

The Glasgow School of Art
BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND MAJOR INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN
PART 1. PLANNING
 April 2022



Degree Show 2018 McAteer photograph 1 June 2018

Policy Control.

Title	Business Continuity and Major Incident Response Plan Part 1 Planning
Date approved	16 June 2022
Approving Bodies	Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Governors
Implementation date	17 June 2022
Supersedes	Emergency Management Plan and Business Continuity overview
Supporting Policy	Business Continuity Plan and Major Incident Response Policy
Review Date	15 June 2023
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Date of Equality Impact Assessment	Tbc
Sources of information	York St John University Major Incident plan University of Stirling Business Continuity Management System Approaches to Business Continuity in Universities. Christopher Hale, Director of Policy, Universities UK BS25999 A frame work for resilience and success Higher Education Business Continuity group. (HEBCon). Emergency Management and Business Continuity in Higher Education

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1. Introduction

This Business Continuity and Major Incident Response Plan provides a framework for managing the Glasgow School of Art's response to an event that poses a significant threat to people, property, reputation or service delivery and which require special measures beyond the day to day to restore operations to normal.

The aim of the Plan is to mitigate the impact of major incidents on the School's core business and to facilitate community recovery and the restoration of normal services. Within that, key objectives are to:

- Protect staff, students and visitors.
- Secure the School's infrastructure and facilities.
- Resume core business activities as soon as possible.
- Protect the School's reputation.

There are four key elements to help achieve the above and the objectives laid out in the policy:

1. **Risk Management.** Recognising and minimising threats in advance.
2. **Emergency Management.** Responding promptly to Major Incident.
3. **Business Continuity.** Being able to carry on essential functions during the disruption.
4. **Business Recovery.** Restoring normality as quickly as possible.

Elements two, three and four overlap to varying extents depending on the incident. This is explained in more detail in the following pages.

This Plan defines the roles and responsibilities of key staff members, provides guidance for all employees on the School's response to a major incident, and establishes procedures for the implementation, testing and review of the Plan.

The Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates) has delegated powers from the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) to take institutional measures as required during a Major Incident and will report back to the Senior Leadership Group at the earliest opportunity.

In the event of a Major Incident, due to the importance of quick and effective decision making, the existing Safe Campus Group or sub-set of, will form a Major Incident Response Team. This will be chaired by the Business Continuity Plan Co-ordinator (Director of Estates). This Chair has the power to make urgent decisions that would under normal business circumstances be asked of a Committee. The Team also has the power to over-ride School or Directorate local contingency plans where necessary.

2. Types of Incidents

A **Major Incident** is one that is likely to seriously impact on the GSA's operations, the health and safety of staff, students or visitors, the GSA Estates or cannot be effectively managed by Departmental or individual school emergency response procedures.

A **Minor Incident** by contrast can be defined as something causing a limited disruption of services, does not threaten the operation of the GSA as a whole, no one has been seriously harmed, involves no legal ramifications and poses no threat to the reputation of the School, e.g. a localised chemical spill in a studio or localised power outage. It can usually be controlled by Departmental or individual School resources.

Major incidents can be emergencies that require immediate action, however they can also have a slower trajectory or emerge from less serious incidents therefore allowing for a more considered response.

Anyone of the following could result in a major incident

Fire in our building	Industrial action	Loss of mass personal data
Fire in a neighbour's building.	Terrorism alert	Damage caused by building and maintenance activities
Flooding	Exclusion from buildings because they are a crime scene	Discovery of asbestos
Power outage	Denial of service attack on the network	HSE notifiable event
Water supply failure	Unexpected network outage	Chemical incident
Transport disruption	Ransomware infection	Failure to renew contract with major monopoly supplier
Severe weather	Vermin infestation	Serious Injury or death
Medical epidemic, e.g. Influenza, SARS CoV 2	Legionella infection	Adverse social media storm

3. Elements of Business Continuity

3.1 Risk Management

Risk management refers to the overall process of identifying, assessing and mitigating threats to the GSA. Fundamental to this is a structured approach to risk registers by Schools, Support Departments, Estates and the Institution.

The production of risk registers is not dealt with in this document.

3.2 Emergency Management

Emergency management refers to the immediate actions the GSA needs to take when a Major Incident occurs that impacts the normal operations and requires an enhanced response.

The focus is on the short-term requirements of those affected by the emergency.

It is likely to involve liaison with multiple agencies, and establishing an effective communications chain.

3.3 Business Continuity

Business continuity is the capability of the GSA to continue to deliver products and services at acceptable predefined levels following a Major Incident.

