Business Process Continuity Policy and Mechanisms for Its Implementation

Content

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1. Business Continuity Policy and Objectives

The University business continuity policy implies the capacities of the University to carry out functioning and provide relevant services at a pre-planned and calculated level during the crisis period as well as after the crisis situation.

Business continuity policy is an essential part of the University's strategic management, the objective of which is to ensure the University's publicly stated mission, vision, values, educational / research, activities envisaged under Georgian legislation and University regulatory documents for the purpose of the continuity of the institution activities. The implementation of this goal of business continuity policy creates the opportunities for understanding the diverse, many-sided activities of the (HEI) as a higher educational institution with the university status in the context that the definition of the business process policy does not involve accurate scenarios of specific, individual cases, but rather mechanisms that are transparent and predictable in any crisis situation that will be effective in any situation.

The business continuity policy foresees in case of need provision of urgent call , assembly, analysis and operational actions of relevant staff, which should ensure the continuous operation of the University.

Business continuity policy is mandatory to be considered by all structural units, as by teaching – research staff, as well as by persons of administrative and support positions, who must take into account the requirements of this plan when planning and implementing their activities.

An important part of the business continuity policy is the mechanisms and capabilities for developing this policy and the continuity plan, making it publicly available, and implementing it. Accordingly, the document is posted on the University website. Policy implementation also includes additional introductory meetings and trainings about policy and plan for university staff.

2. Spatial Spread of the Document

The document is spread within Georgian American University and the entities under contractual obligations with the University.

3. Business Process Continuity Management

In order to manage and ensure business continuity properly there were established the Business Continuity Management Board (BCMB) and the Crisis management Team (CMT) at the University.

The Business Continuity Management Board will develop strategic business continuity goals and directions, oversee the Crisis Management Team, and manage emergencies in the event of a large-scale incident.

The members of the Business Continuity Management Board are represented by the services listed below:

- Senior Vice President - **Coordinator of the Business Continuity Management Board**
- Vice President of Education, Science and Quality Assurance
- Head of Security Office
- Strategic Development Office
- Financial Office
- Legal Services Office
- Marketing and Communications Office
- Maintenance Office
- Information Technologies Office

The Crisis Management Team will carry out the implementation of the Business Continuity Plan during crisis (emergency) situations.

The Crisis Management Team is accountable to the Business Continuity Management Coordinator and should contact him in the event of a large-scale incident. The group is staffed by the persons with the competencies needed to manage crisis situations:

- Head of Security Office - **Crisis Management Team Coordinator**
- Security Office
- First Aid Nurse
- Marketing and Communications Office
- Human Resources Management Office
- Maintenance Office
- Information Technologies Office
- Student managers of schools (faculties)

4. Responsibilities

Senior Vice President	• Will act as the coordinator of the University Business Continuity Management Board, will be responsible for implementing the University Business Continuity Management Strategy and Plan
Business Continuity Management Board	• Develops, reviews and evaluates the University Business Continuity Management Plan • Establishes communication with schools and various services at both the strategic and operational levels to ensure the involvement of University staff at all stages of the business continuity plan implementation process. • Will manage emergencies during large-scale incidents • Will hold an annual meeting and discuss the need to change the business continuity plan • Submits an annual report to the President of the University
Head of Security Office	• Will act as the Crisis Management Team Coordinator • Inform all offices of the University about the possible danger
Crisis Management Group	• Ensures the execution of the business continuity plan • Responds to specific risks and incidents, identify gaps • Will study the causes of each case • Submits relevant conclusions and proposals to the Business Continuity Management Board
Security Office	• Ensures order and security of the building • Provides information to students and staff on potential threats • Will control the people entering and leaving the building • Develops a university evacuation plan and evacuates the university if necessary • Provides information on the content and location of radiological, chemical, biological and fire hazards

