology
	27a-08	social demography (including aging, family and marriage, health, migration)
	27a-09	social stratification, inequality, and mobility
	27a-10	urban sociology
	27a-11	social statistics
	27a-12	other sociology
	27a-13	social anthropology
	27a-14	cultural anthropology
	27a-15	economic anthropology
	27a-16	political anthropology
	27a-17	other anthropology
28 social work and social policy  (28a social work; 28b other social studies)*	28z-01	research on social work and social care practice (including community work)
	28z-02	social work education
	28z-03	child and family social work (including abuse & neglect)

<u>UoAs</u> ( <u>Research Areas</u> )	<u>Sub-disciplines</u>	
	28z-04	social work and health/mental health/disability/addiction
	28z-05	social work and schools
	28z-06	social care adults and older people
	28z-07	social services management and supervision
	28z-08	other social work
	28z-09	social policy and administration
	28z-10	comparative social welfare systems
	28z-11	criminology and criminal justice policy
	28z-12	social gerontology
	28z-13	other
29 communications & media studies  (29a communications & media studies)	29a-01	communication studies
	29a-02	cultural studies
	29a-03	media studies
	29a-04	journalism
	29a-05	film and television studies

\*A special code “z” is designated to denote sub-disciplines grouped under more than one research area.

8. It is critical that research outputs are assessed by the most appropriate panel. If the Panel suspects any anomaly regarding universities’ assignment of eligible academic staff (and therefore their outputs) to research area(s) and UoA(s) under its remit, it will follow the procedures for re-assignment of eligible staff according to paragraphs 10-11 of the General Panel Guidelines. The Panel also recognises its responsibility to handle submissions arising from any re-assignment of eligible academic staff to the Panel.

## **Section B: Assessment Criteria: Research Outputs**

### **Output Types**

9. The Social Sciences Panel will consider the eligibility of research outputs as described in paragraphs 15-17 of the General Panel Guidelines, paragraphs 5.7-5.11 and Appendix E of the Guidance Notes.

10. The Panel will assess the quality of each eligible output on its own merits and not in terms of its publication category, medium or language of publication. The Panel will examine each item in detail and will not assess outputs mechanistically according to the publication venue. The Panel recognises that there can be work of the highest quality in various output forms, and no distinction will be made between types of output submitted nor whether the output has been made available electronically or in a physical form.

11. Forms of research outputs that are admissible and specifically relevant to the Social Sciences Panel include the following examples. This should not be regarded as an exhaustive list. Equally, there is no implication of priority or importance in the ordering of examples in this list –

- books and book chapters which report and analyse original research and scholarship (not textbooks).
- research monographs.
- published research reports commissioned by government departments and NGOs.
- published papers in peer-reviewed journals and e-publication ahead of print. For peer reviewed publications, the Panel reminds that the DOI of any published supplementary material should be provided in the submission.
- published pedagogic manuals which contain original research and scholarship.
- systematic reviews and scoping review articles where these incorporate new research, new syntheses or meta-analyses.
- non-traditional research such as documentary film and photographic essays.

11.1 The following outlets in the social sciences are considered unlikely to provide sufficient scope to demonstrate originality, significance and rigour –

- published conference proceedings and open datasets/databases;
- review papers;
- short communications;
- translated works;
- textbooks; and
- technical notes.

11.2 Please note the requirements for an abstract that includes a clear indication of what new insights or innovation are presented in outputs, as at paragraph 18(a) of the General Panel Guidelines.

12. Research outputs will be assessed for the quality of original research they include.

12.1 The Panel will accept the submission of review articles only where they contain a significant component of unpublished research or new and integrative insight. Such outputs will be judged only on their original research or novelty of insight.

12.2 The Panel recognises the value of careful refereeing of papers submitted to academic publishing outlets through a process of peer review. Where outputs have not been subject to formal peer-review or refereeing processes, a brief note should be provided explaining what quality review has been carried out.

