Business Continuity Policy

Definition of Business Continuity Management

1. According to the Business Continuity Institute, business continuity management is "an holistic management process that identifies potential threats to an organisation and the impacts to business operations that those threats, if realised, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organisational resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities".

Business continuity objectives at LSE

2. The objectives of the School's business continuity policy are to ensure as far as practicable that:

   - the initial response to a threat to the School's normal business is as coherent and effective as possible in the circumstances;
   - the impacts of the threat are kept within acceptable levels as pre-defined by the relevant senior managers;
   - in recovery to normal business activities, priority is given to maintaining or restoring activities that can be regarded as business critical in the circumstances; and
   - relevant managers around the School are trained, advised and supported in order to achieve the above, in cooperation with others as appropriate; the process is not centrally directed.

3. It is not an objective of business continuity planning at LSE to ensure that, in the worst cases such as prolonged loss of use of the entire campus, full recovery of normal activities can be achieved quickly, or indeed in any particular timeframe. To ensure such recovery to any specific deadline would require prohibitively expensive resilience measures, such as an entire second campus left idle during normal times.

4. As part of the definition of business continuity management within the International Standard, ISO 22301, it references the need to define 'the capability of the organisation to continue delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident'.

LSE business continuity policy

5. It is the policy of LSE to:

*   maintain a strategy for reacting to, and recovering from, adverse situations which is in line with an agreed level of acceptable risk
*   ensure that, whenever practical, action is taken to prevent the occurrence or recurrence of an adverse situation through adopting appropriate risk controls
*   maintain a programme of activity which ensures the School has the ability to react appropriately to, and recover from, adverse situations in line with predefined business continuity objectives
*   maintain appropriate response plans underpinned by a clear escalation process
*   rehearse business continuity and major incident plans following significant revision of plans
*   maintain a level of resilience to operational failure in line with the risks faced by the School
*   maintain employee awareness of the School's expectations of them during an emergency or business continuity situation
*   take account of changing business needs and ensure that the response plans and business continuity strategies are revised where necessary
*   remain aligned with good industry practice in business continuity management

Scope of business continuity planning

6. All activities undertaken within the School, wherever they are conducted, must comply with the requirements of this policy. Business continuity planning at LSE concentrates on the following priorities:

*   personal safety of all on campus/in LSE student residences
*   initial/emergency response
*   communications
*   safeguarding of assets
*   recovery/continuity of key business activities
*   recovery/continuity of revenue streams

Responsibility for Business Continuity

7. Executive responsibility for Business Continuity in the School is delegated by Council to the Chief Operating Officer. This responsibility is in turn cascaded through the School's management structure and assured and overseen by the Resilience and Business Continuity Management Board. The Board meets three times a year and is composed of senior management in the School who have oversight of specific areas such as Estates, IT etc. The Board reports to the SMC. Operational responsibility for maintenance and management of Business Continuity is the Head of Health and Safety (on an interim basis).

8. Responsibility for localised business continuity matters and planning lies with the heads of departments/institutes/centres/other academic units and the heads of divisions/service areas. These managers may delegate the undertaking and implementation of business continuity measures in their areas to an appropriate member of their staff. As a minimum the School expects each unit/area to have its own, fit for purpose, business continuity plan and for that plan to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Failure to comply will be noted in the School's operational risk register.

Management of Business Continuity

9. The following are the main instruments and procedures through which the School implements its business continuity policy:

- the Major Incident Initial Response Plan (MIIRP); this uses a Gold/Silver/Bronze command structure in line with that used by the emergency services
- Business Continuity Plans for all units in the School which should be reviewed not less than every third year unless there is a significant change (such as a relocation) to circumstances
- periodic business impact analyses to help define recovery priorities for the School (these should be updated every three years or in the event of significant organisational change)
- School-wide training and support facilitated by the Business Continuity Manager

Policy Implementation

10. All areas of the School are required to assist as appropriate in:
- taking all reasonable measures to prevent and avoid any disruption to normal operations
- considering business continuity planning and resilience implications in all process, project, and system developments
- making advance arrangements (as appropriate) for the recovery of infrastructure components (e.g., accommodation, transport, telecommunications, IT, specialist space, equipment, and supplies)
- making advance arrangements to relocate or reorganise operations to allow critical activities to continue as quickly as possible
- providing resilience for information systems and data, or alternative ways of working in the event of their failure
- the delivery of business continuity and emergency plans

- ensuring the effectiveness of plans and other recovery arrangements through robust and regular exercising and training

Policy Review

11. This Policy must be reviewed to ensure that it is maintained in accordance with relevant legal, regulatory, and organisational requirements and with best practice principles. Reviews should take place at least every three years, or when a significant change occurs to the organisation's business continuity planning requirements which require that the Policy be updated.

Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
3 years	Jan 2027	Oct 2026

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
1.0	27 May 2008	BC Steering Group	
2.0	11 April 2017 20 Sep 2017	BC Steering Group SMC	Full re-write in light of lessons learned since version 1.0 approved
3.0	18 Jan 2024	Resilience and Business Continuity Management Board	Updated policy approved by RBCMB (minor updates so approval from SMC not required)

Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
Business Continuity Consultant	Chris Lintern	c.lintern@lse.ac.uk	Author
Head of Health and Safety (responsible for overseeing BCM activities)	Mel Boucher	m.boucher1@lse.ac.uk	Author