	• Will communicate and coordinate with the local law enforcement agencies together with the Legal Services Office
First aid nurse	• Provides first aid for students and staff • Organizes and controls the disinfection of the building
Marketing and Communications Office	• Develops an effective communication plan to inform university staff, students, the media and other stakeholders • Provides control over the spread of false information • Provides necessary services to students during emergencies
Information Technologies Office	• Ensures the smooth operation of data, telecommunications and IT systems and networks and responds in the event of problems • Provides proper control over information security • Organizes operations of backup files • Provides readiness for remote operation of the work and study process, if necessary
Maintenance Office	• Provides utility services and disconnects them if necessary • Periodically checks the sustainability of the building and ensures the safety of the building • Repairs / purchases damaged furniture and other training / office equipment • Provides alternative study and office space if needed • Provides transportation of key personnel as needed • Will procure goods and services
Financial Office	• Provides timely payment of salaries together with the Human Resources Management Office • Will manage emergency expenses • Will communicate with insurance companies together with the case management service • Together with the Legal Services Office , prepares / stores financial and administrative documents
Deans of schools	• Introduce business continuity policies to the core education unit • Within their competence, provide issues related to the implementation of the business continuity plan in the main educational unit
Heads of other services and offices	• Ensure the implementation and realization of business continuity policies in their direction • Ensure proper involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the business continuity plan
University staff	• In the process of developing a business continuity plan, they provide information about their activities • Learn about business continuity plan and procedures • If necessary, act in accordance with the business continuity plan

5. Risk assessment

The Business Continuity Management Board has identified, analyzed the probability risks, and assessed the degree of their impact on the University's business processes. Accordingly, the following risk levels have been developed:

Risk level	Risk category	Description and necessary measures
I	Non-essential	A minor incident that is considered to be a minor case of local impact that does not affect the functioning of the University. No need to implement specific procedures, need to monitor job performance
II	Essential	A serious case that hinders one or more university processes Risk reduction procedures need to be developed, priorities assessed, and risk mitigation control measures planned.
III	Critical	A critical incident that completely hinders or disrupts the work of the University Work / study should be stopped, measures should be taken immediately to reduce the risk.

6. Defining critical business processes

The Business Continuity Board has identified all the business processes and activities that are critical to the functioning of the University. Delaying / disrupting these processes can cause significant financial and legal harm to the University, or affect the health and safety of students and staff. These business processes should be resumed in a timely manner, preferably no later than 6 hours after the delay.

Table of critical business processes:

University services	Critical activities / processes
Human Resources Management Office	• Administrative and academic staff management process
Document Control Office	• Internal university Document Control Office
Legal Services Office	• Ensure compliance of the contracts / agreements / memoranda concluded by the University with the current legislation • Representation of the University in case of legal dispute before public / private organizations and individuals
Information Technologies Office	• IT support • Procurement of IT equipment and inventory management
Financial Office	• Ensuring the University's accounting and financial operations in accordance with current legislation and international standards

	• Analysis of the financial condition of the university and preparation of reports • Coordination with tax and financial control bodies
Maintenance Office	• Procurement of office furniture and inventory and supplies management • Organizing repair works • Coordination with labor safety, 112 and other emergency regulation bodies • Support for accreditation / authorization requirements
Security Office	• Access control of visitors to the University territory • Manage video recordings • Monitoring the internal and external territory of the university • Responding to various emergency incidents
Library	• Manage book and electronic resources in the library
Strategic Development Office	• Coordination of the development and implementation of strategic and action plans of the University • Prepare data, reports, proposals and other materials upon request and, if necessary, analyze them
Marketing and Communications Office	• Event management (open days, graduation days, registration days, etc.) • PR communication • Media Relations and Management Process • Student employment support
International Relations Office	• Administration of attracting foreign students • Exchange program management process • Informing Georgian and foreign students about the international component
Research Development and Support Office	• The process of finding funding, applying for and administering funding for grants and research projects • Promoting involvement in scientific research activities
Quality Assurance Office	• Coordination process of self-assessment, authorization and program accreditation
Continuous Education and Certificate Center	• Certificate course management process
Academic Process Management Office	• The process of compiling and managing schedules • Student enrollment, mobility, termination-suspension administration process (Bachelor's programme, Master's programme and Doctoral) • The process of defending a Master's and Doctoral dissertation • Academic portal administration and customer support process
Exam Center	• The process of managing and administering written exams
Student Ombudsman	• Student advocacy process
Personal Data Protection Officer	• Controls the personal data processing process at the University • Participates in the data processing risk assessment process, if necessary • Cooperates with the Personal Data Protection Service, if necessary • Ensures information and training of employees on personal data protection issues • Reviews statements, complaints and/or applications • Provides consultations on personal data protection issues to students, lecturers and university employees • Detects, investigates and appropriately responds to personal data breaches
Schools	• Learning / teaching / research Process