12.3 Outputs placed in open repositories should be accompanied by evidence of post-publication review.

12.4 The Panel will expect edited books and special issues to have a significant and original contribution by the editor, which will be assessed as a research output. Edited books and special issues will not be considered as a single output which is attributed to



the editor(s).

12.5 The Panel considers that the outputs of intervention studies e.g. trials built on existing conceptual or theoretical frameworks or modified on previous similar interventions, are likely to score less highly for originality.

12.6 Outputs from the same eligible member of staff should not include a significant amount of material in common (for example, the same material might have been published as both a book chapter and a journal article).

12.7 Practice-based outputs (e.g. software such as educational games embodying research findings, documentary film) or commissioned research outputs should be accompanied by a short text note explaining their content.

12.8 Reports should be accompanied by a short explanation of the review process that led to their selection for presentation or publication.

12.9 The Panel will expect that translations, transcriptions of interviews and reproductions of documents should be accompanied by a significant and original analytical component.

13. The Panel will consider subsequent editions of previous work only where they contain a significant component of previously unpublished research. Material that appeared in editions published before 1 October 2019 will not be assessed.

14. Other than the requirement in paragraph 18(a) of the General Panel Guidelines, the Panel does not require a brief statement of no more than 100 words be submitted for each output item to specify the originality and significance of the output.

### **Double-weighting of Research Outputs**

15. Paragraphs 29-31 of the General Panel Guidelines indicate that in exceptional cases a submitting university may request that outputs of extended scale and scope be double-weighted in the assessment. In view

of the established practice in social sciences of publishing major research outputs in the form of extended monographs, the Panel recognises that there may be outputs of such scale and scope and will consider the items submitted for double-weighting in line with the General Panel Guidelines. The Panel welcomes applications for double weighting where the research output is equivalent to two papers at least. These could include books and research monographs and substantial commissioned research reports.

16. When requesting for double-weighting of an output, universities should submit a statement in not more than 100 words, explaining in what ways the output is of sufficiently extended scale and scope to justify the claim. The Panel will decide whether to double-weight the output, based on the submitted statement and reading. The Panel will consider a sole-authored monograph to be equivalent to requiring research effort for producing two single outputs.

### **Co-authored/Co-produced Outputs**

17. The Panel affirms the principles and arrangements on assessing co-authored/co-produced research outputs as set out in paragraphs 32-34 of the General Panel Guidelines.

18. The Panel will consider co-authorship to be a normal element of research activity in social sciences and consider all named co-authors to have made a significant contribution to the research process leading to the output concerned where there are six co-authors or fewer. In assessing co-authored/co-produced outputs, the Panel would particularly require information of no more than 100 words regarding the author's specific contribution(s) (e.g. research design, data analysis, writing the output) when there are more than six co-authors and where the submitting author is not a main author (i.e. first, corresponding or last, according to disciplinary conventions).

### **Non-traditional Outputs**

19. The Panel will handle research outputs in non-traditional form according to paragraphs 35-37 of the General Panel Guidelines. The Panel expects to receive additional information of no more than 300 words about each non-traditional output in terms of its novelty, significance, method used to ensure academic rigour in the production of the output,

deliverables, and dissemination method. For submissions involving recordings, images or photographs, the Panel would expect the contents are of good quality in at least MP3 standard audio and high definition 1280 × 720 video resolution for recordings and 300 dpi (dots per inch) for images/photographs respectively.

### **Criteria and Quality Levels for Assessing Research Outputs**

20. Panel members will use their professional judgement with reference to international standards in assessing research outputs.

21. In assessing outputs, the Panel will look for evidence of originality, significance and rigour, and will grade each output into one of the five categories of quality level as set out in paragraph 19 of the General Panel Guidelines. The generic description of the quality levels as set out in paragraph 20 of the General Panel Guidelines will be applied in the Panel's assessment.

22. The Social Sciences Panel provides the following amplifications on the criteria of assessing research outputs –

- 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; propose new paradigm shift; 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.
- 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.

- 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.

