BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY

Document Owner	The Directors
Implementation	This policy will be made available to all stakeholders.
Communication	This policy will be communicated to all staff at induction. Copies of this policy are available electronically via the Policies and Procedures folder on the Everything Apprenticeships SharePoint Site. Stakeholders may request a PDF version of this policy which will be sent by email.

VERSION	DETAILS INC. POLICY CHANGES	DATE	APPROVED BY
1.0	First production	16/04/2024	Kerry Linley
1.1	Policy review and refinement	26/04/2024	Kerry Linley

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This document is the Apprenticeship Continuity Policy (the Policy) which sets out how we will deal with the effects of an incident that disrupts our ability to deliver apprenticeship training. The Policy sets out what actions Everything Apprenticeships (EA) will take to maintain its apprenticeship training activities in the face of disruption. It also details what steps EA will take in the event it is removed from the register of apprenticeship training providers.

Given that we are a small and new provider delivering most training offsite at our employer premises and via our online systems and platforms, much of this plan focuses on our IT recovery to ensure minimal disruption to apprentices. However, we do also outline the roles and responsibilities of the individuals involved to ensure continuity of training for apprentices.

2. KEY TERMS

The following key terms define and clarify the terminology used throughout this Policy and serve to ensure that all readers have a clear understanding of the definitions.

Contractor(s)	An individual or group who provide services to EA, or on behalf of EA acting as if they were employed by EA.
Coach tutor assessor	An individual or group employed by EA to plan, support and monitor apprentices ensuring clear objectives and alignment to the KSBs.
Directors	The Directors of Rubitek Solutions Limited.
Employers	Those organisations who employ learners and contract with EA to deliver training.
Everything Apprenticeships	Everything Apprenticeships (EA) or the Company is a trading name of Rubitek Solutions Limited.
Facilitator(s)	An individual or group employed by EA to guide and assist learner(s), either individually or in groups, during facilitated training sessions.
Learner(s)	An individual or group including apprentices who attend facilitated learning sessions delivered by facilitators / coach tutor assessors.
Senior Management	Individuals responsible for shaping the organisational culture, driving innovation, and ensuring effective leadership at all levels.
Staff	Employees and any external consultants employed in any capacity by EA.
Stakeholders	Individuals and groups of individuals who are detailed in this Policy.

3.   OBJECTIVES

This policy seeks to ensure that EA can maintain continuity of apprenticeship training and support services in the event of unforeseen disruptions or emergencies. It provides guidance to staff and learners for how:

- Disruptions to apprenticeship delivery are minimised.
- Staff and learners are protected during times of crisis.
- The quality and effectiveness of apprenticeship training is upheld.
- Communication processes keep all stakeholders informed about contingency plans, changes in delivery methods and other relevant updates.

4.   SCOPE

This policy applies to all learners, staff, facilitators / coach tutor assessors, and any partners and associates of EA. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining continuity during unexpected disruptions. Additionally, it outlines the framework for implementing continuity measures across all apprenticeship programs.

5.   RESPONSIBILITIES

The Company is committed to ensuring the continuity of apprenticeship delivery in the face of unforeseen disruptions or emergencies and allocates resources and implements measures to achieve this. EA invests in robust infrastructure, including online platforms and remote access systems, to facilitate uninterrupted apprenticeship delivery. Moreover, EA fosters a culture of preparedness and resilience among its staff and stakeholders, emphasising the importance of adaptability and responsiveness during challenging circumstances. The company proactively identifies potential threats to apprenticeship delivery and takes proactive steps to address them, ensuring minimal disruption to learners' educational journeys.

The Directors are responsible for fostering a culture of vigilance, preparedness and resilience among staff and stakeholders, emphasising the importance of adaptability and responsiveness during challenging circumstances. They are responsible for ensuring that robust measures are in place to identify potential threats to apprenticeship delivery, and that proactive steps are taken to address them ensuring minimal disruption to learners' educational journeys.