7. Emergency action plan

Name of risk	Risk level	Expected results	Prevention / Risk management	Crisis management	Maintaining business continuity	Business process recovery
Pandemic/ Other infectious diseases	III	- Infecting large numbers of students and staff - Delays in the work of the university	- Provide information to students and staff on prevention measures - Strengthen University disinfection - Thermoscreening of university entrants - Etc. (see Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan)	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed and actively involved in the problem-solving process - Provide information to students / staff on a specific action plan - Informing the responsible person in case of infection of the staff - Detect and isolate contacts - Implement an infectious disease preparedness and response plan Involved: - Security Office - First aid nurse - Human Resources Management Office - Marketing and Communications Office	- Transfer work and learning process to online mode (in whole or in part) - Providing administrative staff with computer equipment, transportation, communication and other resources to switch to online mode - Conduct online training for academic staff to learn the technical details of distance learning - Preparation of guidelines and online tutorials for students / lecturers regarding online learning / teaching - Create online groups and write time schedules - Organizing online exams by the Examination Center	- The time required for the transition to online learning activities is 2-3 days - Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of spread of pandemic / other infectious diseases and the state regulation of quarantine

Deterioration of climatic conditions and cases caused by it (e.g. if strong wind or snow, etc. lasts longer than 24 hours)	II	- Possible damages (e.g. tree felling, power lines damage, etc.) - Delays in the delivery of utilities - Problems with movement / travel - Possible delay in the work of the University	- Monitoring of the building by the protection and security office at the end of each working day to minimize risks in case of worsening weather	The CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed - Possible suspension of lectures and changes to the time schedules Involved: - Security Office - First aid nurse - Schools administration - Maintenance Office - Marketing and Communications Office	- Repair / replacement of damaged infrastructure - Cleaning of the outdoor area by the relevant service - If the weather continues to worsen, continue the academic and work process online	- The time required for the transition to online learning activities is 2-3 days - In case of weather improvement, the business process will be fully restored in 1-2 days
Fire	II	- Possible injury to students and staff - Termination of the functioning of the University	- Arranging the University in accordance with the regulations of the Emergency Management Service - Fire hydrants and fire extinguishers are available in the university - Conduct fire safety instruction for university staff	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed - Localize / extinguish fires with fire extinguishers or fire hydrants in case of small fire - In the event of a large fire, call 112 and call the fire department - Evacuate people and close the building - See the GAU Occupational Safety Policy and Fire Safety Instruction Document on which all actions will be taken Involved: - Security Office - First aid nurse - Maintenance Office - Marketing and Communications Office	- Damage to the building and inventory is assessed and repaired - In case of serious damage, continue the training and work process online or find an alternative space	- Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of damage. In case of small and local damage, the training / work process is restored in 1 day - In case of serious damage, the business process will be restored in 1-3 months

Terrorist attack / hostage taking	III	- Possible panic - Risk of receiving psychological trauma - Possible physical injuries to students and staff (including life-threatening) - Manage the situation by the state structure and restrict movement on the territory of the university - Temporary interruption of the University functioning	- Tighten access control for visitors to the University territory - Tighten video recording storage and control - Monitoring the internal and external area of the university	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed and is actively involved in the problem-solving process - Call 112 and call for the police - Demarcate and lock the perimeter - Suspension of teaching / work process Involved: - Security Office - First aid nurse - Marketing and Communications Office	- Assessment of the level of damage and adequate response in each case in cooperation with state structures	Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of damage
Bomb blasting, spreading of chemical, radiation or biological substances (inside the building)	III	- Possible panic - Risk of receiving psychological trauma - Risk of additional explosion / harmful substances - Possible physical injuries to students and staff (including life-threatening)	- Tighten access control for visitors to the University territory - Tighten video recording storage and control - Monitoring the internal and external area of the university	CMT is ready for a for a timely response BCMB is informed and is actively involved in the problem-solving process - Call 112 and call for the police - Urgent evacuation of the building - Demarcate and lock the perimeter - Suspension of teaching / work process Involved: - Security Office - First aid nurse - Marketing and Communications Office	- Assessment of the level of damage and adequate response in each case in cooperation with state structures - In case of serious damage, continue the training and work process online or find an alternative space	- The time required for the transition to online teaching activities is 2-3 days - Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of damage

