1. **Minutes**
The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2013.

2. **Matters arising from the minutes**
   
i. **M12-13/65 External Examiner Reports on PGT Programmes 2011-2012**
   
The Committee noted that a University-level response has been formulated and sent to Prof. Frecknall-Hughes by the PVC Teaching, Learning and Information regarding her concerns about external examiners being asked to sign results lists without having seen work in Management. The department has agreed to move their PGT boards back into Week 11 for this academic year in order to allow external examiners an opportunity to review the last of the work, and to send samples of earlier work well in advance of the final board. The Management School is also considering the possibility of additional staff to support the administration of examinations and boards.
i. 12-13/57 Request for Clarification of the Guide to Assessment re: ISMs in Integrated Masters
Edits to the guide have been approved and will be integrated into the 2013-14 Guide. The Maths department have yet to be contacted regarding their wishes regarding the potential compensation and reassessment of their 40 credit ISM.

(Outstanding Action: JW)

12-13/77 Chair’s Oral Report
The Chair reported the following developments:

i. A review of the Code of Practice on Research Degree Programmes is being added to the UTC annual cycle of business, with the first annual review happening in time for changes to be recommended to the May or June meeting of UTC. The main goal of the current review is to align ourselves with the QAA Quality Code Section B:11, and to clarify responsibilities in light of the dissolution of the Board for Graduate Schools

ii. An extraordinary meeting of UTC was held on 25 April 2013 in order to consider responses to the consultation on the Structure and Shape of the Academic Year. Results of the consultation were mixed, and John Robinson and the ASO will be contacting Chairs of Boards of Studies and Heads of Department in order to clarify their responses. These responses will come back to the Working Party in autumn in order to formulate a formal proposal for UTC in November. The earliest likely implementation of any change to the academic year is now 2016-2017.

iii. A report on the degree classifications for the 2012 graduates was due to come to this meeting, but is not yet available due to delays in the Planning Office. This report will be circulated via email to all members of SCA in advance of its consideration at the May meeting of UTC.

iv. There is a request from a department for permission to revisit Stage 2 marks for this year’s finalists in order to ensure that marking was appropriate in light of the effects of modularization on degree classifications. This request was initially rejected by the Chairs of SCA and UTC, but is being reconsidered given the potential for disparity in classifications for this year’s finalists. If a proposal is approved, it will be for a single year in order to allow the department to correct errors in last year’s marking, and will not affect future years. The department is now aware of the impact of marks on the modularized degree classifications, and so should not be in this position for 2013-14.

v. The Chair has been in discussions with the Planning Office regarding...
the use of Tableau software to allow Boards of Examiners to consider module results in a broader context. The appropriate reports are almost ready, but need some tweaking before they can be released widely. Chairs of Boards of Examiners will be shown the software and its potential at an upcoming meeting.

vi. The academic members of the Committee are reminded that the signing of awards and progression are likely to require additional commitment during weeks 9-11 of Summer Term. The Exams Office will contact members for their availability as soon as possible.

(Action: Exams Office)

12-13/78 Report from Students
The Students’ Union reported the following:

i. The YUSU Academic Officer and the incoming Disabled Students Officer met with the Assistant Registrar: Student Progress regarding individual arrangements for assessments, and agreed that they would conduct a joint survey of students for whom individual arrangements are currently in place in order to determine their level of satisfaction and if any changes are appropriate to current practice. This will be done with consideration for the issues of confidentiality involved.

The Graduate Students’ Association reported the following:

i. The GSA was concerned by the delay in the circulation of the papers for this meeting of the SCA, and requested that papers be circulated at least a week in advance in future. The Chair apologized for the delay.

ii. Students in Health Economics have expressed concern about examination timetables which require them to write two exams in a single day, with one exam being recognised as particularly difficult by students. The Chair confirmed that all exams were scheduled within the University parameters, and that some compression of exams into a single day was inevitable. The Chair suggested that these principles be better advertised, and the Secretary agreed to have the Exams Office do this via their website.

