

Business Continuity Plan

Version Number:	3
Effective From:	4 March 2020
Review by:	14th January 2024
Date Ratified:	23 October 2019
Last Reviewed By:	14th January 2023, David Hampton

This policy is designed to protect apprentices who are registered with us, to minimise the effect of an adverse effect and ensure that we comply with all relevant guidance and standards.

Purpose

- The purpose this plan is to outline how we will continue to operate in the event of a short-term problem or serious crisis and all members of staff are therefore asked to familiarise themselves with the content of the plan. This plan is included in the consultant's Handbook.

Applicability

- This policy is applicable to all employees, associates and partners.
- We recognise that our assessment activities could be carried out on client or third-party premises and therefore much of our response in these cases will be to follow local premises management emergency policies which take precedence over our own.
- Emergency evacuation procedures and ensuring the security of buildings are the responsibility of the owner of the facility (which will be the employer or an external meeting venue)

Anticipating Risks

- In order to minimise the possibility of a major incident occurring, or a small problem becoming a big problem, we will as far as is practicable ensure that any perceived risks have been determined, assessed and registered.

How We React to Problems

- Our assessment activities may be disrupted due to events outside of our control, which either need to be mitigated or could in some cases necessitate suspension for part of a day or more.
- Such events include but are not limited to:
 - Facilities failure (eg power, water, heating)
 - Transport failure (eg severe weather conditions, strikes)
 - Risks to life (eg bomb threats, fire)
 - Technology risks (eg malicious attacks, IT failure)
 - Personnel risks (eg accident, illness, bereavement)
- These risks will typically require one or more of the following:
 - Communication to affected parties
 - Arrangement of alternatives
 - Co-ordination of activities

Communication to Affected Parties

- In the event of a failure (such as the ones listed above) that requires a face-to-face or remote event to be cancelled, communication between ourselves and the employer will be via email, text messages and phone calls until confirmation is received that the situation is understood on both sides. We will also communicate the situation internally to the assessor and Partners. The Partners are available out of office hours and when we are on vacation.
- Information to staff and apprentices regarding the current situation will be relayed by the employer through their own contingency channels. We support this activity wherever possible. Apprentices, staff and IEPAs will be advised to take appropriate action (eg sent home or requested to stay at home until further notice, or advised of an alternative arrangement being made)
- In the event of a significant incident, the emergency contacts to be used are:
 - Michael Akers: michael.akers@advancedanalyticssolutions.co.uk +44 7986 157649 (M) +44 1227 459007 (H)
 - David Hampton: david.hampton@advancedanalyticssolutions.co.uk +44 7917 71740 (M) +44 1732 464704 (H)
 - Employer – key contacts, whoever this may be in each case
 - The Partners will maintain the latest contact details for all concerned

Arrangement of Alternatives

- Examples of alternatives that might need to be arranged include (not an exhaustive list):
 - hire of an external meeting room (there are many rooms available throughout the UK from companies such as Regus, hotels and web agencies)
 - car rental (or use of other alternative transport arrangements)
 - hire or purchase of a replacement laptop
- The IEPA is authorized to decide on appropriate action to be taken, where an alternative needs to be arranged at short notice to provide continuity of support..
- We work together as a team; Partners support each other and the IEPA doing the work by helping to make urgent arrangements for suitable alternatives as the need arises.
- Our assessment materials, emails and other critical data cannot be replaced from a shop, so we use backup systems: duplicates of everything are kept in the cloud, where they can be accessed with appropriate credentials from any computer.
- We are authorized to conduct End Point Assessments remotely, which provides additional options (eg alternative assessors) with minimal logistical difficulty (and indeed is our default arrangement).
- The only business-critical software that is not available as standard on a replacement laptop is Minitab. In a situation where a replacement laptop must be used, a full-function 30-day trial can be downloaded from Minitab.com (and we have copies in the cloud of the zip file) which temporarily removes the need to obtain a replacement license key from Minitab, speeding up the recovery process.
- Where a IEPA is unexpectedly unavailable, the Partners will immediately arrange a replacement. We ensure that we have sufficient bench strength to make it highly unlikely that an event will need to be postponed because a crucial person is unavailable.

Coordination of Activities Through a Crisis Management Team

- In extreme cases it may be necessary to call on a number of staff from the employer and our own team to form a Crisis Management Team who will oversee the reaction plan.
- The team will either remain at the premises or work remotely (as determined by the circumstances) to ensure that vital support to the business and the apprentices is provided as swiftly and effectively as possible.

The role of the crisis management team

To manage a major incident by:

- Implementing alternative strategic arrangements contained within the emergency/ disaster recovery plans, business plans, risk register, Health and safety policies, and IT recovery plans.
- Ensure stator compliance with regard to RIDDOR
- Ensure emergency plans are in place
- Inform where applicable:
 - Governance Board
 - ESFA
 - Awarding organisations
 - Insurance company
 - Next of kin
 - Local authority
 - Health and Safety Executive
 - Police
- Enlist the help of counsellors for therapy or bereavement
- Maintain adequate records

Specific role of the leader of the Crisis team

- To oversee and facilitate the action plan
- To disseminate information to the appropriate people
- To report to all relevant authorities including health and safety executive, the police and ESFA
- To notify insurers
- To ensure communication is maintained and ensure that alternative methods of communication are put into place should the need arise. This could include using different email accounts, written messages, and the internal communication site. Ensure all records are accurately recorded and a time line is in place.
- To keep the Governance Board informed

Evacuation and emergency action plan

- The procedures for safe evacuation of the premises and alerting the emergency services are set in the health and safety policies and procedures of the owners of the premises (we do not use our own premises for End Point Assessments)

Learner's records

- Learner records are kept on ACE360 which is backed up automatically to ensure no essential information is lost. In the event of a disaster the awarding organisation will be notified and additional measures will be put into place to ensure that learners are not impacted.

Counselling

- If the incident has involved violence, injury, loss of life or other stressful situations the Partners will make arrangements for counselling advice to be available to all that are affected.

Notification of death

- In the event of a death whether it be a learner or member of staff, the next of kin, police and appropriate authorities (including the ESFA) will be informed to ensure that the procedure is followed correctly.