23. In addition, the Panel provides the following advice on their understanding of the quality definitions adopted for assessing research outputs. The Panel will take into consideration the following characteristics in particular –

- scientific rigour and excellence with regard to the design, research method, execution and analysis of the work or in the arguments and conclusions of theoretical work.
- whether or not the output has been subject to peer-review.
- significant addition to knowledge and to the conceptual framework of the field.
- potential and actual significance of the research both within and beyond the field concerned.
- the scale, challenge and logistical difficulty posed by the research.
- the logical coherence of argument.
- contribution to theory-building.
- significance of work to advance knowledge, skills, understanding and scholarship in theory, practice, education, management and/or policy.
- The Panel will equally value English language and non-English language outputs.

### **Metrics/Citation Data**

24. The Panel will not use metrics such as journal impact factors or citation data to inform the assessment of outputs. Each output will be assessed by the panel on its own merits.

25. *(Template paragraph deleted.)*

## **Additional Information on Research Outputs**

26. Other than the information required on research outputs as specified in the Guidance Notes, and unless specifically required by the Panel during the assessment process, no other information should be provided. The Panel will take no account of any such information if submitted.

## **Section C: Assessment Criteria: Research Impact**

### **Range of Impacts**

27. The Social Sciences Panel will accept submissions on research impacts that meet the generic definition and criteria as set out in paragraphs 47-49 of the General Panel Guidelines.

28. The Panel will assess the quality of all eligible impact submissions based on their merits on equal footing with no consideration given to the differences among submitting universities/units in terms of staff size, resources and histories. The Panel recognises that impacts within its remit can be manifested in various ways and may occur in a wide range of spheres whether locally, regionally or internationally.

29. Examples are provided to illustrate the range of potential impacts from research across the Social Sciences Panel in Table A. These examples are indicative only and are not exhaustive or exclusive. Equally, there is no implication of priority or importance in the ordering of examples in the list. The panel does not consider continuing professional developments courses by themselves to constitute research impact. However, these could form part of a wider impact case where the course has been designed specifically to train professions to implement a new intervention and the training has demonstrably led to improvements in the delivery of services and benefits to service users and/or carers.

30. Universities are expected to submit their strongest impact cases and not to align submitted cases specifically with the particular types of impact listed, as an impact case may describe more than one type of impact, such as a new social or psychological intervention can generate health and economic impact / a new energy technology can generate environmental

and production impact / a new knowledge or a new method can contribute to public policy and social welfare.

Table A: Examples of Impact<sup>2</sup>

<p><u>Impacts on the economy</u> <i>where the beneficiaries may include businesses, enterprises, governments, workers, consumers, tax payers or benefit recipients</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gains in productivity have been realised through research-led practices.</li> <li>• A spin-off or new business has been created, established its viability, or generated revenue or profits.</li> <li>• Contributing to economic prosperity, innovation and entrepreneurial activities through research-led practices.</li> <li>• Persuading national and international bodies to consider natural capital in their economic and resource planning.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Impacts on the environment</u> <i>where the beneficiaries may include people, flora or fauna experiencing environmental hazards or degradation, or environmental organisations concerned with preventing or mitigating environmental hazards or degradation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The management of an environment risk or hazard has changed.</li> <li>• The management or conservation of natural resources (e.g. water) has been influenced or changed.</li> <li>• Changes in practices or policies affecting biodiversity.</li> <li>• Influencing international climate mitigation strategies.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Examples of impact case studies in RAE 2020 may be accessed online at <<https://impact.ugc.edu.hk/>> and <<https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/activity/research/rae/2020/impacts/submissions.html>>. Other examples of research impact as assessed in other jurisdictions may be accessible online such as <<https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/impact>> from the United Kingdom.

Universities may also refer to examples of impacts and indicators detailed in Annex A of <[https://2021.ref.ac.uk/media/1450/ref-2019\\_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf](https://2021.ref.ac.uk/media/1450/ref-2019_02-panel-criteria-and-working-methods.pdf)> of the United Kingdom Research Excellence Framework 2021.

