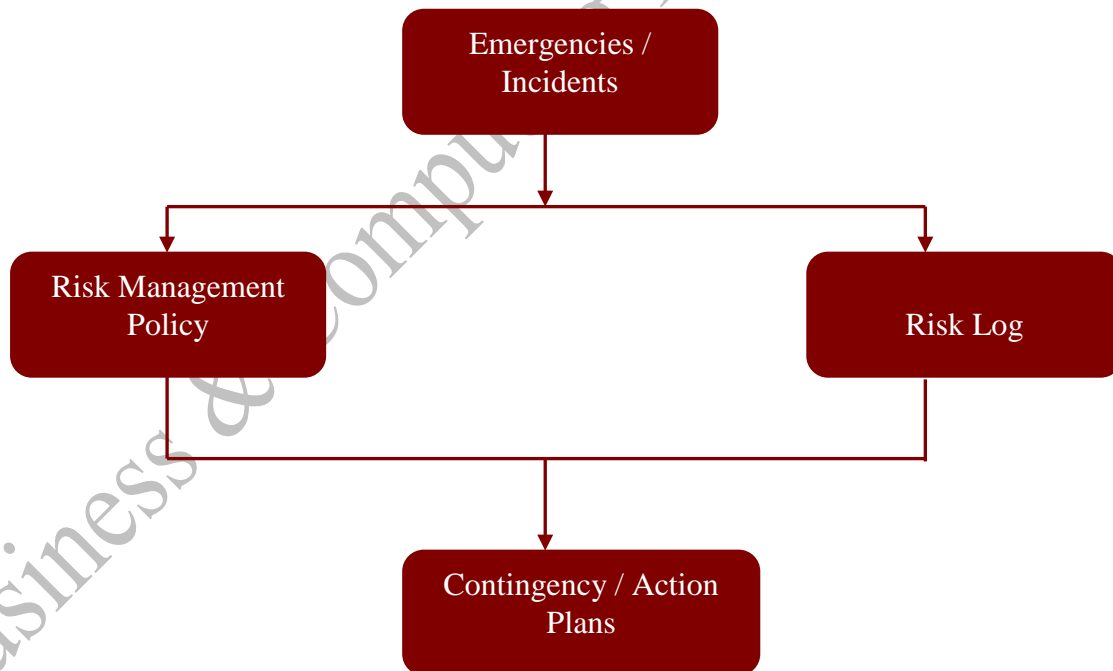




Contingency Plan Policy

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Status:	Approved
Responsibility for policy:	Chief Executive Officer
Responsibility for implementation	Chief Executive Officer / Programme Development Manager

Contingency Framework



Introduction

The Contingency Plan Policy is the standard operating guideline for BCE which is to be used in cases of emergency. It is a set of procedures written and in place with the express aim of providing those charged with dealing with any emergency or incident with a clear set of guidelines. The Contingency Plan Policy shall reference the applicable policies and procedures of BCE in the event of an emergency including, but not limited to:

- Adverse Weather Conditions
- Technical fault in production of Assessment
- Examination papers/scripts lost in transit
- Disease outbreak (UK or Abroad)
- Loss of building and/or facilities due to:
 - flood
 - fire/explosion
 - vandalism
- Theft of BCE assets

Irrespective of the means that may be instigated it would be wrong to assume that a major incident could never occur or affect BCE. However, with sound organisation and planning, the likelihood of any occurrence seriously affecting our operations would be minimised. Good planning focuses on the best options available and provide guidance for identified situations. Good planning takes into consideration some of the common things that might go awry. Having contingency strategies in place enable us to navigate through the changes and support each other in the decision making, should the need arise. As with most elements of event planning, a lack of attention to details can turn common hurdles into frustrations and "urgencies" that could have been avoided.

The significance of any emergency or incident is relative to a disruption it causes. Effects of how this could impact on us and stakeholders are wide ranging including:

- BCE staff
- BCE Centres and learners
- Members of the public who could be exposed
- The effect that a breakdown in communications could have on our stakeholders
- Ability for BCE to meet contractual obligations in particular; delivery of assessments

Incidents could include:

- Fire, explosion, damage to the building, vandalism, theft, serious accident
- Loss of IT and/or communication systems

It is BCE policy to sent examinations 5-10 working days before examination starting date to minimise exam malpractices e.g. exam leakage. Almost all examinations are sent by courier unless if a staff member is visiting a country, then takes them.

Adverse Weather Conditions/ Disease outbreak (UK or Abroad)

However, in recent years, we encountered problems with adverse weather conditions (snow and the volcanic eruption in Switzerland). These caused serious delays to examination delivery to centres and flights from UK were suspended.

In such events, centres will postpone examinations by one week and resume exactly one week later i.e. the following week. BCE will keep in contact with centres and advise them accordingly. In terms of volcanic eruption which took almost 2 weeks before flights resumed, we advised centres to postpone examinations by 3 weeks. This gave time for courier companies to clear backlog and also for learners to know scheduled dates well in advance.

For consistency, BCE will publish information on the website and also email centres.

Examination papers/scripts lost in transit

In cases where examination question papers are lost in transit, BCE will resent the exam papers again and candidates will sit for examinations exactly the following week. However, if Candidate examination written scripts from Centres are lost en-route to BCE offices, the following procedures applies:

1. Proof that scripts were sent. Acceptable forms are (i) courier (ii) recorded delivery. Centres can not use any other means.
2. If proof is provided and courier company is to blame, BCE uses internal assessment marks. It is a requirement for BCE Centres to keep a record of internal formative assessments.

[For more information, see BCE Centre Assessment Policy]

Technical fault during production of Assessment Materials

All BCE assessment questions are centrally kept and also backup is done regularly. We also have a databank of questions, hence the examination questions will always be available, safe and secure. Also a provision of sufficient lead time between production of Assessment material and minimum exam despatch dates. We also ensure enough accessories are on standby i.e. spare computers, printer, toner and bond paper.

Functions of Contingency Plan Team

- To act as the decision making authority for the management of an incident.
- To implement the procedures and practices to be used for handling emergencies and communicating these to all stakeholders.
- To test the Contingency Plan on a regular basis (the team will meet annually and test the plan using desktop exercises) to ensure that if it is feasible and realistic and to upgrade the plan periodically ensure information is accurate and current.
- Identify individual roles and responsibilities.

Contingency Plan Team comprises of:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Line Managers

Contingency Planning

Possible Contingencies	Likely consequences	Degree of risk	Risk strategy	Plan(s)	Responsibilities
1. Financial					
2. Customer Management					
3. Internal Processes					
4. Business Continuity					
5. Other					

[see Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Log for more information]