Other Stakeholders' Responsibilities:

Senior Management is responsible for ensuring the implementation and continuous improvement of the Apprenticeship Continuity Policy, ensuring alignment with organisational goals and regulatory requirements.

Facilitators / coach tutor assessors and staff must familiarise themselves with this Policy, adhere to its guidelines and actively participate in continuity planning and drills to ensure seamless delivery of apprenticeship programs during disruptions.

Learners, employers, and other stakeholders have a responsibility to cooperate with EAs continuity efforts, including following directives during emergencies, participating in training sessions related to continuity planning, and provide feedback to enhance the effectiveness of the policy.

Individual responsibilities are set out at Appendix I.

6.   DEFINITIONS

Disruption is defined as anything that impacts EAs ability to deliver apprenticeship training. Onsite incidents (at EA premises where staff are based, or at our employer premises where we deliver our training) that should be considered a potential disruption to training include fire; flood; explosion; serious adverse weather conditions; vandalism, sabotage, or theft; and other serious incidents that render the location unusable either temporarily or permanently. Offsite incidents that should be considered a potential disruption to training include loss of IT / online systems, loss of personal information and data protection issues.

Incidents may arise from natural causes like severe weather, or from equipment failure, deterioration, or human error, and can lead to significant losses of control or expertise, access to buildings and equipment, use of facilities, data, personnel, reputation, and funding. In the event of a disruption, every effort will be made to restore operations and minimise the impact to reduce any losses.

Continuity Plan is the name given to specific plan developed in response to a prospective disruptive event which has been identified as posing a significant risk to the continued operational processes of EA.

The coronavirus pandemic represented an ongoing **Health Crisis** and caused significant disruption to training with many training providers struggling to respond quickly to the challenges it presented. To ensure its readiness to react quickly in the event of any future pandemic, EA has prepared a specific Health Crisis Continuity Plan and will revert to 100% online delivery, support, and monitoring for learners. This enables everyone to remain isolated if necessary.

An **Emergency** is a specific type of incident that presents an immediate threat to life, health, property, or the environment and requires urgent action to address. Emergencies involve risks that escalate quickly and necessitate rapid response measures to protect individuals and assets. Examples of emergencies include fires, explosions, severe weather events, acts of violence, or public health crises. Emergency scenarios are addressed in accordance with the EA Emergency and Evacuation Policy.

7.   ENSURING CONTINUITY

EA provides high quality training and takes a blended approach to delivery incorporating online and in-person facilitated and self-guided sessions. These include:

- **Rubitek learning management platform:** Learners, their employer supervisors and staff are given user specific access to the platform so that they can engage with all learning materials, resources, and access support, allowing them to progress in their learning.

- **Facilitator and coach tutor assessor Check-ins and Tutorials:** Through our online systems and other technologies (telephone, email, web conferencing) we facilitate one-on-one / cohort learning sessions.

- **Email:** We use email to communicate and can track these via our learning management platform so that in the event of an incident a copy of all communications is stored in the platform.

- **Web Conferencing:** We use Microsoft Teams to host online sessions with learners. Should this fail we have access to dedicated Zoom rooms.

This provides a high level of flexibility and accommodates the needs of a wide range of learners. However, in the event of a disruption, it is possible to move all training online, although this is not our preference and is only adopted where necessary.

7.1   LEARNING ONLINE

EAs online learning management platform supports the continued delivery of all EA services including initial and ongoing learner assessment, review, and communication. Apprentice work is stored via the platform which only the learner and appropriate staff can access. The e-portfolio is available for downloaded from this platform and can be shared with the End Point Assessment Organisation and / or Awarding Body electronically.

Apprentices without access to technology are supported via a laptop and dongle support scheme for the duration of their training.

Where remote delivery and assessment is conducted, quality assurance is in line with awarding body requirements. Inevitably this includes the use of learner declarations and the audit record of these elements. Facilitators / coach tutor assessors participate in regular training to ensure quality standards are achieved and maintained.

