

# University of Liverpool Business Continuity Policy

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## UNIVERSITY BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY STATEMENT

This University policy is to maintain the continuity of its activities, systems, facilities and processes and where these are disrupted by any event to enable it to return to 'normal' operations as soon as possible, taking into account the impact of any delay on the University's quality of service, reputation and finances.

The following responsibilities align with the 'BCM@UoL' framework adopted for use by the University of Liverpool Business Continuity Community to manage business continuity.

The University is responsible for ensuring:

- Systems and processes are in place to define and formalise the University's approach and commitment to business continuity
- Roles and responsibilities are clear in relation to business continuity planning and management
- Proportionate governance arrangements for reporting on the University's business continuity and emergency planning arrangements are defined and in place
- Business continuity is aligned with the University's Strategic Plan
- Business continuity plans are established and implemented across all areas of the business
- The level of planning in business continuity plans and the resulting response is proportionate to the impact of loss of service on the University's operations and strategic objectives
- The business continuity framework, BCM@UoL, where appropriate, is aligned with existing policies and procedures
- An active out-of-hours on-call arrangement is in place with the capacity to set up an emergency management team to respond to incidents using incident management methodology
- The principles and approach of Business Continuity at the University, and this policy, is understood by all stakeholders
- All departmental business continuity plans are developed to ensure that they proportionately optimise recovery to minimise disruption to services, and that they are congruent and aligned with other departmental plans that are co-dependent to achieve suitable recovery
- Business continuity plans are systematically maintained and tested
- A programme of training and communication is put in place

This policy will be reviewed and updated every two years by the Business Continuity Community.

## **i. Purpose and application of the document**

The formal Business Continuity Management principles adopted by the University of Liverpool to prepare for disruptive incidents in order to minimise the effects on the key services and effectively protect University assets, operations, staff, students, visitors and contractors.

### **1. Introduction to Business Continuity**

Whilst the University of Liverpool has a legal responsibility to ensure that health, safety and welfare of its staff and students it also has responsibilities to minimise the disruption to critical business operations in the event of an incident or disaster. Although the University of Liverpool has no legal duties as a category 1 or category 2 providers within the context of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Act still promotes the implementation of business continuity planning within all organisations. It further supports large organisations in having in place a formal business continuity system that prepares them for disruptive incidents in order to minimise the effects on the key services which they provide.

The University is committed to developing, implementing and managing a robust and effective Business Continuity Management system. This Policy has been prepared to provide a framework for preparing business continuity arrangements. It sets out the key business continuity objectives of the University, lists the clear responsibilities for key members of staff and supports other associated documents. This policy does not stand in isolation and should be read in conjunction with other related policies and codes of practice such as "Preparing and implementing local emergency arrangements", as developed by the University Safety Advisors Office.

Business Continuity Management consists of three distinctive, yet interlinked, activities. It is important to distinguish between them. All have different priorities and resource requirements, i.e.:

- **Incident Response** is primarily focused on the immediate reaction to an incident to minimise impact on the welfare and safety of people, and the proportionate impact of loss of activities and service on the University's operations and strategic objectives
- **Business continuity** is primarily focused on restoring critical activities and services affected by the incident to proportionately optimise and minimise disruption
- **Recovery** is primarily focused on the repair and replacement of services affected by the incident and recovery of any loss through insurance and loss adjusters.

### **2. Regulatory Background**

#### **2.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)**

The Health and Safety at Work Act imposes a general duty upon the University to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that its staff, students and visitors are safe and healthy when at work. These general duties include providing a safe place of work, safe plant and systems of work, and provision of necessary information, instruction and training. All of these issues have business continuity management implications.

## **2.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to consider the following:

### **Health and Safety Arrangements**

Every employer shall make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the nature of his activities and the size of his undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventive and protective measures.

### **Information for Employees**

Every employer shall provide his employees with comprehensible and relevant information on:

- a) The risk to their health and safety identified by the assessment
- b) The preventive and protective measures

### **Capabilities and Training**

Every employer shall, in entrusting tasks to his employees, take into account their capabilities as regards health and safety.

Every employer shall ensure that his employees are provided with adequate health and safety training:

- a) On their being recruited into the employers undertaking
- b) On their being exposed to new or increased risks

## **2.3 Office for Students' regulatory framework**

### **2.3.1 Student Protection Plans**

The University has a responsibility to produce Student Protection Plans under the Office for Students' Regulatory Framework to set out what students can expect to happen should a course, campus, or institution close for planned and unplanned reasons. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that students can continue and complete their studies, or can be compensated if this is not possible.