(Action: Exams Office)

12-13/79 Clarification of Guidance on the Presentation and Binding of Theses
The Committee approved revised Guidance on the Presentation and Binding of Theses to replace the current document and the ‘Requirements for the Presentation and Binding of Theses and Dissertations’ subject to the following changes:

- State that referencing system must be in accordance with any
published departmental policy where such a policy exists

- Clarify submission deadlines for EngD programmes and PhD programmes with unusual end dates (such as three and a half year and four year programmes)
- Change the ‘order of submission’ to ‘Elements of the Thesis’. Make it clear that we will not reject theses for being in the wrong order, but that students should consult with departments regarding appropriate order
- Clarify that title page needs to be duplicated in any additional volumes, but that other front matter does not
- Give guidance on the nature of a preface in the list of material
- Make the bibliography optional with the proviso that material must be properly referenced
- Reinsert the section on the numbering of appendices
- Clarify the paragraph regarding numbering of illustrations and tables to indicate that the requirement is that there not be two identically numbered illustrations or tables

12-13/80  Proposal for Additional Viva Results from Language and Linguistic Science

The Committee considered a recommendation from Language and Linguistic Science that an intermediary viva outcome be introduced between minor corrections and major corrections/referral. The Committee accepted that there may be some negative psychological impact on students who were ‘referred’ but felt that minor changes to the existing viva results were better suited to solving the problem than an additional outcome. The Committee agreed in principle on the following:

i. The term ‘pass subject to minor corrections’ should be replaced with ‘pass subject to corrections’
ii. The deadline for such corrections should be set at three months rather than two months as is current practice
iii. The current wording of the letter sent from the examinations office which states that a referred candidate has “failed to satisfy examiners” should be rewritten to state that the candidate “has not satisfied examiners”, and being referred should be changed to being asked to “revise and resubmit” in not more than 12 months, and not less than 3.

The GSA requested that they be given time to consult with their membership on this issue before it is approved, so it was agreed that it would be brought back to the next meeting.

(Action: GSA)

12-13/81  Clarification on Timelimits to minor corrections of PhD theses
The Committee considered a recommendation for the codification of the timelines for minor corrections to theses following viva. The Committee noted that there was inconsistency in the ways that departments were interpreting deadlines for minor corrections to theses, with some departments using the deadline as the date by which the approval of corrections was required, and others as the date by which the student had to have made a first attempt at the corrections. This inconsistency created an unequal playing field for students, and made it difficult to ensure that examiners reviewed work in good time.

The Committee agreed that the deadline should be enforced as the date by which the final version of corrections must be submitted to the examiner, with the minor corrections approval form forwarded to the RSAT by 2 weeks after this deadline. Any consultation between the candidate and the examiner about the direction or appropriateness of corrections must happen before the deadline, and no further revisions can be completed after the deadline.

The RSAT will also be asked to review examination report forms to ensure that the options available are clear (including the option of ‘pass subject to binding’) and that the submission date is included on the minor corrections approval form.

(Action: RSAT)

12-13/82 External Examiners, Boards of Examiners, and Boards of Studies

The Committee considered a proposed system of meetings to rationalise Board processes in light of modularisation. The proposal recommended a three stage process:

1. A Scrutiny Panel with a small number of academics and departmental administrators to determine the availability of all results and to spot any obvious inconsistencies in marking
2. A Board of Examiners which would have a larger quoracy, including external examiners who would have access to all results and predicted degree classifications to determine if scaling or moderation were necessary. This group would also be responsible for reviewing the process and the programmes.
3. A Ratification Panel with a small quoracy including one external examiner (potentially virtually) to sign off degree and progression results as generated by SITS and previously approved in principle by the BoE.

The Committee agreed that this was a good first step, and that it addressed the most important issue which was the inclusion of the External Examiner early enough in the process that they could have a real impact on the results. However, there remain concerns about how modules would be considered for
joint and combined programmes; particularly those for integrated combined programmes such as PPE and Biochemistry, and modules shared by students in more than one department. There also appeared to be a great deal of disparity in the number of academic members currently attending Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies in individual departments, which raised concerns about appropriate quoracy levels at each of the three stages. Finally, there was some concern about what role the scrutiny panel would have in a department which moderates marking as a matter of course, and so very rarely scales marks.