<p><u>Impacts on health</u>  <i>where the beneficiaries may include patients experiencing actual or potential ill-health, health treatment or maintenance organisations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions by health service or regulatory authority have been informed by research.</li> <li>• Development or adoption of new indicators of health or well-being.</li> <li>• Using names analysis to add ethnic, cultural or linguistic markers to health studies and trials.</li> <li>• Raising awareness of public health hazards or solutions.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Impacts on public policy and services</u>  <i>where the beneficiaries may include governments, public bodies and agencies determining public policy or delivering services, the beneficiaries of policy changes or recipients of public services</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy decisions or changes to legislation, regulations or guidelines have been informed by research.</li> <li>• Research stimulates public debate, increasing government transparency and accountability.</li> <li>• Research helps improve standards of governance or public agencies' work practices.</li> <li>• Courts, commissions of inquiry, or government task forces draw on researcher's expert testimony.</li> <li>• Influencing the design of legislative constituencies to achieve a fairer representation across geographical areas in a country.</li> </ul>



<p><u>Impacts on quality of life and welfare</u></p> <p><i>where the beneficiaries may include individuals, families and households, particularly those experiencing poverty or other forms of marginalisation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved provision or access to services or innovations in service delivery which lead to better outcomes for service users.</li> <li>• Improved standards of training resulting in greater effectiveness in practice.</li> <li>• Investigating the income required for individuals and households to live a reasonable life (the living wage) and persuading different organisations, companies and governments to adopt the standard.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Impacts on society and culture</u></p> <p><i>where the beneficiaries may include individuals, families and households in different social or cultural groups, social or cultural organisations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The awareness, attitudes or understanding of sections of society have been informed or enhanced.</li> <li>• Enhancements to preserving, conserving and presenting culture heritage.</li> <li>• Generating new or clarified ways of thinking that influence social or cultural policies or public opinion.</li> <li>• Adoption in public discourse by activists, artists, stakeholders and commentators of conceptual tools and empirical evidence.</li> <li>• Making knowledge about increasing inequalities and its causes part of the public debate on policies to reduce inequality.</li> </ul>

<p><u>Impacts on official statistics</u>  <i>where the beneficiaries may include national or international statistical agencies, users of official statistics including researchers, businesses or the public</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing the geographies of small areas used in publishing official statistics for use in monitoring the effect of area-based policies.</li> <li>• Developing new ways of estimating key, policy relevant statistical outputs.</li> <li>• Improving the accessibility and utility of official statistics or data.</li> <li>• Introducing new variables or new classifications into official statistics.</li> </ul>
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## Impact Strategy

31. Universities are reminded to set out their impact strategy in the University-level and UoA-level Environment Overview Statements.

## Impact Case Study(ies)

32. Following paragraphs 7.7 (a) and (b), 7.9-7.10 and Appendix F of the Guidance Notes and also paragraph 51 of the General Panel Guidelines, submitting units are required to provide a narrative account in each case study that should be coherent, clearly explaining the relationship between the research, its findings and implications, dissemination, implementation of new/improved policies and interventions and impacts, the nature of the changes or benefits arising.

33. Each impact case study should include appropriate evidence and indicators that support the claims for the impact achieved, including who and what has/have benefitted, when the impact occurs/occurred, and the relationship between the case study and how it has/had sustained further innovation and impact. Individual case studies may draw on various evidence and indicators, which may take different forms depending on the type of impact.

34. Examples are provided in Table B to illustrate potential evidence or indicators that may be mostly relevant to the Social Sciences Panel.

These examples are not intended to be exhaustive. Equally, there is no implication of priority or importance in the ordering of examples in the list.