The University of Liverpool acknowledges its responsibility under this framework and will remain registered with the Office for Students (OfS) and have a plan in place as an ongoing condition of registration.

Student Administration Services will collaborate with students to review and refresh the plan on an annual basis.

The University Student Protection Plan will continue to comply with the OfS regulatory framework requirements, including approval, and will be available to both current and prospective students. It has been designed to identify address the specific risks to the continuation of study for the students of the University of Liverpool in a proportionate manner.

In the event of a change in circumstances, such as planned or unplanned, temporary or permanent, significant course closure, building closure or a campus closure, the University will work closely with

the students and the OfS to ensure that students' interests continue to be protected through any changes.

### **3. Scope**

This policy will apply to all University areas and activities under the direct control of the University. Where University staff share premises with other organisations, there will still be a need to create business continuity plans, however certain aspects of the plan may be the responsibility of non-University staff. In these situations, University staff must agree on shared rules and procedures with the other parties involved.

#### **3.1 In scope**

To focus on incidents which:

- Will emerge quickly and develop within a very short timescale that will not allow normal business activities to respond appropriately
- Are, or will be, disruptive to normal business activities and services
- Has the potential to cause harm/distress to people, damage to assets and facilities, increase risk of non-compliance with legal or contractual obligations, would damage reputation or relationships, and cause unplanned financial loss
- Are identified as an unplanned event that increases risk to the University requiring a proportionate response and optimise recovery to minimise or remove the disruption caused by the incident

All areas of the University are responsible for developing plans to cover and mitigate their own operational remit, and that they are congruent and aligned with other co-dependent departments. However, some incidents will be so widespread, unpredictable, complex and serious by their nature and in their impact that local planning would need to be supplemented by wider University, regional or national arrangements. Whilst all areas of the University will need to consider and include planning to minimise their own disruption the wider reaching elements of the incident will be responded to by other internal and external resource, such as CSD, FRCS, and Category 1 and 2 responders i.e. the Emergency Services, HSE, Environment Agency.

Examples may include:

- Total loss of IT network
- Cyber attack
- Total loss of power/water
- Pandemic
- Widespread flood
- Major structural collapse or catastrophic failure of infrastructure

#### **3.2 Out of scope:**

Day-to-day variations and changes to work activity that are typically found within a large dynamic and complex organisation as a result of improving and adapting the operational context due to changes in demand on the University. They would be low risk and reasonable to foresee and plan for using existing resources to respond appropriately, and are best addressed via normal operating practices. Such variations and changes are not classed as 'incidents' for the purposes of this plan and are not considered within this policy.

Examples might include:

- changes to student fees
- projected growth/decline in student numbers
- positioning in external leagues tables, TEF, REF, NSS etc

These types of operational risks should be managed through the University risk management policy.

#### **4. Definitions**

Key definitions are listed in Appendix 1.

#### **5. Objectives**

The objectives of business continuity planning are to ensure that the University shall:

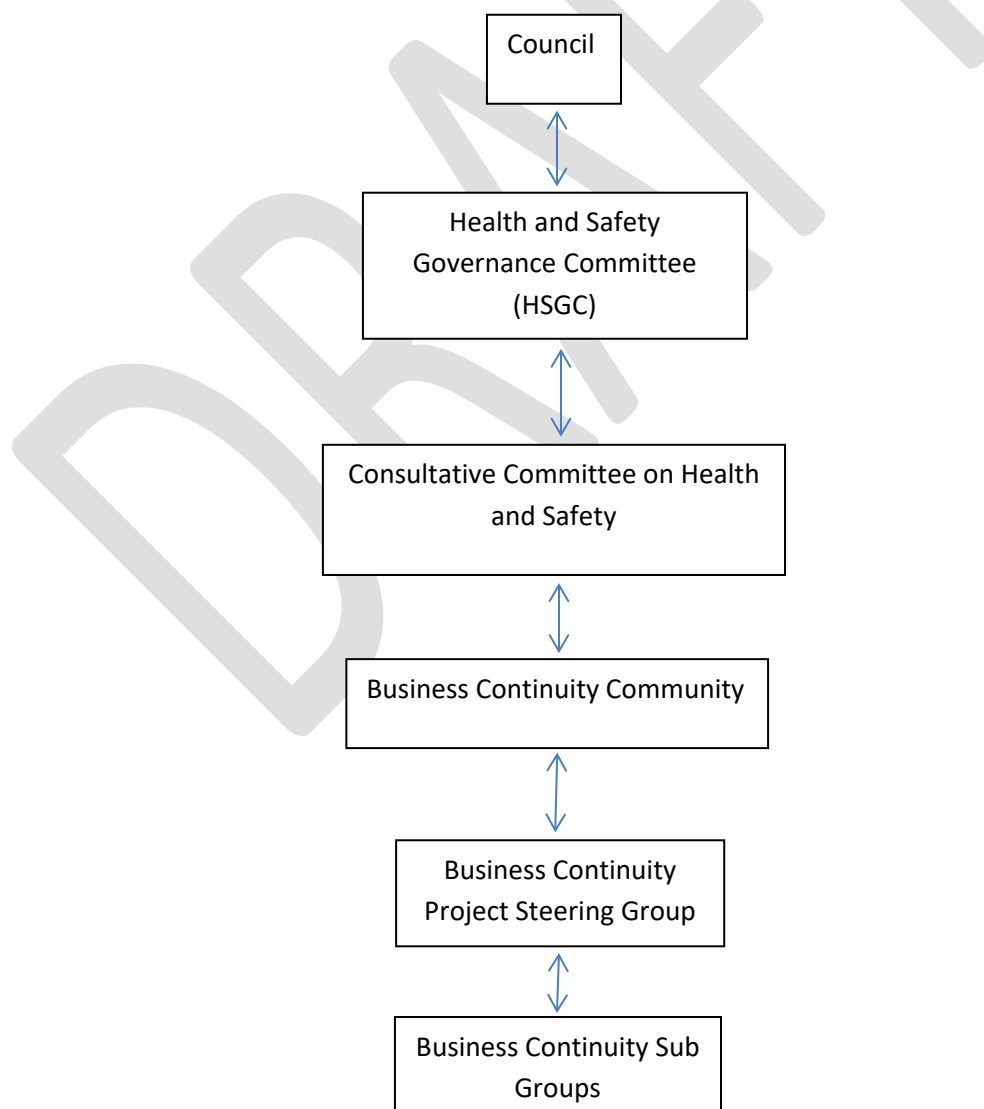
- Understand critical activities and maintain the capability to resume operations within reasonable time frames, following the deployment of a contingency planning response
- Increase resilience by protecting critical assets and data (electronic and otherwise) through a co-ordinated approach to identifying risk, management of risk and optimising recovery
- Minimise operational impact using a focused, prioritised and well-managed response
- Agree and promotes a standardised framework for the development, implementation and monitoring of a Business Continuity Management. This is called 'BCM@UoL'
- Identify, assesses and minimises business continuity risk
- Ensure that BCM@UoL adequately addresses planning, processes, training and continuous improvement to manage disruptions that may adversely affect the University or its interests
- Support the delivery of the University Strategy 2026
- Safeguard the University's reputational integrity
- Raise awareness of Business Continuity and the interdependencies between Teaching, Research and Professional Services
- Ensure a formal, consistent, co-ordinated and cost effective approach to the continuity of teaching, research and other operational activities
- Identify critical activities of business activity via robust Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and Risk Assessment (RA)
- Protect, maintain and recover critical activities as recognised in the relevant BIA.
- Develop plans that will ensure continuity of activities at a minimum acceptable level and within reasonable timeframes as agreed with gold level senior leadership
- Develop a culture of Business Continuity Management that is embedded with the University's planning and management processes
- Maintain the confidence of staff, students, stakeholders and visitors
- Provide assurance to stakeholder via annual testing of business continuity plans
- Continue to improve and enhance business continuity plans via robust testing

## 6. Business Continuity Management and Governance

The Business Continuity Governance structure is shown in Figure 1 and summarised below:

- Council – provide constructive challenge and receive assurance that business continuity plans and processes are in place
- HSGC/CCHS – provide oversight, review and endorsement of the work of the Business Continuity Community prior to final Council approval, where appropriate
- Business Continuity Community (BCC) - includes representatives from all parts of the University to develop and implement BCM@UoL, to review and consider proposals of the Business Continuity Project Steering Group. The BCC reports into the Consultative Committee on Health and Safety (CCHS) and the Health and Safety Governance Committee (HSGC)
- Business Continuity Project Steering Group – develops the programme of work of the BCC in line with BCM@UoL, reviews and considers proposals of the Business Continuity Sub Groups, and oversees the implementation of the BCM@UoL
- Business Continuity Sub Groups – task and finish groups focussed on specific projects to support the development and implementation of BCM@UoL