		- Possible pollution of the environment - Situation management by the state structure and management of university resources - Temporary interruption of the University functioning				
Student protest	II	- Partial disruption of university processes - Possible aggravation of the situation	- Active communication with the administration, dean's office and marketing and communications Office - Student Ombudsman Service	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed and will be involved in the problem- solving process if necessary - Situation monitoring Involved: - Security Office - Student Ombudsman - Schools administration - Marketing and Communications Office	- Determining the reason for the student protest - Conducting negotiations - Resolve the problem or otherwise respond to end the protest peacefully	- The full recovery of the business process depends on the duration of the student protest

Electricity supply problem	I	- Possible interruptions, e.g. shutting down the elevator, turning off the lights (critical in the evening), turning off the internet, turning off the air conditioning (during the summer season), etc.	- Generator - UPSs (to protect the data of staff and students in the process of work) - Monitor electrical wiring once a year	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed, if there has been a power outage for a long time (> 4 hours)- Automatic start of the generator (wait 1 minute) - Contacting an electricity supplier Involved: - Security Office - Maintenance Office	- Identify the problem (internal or external) and respond accordingly	- The business process is fully restored in 1-3 working days
Problem with natural gas supply	I	- Seasonal risk, critical November-March (5 months) - Possible shutdown of central heating - Possible suspension of the study / work process in the critical period (5 months)	- Air conditioners that make it possible to temporarily replace central heating - Seasonal preventive works of the heating system	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed if the gas supply has been cut off for a long time (> 4 hours) - Contact a gas supply representative - Possible delay in the study / work process during the critical period (5 months) Involved: - Maintenance Office	Identify the problem (internal or external) and respond accordingly	- The business process is fully restored in 3 -5 working days
Water supply problem	I	- Continuous continuation of the main processes of the University in case of water supply problem up to 2 days	- In the reserve tank (5 tons of technical water), enough for an average of 2 days - Drinking water supply - Periodic monitoring of the system	CMT is ready for a timely response BCMB is informed if the water supply has been cut off for a long time (> 4 hours) - Contact a water supply representative - Switching the system to a backup tank for technical purposes (waiting 30 minutes) Involved:	- Identify the problem (internal or external) and respond accordingly - The need to fill the reserve tank in 2 days and consequently increase the financial cost	- The business process is fully restored in 2 -5 working days

				- Security Office - Maintenance Office		
Sewer problem	I	- In case of a short-term problem, the main processes of the university will continue continuously	- Preventive works 2 times a year	CMT is ready for a for a timely response The BCMB is informed if a delay has occurred for a long time (> 4 h)- Contact the relevant services - Temporary closure of part of the university toilets Involved: - Security Office - Maintenance Office	- Identify the problem (internal or external) and clean the system by the appropriate service	- The business process is fully restored in 1 working day
Damage to the building	II	- Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process	- Periodic monitoring and repair work	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - Temporarily close the damaged area - Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process Involved: - Maintenance Office	- Damage assessment and repair work	- Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of damage, in case of local damage it will take 1-2 working days
Damage / destruction of training-laboratory and administrative equipment	I	- Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process	- Periodic monitoring and repair work	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - Temporarily close the damaged area - Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process Involved: - Maintenance Office	- Damage assessment, repair or replacement	- The business process is fully restored in 1-2 working days

Destruction of archival material and various documents	I	- Possible delay in tax / audit process - Slight disruption of clerical office process - Absence of contracts and memoranda with students, academic and administrative staff, suppliers and partners prior to renewal	- Existence of electronic copies - Storage of archival material and other documents in specially designated protected areas	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process Involved: - Document Control Office - Financial Office - Legal services Office	- Description of destroyed documentation and setting priorities for phased recovery - Restoration of documentation through electronic copies by the relevant service - Re-signing of contracts and memoranda	- Complete recovery of the business process depends on the degree of damage, on average it will take 1-30 working days
Internet problem	I	- Slight disruption of the learning / work process - Suspension of the learning / work process in case of prolonged shutdown	- Existence of an alternate line	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - Contact the Internet provider - Switch to backup line (wait 15 minutes) - IT assistance to eliminate the Involved: - Information Technologies Office	- Identify the problem (internal or external) and respond accordingly	- The business process is fully restored in 1 working day
Software problem	I	- Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process	- Official partners existence of Microsoft, Google and others, which reduces the risks associated with the software - Existence of firewall, antivirus applications, LAN restrictions	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - IT assistance to eliminate the problem - Contact official suppliers if necessary Involved: - Information Technologies Office	- Identify the problem and respond accordingly	- The business process is fully restored in 1-3 hours

