

VPAA's "Frequently Asked Questions on Academic Review Policy and Procedure"

(http://www.ust.hk/~webaa/AcademicPersonnel/AcademicReviewFAQ/FAQ_AR_PolicyandProcedure.htm)

Item 6 of the FAQ:

"Usually, new information which has not been considered by review parties at the lower levels shall not be injected at the University level. If such new information is provided and accepted exceptionally, it should be relevant and accurate, and with no intention of advocating positively or negatively for a case."

1. The Academic Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual, which regulates promotion, does not contain such a clause.

While the content of that Manual is approved by the Council, the Senate, or the University Administrative Committee, the FAQ webpage is not signed by anyone and simply posted on the academic affairs website. I wonder if not being part of the university regulatory framework does not mean that it has no legal force.

2. The FAQ information has not been announced to faculty members.

Information that is not announced to faculty members and is not part of the university regulatory framework would seem to have no validity.

3. The item does not say what constitutes "usually" vs. "unusually," does not specify the lower levels (all?, or which specific ones?), and does not specify who has the authority to accept exceptions.

The item seems so deficient in phrasing that it would seem problematic as part of a regulatory framework, even if it were sent to the Senate for approval.

4. Other items on the FAQ list are not being enforced.

Item 6 in the section "Others" on if committee members should read between lines of an evaluation comment ("Guessing should be avoided. Clarification should be sought if possible.") was violated by the dean in my earlier floating salary bar review. That floating salary bar review was promptly accepted by the (previous) VPAA and the current VPAA had no problem with it.

An item 5 in the section "Information for Review" reads "Department Heads shall comment on the quality of the journals in preparing the dossiers. If possible, a list of the top 6-10 journals with their impact factors in the candidate's area of specialty should be provided. The list should be divided into first and second tiers. This list should be provided by the Department Head in consultation with the senior faculty in or outside the Department and not with the candidate himself or herself." No department head was involved in my review, presumably because the department head himself was under full professor review. I have never seen a list in any review. As a faculty member I have never seen a statement that tells me which journals any review committee views as the top 6-10 for the SOSC division (or for me). The division review report lists the journals in which I published and concludes that my research record is excellent. The UASC in 2001/02 was happy with the journals in which I published and then promptly contradicted itself in 2007/08, and all of this under the stamp of confidentiality.

If the appeal committee reached its vote based on this FAQ item, why does it not say so explicitly?