

Halderstone



Training module

Business Continuity Preparedness & Response

Structure continuity plans, define response roles and communications, and design exercises aligned with continuity requirements



Do your continuity plans look complete but fail when events occur and exercises are mere formality?

Overview

Many organisations have continuity plans that look complete but don't work under pressure: unclear activation criteria, role confusion, missing dependency information, and escalation/communication steps that rely on individual knowledge. Exercises then become "tick-box" events that confirm the plan exists rather than whether it can be used.

This training module covers continuity planning outputs and operational readiness: how to structure and maintain continuity plans, how to organise response roles and communications, and how to design and run exercises that validate assumptions and trigger improvements. It assumes that BIA outputs and strategy decisions exist as inputs; it does not teach BIA execution or continuity strategy design, which are covered in the dedicated ISO 22301 modules.



Target audience

- People involved in designing, building, operating, or improving a BCMS aligned with ISO 22301
- Executives and department heads accountable for BCMS effectiveness and performance
- Those responsible for processes, policies, assets, risks, and controls related to business continuity management
- Auditors of ISO 22301 who want to deepen their understanding of management-side best practices (not audit technique)

Is this module for you?

It is a good fit for you if you...

- need continuity plans that work under real response pressure.
- want clear activation, roles, and escalation paths.
- design response structures and communication flows.
- want exercises that surface gaps and drive improvement.
- support ISO 22301-aligned operational readiness.

It may be less suitable for you if you...

- are looking for business impact analysis or strategy selection.
- want detailed technical recovery procedures only.
- focus solely on crisis communications or incident management.
- already run mature, regularly exercised response arrangements.

Learning outcomes



Key outcomes

- Structure continuity plans so they are usable in response, not just complete on paper
- Define clear response roles, escalation paths and coordination interfaces across functions
- Specify activation criteria, initial actions and communications steps that work under time pressure

Additional capabilities

- Translate continuity requirements and strategy decisions into concrete recovery actions and hand-offs
- Design exercises that validate key assumptions, coordination and decision-making
- Capture exercise outcomes and lessons learned in a form that drives continual readiness improvement

Agenda

Plans, response, and exercising in the ISO 22301 operating model

How to position plans, response, and exercising within the continuity operating model and maintain traceability from requirements to executable plans

Continuity plan architecture and usability

How to structure continuity plans by level and design them for usability under pressure, with clear triggers, roles, and the minimum information needed to act

Response organisation and role clarity

How to define response structures, responsibilities, and escalation paths and integrate them cleanly with existing incident, crisis, and operational teams

Activation, coordination, and communications

How to define activation criteria, initial actions, coordination cadence, and communication patterns that support timely, controlled response

Recovery actions and hand-offs

How to sequence recovery actions across business and enabling functions and manage assumptions, constraints, and decisions during recovery

Exercising to validate readiness

How to design exercises that validate readiness by testing assumptions, coordination, and decision-making rather than just plan completeness

Capturing outcomes and driving follow-up

How to capture exercise outcomes as decisions and ownership items and feed them into corrective action and improvement routines

Technology as an enabler

How to support plan accessibility, version control, and exercise follow-up with technology and AI-assisted summarisation without replacing judgement

Case-based workshop

Applying the learned concepts, methods, and approaches in a realistic case setting

Included materials



Learning materials

- Slide deck
- Participant workbook

Templates & tools

- Continuity plan structure template
- Response roles & escalation map template
- Activation & first-hour checklist
- Communications matrix template
- Exercise design brief template
- After-action review log template

Confirmation

- Confirmation of participation

Preparation guidance

Assumed background

This module assumes participants can discuss service/operational dependencies and can interpret time-based continuity requirements as inputs to plans and response arrangements.

Helpful background includes:

- Familiarity with core services/processes and their enabling dependencies

Preparatory modules

Foundation (depending on background)

Useful if you are new to the underlying concepts

- Business Continuity Preparedness & Response
- Business Impact Analysis

Supporting (optional)

Helpful but not required to participate effectively

- Objectives & Performance Management
- Operational Control
- Competence, Awareness & Communication

Logistics



Available languages

- English
- German

Standard delivery options

- Virtual live teaching
- Blended learning (e-learning + live)

Bespoke delivery options

- On-site delivery at your place
- Content adapted to your organization



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