



# BUSINESS CONTINUITY STRATEGY

[FG010]

Department	: Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Policy owner	: Chief Operations Officer
Responsible for update	: Director: Risk, Compliance & Relationship Management
Prior update	: New policy, formalising current processes & procedures
This policy	: June 2024
Approved by	: Council

# Business Continuity Strategy

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## Acronyms

BCI	Business Continuity Institute
BIA	Business Impact Analysis
BCMS	Business Continuity Management System
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
COO	Chief Operating Officer
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOA	Delegation of Authority
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
ED	Executive Director
GPG	Good Practice Guidelines
HOD	Head of Department/ Line Manager
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PASS	Professional, Administrative Support & Staff
RMEC	Risk Management Executive Committee
UARC	University Audit and Risk Committee
VC	Vice-Chancellor

## Definitions

For purposes of consistency, the following business continuity definitions are applied within the University of Cape (UCT). These definitions are aligned with leading industry practices such as the ISO 22301:2019 standard.

Term	Definition
Activity	Set of one or more tasks with a defined output.
Audit	Systematic, independent, and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled.
Business Continuity (BC)	Capability of an organisation to continue the delivery of products and services within acceptable time frames at predefined capacity during a disruption.
Business Continuity Plan (BCP)	Documented information that guides an organisation to respond to a disruption and resume, recover and restore the delivery of products and services consistent with its business continuity objectives.
Business Impact Analysis (BIA)	Process of analysing the impact over time of a disruption on the organisation.
Competence	Ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results.
Conformity	Fulfilment of a requirement.
Continual Improvement	Recurring activity to enhance performance.
Corrective Action	Action to eliminate the cause(s) of a nonconformity and to prevent recurrence.
Disruption	Incident whether anticipated or unanticipated, that causes an unplanned, negative deviation from the expected delivery of products and services according to an organisation's objectives.
Documented Information	Information required to be controlled and maintained by an organisation and the medium on which it is contained.
Effectiveness	Extent to which planned activities are realised and planned results achieved.
Executives	Person or group of people who directs and controls an organisation at the highest level.  Standard: Top Management Preferred: Executive
Impact	Outcome of a disruption affecting objectives.
Incident	Event that can be, or could lead to, a disruption, loss, emergency, or crisis.
Interested Party Stakeholder	Person or organisation that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity.
Management System	Set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organisation to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives.

Term	Definition
Measurement	Process to determine a value.
Monitoring	Determining the status of a system, a process or an activity.
Nonconformity	Non-fulfilment of a requirement.
Objective	Result to be achieved.
Organisation	Person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities, and relationships to achieve its objectives.
Outsource	An arrangement where an external organisation performs part of an organisation's function or process.
Performance	Measurable result.
Policy	Intentions and direction of an organisation, as formally expressed by its Top Management.
Prioritised Activity	Activity to which urgency is given in order to avoid unacceptable impacts to the business during a disruption.
Process	Set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs.
Product and Service	Output or outcome provided by an organisation to interested parties.
Requirement	Need or expectation that is stated, implied or obligatory.
Resource	All assets (including plant and equipment), people, skills, technology, premises, supplies and information (whether electronic or not) that an organisation has to have available to use, when needed, in order to operate and meet its objective.
Risk	Effect of uncertainty on objectives.
Top Management	Person or group of people who directs and controls an organisation at the highest level.

## 1. Introduction

Business continuity is a proven management practice for building organisational resilience, when effectively implemented and maintained. The design and implementation of practical and cost-effective business continuity solutions are key components in the implementation of robust business continuity capabilities. UCT embarked on a project to implement an effective Business Continuity Management System (BCMS).

The business continuity solutions documented in this report will assist UCT to respond to an incident and continue to support its critical value adding activities.

The Business Continuity Strategy presents business continuity solution selection outcomes. The Risk Management Executive Committee (RMEC) is established and chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and ensures that a sound risk management and internal control system is maintained at the University.

The RMEC Reports to the University Audit and Risk Committee (UARC) that is required to ensure that the University Council assurance on the effectiveness of the Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS). The Deans, Executive Directors, and Heads of Departments are responsible for overseeing the formal risk management processes including BCMS in their respective areas of responsibility.