The Chair agreed to take the proposal back for further consideration and consultation and to return with a revised proposal at the next meeting.

(Action: SK)

12-13/83 Clarification of Penalties for Incorrect Electronic Submissions

The Committee considered a request for clarification of appropriate penalties for incorrect electronic submissions by students. The Committee clarified that it is currently impossible to check file types on electronic submission or restrict uploads to the approved file type, and consideration of this proposal was made with that in mind. The Committee recommended that departments institute as many reminders as possible or reasonable for students to double check that the file they have submitted is the correct assignment in an appropriate format.

The Committee did agree, however, that penalties for lateness or incorrect submission in online submissions should mirror those for in-person submission, and so that the following should be added to the Mitigating Circumstances Policy in the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback from 2013-14 under ‘circumstances never considered’:

1. The student submits the wrong file type (e.g. Apple Pages/corrupted files etc.)

2. The student begins their upload after the deadline has passed

3. The student submits the wrong document (e.g. an assignment from another module or an incomplete earlier draft of the assignment)

4. The student claims technical issues at the University end without having any proof of an error message/system failure on either the VLE or the University network.

12-13/84 University Contingency Plans for Assessment and Examinations
The Committee **considered** the University’s Contingency Plans for Assessment and Examination in light of modularisation. The Committee agreed that there are considerations missing from the plan, including the fact that because condonation had been removed from University policy under Modularisation, no degree could be awarded so long as it was not certain that a student would pass all modules after compensation or reassessment. It also noted that without all module results available, it was impossible to tell if compensation and reassessment thresholds had been (or would be) breached.

The Committee agreed that in the event of the invocation of the contingency plan, priority should be given to PGTs and finalists for recuperative assessment, but beyond that, a further proposal would be necessary. A proposal will be formulated by the Director of Registry Services, the Chair and the Secretary of SCA and brought back to a future meeting.

(Action: JL, SK, JW)

**12-13/85 Amendments to the University’s Regulatory Framework**

The Committee agreed to **recommend** proposals for changes to the University’s regulatory framework to clarify the roles of SCA, SCC and Senate. The recommendations are as follows:

i. Regulation 6.5(a) should read:
   Students must meet progression requirements as specified in the University regulations and in programme documentation. Students who fail to meet progression requirements will not be permitted to continue and their enrolment with the University may be terminated or they may be permitted to transfer to another programme.

   **Recommendations from the Board of Studies relating to the achievement of progression requirements are to be made to and considered by the Standing Committee on Assessment on behalf of Senate at which point a decision is made.**

   Students may appeal against such decisions on academic progress and programme transfer. Such appeals can be made to Special Cases Committee (see Regulation 6.7 below).

ii. Regulation 5.3(g) should read:

   In all cases where a recommendation for the award of an aegrotat pass is being submitted to the Special Cases Committee, acting on behalf of Senate, by a Board of Examiners and Board of Studies, the recommendation must be accompanied by a written statement of the circumstances including all relevant medical evidence. The Special Cases Committee will also require notification that sufficient evidence of the candidate’s academic achievement has been presented to satisfy the external examiner(s) concerned. Recommendations for the award of an aegrotat pass may not be submitted after the Standing
Committee on Assessment has approved the relevant assessment results.

iii. Regulation 6.2(g) should read:

Exceptions regarding the above may only be made by University Teaching Committee on the recommendation of the Board of Studies

iv. MCCs should work under the delegated authority of Special Cases Committee, rather than Boards of Studies, with appeals continuing to be to SCC. It should be noted that this is a change in policy.

12-13/86 Date of the next meeting
The Committee noted the date of the next meeting as Friday 24 May 2013 at 2.15 pm in Room HG17- The Dawson Room, Heslington Hall.