

Business Continuity Policy

Introduction

Responsible Person	Director – Kulsum Hussin
Distribution	Senior Managers, Delivery Team Leaders, Chief Administrator
Emergency Contacts	Director and CEO – Kulsum Hussin 020 8916 0227 Recruitment and Employer Engagement - Waseem Sherwani – 020 8916 0227 Education and Skills Funding Agency – 0845 377 5000

The Business Continuity Plan is issued as part of Welcome Skills Limited overall policy of risk management. If an emergency develops that affects the running of the company, the Director, or in their absence, a member of the senior management team will assess the situation to see if it is necessary to enact this continuity plan.

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. Avert or minimise the effects of major incidents
2. To maintain or bring the company back to full operation with minimal disruption

The major areas of risk for Welcome Skills Limited have been identified as:

1. Closure or partial closure of the centre as a result of fire, flood or other incident
2. Communications
3. Loss of Life and/or major injury or illness
4. Major Loss of Information and Communication Technology
5. IT Disaster Recovery Action Plan
6. Cash-flow
7. Contracts
8. Contingency for Continuity of Learning

A. Closure or Partial Closure due to Incident

Evacuation and Emergency Action

All staff are made aware of the emergency evacuation procedures at induction, and these are laid out in the Health & Safety policies and procedures.

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Business Continuity Plan	July 2021	5	K.Hussin	Aug 2022

In the unlikely event of the centre being affected by a major incident, a member of the senior management team will arrange for the security of the damaged area, and temporary storage for any furniture and equipment.

The Director will notify any suppliers and contact the Insurance Company, and Capital Business Centres (the landlord) to seek alternative office accommodation during the period of disruption. Welcome Skills has access to alternative rooms at the Business Centre Croydon. Where necessary alternative modes of transport will be used. This will depend on the exact requirements.

B. Communications

Should an incident cause disruption to the main telephone services, all assessment and delivery staff are equipped with mobile telephones or tablets and have facilities to communicate via email or other social media. Where the mainline office phone is unavailable calls will be transferred to a mobile number.

The Delivery Team Leaders will maintain contact with all trainers. Given that the programme delivery mainly takes place on employer's premises and via remote systems, there should be minimum disruption to clients and training should continue as planned.

Office based staff will be contacted by the Operations and Administration Manager and advised as to any alternative office accommodation or asked to work from home if none is available.

To maintain records, the company has a full computer back-up system and the physical back up facility is stored in other premises.

The Director will ensure that all staff are kept fully informed and any questions are answered. If questions arise to which the answers are not yet known this will be acknowledged, noted and a response will be given when known.

In the event of such an incident, all Prime Funding partners will be notified of the situation and will receive regular updates on the status and when normal functions and facilities will be regained.

C. Loss of Life and/or major injury or illness

In the case of a major outbreak of disease or illness e.g. meningitis or food poisoning, the Health & Safety Officer will notify the Health Authority who will advise the company how to proceed.

The Health & Safety Officer will also be responsible for contacting any other necessary authorities E.G The Health & Safety Executive if required.

All staff will be informed of any such illnesses or diseases as soon as possible, and within a maximum of 48 hours. Learners who may have come into contact with anyone affected will be notified immediately, as will employers, where assessment and delivery take place on their premises.

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Business Continuity Plan	July 2021	5	K.Hussin	Aug 2022

The manager responsible for leading the delivery team will ensure that all staff are supported and made aware of the need to support other learners and staff who may have been affected by the incident. Where necessary the company will arrange for a counselling service to be made available to those affected.

D. Major Loss of Information and Communication Technology

ICT is at the centre of operations for Welcome Skills Limited and affects all areas of the company.

The systems can be categorised under two headings:

1. Administrative, communication and management information systems
2. Teaching and Learning

E. IT Disaster Recovery Action Plan

Welcome Skills Limited have taken a number of steps to ensure the safety of data. In the event of a system failure, the Director or a member of the senior management team will enact procedures to retrieve the data.

Administrative and Learner assessment material is stored on a server located within the main office. To maintain records, the company has a full computer back-up system and the physical back up facility is stored in other premises. Data is backed up daily.

For MIS data the company uses Pelcomp's PICS system, which holds all learner data. This ensures that all critical data pertaining to the learner is also held by Pellcomp Software in several external server stations.

In the event of such an incident, all Prime Funding partners will be notified of the situation and will receive regular updates on the status and when normal functions and facilities will be regained.

F. Cash Flow

Welcome Skills Limited recognise the importance of cash-flow, which ensures the sustainability of the business. The company manages its accounts carefully to ensure that sufficient funds are available to service the overheads of the business and enable additional resources to be purchased for purposes of growth. To support the cash-flow and general finances, the company contracts with a professional book-keeper to ensure that the month to month income and expenditures are as planned. In addition, the company uses PICS and external support mechanisms to ensure that all claims are processed in time to our Funding Partners to generate on-time revenues.

Should the company cash-flow be reduced to the level where non-payment of invoices or salaries may occur, the following actions will be taken.

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Business Continuity Plan	July 2021	5	K.Hussin	Aug 2022

1. Investigation into any expected revenues not being paid on time by Colleges. In this instance we will request a written response by the College as to the reason and work to attract the payment in the swiftest timescale
2. Invoices: we will identify which of the invoice payments are the most fundamental to maintaining the business operation and they will be placed in order of priority and agreements made with the respective organisations about late payment dates.
3. Staff Salaries: These will be maintained, and staff will not be at risk of non-payment.
4. Bank Overdraft or loan: As the company is self-financing and has an excellent credit history, attracting a short-term business loan or overdraft will be used if required.

G. Contracts

The company is proud never to have lost a contract in its trading history. The business is structured to meet the needs of our partners and the current guidelines set down by Government for the sector. We have the following procedures if we lose a contract and require replacement funding.

- We would request a meeting with the contract holder to identify what the issues are and agree on any contract issues that are relevant. We would work to resolve any issues where possible.
- We would approach our existing Funding Partners and request a growth case.
- Through our Contracts Manager we retain a position of having additional funding providers who are interested in our offer, and in some instances, we have already passed their PQQ and are on their Approved Provider list.
- The company would market to new Prime Fundholders to establish new contracts.

H. Contingency for Continuity of Learning

Should a programme be withdrawn due to funding changes or removal from the current Hub by a Government Agency or Awarding Organisation, Welcome Skills Limited will do its utmost to ensure that the learner and their study is not compromised.

In these situations, the following actions will be taken.

- Removal of Funding: Welcome Skills Limited will communicate with its relevant funding partner and Awarding Organisation to appeal against the removal of funding. A request for continued funding will be made to the Agency. During this process, Welcome Skills Limited will continue to support the learner. If necessary, the learner will be transferred onto another suitable programme with similar outcomes and all prior work and evidence will be cross-referenced to remove any unnecessary duplication. Or as a last resort if funding is completely removed the learner will be transferred to a partner provider.
- Removal or Withdrawal of Qualification: In this instance Welcome Skills Limited will appeal to the relevant Awarding Organisation and request an extension of the qualification until the learners expected end date plus two months for any late completers. During this process, Welcome Skills Limited will continue to support the learner. If necessary, the learner will be

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Business Continuity Plan	July 2021	5	K.Hussin	Aug 2022



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transferred onto another suitable programme with similar outcomes and all prior work and evidence will be cross-referenced to remove any unnecessary duplication.

- Should funding be completely moved all learners will be transferred to an appropriate provider.

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Business Continuity Plan	July 2021	5	K.Hussin	Aug 2022