Business continuity will involve making whatever temporary arrangements are necessary for the GSA to continue with its essential functions.

Depending on the nature and scale of the incident, and how long business recovery takes, the business continuity arrangements may need to be in place for a considerable time.

3.4 Business Recovery

Business recovery is the process of restoring the full functionality of the GSA's processes, services and / or facilities affected by the incident.

For example, replacing a lost building, or restoring multiple computer systems.

It will involve re-introducing normal day-to-day operations, often alongside the business continuity arrangements.

Depending on the nature and extent of the incident this can be a time consuming and costly exercise. Opportunity should be taken to improve on previous processes and services where possible.

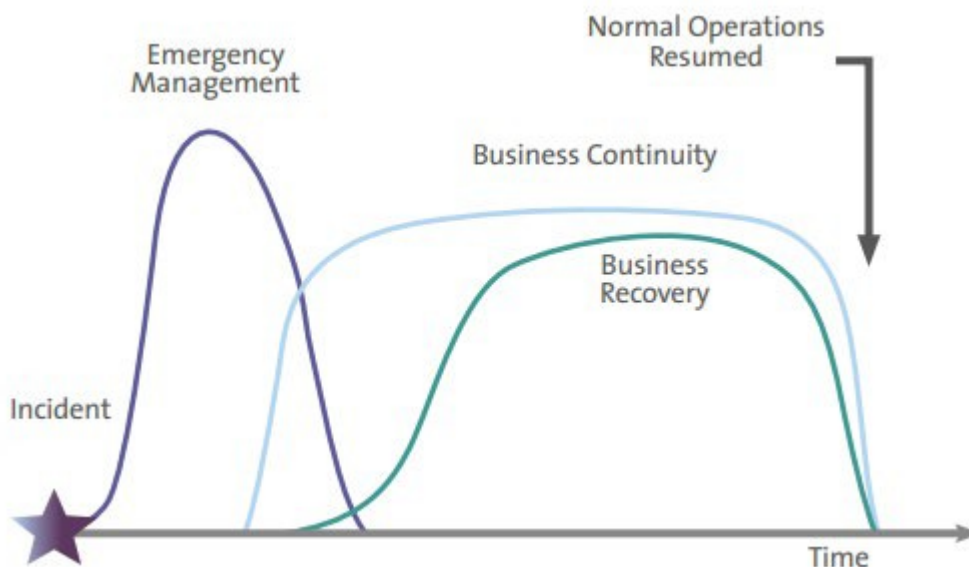
3.5 How these elements interact

An example of how risk management and the response phase elements interact in the event of a Major Incident is shown in the table below which uses the example of a fire in a residential hall.

Table showing process phase interactions and management responsibility

Incident phase	Approach	Description	Drivers	Responsibility
1. Planning	Risk management	How do we prevent fires in halls of residence? How can we limit fire damage?	Concern for the short, medium and long term viability of the GSA	Halls management team Fire Safety Officers Health and Safety Team Estates Team
2. Immediate Response	Emergency management	Get everyone out and summon the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Talk to media and students' parents	Concern for the immediate welfare of those affected by the incident.	School / Department. Safe Campus Group SLG plus co-opted members
3. Delivery of service response	Business continuity	Find everyone places to sleep	Concern for the medium-term welfare of those affected by the incident, and the short-term viability of the GSA	School / Department. Safe Campus Group SLG plus co-opted members
4. Restoration of normality	Business recovery	Repair the building or relocate.	Concern for the medium-term viability of the GSA	School / Department. SLG plus co-opted members

The considerable overlap between the various elements of the plan can be illustrated in the figure below.



Approaches to Business Continuity in Universities. Christopher Hale, Director of Policy, Universities UK

The plan set out in this document provides a structure to manage the transition and overlaps between phases of a Major Incident response.

In this document the term Business Continuity is used as an umbrella term covering both the temporary arrangements necessary to support a continuation of service delivery and the process of restoring the disrupted facilities to normal.

This aligns with terminology used by the Higher Education Business Continuity Network (HEBCoN).

4. Producing the Plan

The Plan is overseen by the Senior Leadership Group coordinated by the Director of Estates. The plan will be approved by the Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Governors.

4.1 The Business Continuity Plan Coordinator

The Director of Estates currently fulfils this role at the GSA.

