

## CAG Consultants Business Continuity Plan

### Introduction

A business continuity plan is a type of risk assessment. It looks at risks to the successful delivery of the company's business and the likelihood of these happening. It considers ways of reducing the risks, and it puts in place for dealing with problems and emergencies if they occur.

Business continuity planning is also a process whereby the risks are reviewed and the plan updated and improved on a regular basis.

### Types of risks

As CAG Consultants does not have a fixed office base, the risk of a single catastrophic event wiping out the company's ability to do business is much reduced. Events such as flood or fire might affect individual consultants and their offices; these and risks and the plans for dealing with them are considered below.

The main risks are therefore:

- Individual staff circumstances – sickness, injury, dependants' responsibilities;
- IT problems;
- Damage to company reputation, including passing off ; and
- Financial risks

### Risk Management

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Response
Individual staff circumstance – short term absence	Medium	Low	Short periods of staff absence (less than a week) can occur at any time. Examples might be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sickness;</li><li>• Carers' responsibilities; and</li><li>• Personal emergencies such as flood or fire in the member of staff's office</li></ul> and should be dealt with as outlined in the CAG manual. The member of staff should highlight any urgent work issues, and the finance and admin manager should arrange for these to be deal with by an appropriate member of staff. The staff member should also inform

			clients of any impacts on work they are expecting, and inform them of a likely return to work date, negotiating any changes to due dates or deadlines as appropriate.
Individual staff circumstances – medium to long term absence	Low	Medium	<p>Where it becomes apparent that a staff member is likely to be absent in the medium to long term, CAG consultants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a staff member to cover / deputise for the absent member.</li> <li>• This person will take on responsibility for managing any outstanding work and projects. This includes allocating work to colleagues, and if appropriate, bringing in associates to ensure work is delivered effectively.</li> <li>• They will also inform the client(s) of any cover arrangements and make sure plans are in place to deal with any outstanding work.</li> </ul> <p>In the case of the absence of the Finance and Admin manager, Coops UK will be appointed to manage finances, invoicing, salary payments, etc, in line with usual procedures for holiday cover.</p> <p>CAG also has a Health and Safety policy and the CAG manual contains advice on working safely and reducing the risk of absence because of stress.</p>
IT problems, e.g. viruses, equipment being stolen	Low	High	<p>IT problems can have a high impact, but this should only be short term. In order to reduce the risk, consultants should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure their computers have anti-virus and firewall software and that this is updated regularly;</li> <li>• Back up their work onto a portable disc drive or other external facility at least once a week;</li> <li>• Email completed reports, proposals and similar to the Finance and Admin manager who will maintain a central record;</li> <li>• In the first instance, the Finance and Admin manager should be contacted for IT support, but consultants will also have in place local IT support arrangements so they can get advice and assistance to resolve IT problems quickly;</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure they take into account data protection and confidentiality issues, for example, if carrying out focus groups with children or vulnerable adults.</li> <li>• Laptops, Blackberries and other mobile IT equipment should be password protected.</li> </ul>
Damage to company reputation	Low	High	<p>CAG Consultants' reputation for carrying out high quality, professional work is one of its most important assets. Examples of where this could be damaged include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A client being dissatisfied with a piece of work and deciding to publicise this fact;</li> <li>• A competitor company distributing incorrect or defamatory information about CAG, or seeking to pass off CAG's work as its own;</li> <li>• Reports and research work being changed without CAG's consent or involvement, but still appearing to be CAG work.</li> </ul> <p>CAG has quality control procedures in place that include support for new staff and peer reviews of reports and similar work. They also include agreeing work plans and draft documents with clients before producing final versions. CAG has a complaints procedure for clients to use to resolve any issues that arise during the course of work, and would respect most matters to be resolved through discussion and negotiations with consultants, without needing to resort to formal procedures.</p> <p>CAG will respond to threats to reputation on a case by case basis. The company directors will hold a telephone conference or meeting as soon as possible after becoming aware of the threat, and agree an appropriate response.</p>
Financial risks	Low	Medium	<p>Financial risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cash flow problems owing to work over running or clients not paying in line with contracts;</li> <li>• Theft or fraud;</li> <li>• Failure to win sufficient work to meet company costs.</li> </ul> <p>CAG has detailed financial procedures in place. There is a Finance and Admin manager and a CAG director with management responsibility for finances. Accounts are presented at monthly CAG meetings and the cooperative agrees any plans for dealing with financial issues and</p>

			approving unusual items of expenditure.
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**Updating this plan**

This plan will be reviewed by the cooperative at least annually and updated whenever the CAG manual is updated.