Table B: Examples of Evidence or Indicators for Impact<sup>3</sup>

Quantitative indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative data relating to cost-effectiveness.</li> <li>Performance measures (e.g. sales, turnover, profits associated).</li> <li>Audience or attendance figures.</li> <li>Indicators of quality of life or level of living.</li> </ul>
Documentary evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documented changes to public policy / legislation / regulations / guidelines.</li> <li>New professional codes and standards.</li> <li>Licences awarded and brought to market.</li> </ul>
Engagements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial adoption of new technology, process, knowledge or concept.</li> <li>Application or incorporation in professional best practice, training and continuing development materials.</li> <li>Evidence of policy or public debate.</li> </ul>
Independent testimony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal acknowledgements of and/or evaluations by relevant beneficiaries, bodies and organisations.</li> <li>Justified claims of benefit when formal acknowledgements cannot be obtained.</li> </ul>
Reviews and citations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Citations and reviews outside the academic literature, e.g. in policy, regulatory, practice documents.</li> <li>Citations in media.</li> </ul>

35. The Panel provides the following advice on particular aspects of impact case studies –

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2 for links to further examples.

- credibility: are there reasonable grounds for the claimed impact, bearing in mind other factors or organisations could have contributed to impact?
- evidence: is there a clear account of evidence that links the research with the claimed impact?

## **Underpinning Research**

36. The Panel acknowledges the level of quality required for research underpinning impact cases, i.e. equivalent to at least 2 star (2\*) or international standing, as stipulated in the General Panel Guidelines. Where necessary, the Panel will review the outputs concerned in order to ensure the quality of the research is of at least 2 star (2\*). There should be clear linkage between the underpinning research and the impact claimed.

37. Provided that the Panel is satisfied that the quality threshold has been met, the grading of the underpinning research will not be taken into account in the assessment of impact. Underpinning research referenced in a case study may also be submitted for assessment under the research output element. The evaluation of the outputs concerned under the impact element is a separate assessment only for assuring the threshold of underpinning research. In this case, the guidance on output types and criteria for assessing research outputs as stipulated in paragraphs 9-14, 20-23 above would apply.

## **Criteria and Quality Levels for Assessing Research Impact**

38. Panels will exercise their expert judgement in assessing the quality of each impact submission and will not judge in terms of the type of research underpinning the impact cases.

39. In assessing impacts, the Panel will look for evidence of reach and significance and will grade each impact submission as a whole and give a rating using one or more of the five categories of quality level following paragraphs 53-55 of the General Panel Guidelines. In respect of the Social Sciences Panel, the criteria of reach and significance will be understood as follows –

- reach: the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, as relevant to the nature of the impact. Reach will be assessed in 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. For example, the Panel will evaluate the extent and diversity of the communities, individuals or organisations that benefitted from or have been positively affected by the impact. The Panel will evaluate the extent to which society, communities or individuals have benefitted from the introduction of a new method, understanding or policy, based on evidence provided in the impact case study. Note that reach can refer to any or all spatial scales – local, national or international or to a specific under-represented group.
- significance: the degree of beneficial effects to policies, practices, perspectives or awareness of organisations, communities or individuals, constructive change to the prevention or reduction of harm, risk or cost. For example, the Panel will evaluate the degree of benefit gained or improvement effected or reduction of harm, risk or cost from the introduction of a new method, understanding or policy, based on evidence provided in the impact case study.

40. The Panel will make an overall judgement about the reach and significance of impacts, rather than assessing each criterion separately. The criteria will be applied in the assessment of the research impact regardless of the domain to which the impact relates. In addition, the Panel understands the quality standards for assessing research impact as follows:

- 4 star (4\*): outstanding 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;

- 1 star (1\*): limited impacts in terms of their reach and significance; and
- 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.

## **Section D: Assessment Criteria: Research Environment**

### **Research Environment**

41. The Social Sciences Panel will accept submissions on research environment according to paragraphs 57-58 of the General Panel Guidelines. The Panel recognises that excellent research can be undertaken in a variety of research structures and environments. The Panel has no pre-formed view of the ideal size or organisational structure for a research environment. The Panel will assess each submission based on what has been presented in relation to the work of the submitting unit in providing and ensuring a good environment.

42. A research environment submission includes one University-level Environment Overview Statement across the same university, and one UoA-level Environment Overview Statement and environment data for each UoA. The UoA submission may relate to a single coherent faculty/department or to multiple units/departments.