			- Periodic storage of copies			
Hardware problem	I	- Slight disruption of a specific learning / work process - Continuation of the main processes of the University if we are not dealing with a large amount of equipment damage	- Periodic inspection of equipment, replacement of obsolete equipment from time to time - Backup computer supplies	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed in case of a serious problem - IT assistance to eliminate the problem - Replace damaged equipment if necessary Involved: - Information Technologies Office	- Identify the problem and respond accordingly (repair / replacement / purchase of damaged)	- The business process is fully restored in 30 minutes -1 day
Cybercrime	II	- Danger of data loss - Possible delay in the learning / work process	- Store important information on external protected servers - Periodically back up and save information (once a week)	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed and will be involved in the problem-solving process if necessary - Timely informing of law enforcement agencies - Provide IT assistance where possible Involved: - Legal services Office - Information Technologies Office	- Identify the problem and respond accordingly	- The business process is fully restored in 2-3 days
Realization of the risks listed in the Personal Data Protection Impact Assessment document, which pose a	II	- Violation of fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects - Information security breach	- Regular impact assessment and monitoring (DPIA) - Compliance with the principle of data minimization	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed and will be involved in the problem-solving process if necessary - Incident identification and rapid response (including notification to the Data Protection Officer and/or the Data Protection Service)	- Assessment of the level of damage and adequate response in each specific case in cooperation with state structures	- Full restoration of the business process depends on the degree of damage

risk of violating fundamental human rights and freedoms		- Reputational and legal risk to the university	- Strengthening data security, technical and organizational measures - Training of personnel on data protection issues	- Impact assessment document review and retraining process - Regular briefings as necessary - Development of incident management policy and response plan - Timely notification of law enforcement agencies - Provision of IT support to the extent possible Involved: - Legal services Office - Information Technologies Office - Data Protection Officer	- Informing subjects, unless otherwise provided by law	
Lack of income	II	- Insolvency of the loan amount - Inability to pay salaries and other operating expenses	- Currency diversification is a way to protect against exchange rate volatility - Financial reserves - Determining the budget for the academic year at the beginning of the academic year	CMT does not require contact BCMB is informed and involved in the problem solving process - Determining the shortage - Capital increase - take a loan Involved: - Financial Office - Legal services Office	- attract investments - Develop new grant and research projects and submit applications - Develop and add new curricula - Develop and add new certification courses - Activation in the direction of attracting international students	- It will take 7-10 working days to fill the revenue shortfall in a short period of time - The growth of finances in the long run will take more than 1 year
Deficit of public transport	II	- Possible disruption of the work / learning process	- Most employees have a car	CMT is ready for a response BCMB is informed	Transfer of work and study processes to online mode(in whole or in part)	- The time required for the transition to online learning

				- GAU is served by a minibus	- Organize transition to distance learning in case of long delays and inform students and staff - Provide staff transportation if needed Involved: - Security Office - Marketing and Communications Office	- Providing administrative staff with computer equipment, transportation, communication and other resources to switch to online mode - Creating online groups and writing time schedules for students / lecturers	activities is 2-3 days - The full recovery of the business process depends on the solution of the public transport problem determined by the state
Collapse of large suppliers	I	- Possible delay in university procurement - Possible Impact on University Services	- Supplies - Diversify suppliers	CMT does not require contact BCMB is informed - Market research - Situation monitoring Involved: - Financial Office - Maintenance Office	- Find alternative providers / suppliers	- The business process is fully restored in 1-2 working days
Socio-political or other type of event in the country / city	II	- Possible impact on university activities-Possible suspension of the University functioning	- Timely delivery of information on possible developments - Communicate with students and staff to ensure safety	CMT can be contacted BCMB is informed - Situation monitoring Involved: - Security Office - Marketing and Communications Office	- Identify the problem and respond accordingly	- Complete recovery of the business process depends on the event in the country / city