7.2   CURRICULUM RE-SEQUENCING

In the event that in-person contact with learners is not possible and is likely to continue for a period of more than 10 business days, the sequencing of curriculum is reviewed by senior management to bring forward any activity that can be better facilitated via remote learning (for example the teaching of theory in place of planned workplace observations) to ensure where possible the duration of study is not prolonged unnecessarily.

7.2   LEARNER TRANSPORT TO ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS

In the event of significant disruption to travel, EA will work with the employer to minimise the impact. We have a corporate account with Uber and can collect learners from train stations, airports, and hotels. Our account features the necessary safety measures for those learners aged 16-18 including background checks on drivers, and only tenured drivers with high ratings are selected for this service. Riders are given a pin number and are required to provide this to the driver at the start of a ride to prevent them getting into an incorrect car.

7.3   LOSS OF POWER / FACILITIES ON SITE

EA offices are in a serviced building and in the event of a loss of power or facilities the Office Manager is responsible for liaising with the landlord to restore services as quickly as possible. There are external specialist services in place providing 24/7 support for IT, Communications, and Services (heat, power, water). We can co-locate to 2 different locations (see Recovery Operations Plan at Appendix III), and these are less than 10 minutes away from our offices so that our staff can continue to work.

In the event we lose access to offsite training facilities (because of an incident impacting one or more of our employers or training venue providers), we have preferential rates agreed with Holiday Inn who have a national network of suitable facilities. Senior management is responsible for planning for alternative facilities.

There EA will also work in collaboration with partners including Awarding Bodies, EPAOs and employers to identify alternative methods of assessment where access to the apprentices' workplace is restricted.

7.4   LOSS OF KEY STAFF

As a small organisation, we recognise the impact of losing one or two key members of staff. In the event our staff / facilitators / coach tutor assessors are unavailable, we have access to 6 qualified and experienced associates who can step-in to ensure continuity of learning at short notice. Back-office staff have also been upskilled to deliver learning facing roles when required.

8.   INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

As a proactive measure to mitigate the risk of potential disruptions to our operations, EA leverages online services for essential business functions. This conscious decision aims to minimise the impact of potential loss of access to our physical buildings, data, and systems. While this enhances our flexibility and resilience, we acknowledge that dependence on such systems introduces its own set of vulnerabilities.

All staff receive training so that they can recognise the initial warning indicators of an IT emergency which includes intermittent or continuous power loss, server failure or malfunction, data theft, internet failure or malfunction, fire / flood, national or local disaster, and cyber-attack / sabotage / viruses / malware.

We have developed contingency plans to address scenarios where online services become inaccessible recognising the critical role they play in sustaining our day-to-day operations and the areas of business that may be affected.

9.   BACKUPS AND RECOVERY

To safeguard against potential data loss or service disruptions, backup and recovery mechanisms are integrated into our agreements with our service providers. These agreements stipulate regular data backups, redundancy measures, and robust recovery protocols to minimise downtime and ensure swift restoration of services in the event of an incident.

The IT and Software Management Policy sets out the data backup procedures for all systems including the test and restoration steps, as well as the storage locations for backups of each system.

10. LEARNING MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

Our learning management platform is hosted in the cloud on AWS infrastructure with 99.99% guaranteed availability and uptime, with resilience and fail-over support. This system is backed-up overnight. Should there be a technical failure, data will be restored from the most recent back-up version.

Details of all services and processes supported via the platform as well as alternative methods to achieve its aims are listed at Appendix II.

11. ACCESS TO ONLINE SERVICES

Should access to any online services become unavailable from one location (for example due to a PC failure or a power outage), then the same services can be accessed from another location (for example another PC or location where there is no power outage). All staff who need to relocate from our premises have access to alternative work locations including home and the necessary home working evaluations are carried out during staff inductions and updated annually. All services are backed up and will restore to a day-before back-up if they fail.

Should any of these cloud services fail, the mitigation and emergency contact details for each are set out at Appendix I.