The Planning phase is managed by the Business Continuity Plan Coordinator who has overall responsibility for creating the plan. They will:

- Arrange to release necessary resources.
- Establish an effective team with clear communication routes. This will be the SLG with suitable seconded members
- Liaise (or delegate this task) with other groups and organisations internally and externally as required.
- Maintain a sound understanding of the business-critical processes.
- Dedicate sufficient time to oversee the planning process.
- Arrange for dissemination of the plan to appropriate groups or persons.
- Manage the provision of appropriate training resources.

4.2 The Senior Leadership Group

The Business Continuity Planning Team at the GSA is the Senior Leadership Group with the addition of co-opted members. The membership of this group is detailed in Part 2 of the Plan.

The members of the team have been selected for their collective understanding of the business processes at the GSA, and their ability to engage others in the detailed planning as well as all the phases of managing a Major Incident.

The SLG plus seconded members is not just involved in the production of the plan but will engage with all the phases of the management of a Major Incident and will lead on business continuity and business recovery.

This aligns with the recommendations of the [Approaches to Business Continuity in Universities](#) publication.

At the planning stage the SLG plus seconded members is responsible for:

- Identifying business critical processes
- Managing risk registers (reference 4.3)
- Identifying the maximum length of time that any given disruption can be tolerated
- Identifying the minimum tolerable service levels
- Identifying services supporting the critical business element
- Establishing a plan for communicating information, advice and instructions (internal and external).
- Planning for the continuity of School operations, as far as possible, during and after the incident.
- Establishing alternative venues for critical services such as student accommodation, Information Technology, finance etc. This includes securing space in buildings outside the GSA estate where required. For example, if emergency service cordons or exclusion zones prevent access to the GSA buildings.
- Arranging to exercise and test the plan
- Keeping the plan up to date and relevant.
- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practical, that no group or individual is disadvantaged by loss of service provision at the GSA as a result of a Major Incident.

- Ensuring that the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are considered during the management of a major incident and as part of the recovery planning.

Heads of School and Support Departments

As part of the SLG the HoS and Heads / Directors of Support Departments are responsible for

- Producing a Risk Register for their area of responsibility.
- Assessing status of the business systems and risks within their School / Department.
- Assessing minimum standards of service and “normal” levels of service together with timescales that these levels of service need to be achieved following a disruption.
- Detailing consequences should the set levels of service not be restored within the set timelines.

4.3 Business critical Processes

The SLG plus co-opted members will establish a list of business-critical processes informed by their own knowledge and the School and Support department risk registers.

4.4 Maximum tolerable period of disruption

The SLG plus co-opted members will establish a maximum tolerable period of disruption for each process. This is defined in BS25999 as “duration after which an organisation’s viability will be irrevocably threatened if product and service delivery cannot be resumed”.

This will vary with the business process, and in many cases with the time of year.

4.5 Minimum tolerable service level

The SLG plus co-opted members will consider the level of reduction in each service which can be tolerated by the GSA. This may vary depending on the time of year and may require a more detailed breakdown by the business process owner.

For example, supplier payments.

Supplier payments	
Length of disruption	Minimum tolerable service level
Up to 5 working days	All payments suspended
Up to 10 working days	All supplier payments over £5K paid
Over 10 working days	All suppliers paid.

A table is set out in Appendix 1 that broadly identifies the GSA business critical processes, maximum tolerable period of disruption and minimum tolerable service levels.

However, it must be remembered that further details may be required depending on the complexity of the process.

4.6 Critical service and supply

For each critical business process, the SLG plus seconded members will identify facilities that the process depends on. This will help to focus attention on the various ways in which the business process could be compromised and what needs restoration to re-establish the process. These supporting services and facilities could be:

- Utilities such as electricity, gas, water.
- IT services such as email, network connectivity, virtual working including learning and teaching.
- Telephones.

- Buildings or plant (e.g. student halls, library or a central boiler).
- Physical access (to a campus or part of a campus).
- People (groups of people or specific individuals).
- External providers or services such as food deliveries, scholarly publishers.
- Postal services, BACS, public transport or local car parks.

This may require the production of a matrix which defines which business critical process is supported by what service. This will help in the assessment of impact in the event of a major event.

An example is set out in Appendix 2

4.7 Communication

The SLG plus seconded members will establish a communication plan.

Current locations for the emergency response cabinets are noted below. Additional cabinets will be installed in each of the GSA main buildings.

Main Campus emergency cabinet locations

Reid PSR1 Ground Floor

Haldane 1st Floor

6 Rose Street 3rd Floor

Forres Campus - Building A

5. Recording the Plan

Responsibility for dissemination of the plan lies with the Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates).

