BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN
2025 - 2026

Our Mission Statement

Aim to deliver an engaging, positive learning experience every time.

Our Values

Our values encompass the achievement of all of our learners. Our values are HONESTY, INTEGRITY, SUPPORT, ETHICAL BUSINESS AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL. We support PREVENT, SAFEGUARDING, BRITISH VALUES, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION and this policy is at the heart of and supports these core values in aiming to safeguard staff and learners.

Our Vision

To be the provider of choice for apprentices and clients, creating bespoke education and training that maximizes opportunity and investment, both for now and in the future.

Contents

1 - Introduction and Overview

As an organisation, we aim to ensure that all areas of the business are secure and safe in the event of an unforeseen circumstance or significant event. This is to protect learners in relation to the development, delivery, assessment, and award of qualifications and or end point assessments. The Business Continuity Plan outlines measures we have in place to secure our IT and other infrastructure to maintain business productivity and secure information.

2 - Rationale and Scope

This document covers all staff, students and visitors to the centre. The policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

This policy ensures that the centre's Continuity Management arrangements are developed and implemented in a safe, prioritised, and structured manner with the commitment of the Senior Management Team.

The aim of having a Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) is to ensure that the centre is able to maintain its activities in the face of disruptive challenges. Therefore, all centre services are expected to prepare, exercise, maintain and review BCP's based on the principle that each business area should be able to maintain its own critical activities which are key to contributing to the Strategic intention of the centre.

Business areas are assessed through a risk assessment (annex A) and key areas of vulnerability identified, this will form the focus of the BCP and a checklist is created. The checklist details different scenarios and explains who is responsible for what and provides timescales for different tasks, this will minimise the impact of business disruption. Full compliance with this policy will ensure procedures exist for recording, assessing, and managing business continuity risk; identifying and prioritising essential activities; responding to business disruptions or incidents, regardless of cause; and maintaining essential services (or restoring services to a minimum acceptable level).

3 - Roles and Responsibilities

Our SMT (Senior Management Team) take overall responsibility for the provision of all policies within the centre. The directors, Mark Webber and Peter Carey, take overall responsibility for this policy, its application and sharing of appropriate information.

4 - How this Policy will be Communicated

- Our Senior Management Team will review policies and update as required
- Our policy will be made available on our website if applicable
- Our policy documents will form part of the induction for all staff to the centre
- When suitable, policies will be uploaded to OneFile resources for access by all appropriate users
- Acceptable use agreements to be held on learner files, or signed on OneFile as required
- We may email policy updates to staff as required or use OneFile system announcements
- Staff should review the employee handbook in relation to staff behavior and the Staff Behavior Policy.

5 - Complaints

Any complaints in relation to this policy or relating to this policy should be made to the Senior Management Team or the Directors, who can be contacted via our Head Office on 08452235020 or email info@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk. Kirsty Ryan can be contacted on the same number or email Kirsty@apprenticeship-centre.co.uk

6 – Statement of Intent

The centre is committed to developing, implementing, and managing a robust and effective BCMS as a key mechanism to:
- Ensure a formal, consistent, coordinated, and cost-effective approach to the continuity of its teaching, and assessment activities within the Higher Education environment.
- Identification of the critical activities of its Business Area activity, via robust Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and Risk Assessment (RA)
- Protection, maintenance, and recovery of Business Area critical activities as recognised in relevant BIA.
- Developed BC plans will ensure continuity of activities at a minimum acceptable level and within specified timeframes.
- Develop a culture of Business Continuity Management (BCM) that feeds into the centre's planning and management processes.
- To analyse the impact that a failure of service could have and set recovery objectives to ensure continuity of service
- Maintain the confidence of staff, students, and visitors.
- Protect and uphold the reputation of the centre and manage an up to date and relevant BCMS.

7 – Related Roles and Responsibilities

Health and Safety Manager – Lloyd Johnson
Safeguarding Lead and Data Protection Officer – Julie Gardner
Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Joanne Ross
Directors Peter Carey – 07899 873564 and Mark Webber – 07970 637509

The above staff can be contacted via our Head office on 0845 2235020 or email info@nvq-centre.co.uk

8 – Incident Reporting – Emergency Contacts

Incidents should be reported to the SMT or Directors as detailed above.

Emergency Numbers:
Ambulance, Fire, Police – 999
Flood Line – 0345 6026340
Asptech (IT Support) – 0845 2220100
Gas & Electricity – 0800 111999
ESFA – 0370 2670001
Hastingwood (Managed Office, Landlord) – 0121 3866600

9 – Working to Reduce Risks

Our centre uses recognised and award-winning partner organisations, with outstanding reputations to support our business. This helps to protect us as we utilize the systems of other organisations that are well protected and well resourced, beyond the capability and expertise of our organisation.