We recognise the increasing rise of cyber-attacks on educational institutions. EAs Cybersecurity Policy sets out how we will respond in the event of an attack (cyber-attack / sabotage / viruses / malware). Should a data breach occur, EAs Data Controller will follow the EA Data Protection Policy and Procedures, informing the ICO of the data breach and contacting those affected by the data loss. ESFA, DfE and Rubitek will also be notified. See Appendix IV for contact details.

12. COMMUNICATION

EA prioritises communications with staff and learners and our procedures for maintaining communication in the event of an incident is included in our induction to new staff and as part of regular team meetings.

Staff receive regular instruction on how to deliver online learning and material, maintain contact with learners through our business online accounts (e.g. Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn), and use our communications groups on WhatsApp. We also use email and telephone, and maintain a secure up-to-date list of all contact details which can be accessed via our EA SharePoint site, and in printed format.

All staff have access to the internet, a laptop, and a mobile telephone. Where learners do not have access to the same, consideration will be made to ensure contact and learning material is accessible. Learners each have a login to our online learning platform and can reset their passwords when necessary.

The EA main telephone number can be redirected to any alternative telephone number so that we can continue to make and receive calls using our normal telephone number.

13. NOTICE OF REMOVAL FROM APAR

EA is keen to ensure it is prepared for all eventualities, including the prospect of its removal from the register of apprenticeship training providers.

In the event of removal, EA is committed to complying with the ESFA, Ofsted, and any other regulatory body, to maintain with minimal disruption, the learning journey of all apprentices. This includes providing all support required to transfer learners to new provision so that they can continue training and complete their programs.

Transfers will be led by the directors and supported by senior management. Continuous access to portfolios and resources (via Rubitek) will be provided until learners are fully transferred to their new provision.

14. PROMOTING THIS POLICY AND GAINING COMMITMENT

We are committed to ensuring that all staff and wider stakeholders fully understand, comply with, and actively engage with our policies. Our board and senior management are dedicated to fostering a culture of policy adherence and continuous improvement across our organisation.

Our induction process ensures that new staff members are introduced to our policies from the outset, providing them with the necessary information and guidance to adhere to our standards. Additionally, our annual appraisal process includes a thorough review of staff implementation of our policies, recognising and celebrating successes while identifying areas for improvement.

EA considers staff and wider stakeholder insights and perspectives when refining and reviewing its policies. This ensures our policies remain relevant, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of our organisation and stakeholders. In addition, we proactively seek out examples of best practices from exemplar training providers, incorporating learnings and insights to further enhance our policies. By continuously benchmarking against industry standards and embracing innovative approaches, we strive to maintain the highest standards of policy governance and effectiveness.

15. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

The Directors are responsible for ensuring the Company meets its obligations in line with this policy.

This policy shall be reviewed by the Directors and updated where necessary before being approved at least annually to ensure that it (and any subsidiary policies and procedures) remains appropriate considering any relevant changes to the law, organisational policies, or contractual obligations.

This policy is approved by Kerry Linley (Director) on 26th April 2024.

APPENDIX I – INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Individual	Responsibilities
Kerry Linley 07846 035748 kerry@everythingapprenticeships.com	• Incident Officer • Overall responsibility for the continuity of delivery • Chairs Crisis Team meetings and coordinates responses • Allocates resources and manages external liaison • Press contact • Decides on emergency measures including evacuations • Liaises with funding organisations, partner providers, and awarding bodies • Responsibility for managing disruption in the provision of administrative services, learning and assessment arrangements and physical premises • Meet and greet emergency services as they arrive, with a floor plan of the building if necessary • Ensure all significant occurrences and decisions are recorded, together with reasons for decisions made • Rubitek systems main point of contact
Carl Douglas 07984 449989 carl@everythingapprenticeships.com	• Ensures learning content is suitable for various delivery modes • Oversees instructional design and alignment with apprenticeship levels • Coordinates with emergency services, providing necessary site plans • Records significant occurrences and decisions • Responsibility for overseeing communication with employers and learners from all staff • Support and train all staff on the use of continuity learning systems and implementation of this policy • Liaises with funding organisations, partner providers, and awarding bodies • Apprentice work placement, safeguarding, ongoing insurance / health and safety checks
Joe Douglas 07934884567 joe@everythingapprenticeships.com	• Manages administrative, learning and assessment disruptions • Ensures continuity of delivery and pastoral support • Supports staff in delivering content under disrupted conditions

