

# GSS – Covid-19 Business Continuity

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## About this plan and its Purpose

As part of GSS's Business continuity plan the Covid-19 pandemic has meant that our business went into our 'Continuity phase' and as a result business was initially halted and only critical business was conducted.

As Covid-19 restrictions now start to lift we are making provisions to move into a non-critical stage of our business continuity and must make adjustments to continue with our business to ensure we can in stages move towards 'Business as usual' or as close to this as Government guidelines allows for.

## Business Continuity

### **PURPOSE OF THE BUSINESS CONTINUITY PHASE**

The purpose of this new Covid-19 business continuity phase of response is to ensure that contracted activities are resumed and planned phase for return to 'Business as usual' is rolled out

As we move out of Covid-19 GSS will take a staged approach to analyse the risks and potential measures required to move to delivering training either face to face, through blended learning or via remote online delivery methods as has been.

The principles of this will be based on GSS's ability to provide appropriate control measures for Directors, managers and employees to implement under a Plan, Prepare, Action and Review' cycle which must be continuously monitored and reviewed based on Government guidelines and restrictions.

GSS will take guidance from Central and local Government and health professionals alongside our Prime contractors to ensure that learners and staff alike can feel confident in our ability to ensure we have taken preventative measures to mitigate the spread and re-infection of Covid-19. It is also of importance that Learners and staff alike feel safe in their environment to aid their learning process.

## Stage 1 - Planning

Firstly there are a number of items that we will need to consider before we can embark on our thoughts for entering into buildings with staff and learners

As with our normal Risk assessments GSS would seek to conduct the following:

- Ensure that all health and safety compliance checks have been undertaken with all delivery venues before opening (e.g. fire alarm, emergency lighting, water hygiene, lifts, etc are all in working conditions and checked in line with usual risk assessments.).

- We will check for ventilation and AC systems working optimately; (ventilation system should be kept on continuously, with lower ventilation rates when people are absent).
- We will ensure COVID-19 posters/ signage displayed in communal areas
- We will look to see if the delivery venue has considered a one-way system if possible for circulation around the building and to minimise contact this should also include.
  1. Stairways to be up or down only
  2. Use of fire exits.
- GSS will be requesting venues to put down floor markings along the middle of two-way corridors/stairs to keep users apart and 'keep left' signs.
- In areas where queues may form, floor markings to indicate government guideline distancing should be visible .
- Where possible we would seek to have separate doors used for in and out of the building (to avoid crossing paths).
- We would look to identify doors that can be propped open (to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation) taking account of fire safety and safeguarding.
- Where training is taking place GSS would look to identify rooms that can be accessed directly from outside (to avoid shared use of corridors).
- GSS will work with our delivery venues to organise classrooms for maintaining space between seats and desks to meet the Government guidelines.
- We will make recommendations for all class rooms to remove unnecessary items in particular soft furnishings and items that are hard to clean.
- GSS would also recommend that communal toilets are assessed to meet social distancing with use of toilets and sinks, dryers etc as well as advising that hand sanitizers, soap, water, single use disposable towels or hand dryers are in use.
- We would recommend toilets should also have laminated picture signs in front of sinks showing effective handwashing.
- GSS would also want to see that arrangements have been made with cleaners for additional cleaning at scheduled times and this is documented and displayed.

## Stage 2 - Preparing

With the thought that we may be returning back to a phased face to face delivery method GSS would prepare the following to give confidence to our learners

- Involve key GSS Trainers and Managers in plans to return and listen to any suggestions on preventative measures that can be taken.
- We would consider personal risk factors: age, obesity, pregnancy, existing health conditions and ethnicity for all returning staff and learners.
- Where necessary individual risk assessments for employees and learners at special risk would be analysed and taken into account based on medical advice.
- Regular communications to ensure that those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, are not to be in circulation and must observe the Government guidelines on quarantine
- Remote training will continue as much as possible to limit class numbers attending and to provide a mixture of blended learning for individuals.
- We will assess how many Trainers and staff will be required for delivery of GSS's contracts and provision and identify those that can remain working from home.

- Returning to classroom training will be initially prioritised for groups who do not have the means to access remote learning with a potential phased return for others in line with government guidance
- GSS will review lessons to decide whether each training session requires the number of hours given on site and whether parts of training can take place remotely allowing for alternation of classes and length of times within the classroom setting.
- Class groups will need to be looked at to determine the adequate number of learners per unit to exercise the Governments distancing rules
- GSS will also look to plan staggered break times (including lunch), to limit the number of learners moving around at any one time.
- GSS will also take responsibility to encourage learners to walk or cycle to their training where possible and gatherings at the start and end of classes will be actively discouraged.
- GSS will also work with the funding authorities and venue owners to consider how learners not following distancing rules will be managed.
- GSS employees will be fully briefed about the plans and protective measures identified in the risk assessment.
- GSS will conduct regular staff briefings to discuss safety, risk and updates on changes to this.
- GSS will also seek to keep in close contact with our learners and staff to check their welfare, mental and physical health and personal security.