Members of the SLG plus co-opted members will each be provided with two hard copies of the Business Continuity Plan. One to be retained in the office, the other for home use.

Copies of the Plan will also be held electronically centrally on the Health and Safety intranet and SharePoint resource.

A copy of the Plan will be provided to the Students' Association and other external organisations with a presence in the School's building and local Emergency Services as appropriate.

6. Exercising the plan

The Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates) will organise exercises of all or components of the plan.

The aims of the exercises are to:

- Identify any areas for development in the existing plans so that they can be improved.
- Ensure that key staff, particularly those who may not have been closely involved in the planning process, are familiar with the Major Incident Response and business continuity arrangements.
- Build confidence in teams and in the GSA about its ability to respond to a disruption and to raise the profile of business continuity.

To meet these aims, the exercise must:

- Be as realistic as possible without putting the GSA or individuals at unnecessary risk.
- Involve different people in the exercise from those who wrote the plans.
- Involve all the staff likely to be involved in a Major Incident.

- Be at least annual.
- More frequent training may be organised for specific roles if required.

7. Review and updating the plan

The Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates) will ensure that the plan is kept up to date and advised to all parties.

The following will prompt a review of the plan:

- Activations (or near activation) of the business continuity arrangements.
- Business continuity exercises findings.
- Changes in the nature, scale or organisation of services, facilities or business processes.
- Changes in personnel or contact details.
- Scheduled annual review.

8. Training

Appropriate training and where required, refresher training, will be provided to members of the SLG and co-opted members plus the Safe Campus Group. This will be overseen by the Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates).

Training sessions and exercises will be organised and held to provide the opportunity for the various teams and individuals to practice in their roles and highlight any problems that they may experience whilst carrying their roles.

Exercises will be held annually and form part of the training programme. More frequent, and, or additional training may be organised for specific roles as required and identified by assessment or outcomes from the exercises.

9. Post event evaluation

Following any major incident, the Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates) will be responsible for carrying out a full evaluation and debrief of the effectiveness of the School's response.

A meeting of the SLG plus co-opted members and Safe Campus Group will be called at an appropriate time, including any members brought in for the purposes of managing the incident.

The team will:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures and performance of the plan.
- Evaluate the timeliness of the actions.
- Record any problems in relation to practice, communication or availability of physical/finance/staffing resource.
- Reflect on any learning in terms of whether the incident could have been avoided or whether steps could be taken to mitigate impact should a similar incident happen again.
- Record any changes needed to local school/directorate plans to ensure a more efficient response if a similar incident occurs again.

The Business Continuity Plan Coordinator (Director of Estates) will formally record the evaluation and notify relevant parties of follow-up action needed.

In addition, arrangements will be made to meet with the people who were affected by the incident for debriefing purposes and to make sure everyone has been appropriately supported.

Appendix 1 Critical processes, disruption and service level tolerance.

Number	Process	Max tolerable disruption period	Minimum tolerable service level	Critical supporting service
1	Student accommodation			Buildings, utilities, and plant.
2	Landline telephone communication			IT and external provider.
3	Mobile Phone communication (Unlikely to be lost completely)			IT and external Provider. May be outside GSA control
4	Media communication			IT
5	Student feeding			Building, utilities plant and external provider
6	E mail			IT
7	Internet			IT and external provider
8	Staff feeding			Building and external provider
9	Staff Payroll			BACS, IT
10	Offering student places			
11	Delivering lectures			IT and Lecturers
12	Access to learning and teaching resources			IT, TSD and lecturers, tutors
13	Assessment			
14	Marking			
15	Exam boards			
16	Overseas student welfare			IT and student support services
17	Offsite activities staff and student welfare			IT and student support services
18				
Key				
	Process criticality	Max Tolerable disruption period	Minimum tolerable service level	Notes
	Critical	0-12 hour	Increase in demand No Reduction or reduction tolerated for limited time subject to incident circumstances	Depends on the time of incident and risk assessment.
	Important	12-24 hours	50% to 75% for up to 24 hours	
	Required	5 working days	25% to 50% for up to 5 working days	May depend on timing of the event
	Desirable	Progressive restoration	No service to 25% but improving.	

Appendix 2 Service and process matrix

Process	Service									
	Gas	Electricity	Water	Sewage	IT services	Telephones	Building	Plant	External provider	Staff
Accommodation										
Land lines										
Media comms										
Student feeding										
Email										
Internet										
Staff feeding										
Staff Payroll										
Offers of places										
Lectures										
Learning and teaching resource										