APPENDIX II – SYSTEMS AND ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Purpose	Service	Alternative Solution	Emergency Contact
Enrolment	Rubitek	Paper based or MS Forms within Office 365	0330 133 0540
Initial assessment for prior learning	Rubitek	Excel based digital assessment can be conducted over Teams	0330 133 0540
E-portfolio	Rubitek	Candidates and Coach Tutor Assessors can send documents via email until service is restored.	0330 133 0540
Learning Management Platform	Rubitek	Learners and teaching staff can share information via email and over Teams until service is restored.	0330 133 0540
Apprenticeship documents and e-signature solution	Rubitek	Templates available in AWS and Office 365 – can be sent via email for signature or printed and posted. Can be uploaded to Rubitek once service is restored.	0330 133 0540
Learning Materials	Rubitek	All materials also stored on Office 365 – can be emailed to learners.	0330 133 0540
Functional Skills	Rubitek	Wide variety of paper-based assessment material on Office 365 – can be emailed or posted to learners.	0330 133 0540
SharePoint	Office 365	All learner documentation duplicated on Rubitek	Globe2 01858 898236 support@globe2.net
ESFA	Apprenticeship Service	Wait to upload any information, no alternative available	0800 150 6000 helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk
ILR / MIS Service	Rubitek	Wait to access information. Can manually produce ILR.	0330 133 0540
EA Offices	Vanilla	Harborough Innovation Centre or Focal Business Group offices.	Vanilla 01858 898058 / 07921 124013 eshelton@vanillarecruitment.co.uk

APPENDIX III: RECOVERY OPERATIONS PLAN

In the event EA loses access to any critical systems the directors are responsible for ensuring staff have the tools they need to perform their roles as quickly and efficiently as possible. This includes arranging suitable alternative working accommodation (this may include Home Working arrangements in line with the Company's Home Working Policy) and ensuring staff have the necessary tools, equipment, and access rights / information for their specific roles.

Category	Details	Actions
Hardware	Ensure sufficient spare computers / laptops / mobile devices are on hand so that work is not significantly disrupted.	Purchase and distribute where necessary. Ensure the required software / patches / security / access rights.
Software	All business-critical software is web based and available with wi-fi connection or 4G hotspot tethering.	Check that staff can access systems and provide necessary login details.
Meeting / office locations	EA has access to 2 alternative locations in the event of an emergency: Harborough Innovation Centre which is located at Airfield Business Park, Leicester Road, Market Harborough (telephone 01858 414200 or email hic@harborough.gov.uk) or Focal Business Group (accountants) which is located at 4a Church Street, Market Harborough (telephone 0800 112 0880 or email hello@focalbusiness.co.uk). We also have access to a register of serviced offices / partner / customer premises.	Telephone to plan for temporary use of the facilities. See list of maintained offsite locations on Everything Apprenticeships SharePoint site.
Mobile phones	Ensure staff have access to mobile phones.	Request that staff ensure these are always charged – purchase and distribute power banks / chargers where necessary.
Training locations	EA has access to a network of suitable training venues and preferential rates with Holiday Inn. Telephone: 0800 40 50 60	Contact Holiday Inn to make necessary arrangements. Contact all learners and employers to confirm the new arrangements.

APPENDIX IV: DATA BREACH – CONTACT DETAILS

Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
dpo@ico.org.uk
Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Service Desk
sde.servicedesk@education.gov.uk
Telephone: 0370 267 0001

Department for Education (DfE) helpline:
Telephone: 0370 000 2288 or
Contact DfE online

Rubitek Solutions Limited
support@rubitek.co.uk
Telephone: 0330 133 0540