



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau
Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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25 February 2015

Clerk to Panel on Education
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Miss Polly Yeung)

Dear Miss Yeung,

**University Grants Committee
Research Assessment Exercise 2014**

Thank you for your letters of 4 and 5 February 2015. I am authorised to reply as follows.

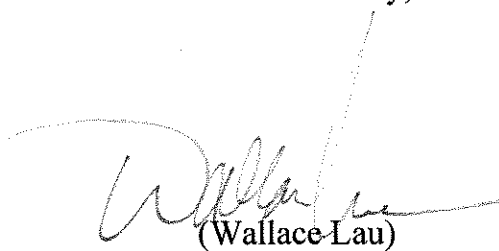
The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is part of the University Grants Committee (UGC)'s commitment to assessing the performance of the UGC-funded institutions. Using international benchmarks and more precise measures, the RAE examines the research quality and areas of relative strengths of the institutions and makes recommendations for institutions to seek further improvements. The objective is to encourage world-class research and promote the pursuit of excellence among the institutions.

The UGC announced the results of the RAE 2014 on 27 January 2015. Of the research submissions made by the institutions, 12% were judged by international experts as of "world leading" standard, 34% as achieving "international excellence", and the vast majority of the rest as having attained "international standing" or "regional standing". The RAE results are expected to provide guidance for the institutions' future developments in pursuing research excellence, launching new projects, teaching and learning, knowledge transfer, etc.

As stated in the press release (at Annex) issued by the UGC on 5 February 2015, regarding the result announcement of the RAE 2014, the results of the exercise were kept strictly confidential until the public announcement on 27 January 2015. All relevant confidential papers for discussion at the UGC meeting were returned to the UGC Secretariat immediately after the meeting. Moreover, the Education Bureau has all along been working in partnership and maintaining good communication with the UGC, and strict confidentiality has been observed throughout the process.

Besides, it is noteworthy that the community is not only concerned that part of the RAE results were reported in advance; in fact, the community is even more concerned about the actual research performance of the relevant institutions as demonstrated in this exercise, and the analysis of the relevant assessment results.

Yours Sincerely,



(Wallace Lau)
for Secretary for Education

cc: Secretary-General, University Grants Committee (Attn: Ms Sharon Ho)

University Grants Committee's response to enquiries on result announcement of Research Assessment Exercise 2014

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The University Grants Committee (UGC) today (February 5) responded to enquiries on the result announcement of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2014 as follows:

Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are core values treasured by Hong Kong and are cornerstones of our higher education sector. All eight higher education institutions funded by the UGC are autonomous bodies with their own Ordinances and governing Councils. The UGC Notes on Procedures clearly state that institutions enjoy autonomy in the development of curricula and academic standards, selection of staff and students, initiation and conduct of research, internal allocation of resources, etc. The UGC has all along supported and safeguarded academic freedom and institutional autonomy in accordance with the Notes on Procedures, in the context of appropriate financial and public accountability.

Academic and administrative matters fall squarely within the autonomy of the UGC-funded institutions in accordance with their own governing Ordinances and internal procedures. While institutions should be mindful of the public interest and be held accountable for their decisions, the UGC appeals for society's continued respect for institutional autonomy.

Regarding the result announcement of the RAE 2014, the results of the RAE 2014 were kept strictly confidential until the public announcement on January 27, 2015. All relevant confidential papers for discussion at the UGC meeting were returned to the UGC Secretariat immediately after the meeting.

Ends/Thursday, February 5, 2015

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