Empowering Futures

# Business Continuity Plan

## Purpose:

The purpose of this Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is to provide a structured response framework that ensures continuity of delivery, learner support, safeguarding, communication, and organisational resilience in the event of a disruption. The BCP outlines preventative strategies, emergency response protocols, and recovery actions across all key areas of Empowering Futures’ operations.
This plan applies to our broad scope of educational provision, which includes council-funded alternative provision for young people, adult teacher training and CPD courses, privately funded tuition for school-aged learners, and non-funded vocational and personal development programmes. The BCP ensures that essential services continue with minimal disruption to learners, stakeholders, and staff while protecting the integrity and quality of our education services.

## Scope:

This plan covers all Empowering Futures services, sites, delivery modes (face-to-face, blended, and online), learners, and staff. It includes but is not limited to:
- Alternative provision programmes for 11–16-year-olds commissioned by local authorities.
- Private tuition services funded by parents/guardians for primary and secondary pupils.
- Accredited adult education courses including the Level 3 Award in Education and Training (AET).
- Community learning and vocational tasters in sectors such as Hair & Beauty, Sports, Customer Service, and Business.
- Functional Skills, employability, and life-skills courses.

## Business Structure and Income Streams:

Empowering Futures sustains its operations through a diversified business model, which enhances resilience and reduces dependency on a single income source. Our income is derived from:
- Local authority and council-funded placements (e.g., Walsall Council, Wolverhampton Council).
- Privately paid short courses and tuition services for children and adults.
- Government-funded adult education and skills training where available.
- Partner-delivered and commissioned work from educational and training agencies.
- Sales of CPD and short vocational courses in the community and private sector.

## Key Risks to Continuity:

Our risk assessment has identified the following as the most likely threats to service continuity:
- High levels of staff absence due to illness, industrial action, or turnover.
- IT system failure, data loss, or cyberattacks compromising online delivery and records.
- Fire, flood, or damage to premises rendering facilities unsafe or inaccessible.
- Funding cuts or late payments from councils, funders, or clients.
- Public health emergencies impacting face-to-face operations.
- Supply chain disruption (e.g., educational materials, utilities).

## Continuity Measures and Mitigation Strategies:

1. Staff Contingency and Remote Delivery:
- All staff are issued laptops and trained to deliver sessions remotely.
- A standby bank of qualified tutors is retained to cover absence in core subjects.
- Remote learning platforms (Zoom, Teams, Google Classroom) are embedded into course delivery models.
- CPD is delivered on hybrid models to ensure continuity in adult training.
2. Data Security and IT Recovery:
- All data is backed up automatically using encrypted cloud-based platforms.
- Our Learning Management System is accessible from multiple locations and is compliant with UK GDPR.
- IT use policies and staff training are in place to prevent breaches and ensure data integrity.
- Offline contingency resources (e.g., paper-based worksheets) are available for emergency use.
3. Alternative Premises:
- Agreements are in place with community venues, partner organisations, and satellite locations for emergency relocation.
- Key staff are trained to deploy lessons online within 24 hours.
- Communication with learners regarding any venue changes is handled centrally and efficiently.
4. Financial Resilience:
- We maintain emergency reserves to fund essential operations for up to three months.
- Income diversification across local authority contracts, private clients, and CPD mitigates risk of single-source failure.
- Budgeting, forecasting, and quarterly review of all income streams are carried out by our finance lead.
5. Communication Protocols:
- A central communication tree outlines the cascade of key messages to staff, learners, parents, and funders.
- Emergency contact information is updated every term.
- Communication platforms include email, SMS, website updates, and telephone chains.
6. Safeguarding and Welfare:
- A designated safeguarding team operates in-person and online.
- Individual learner welfare plans are reviewed and continued during any transition or emergency period.
- Weekly wellbeing check-ins are carried out for all vulnerable learners during remote delivery periods.
7. Service Recovery Timeline:
- Within 24 hours: Immediate internal team briefing, switch to remote tools, learner/family notifications.
- Within 72 hours: Confirm adapted delivery schedules and welfare support plans.
- Within 1 week: Resume modified full service through hybrid or alternative arrangements.

## Plan Review and Testing:

- The BCP is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Scenario-based drills (e.g., fire evacuation, IT blackout, safeguarding incident) are conducted biannually.
- Feedback from drills and real-life disruptions is logged and used to strengthen the plan.
- New risks are assessed, and strategies updated in line with sector changes or guidance from regulators.

## Approval and Review:

Date of Implementation: April 2025
Next Review Date: March 2026
Approved by: Rhean White - Director