Business Continuity Management System

The purpose of this document is to detail the Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) that will be in place within the University. This document supports the Business Continuity Policy, and sets out in more detail how the policy will be implemented.

1. Implementing the policy

Each member of staff has responsibility for ensuring the continuity of operations within the University. This will range from having overall responsibility for Business Continuity or being a plan owner, through to staff knowing what will be required of them in the event of a BC plan being invoked.

2. Business Continuity Management System

There are several components to the BCMS that will operate within the University. When these components are being completed timeously, the University will remain in a position to deal with incidents in a well rehearsed manner with each staff member knowing their roles and responsibilities.

3. Business Impact Analysis

3.1 Business Impact Analysis will be carried out within each Service & Academic School in order to record information regarding the critical activities being completed. The resources required to conduct the activity; both at business as usual and at the minimal acceptable level will be identified, as well as the timescales in which these levels need to be achieved following a disruption.

3.2 The BIA also identifies interdependencies between activities, as well as the potential consequences should an activity not be restored within set timescales. This information will aid decision making regarding the priority in which critical activities should be reinstated in the wake of a disruption. The BIA allows for any seasonal changes to the criticality of an activity to be taken into account.

4. Risk Assessment

Documented risk assessments will take place within Schools & Service Areas in order to identify specific risks that may have a negative impact on critical activities. Once these have been identified, proactive mitigation measures will be considered, and if deemed necessary and practicable, will be implemented in order to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring and/or the impact of the risk, should it occur.
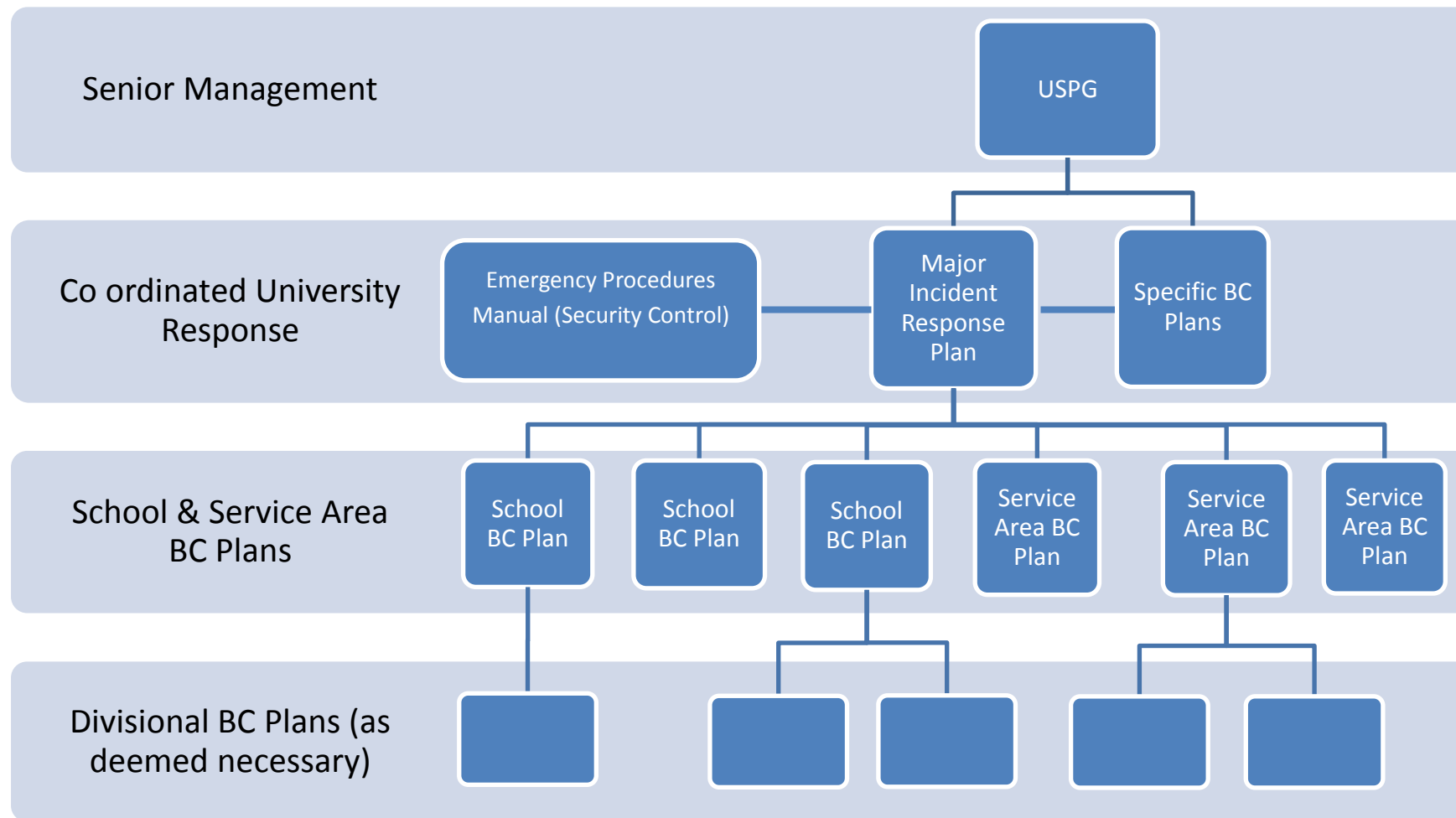
5. Business Continuity Plans & Response Structure