## 2. Scope

As directed by the business continuity policy, the scope of the BCMS, includes all faculties and departments within the University. That cover the core academic functions (teaching, learning, and research) and Professional Administrative and Support Services (PASS). As a result, the scope of this Business Continuity Strategy Report includes the following:

- Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED)
- Faculty of Commerce;
- Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment;
- Faculty of Health Sciences;
- Faculty of Humanities;
- Faculty of Science;
- Faculty of Law; and
- Graduate School of Business (GSB).

In support of the above faculties, the following PASS departments play a key role:

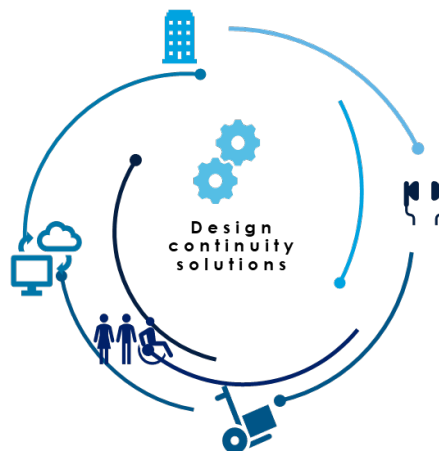
- Communication and Marketing Department (CMD);
- Department of Finance
- Department of Student Affairs (DSA);
- Development and Alumni Department (DAD)
- Human Resources;
- Information Communication and Technology Services (ICTS);
- Internal Audit;
- Institutional Planning Department (IPD);
- International Academic Programme Office (AIPO)
- Office of the Registrar;
- Office of the Vice-Chancellor (including DVCs and COO);
- Office for Inclusivity & Change (OIC);
- Properties and Services (P&S) including Commercial Development;
- Research Office; and
- UCT Libraries.

### 3. Purpose

The overall objective of the Business Continuity Strategy is to identify and select appropriate and cost-effective solutions to facilitate the recovery and continuity of the critical value-adding activities of UCT in the event of a disruption.

These solutions cater to the recovery of the following critical enablers within acceptable timeframes:

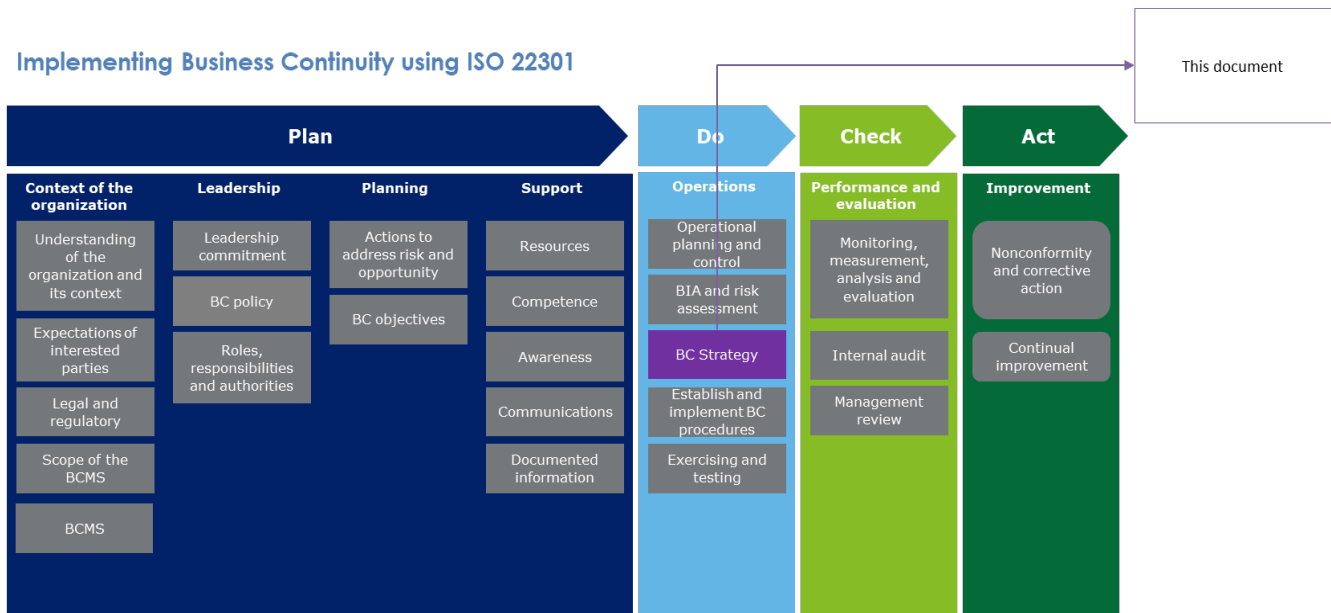
- Building;
- Equipment;
- Technology (systems);
- Human Resources; and
- Third Parties.