### Stage 3 – Actions - Social Distance and Control Measures

GSS will take precautions as follows for the delivery of face to face training to learners

- GSS will work with all venues to ensure all classroom tables, chairs and touch points are thoroughly cleansed at the start of every lesson and at the end of the day
- Class numbers will be limited to ensure that social distancing can be observed
- GSS staff will be required to wear PPE to deliver face to face training including face masks, gloves and visors and will make these available to learners also
- We will consider staggering start times so class groups arrive at different times.
- Where possible classes will be held on ground floor to lessen the need for use of enclosed spaces such as lifts and stairs
- Larger classrooms/ spaces that support social distancing for learners would be requested as preference to deliver to give learners more opportunity to maintain the distancing requirements
- GSS will work with our delivery venues to encourage privacy screens to protect Learners in settings where less than 2 meter ruling is observed.
- We will ensure that venues have hand sanitisers provided at all entrances and sanitising wipes are provided per class to ensure movable objects are continuously disinfected
- Desks, Laptops, mouse, mouse mats and moveable items must be sanitised at the start of each lesson and must not be shared amongst learners.
- Pens and workbooks will be provided to all learners at the beginning of each training session to discourage sharing
- No learners will be allowed into classrooms without prior arrangement.
- GSS will request learners stagger their use of toilet/washroom facilities to allow only 1 at a time if possible
- Class groups will be kept together throughout the day and will not mix with other groups within the building

**In line with current Government guidance we understand that Safe distancing or 2 metres (possibly 1 meter in some instances) is a preventative measure that will be adopted so far as is reasonably practicable but it is acknowledged that this is not always possible in a learning environment. However, all the measures in this assessment are aimed at reducing transmission risk as much as possible**

## Control Measures

- Prior to any course learners must be sent instructions by email/letter/text instructing them of the following:
  1. Restrictions will take place to observe safety regulations for Covid-19
  2. Not to attend lesson if they are any of their household display any “flue-like syptoms” or indeed symptoms of Coronavirus (Covod-19)
- GSS will require all learners to thoroughly wash their hands and sanitise prior to entering into the training centre and should also sanitize hands on entry to their training room.
- Frequent hand washing will be encouraged for all following guidance on hand cleaning displayed throughout the venue
- All learners and staff are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose and should observe Government guidance when coughing or sneezing to use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins for tissue waste (‘catch it, bin it, kill it’)
- Anyone displaying any symptoms of Coronarirus will be requested not to enter the training room and or asked to leave training if this is displayed during any lesson.
- Bins for tissues will be provided and we will request that venues empty these throughout the day and as a minimum at the end of every training session.
- Doors will be propped open, where safe to do so to limit use of door handles in particularly on entry and leaving of lessons. These are closed when classes are unoccupied.
- Sanitising spray and paper towels will be provided in classrooms for use by learners and members of staff.
- Shared materials and surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected frequently (e.g. desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, etc.).
- Equipment used in practical lessons will be cleaned thoroughly between groups.
- GSS will discourage sharing books and other materials.
- Where practicable there will be no books or work handed in on paper, electronic submission will be the preferred method however if not possible work on paper should be put in quarantine for 3 days prior to be handled.

NOTE:

Where a learner may become ill and require assistance the staff member must ensure their PPE is worn prior to approaching the sick member. Anyone providing first aid or assistance for a sick person will not be expected to maintain 2m distance, however the following measures will be adopted:

- Washing hands or using hand sanitiser, before and after treating injured person;
- Wear gloves or cover hands when dealing with open wounds;
- If CPR is required on an adult call 999 and follow instructions given. Only attempt compression only CPR and or early defibrillation (if available) if instructed to do so by trained staff or if the administering person is a trained first aider.
- If CPR is required on a Learner by a trained individual, use a resuscitation face shield if available to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation in asphyxial arrest.
- Dispose of all waste safely and maintain contact with the qualified medical professionals.

Should a GSS staff member have close hands-on contact with anyone who is unwell with Coronavirus they should immediately notify GSS Management and monitor themselves for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 14 days.

## STAGE 4 - Implementation

On discussion with GSS funders and Government timescales for lifting of restrictions GSS will enter into the first phase of this plan with set dates and timescales agreed with all parties but no earlier than 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 with the assumption Government guidelines allows for this process to start.

## PLAN Communication

Sonia Benjamin (Director) is this Plan's Owner and responsible for ensuring that it is maintained, exercised and updated in accordance with Government guidelines, GSS's funding authorities and internal requirements for business continuity whilst observing strict safety conditions

This plan is shared with GSS co Director Richard Wood, Business Development/ Contract Manager Emma Glasscock, GSS employees alongside GSS's funders, venues and other parties who will play a part in ensuring the safety of all those concerned.

## PLAN REVIEW DATE

This Plan will be reviewed at least weekly whilst in 'Lockdown phase' and updated in accordance with Government guidance on lockdown and the phased return of organisations.

For GSS Staff - Any breaches to the above could constitute gross misconduct and where found, individuals could be subject to disciplinary procedures accordingly.

This process will also be looked at in conjunction with GSS's policies and procedures on:

- Health and Safety
- Business Continuity
- Environmental
- Lone working
- Lockdown Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding



Signed by Sonia Benjamin  
Director  
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