Figure 1





## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

General responsibilities are listed in the University Health and Safety Policy, and also aligns with the HASMAP management tiers. Specifically for business continuity, responsibilities are as follows:

### **7.1 University Council**

As the University Governing body, University Council will:

- Review and approve the University's Business Continuity Policy
- Receive assurance through constructive challenge
- Receive annual report on Business Continuity

### **7.2 Senior Executive**

Senior Executive will:

- Form Gold level responders for incident management
- Liaise with appropriate members of staff associated with business continuity management as required during each stage of business continuity management incidents
- Consider and approve, if appropriate, proportionate levels of resource as required and identified by senior managers
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for managing business continuity (including preparing relevant local documentation, training and testing of arrangements) within their own areas of remit and that these are adequately resourced and prioritised
- Ensure that reviews of business continuity processes are planned and lessons are learnt from any related incidents within their own areas of remit
- Ensure adequate representation from their own areas of remit on the BCC
- Attend appropriate training
- Ensure business continuity arrangements are considered at the planning stage of any new project or activity

### **7.3 Senior Managers**

Senior Managers will ensure that:

- Business continuity is embedded in the overall area of responsibility for existing operational activity, when planning new projects, developing services, introducing new business and purchasing new equipment
- A Business Impact Analysis, Risk Assessment and Business Continuity Plans are developed and communicated to relevant staff for their area(s) of control and to those other departments with co-dependencies
- The ongoing and timely submission of the completed business continuity self-assessment form on a quarterly basis
- Relevant staff are appropriately trained and competent to manage local business continuity processes and plans
- Local business continuity plans are tested and reviewed on a regular basis
- Adequate resources are made available to support business continuity planning, testing and training

- Reviews of business continuity processes are planned and lessons are learnt from any related incidents within their own areas of remit
- They regularly attend the BCC meeting, and for meetings where they cannot attend to send an appropriate delegated direct report
- Adequate out-of-hours on-call provision is covered and planned in-line with the requirements of being a primary or secondary responder to out-of-hours incidents
- Business Continuity is embedded in team meetings and to promote a positive Business Continuity culture

#### **7.4 Line Managers**

Line managers will ensure that:

- Local business continuity issues are identified and form part of the business impact analysis, risk assessment and business continuity plan
- Adequate and competent staff are in place to ensure business continuity plans are implemented within their areas of responsibility and in alignment with co-dependent departments
- All staff involved in business continuity plans are provided with adequate training and are competent to undertake their specific roles
- Regular communication is maintained with the relevant senior manager when failings or new situations arise that will require changes to the existing plans
- Adequate resources are provided by senior managers to implement local plans
- Resources are deployed effectively to ensure that local emergency arrangements work effectively and control measures and equipment are in place and maintained
- Business continuity plans are reviewed and tested on a regular basis

#### **7.5 Supervisory staff**

Supervisory staff will:

- Communicate/Implement business continuity plans at local level
- Ensure that any specific business continuity training is provided to staff students and other who work in their areas.
- Inform line managers of any deficiencies in the existing plans
- Proactively assist in the requirements of business continuity

#### **7.6 Staff**

Staff will:

- Proactively assist in the requirements of business continuity
- Adhere to emergency plans and processes
- Attend business continuity training as appropriate
- Report any defect or shortcoming in current business continuity arrangements

## 8. Business Continuity arrangements

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has provided the model for the implementation of business continuity planning within the University as it supports large organisations to have in place a formal business continuity system that prepares them for disruptive incidents in order to minimise the effects on the key services which they provide.

All areas of the University will have in place business continuity plans that will prescribe

- The local arrangements are in place to respond to an incident. Similarly arrangements for restoring critical activities and services affected by the incident to proportionately optimise and minimise disruption, and the repair and replacement of services affected by the incident to ensure affective recovery. Often this recovery is completed by the operation staff at 'Bronze' level
- Escalation principles to Silver level, for incidents that occur that are likely to cause significant disruption to local and/or University activities and services

Where incidents occur that are likely to cause significant disruption to University activities and business continuity and recovery cannot solely be met by Bronze level alone, Silver level support will be requested to assist with the restoration of critical activities and services affected by the incident. This will ensure that the University can proportionately optimise and minimise disruption to activities and services, and progress effective recovery.