10 – Our Partner Organisations

All our learner portfolios are now housed via OneFile. We utilise this well respected and award-winning organisation to support our MI systems information in relation to learners as well as meaning learners can access their information from anywhere at any time. The system is very secure, password protected, and OneFile have robust and sufficient back up and resources to prevent the mishandling of data.

Another MI system we use is MAYTAS, again with sufficient back up and resourcing.

For HR, we partner with Croner to provide advice, guidance and support.

We also use a specialist IT service company called ASPTECH who manage and store our data off site to ensure our central sever and shared data files are backed up daily.

11 – Staff/Learner Continuity

We aim to have at least 4 members of staff affiliated to each training course/assessment standard that we offer. This means we have 2 assessors and 2 IVs as a minimum (Assessment staff can also be IVs). In this way, if a member of staff is absent, then another member of the team can support and ensure continuity of assessment and continually good levels of teaching/assessment practice. We also have an additional 3 experienced tutors/assessors to call upon who are also employed, we ensure that within each department there is more than one individual with the capability to carry out all tasks.

12 – Office, Home Working and Training Facilities

Our office is based in Birmingham and has great travel links for the United Kingdom and is centrally located, which is advantageous to both staff and visitors. We are based within a managed office building who have several offices across the country, therefore, our staff and systems can be moved in the event of emergency, and with all data now online, and/or on the central data base, this can easily be downloaded, and staff can re-locate if required to do so. All staff have the required equipment to work from home or remotely, therefore, if there is an issue with transportation, this is negated.

To ensure that all communication lines are kept open, regular meetings via Teams will be scheduled for all staff to address business updates. All staff have individual laptops, mobile phones and emails to ensure communication continues effectively.

Office phone lines to be diverted to staff work mobiles. Staff members to contact their clients via phone/email/teams to maintain strong working relationships.

13 – Business Closure

Should the worst-case scenario of the business closing happen or was unable to deliver training moving forward, we would work closely with other local training providers and the ESFA to ensure there was a smooth handover of Apprentices.

14 - Annex A – BCP Risk Assessment

Key Area of Risk:	Pandemic
Person responsible for completing:	Mark Webber
How likely is this to happen:	Medium / High
Time scale to resolve:	Immediate / Ongoing

Resources Available	Action Plan	Action By	Date Completed
Data/IT	All information is to be stored centrally and securely on our business server. This is to be password protected where required and only accessible to authorised staff. This will facilitate ease of delivery, internal quality assurance and award of qualifications. All staff have remote access via laptops and phone. All staff to be trained on remote assessment via online platforms.	Mark Webber David Gardner	In place since April 2020
Staffing	Ensure that staff are kept safe and away from unnecessary contact. Covid guidelines to be issued to all staff based on most up to date government information. In the event of staff member contracting Covid 19, cover will be arranged from our pool of assessors, with at least one assessor on standby at all times.	Mark Webber David Gardner Julie Gardner	Ongoing
Equipment	Remote testing facilities for knowledge tests are already in place via Proctor, OneFile and ClassMarker. Staff have work laptops and work phones, however there is a pool of laptops locked in a secure location in the office for back-up purposes. Anti-bacterial sanitiser and face masks to be supplied to all staff.	Mark Webber Mark Webber	In place since Jan 2020 In place since April 2020
Resources	All development and delivery resources are stored centrally for staff access. Remain up to date with office suit for delivery and adapt to suit. For example, observations may be replaced with witness testimonies and reflective accounts. Ensure that the assessment materials are valid, reliable, comparable, manageable and free from bias to reflect flexibility and that staff are trained on their use for delivery, training, and awarding. This will ensure learners are coached and assessed fairly and not disadvantaged.	David Gardner	Ongoing
Communication	To ensure that all communication lines are kept open, regular meetings via Teams to be scheduled for all staff to address business updates and safety. Office phone lines to be diverted to staff work mobiles. Staff members to contact their clients via phone/email/teams to maintain strong working relationships.	Mark Webber David Gardner	In place since March 2020

Premises	Monitor government updates and align workplace practices with their requirements. Office to remain open if allowed, for those who cannot work from home, with the premises having deep cleans daily.	Mark Webber	In place since March 2020
Suppliers	Utilise various suppliers for sanitiser and face masks to ensure sufficient availability for staff	Mark Webber	In place since April 2020
Clients	Contact to be made with current clients to address methods of delivery to ensure continuity for the learner, maintaining current levels of service.	David Gardner	In place since March 2020
Other	Maintain strong working relationships with other training providers to pass over Apprentices if we were to close, to work with the ESFA to enable a smooth handover.	Mark Webber	In place since April 2020

15 - Annex B – BIA Business Impact Analysis

Key Area of Risk:	Critical business activities
Person responsible for completing:	Mark Webber
How likely is this to happen:	Low/Med
Time scale to resolve:	Immediate / Ongoing

1. Purpose

This BIA identifies the key business activities that are critical to maintaining operations and delivering apprenticeship training. It outlines the potential impacts if these activities are disrupted and sets recovery objectives to ensure continuity of service to learners, employers, and regulatory bodies.

