

Major Incident and Continuity Planning Procedure

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Procedure Owner – Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary

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Changes and Reason for Changes – Minor text change and changes to department names.



MAJOR INCIDENT & CONTINUITY PLANNING PROCEDURE

Introduction

Incidents will sometimes occur which impact on the ability of Schools, Departments, or the University as a whole to operate as normal. This procedure outlines the University's general incident response arrangements, although there may be specific arrangements put in place to address particular incidents such as severe weather.

This procedure applies to all staff, and in particular, those with management responsibility in Schools or Departments, or when applicable, responsibility for outsourced services.

Responsibilities

Governance: Ultimate responsibility for Business Continuity Management (BCM) rests with the University Principal and Vice Chancellor and University Court. Executive responsibility for BCM coordination rests with the Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary.

During both the planning and response stages, the **Risk & Resilience Team** will provide support and guidance to Schools/Departments, retain overview of the entire University response and ensure compatibility between any School/Department continuity plans which have been invoked.

Deans and Directors have responsibility to ensure that BCM is embedded within their areas of responsibility. This includes ensuring this procedure is communicated and followed and that School/Department BC plans are developed, implemented, communicated, exercised and reviewed.

The **Major Incident Team** will decide upon and coordinate the implementation of the University response to any referred incident.

All staff must be aware of any business continuity roles or responsibilities they have.

Procedure

Each School and Department is responsible for having their own continuity arrangements in place. These should be focused on continuing or resuming the School/Department's most time critical activities to acceptable levels within an acceptable timescale.

These activities, and the resources (e.g. people, systems, suppliers) required to carry them out at normal and minimum acceptable levels, will be identified as part of an impact analysis. [The Risk & Resilience team](#) can support Schools/Departments to undertake this analysis.

Once drafted, business continuity arrangements should be rehearsed in order to confirm their viability and ensure those who may be involved in implementing them are aware of their roles. There are a number of ways to rehearse or exercise plans, ranging in complexity from a local team review to a desktop scenario based exercise, to a full simulation (using the plan to direct a real response to a simulated incident). Again, the

[Risk & Resilience team](#) can offer advice and support on exercising continuity arrangements.

While some incidents can be managed locally at School or Departmental level, others will require a coordinated University response. For these incidents, the Major Incident Team will be invoked to coordinate the overall University response. The team contains representatives from the Vice Chancellor's Executive, Vice Principal (Governance) and University Secretary's Office, Corporate Communications and the Risk & Resilience team. The team will co-opt colleagues from across the University as required in order to address the incident. This group are supported by a Major Incident Plan, which contains contact details for internal and external colleagues and guidance for responding to incidents. Exercises are held periodically to ensure the plan is workable and that those likely to be involved in real life responses are familiar with their potential roles.

Escalating incidents to the Major Incident Team

Major incidents are those that are having, or have the potential to have, a severe and/or wide ranging impact on the University, beyond the scope of local plans or procedures.¹ They may be managed entirely by the University, or they may involve external agencies such as the police, fire service or utilities providers. Examples of potentially major incidents include utilities/property issues, severe weather, industrial action, IT issues, supplier disruptions and malicious/criminal activity.

Should any School or Department become aware of a potentially major incident affecting any part of the University, Security must be contacted immediately on extension **3168 (0141 848 3168)**, briefing them on the situation, leaving contact details, and requesting they notify the Major Incident Team. This process should be followed 24/7, 365 days per year.

If in any doubt whether to escalate an incident, it is always better to escalate.

Any requests for comments or statements received by Schools or Departments which may be in relation to an incident must be referred to the Major Incident Team as soon as possible. The requester's name, contact details, organisation and question(s) should all be referred to the Major Incident Team, which will coordinate any responses.

¹ This is an internal definition of a major incident. If responding agencies are involved, they may not necessarily regard the situation as a major incident.