### **Environment Overview Statements (One University-level Environment Overview Statement across the University and One UoA-level Environment Overview Statement for Each UoA)**

43. Following paragraphs 9.6 (a) and (b), 9.7, 9.8 and Appendix G of the Guidance Notes, and also paragraphs 59 & 60 of the General Panel Guidelines, the Panel will use the information provided in the University-level Environment Overview Statement to inform and contextualise their assessment of the UoA-level Environment Overview Statement. Submitting units are required to describe how they have supported the conduct and production of research, in the context of the university's policies as set out in the University-level Environment Overview Statement.

44. Within the terms of the Guidance Notes, the Social Sciences Panel will expect in particular to see the following in the –

#### 44.1 University-level Environment Overview Statement

- context and mission: an overview describing the submitting university's size, structure, mission and stage of development in view of its role statement so as to provide a context for the submission.
- research policy and strategy: describing the institutional strategy for research (including research strengths, research focus areas, distribution of research activities across research areas), enabling impact (including stakeholder engagement and knowledge transfer), developing a sustainable research culture (including open access and open data policies, approach to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals, how inter-disciplinary and collaborative research has been supported, how research integrity and research ethics are embedded in the institution), and how the overall institutional policy and strategy contribute to government priorities.
- people: institutional staffing strategy, staff development and training (e.g. recruitment, leave policies, equality and diversity agenda, measures/facilities for early career researchers/research students, etc.), and development, training and supervision of research students.
- research funding sources: breakdown by funding source as a percentage total of overall funding; and university-level resources, infrastructure, and facilities available to support research and impact.

In the context of research environment, the university is encouraged to comment on the extent to which generative AI technologies have been addressed, applied or used within any of the above elements.



## 44.2 UoA-level Environment Overview Statement

The panel requests UoA level statements to be clearly structured using the subheadings prescribed in paragraph 60 (a) – (h) of the General Panel Guidelines and elaborated below.

In the context of the university's policies as stipulated in the University-level Environment Overview Statement –

- UoA context and structure: submission in this part is expected to briefly describe the organisation and structure of the unit, which research groups are covered in the submission and how research is structured across the submitting unit.
- research and impact strategy: evidence of the achievement of strategic aims for research and impact during the assessment period, details of current/future strategic aims and goals for research and impact; how these relate to the structure described above; and how they will be taken forward; methods for monitoring attainment of targets; new and developing initiatives not yet producing visible outcomes but of strategic importance; identification of priority developmental areas for the unit, including research topics, funding streams, postgraduate research activity, facilities, administration and management.
- research integrity and research ethics: give evidence of the steps taken to ensure that research is undertaken in an ethical manner with rigour, honesty and care and respect for those involved in the process. Research conducted with integrity leads to findings people can trust and have confidence in. The social sciences use a range of research methods both quantitative and qualitative which are founded in different epistemological positions. Social scientists nevertheless abide by quite similar codes of ethics or statements of ethical practice, articulated by learned societies such as the American Sociological Association and the British Psychology Society. These statements cover such concerns as professional integrity, conducting research, relationships with research participants, including vulnerable people and groups, informed consent, confidentiality and data storage. UoAs are asked to explain how their unit addresses these and other

concerns in line with their disciplinary guidelines. They should explain how UoA and departments relate to university research ethics procedures. Disciplinary best practice may consider, but is not limited to, issues ranging from approaches to training, ensuring dissemination and accessibility of results, data availability, registration of protocols, ethical compliance, authorship policies, reproducibility, open research, participatory research, the handling of conflicts of interest and intellectual property, and approaches to dealing with allegations of research misconduct and questionable research practices.