2. Scope

This analysis covers core business functions including:

-   Apprenticeship delivery (off-site training)
-   Quality assurance and compliance
-   Internal sales and business development
-   Learner support and employer engagement
-   Communication with external and regulatory bodies
-   IT and data management systems supporting these activities

3. Business Functions and Dependencies

Business Function	Description of Activity	Dependencies (IT / People / External)	Impact if Unavailable	Maximum Tolerable Downtime (MTD)	Recovery Time Objective (RTO)	Recovery Point Objective (RPO)
Apprenticeship Delivery (Off-site)	Delivering training sessions and assessments at employer sites	Trainers, learning materials, transport, communication tools	Critical – disruption halts learning and may breach funding contracts	24 hours	12 hours	4 hours
Learner Support & Progress Reviews	Ongoing support and progress tracking for apprentices	MIS system, assessors, communication	High – impacts learner achievement and funding claims	48 hours	24 hours	8 hours
Quality Assurance & Compliance	Monitoring teaching quality, audits, and reports to ESFA/Ofsted	QA staff, compliance officers, MIS, documentation	Critical – risk of non-compliance or funding claw back	24 hours	12 hours	4 hours
Employer Engagement	Managing employer relationships and placement arrangements	CRM system, account managers, communication	High – potential contract loss or poor partner relations	48 hours	24 hours	8 hours
Sales & Business Development	Generating new apprenticeship opportunities and contracts	Sales staff, CRM, marketing tools	Medium – affects new revenue streams	72 hours	48 hours	12 hours
Communication & Coordination	Internal and external communications (Teams, Email, Phones)	IT systems, internet, power	High – slows all coordination	8 hours	4 hours	1 hour
External/Regulatory Reporting	Submitting ILR, funding, and quality data to ESFA/Awarding Bodies	MIS, data team, regulatory portals	Critical – missed deadlines or non-compliance risk	12 hours	6 hours	2 hours
HR & Payroll	Managing staff pay, records, and contracts	HR system, finance software	Medium – staff dissatisfaction, payroll delay	72 hours	48 hours	12 hours
Facilities & Health & Safety	Maintaining training resources, equipment, and safe environments	Facilities team, physical sites	Medium – interruptions to off-site training	48 hours	24 hours	N/A

4. Impact Categories

Impact Type	Description	Examples
Operational	Disruption to training delivery or learner tracking	Missed reviews, cancelled sessions
Financial	Loss of funding or delayed payments	Missed ILR submissions, refund obligations
Reputational	Loss of employer and learner trust	Poor satisfaction or Ofsted feedback
Legal/Compliance	Breach of ESFA, Ofsted, or awarding body rules	Non-compliance with funding regulations
Health & Safety	Risk to staff or learners during training	Unsafe off-site conditions, lack of first aid coverage

5. Criticality Ranking

Business Activity	Criticality Level	Notes
Apprenticeship Delivery	Critical	Core business function
Quality & Compliance	Critical	Required for funding and accreditation
External/Regulatory Reporting	Critical	Legal and funding compliance risk
Learner Support	High	Impacts learner success and retention
Communication Systems	High	Required for coordination and engagement
Employer Engagement	Medium	Important for growth but short delay tolerable
Sales Operations	Medium	Short-term disruption manageable
HR & Payroll	Medium	Manageable within 2–3 days
Facilities & Safety	Medium	Can continue with limited disruption
Apprenticeship Delivery	Critical	Core business function

6. Recommendations

- Data Continuity: Ensure MIS, CRM, and learner records are backed up daily and accessible remotely.
- Training Continuity Plans: Maintain alternative trainers or virtual delivery options for off-site sessions.
- Compliance Safeguards: Establish backup processes for ILR submissions and Ofsted reporting.
- Communication Resilience: Maintain offline or mobile contact lists for all staff and employers.
- Regular Testing: Conduct quarterly scenario tests (e.g., IT outage, transport disruption, compliance audit).
- Document Retention: Store key compliance and learner files securely both online and offline.

7. Summary of Key Findings

- Apprenticeship delivery, compliance, and regulatory reporting are the most critical activities for maintaining funding and operational continuity.
- Communication tools (email, Teams, phones) are vital for coordinating off-site trainers and staff.
- Data protection and backup of learner information are essential to avoid compliance breaches.
- Maintaining strong relationships with employers and regulators requires minimal downtime and effective communication plans.