5.1 Each School & Service Area will have a Business Continuity Plan (BCP), documenting what actions must be taken in the event of an incident in order to restore/maintain each critical activity to its pre-determined minimal acceptable level, within the set timescale. The level of detail required within each School & Service Area BCP will be based on the findings of their BIA.

5.2 Each School & Service Area will have a nominated BCP owner who will be responsible for ensuring that the plan is updated and issued when required (see 6.4) and also the overall coordination of BC within the area/activities the plan covers.

5.3 Whenever a school or service area BCP is invoked, the Major Incident Response Team (MIRT) must be notified via the security control room so that an assessment of the overall University position can be maintained.

5.4 Situations will arise that are beyond the scope of School and Service Area plans. Incidents affecting multiple Schools and/or Service Areas, or incidents that are of a severe or high profile nature may require a more coordinated University response. This will be provided by the MIRT utilising the Major Incident Response Plan and any relevant University BCPs. This will not remove the need for School & Service Area BCPs to be invoked.

5.5 School & Service Area Plans will usually be invoked by a member of that School or Service Area's Senior Management Team, although in some cases this authority may be delegated. It is at each School & Service Area's discretion as to whether additional BCPs are required at a divisional level.

5.6 The MIRT will provide the Secretary and other members of the University Senior Management Team with updates on the situation as required, and request support if necessary.

5.7 It is usually preferential to invoke a plan and/or escalate a situation to the next level and then stand down that level of response if it is not required, than not escalate a situation at an early stage and later find that extra support is required.

Figure 1 shows the relationship between the various plans and levels of response within the University.

Figure 1 (not all School and Service Area plans are represented on the chart)

Senior Management
- USPG

Co ordinated University Response
- Emergency Procedures Manual (Security Control)
- Major Incident Response Plan
- Specific BC Plans

School & Service Area BC Plans
- School BC Plan
- School BC Plan
- School BC Plan
- Service Area BC Plan
- Service Area BC Plan
- Service Area BC Plan

Divisional BC Plans (as deemed necessary)

6. Exercise, Maintenance & Review

6.1 Once any BC plan has been written and signed off by the relevant senior member of staff, it must be communicated within the School or Service Area. Plans are then tested, and updated as necessary, in order to ensure that they work, and that staff are aware of their roles. All plans will be tested on at least an annual basis in order to ensure they remain current and that staff remain familiar with their roles. Plans will usually be tested by means of an exercise, which can range in complexity from a small group discussing the plan and ensuring it works in theory (a walk through), to a live play exercise in which the plan is implemented. Initially, plan walkthroughs and table top scenario exercises will be used to test the plans, however as confidence and knowledge in the plans grows, so will the complexity of the testing, ultimately leading to live play exercises.

6.2 Whenever a plan is invoked, it is important that the entire response is considered both in terms of good practice that was displayed and also any areas where improvement is required. This could be in relation to the plan itself, or people's knowledge of the plan and how to implement it. In order to capture this information, a structured debrief will be held soon after any invocation of the plan. This will provide an opportunity for those involved in the response to raise any issues, as well as resulting in assigned action points (if necessary) which can then be followed up on. The Business Continuity Officer can provide assistance in facilitating structured debriefs if required.

6.3 BC plans should be reviewed if there is a significant change to an activity covered in the plan which may affect the way or the timescale in which that activity would be reinstated. Other triggers for a review of BC plans include, but are not limited to: change of staff, process, system, location, or a change to any part of the actions documented in the plan (e.g. secondary location no longer available).

6.4 By following points 6.1, 6.2 & 6.3, plans will be reviewed and updated whenever the plan is invoked, whenever a change that may affect the plan occurs, and at least an annual basis if no changes or invocations occur. Whenever a plan is updated, it is the plan owner's responsibility to ensure that each plan holder receives an updated copy and discards the old copy. The Business Continuity Officer should also receive a copy of any updates. Each plan should have both a date of issue and a version clearly marked on the front page.