- people: evidence of staffing strategy, staff development and training (e.g. leave policies, equality and diversity agenda, measures for early career researchers, etc.) and evidence of their effectiveness; how individuals at the beginning of their research careers are being supported and integrated into the research culture of the submitting unit; information on postgraduate recruitment, training and support mechanisms; measures/facilities for development and supervision of research students.
- income (e.g. grants received), infrastructure and facilities: information on research funding portfolio; evidence of successful generation of research income; major and prestigious grant awards made by external bodies on a competitive basis; provision and operation of research infrastructure and facilities, including special equipment, library, technical support, space and facilities for research groups and research students; information on joint-university or cross-institution shared or collaborative use of research infrastructure.
- collaborations: information on support for and exemplars of research collaborations; mechanisms to promote collaborative research at local and international level; support for inter-disciplinary research collaborations; research collaboration with research users.
- esteem: prestigious/competitive research fellowships held by individual researchers; external prizes and awards and elections to fellowships and academy membership in recognition of research achievement.

- contribution to the discipline or research base: exemplars of leadership in the academic community such as advisory board membership; participation in the peer-review process for grants committees or editorial boards.

In the context of research environment, the submitting UoA is encouraged to comment on the extent to which generative AI technologies have been addressed, applied or used within any of the above elements.

## Environment Data

45. Following paragraphs 9.6 (d) and (e), 9.9 and Appendix H of the Guidance Notes, and also paragraph 61 of the General Panel Guidelines, submitting units are required to provide environment data in conjunction with the UoA-level Environment Overview Statement. The Panel will consider the environment data within the context of the information provided in the Environment Overview Statement, and within the context of the disciplines concerned.

46. Data on “staff employed by the university proper” and “graduates of research postgraduate programmes” will be used to inform the Panel’s assessment in relation to “people” (section (4) of the UoA-level Environment Overview Statement). Data on “on-going research grants/contracts” will be used to inform the Panel’s assessment on “income (e.g. grants received)” (part of section (5) of the UoA-level Environment Overview Statement). Additional quantitative data or indicators that are particularly relevant to the Panel are indicated in paragraph 44 above. Such additional information should be submitted within the appropriate section(s) of the UoA-level Environment Overview Statement.

## Criteria and Quality Levels for Assessing Research Environment

47. Panels will exercise their expert judgement in assessing the merits of each environment submission and will not judge automatically in terms of the scale of research environment concerned.

48. In assessing environment, the Panel will consider research environment in terms of vitality and sustainability, including its contribution to the vitality and sustainability of the wider discipline or research base.

The Panel will grade each environment submission as a whole with a profile rating using one or more of five categories of quality level as set out in paragraphs 63-65 of the General Panel Guidelines. There is no weighting attached to individual aspects in the assessment.

49. The Social Sciences Panel provides the following amplifications to supplement the generic criteria for assessing research environment –

- vitality: 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 through a worldwide reputation.
- sustainability: the extent to which the research environment ensures the future health, diversity, wellbeing and wider contribution of the unit and the discipline(s), including investment in people and infrastructure and, where appropriate for the subject area, the extent to which activity is supported by a portfolio of research funding; the extent to which recruitment strategies are aimed at sustaining and extending research areas.

50. The Panel will make an overall judgement about the vitality and sustainability of research environments, rather than assessing each criterion separately. In addition, the Panel understands the quality standards for assessing research environment as follows –

The rating will be based on the following five categories:

- (a) 4 star (4\*): an environment that is conducive to producing research of world-leading quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability;
- (b) 3 star (3\*): an environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally excellent quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability;

(c) 2 star (2\*): an environment that is conducive to producing research of internationally recognised quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability;

(d) 1 star (1\*): an environment that is conducive to producing research of limited quality, in terms of its vitality and sustainability; and

(e) unclassified (u/c): an environment that is not conducive to producing research of 1 star (1\*) quality; or nil submission.

## **Section E : Working Methods**

### **Use of Sub-Group(s)/Sub-Panel(s)**

51. To facilitate assessment on particular UoA(s) and/or research area(s) under the Social Sciences Panel, the following sub-groups will be formed to assess submissions in respective research areas –

The Deputy Convenor will have responsibility for:

- psychology (UoA 24)
- political science (UoA 25)
- geography (UoA 26)

The Convenor will have responsibility for:

- sociology & anthropology (UoA 27)
- social work & social policy (UoA 28)
- communications & media studies (UoA 29)

51.1 A member of each sub-group with previous experience of RAE or Research Excellence Framework (REF) will be invited to chair an interim meeting and the final meeting to agree the recommended grade for the Panel.