Where incidents occur that are likely to cause major disruption to the University and cannot be met at Silver and Bronze levels, Gold level support will be established to assist with the restoration of critical activities and services affected by the incident. In order to ensure that the University can proportionately optimise and minimise disruption to activities and services, and progress the repair and replacement of services affected by the incident to ensure affective recovery. Gold level will only be established when an incident occurs that causes major disruption and impact to University activities, services, reputation, finances and delivery of the University Strategy 2016.

All areas of the University will develop their localised business continuity management system based on the following elements:

- Identify roles and responsibilities
- Identify resources required to manage process
- Undertake an initial Business Continuity awareness raising programme
- Agree an internal reporting structure for Business continuity
- Undertake Business Impact Analysis (BIA)
- Undertake a risk assessment and develop risk mitigation strategy
- Develop clear recovery strategies
- Align plans with other area strategies (e.g. CSD, FRCS, etc.)
- Develop a Business Continuity Plan (BCP)
- Communicate and train relevant staff
- Undertake local testing of arrangements
- Introduce change, problem and incident management systems
- Carry out a regular review of arrangements

### **8.1 Testing (live/table top)**

Local Business Continuity Plans are tested at least annually to provide confidence that they would work in practice. Plans should be realistic and improvements identified. A combination of live and table top exercises should be utilised.

### **8.2 Training / education / awareness**

- All staff are required to undertake appropriate BCM awareness training at least once every three years
- BCM training will be provided to Heads of Department during corporate induction process
- BCM training will be provided to Senior Manager, Line Managers and Supervisors on their local business continuity plans
- Relevant training will be provided to Gold, Silver and Bronze level

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Glossary of terms

- **Bronze Level:** operational members of staff or contractors whose role is to take physical action to reinstate operations to business normal, i.e. on duty Campus Support team, on call tradespersons, specialist technical staff and technicians, CSD and contractors
- **Business Continuity Community:** a group of people, with representation from all areas of University, that coordinate business continuity arrangements and learning across the University
- **Business Continuity Framework:** is the underlying the business continuity management system adopted at the University, by way of example consists of: identification of roles and responsibilities, identification of resources the required, awareness, governance, business impact analysis, risk assessment and develop risk mitigation strategy, recovery strategies, alignment with other key strategies (e.g. CSD, FRCS, etc.), business continuity plans, communication and training, testing of arrangements, change, problem and incident management and review
- **Business Continuity Management:** is the process of creating systems of prevention and recovery to deal with potential threats to a company. A holistic management process that identifies potential impacts that threaten an organisation and provides a framework for building resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities
- **Business Continuity Plan (BCP):** a documented collection of information and procedures that is developed and maintained in readiness for the affected area of the University to implement when threatened with service interruptions/disruptions and which allows it to continue to deliver its critical services at an acceptable pre-defined level. The impact of foreseeable interruptions on the work of the University, school or service should be determined by business impact assessments
- **Business Impact Assessment (BIA):** process of analysing business functions and the effect that a business/service interruption may have on them
- **Business Recovery:** to take the University to a recovered position equal or nearly equal to the condition before the incident
- **Critical activities:** those activities which enable the University to meet its' most important and time-sensitive objectives
- **Gold Level:** formalised on-call rota of executive leadership team. To provide strategic leadership to manage strategic risk, monitor progress, record activity, authorise resource and escalation, achieve organisational stability as far as reasonably practicable, understand existing and forward looking communications commitment and ensure time bound action plan is in place
- **Incident Response:** the immediate reaction and input from Bronze, Silver and Gold levels to an incident to ensure minimum impact on the University
- **Primary Responders:** a primary responder will consist of representatives from FRCS, HR, Legal & Compliance, CSD, ERM, SAS with suitable authority to manage the incident

- **Secondary Responder:** a secondary responder will consist of representatives from Faculty, School, Department or Institute with specialist knowledge of local arrangements to respond to business continuity incidents
- **Silver Level:** formalised on-call rota of senior management from within each Primary Responder department, and formalised on-call rota of effected areas within Secondary Responder category. Role is primarily to support Bronze Command and manage their own specialist areas of operational risk, to identify and respond to existing and potential operational issues, liaison with external bodies (Emergency Services, HSE, Environment Agency, Local Authority, etc.), to understand how and when to escalate, identify resource requirements, regularly update and communicate

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