Introduction and development of Business Continuity Management (BCM)

In order to manage business interruptions, many organisations have traditionally relied on a Disaster Contingency Recovery Plan (DCRP) or Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP). Although these plans have been vital to organisations, they reflect a primarily reactive approach and do not provide comprehensive guidelines for disruption forecasting, risk management, or long term recovery. A business continuity plan, on the other hand, aims to "eliminate or reduce the impact of a disaster condition before the condition occurs."

The emphasis has moved from this type of disaster recovery planning, traditionally in the domain of the IT Department to the more expansive concept of BCM, which considers all business activities, not just IT.

BCM within the University of Glasgow includes the concepts of risk management and corporate governance. Consequently, it now takes a proactive approach, seeking to identify those potential impacts that could adversely affect the service delivery capability before they occur.

It is important to note that BCM goes beyond writing a Business Continuity Plan (BCP). It is a proactive process that identifies the essential resources needed to ensure that the operations of any organisation can be sustained in the event of a disruption.

Resource, time and capability constraints will mean that the University of Glasgow has to focus its business continuity activity on those activities most critical to the University. Prioritisation is a key element of business continuity. All levels of the organisation need to appreciate that they have a responsibility in maintaining service delivery and therefore need to consider how they would manage disruptions to their activities.

The Business Continuity Institute's Good Practice Guidelines gives the following definition:

"Business Continuity Management (BCM) is a holistic process that identifies potential threats to an organisation and the impacts to business operations that those threats, if realised, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organisational resilience with the capability of an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities".

BCM is proactive and concentrates on everything that is needed to continue operations in the event of a disruption and **focuses on the effects and not the cause of the disruption.**