51.2 The final assessment and grading will be decided by the Panel as a whole.

## Allocation of Work in the Assessment Process

52. The Convenor, and Deputy Convenor will allocate work to members and, if necessary, lay members, impact assessors and/or external reviewers in light of their expertise and workload. In allocating the work, the Convenor and Deputy Convenor will also take into account any potential conflicts of interest of respective panel members and assessors, as advised by the Secretariat. All panel members will take account of the requirements of the General Panel Guidelines to ensure that the exercise is conducted fairly and equitably.

53. Panel members will examine the submitted outputs in detail, and put forward a recommendation to the panel for a collective decision on the final grading. To ensure fairness and consistency, each research output will be assessed in detail by two members, one of whom should be a non-local member to the extent possible. For UoA(s) which is(are) only housed at one or two local universities, submissions will be assigned to at least one non-local member in order to ensure fair and impartial assessment. Final grading on research outputs will be decided by the Panel as a whole.

53.1 Research outputs will be assessed by two members of the Panel independently. If the two assessors are unable to agree, the Convenor or Deputy Convenor will invite a third assessor from within the Panel to recommend a grading having read the output and the comments of the first two assessors. The third assessor's recommendation will be recommended to the Panel as a whole.

54. Subject to conflicts of interest of individual members, the impact and environment submissions will be assessed by panel members and impact assessors in the sub-group(s)/sub-panel(s) for respective UoA(s) or research area(s) under the Panel. Final grading of individual submissions will be a collective decision of the Panel.

55. Where appropriate, the Panel will decide, by exercising their professional judgement, whether lay members (local "research end-users" or professionals in respective fields from business, government, industry and the arts, who need not be academics) with suitable expertise will be invited to take part in the assessment. Lay members who are academically qualified may also be invited for assessment of research outputs and

research environment. The engagement of lay members will be by invitation from the Panel only.

### **Cross-Panel Referrals**

56. This Panel will follow the procedures in paragraphs 41-43 of the General Panel Guidelines when initiating referrals to other panels and assessing submissions cross-referred by another panel.

57. Generally, research on pedagogy and education issues submitted to this Panel will be assessed by panel members or external reviewers with expertise in pedagogy or cross-referred to Panel 13 – Education.

58. Cross-panel referrals are envisaged in areas such as: physical geography (to Panel 3 – Physical Sciences); urban geography (to Panel 7 – Built Environment); psychiatry, neuroscience and its clinical specialities (to Panel 2 – Health Sciences) and for some research in political science and in sociology (to Panel 11 – Humanities) with other areas for referral to be determined.

### **External Advice**

59. This Panel will follow the procedure in paragraph 67 of the General Panel Guidelines when referral to external reviewers for expert advice becomes necessary for panel assessment. External reviews may be sought in the cases for which members of the panel do not have the necessary expertise such as outputs in a foreign language or niche research work.

### **Trial Assessment**

60. With reference to paragraphs 91-93 of the General Panel Guidelines, the Panel will conduct a trial assessment using a sample of submissions selected from universities' submissions. These sample submissions will be assessed by all members of the Panel. Members will share among themselves any important observations in the assessment to ensure fairness and consistency in the actual assessment. Submissions used for the trial assessment will be assessed afresh during the main assessment period regardless of their assessment results during the trial. The Panel will decide on the sample size after the submissions are received.



## Panel Feedback Report

61. With reference to paragraph 73 and Appendices E and F of the General Panel Guidelines, the Panel will provide feedback to the University Grants Committee (UGC) after the assessment process. Non-local panel members will be involved in offering comments for an impressionistic international comparison. The Convenor on behalf of the whole panel will submit the panel feedback report to the UGC by November 2026. Sector-wide comments in the panel feedback report will be released for public information after announcement of the RAE results. Comments on individual universities will be provided to the respective universities under confidential cover in accordance with paragraph 11.3 of the Guidance Notes.