## 4. Approach

UCT has recently completed a Business Impact Assessment (BIA). The BIA documents the business continuity requirements of UCT. In line with leading industry practices, the next activity to be completed by UCT is a Business Continuity Strategy.

As illustrated below, the Business Continuity Strategy is an output of the 'Do' stage of the ISO BCMS system.



This report (i.e. the Business Continuity Strategy Report) should be read in conjunction with the BIA Report and the relevant supporting worksheets.

The BIA Report provides a summary of the business requirements. The worksheets provide detailed information for each business area within UCT.

These documents can be made available upon request from the Director: Risk and Compliance.

## 5. Business continuity solutions

There are several solutions for continuity and recovery that can be deployed within an organisation.

- **Diversification** – activities undertaken at two or more geographically separate sites, so that in the event of disruption at one location, the activities can continue at an alternate location.



This solution is appropriate when the business continuity requirements are measured in seconds, minutes, or hours, rather than days.

- **Replication** – replicate the capability at geographically separate sites and move the people in the event of a disruption. The alternate site is maintained at a high state of readiness with all the resources required in place. This solution means that the alternate site is pre-equipped and can be activated in a very short time frame. This solution can also be expensive, as it means that the resources will be in place but remain unused until they are required for business continuity.
- **Standby** – move the people to a geographically separated standby facility. This solution is suitable where the RTO allows for a longer response time, measured in days, rather than hours. This solution requires that the organisation should have a standby facility available that can be made operational within the business continuity requirements.
- **Post-incident acquisition** – this solution is applicable when business continuity requirements are measured in days or weeks, organisations can consider a business continuity solution where the required resources are acquired after the disruption occurs. This solution relies on the organisation having a pre-defined and prioritised list of resource requirements. It also depends on suppliers' ability to provide the resources in suitable quality and quantity within acceptable timeframes.
- **Do nothing** – this solution involves waiting until after the incident to decide what to do. This may be an appropriate solution where the RTO is measured in terms of weeks or months or where it is impossible, too difficult, or too expensive to provide alternate facilities or resources before an incident occurs.







## 6. Selected business continuity solutions

Business continuity requirements are determined by University Management, as documented in the BIA Report.

The following table provides a mapping between the business continuity requirements and the recommended solution design principle:

BUSINESS CONTINUITY REQUIREMENTS				BUSINESS CONTINUITY SOLUTIONS		
Recommended Tier	Suggested MTPD Timeframe	Critical activities in this Tier category		Business Continuity Solution Development Priority	Suggested RTO for Dependencies	Solution Design Principle
Tier 0	<1 day	15%	89	Short Term	0 - 2 hours	Diversification
Tier 1	1 – 2 days	4%	25	Short Term	< 1 day	Diversification
Tier 2	2 – 4 days	8%	46	Short Term	1 - 2 days	Replication
Tier 3	<1 week	25%	147	Intermediate	2 - 4 days	Replication
Tier 4	1 – 2 weeks	3%	18	Intermediate	< 1 week	Standby
Tier 5	2 – 4 weeks	11%	65	Long Term	1 - 2 week	Standby
Tier 6	<1 day	15%	89	Long Term	2 – 4 weeks	Post-incident acquisition
			<b>593</b>			

The business continuity solutions, including initiatives, responsibilities, and implementation timelines, for each critical enabler selected by University Management are discussed below:

Section	Description
6.1	 <p><b>Building</b> This disaster scenario describes situations where <b>a building is unavailable</b>. The disaster may be as minor as being unable to access the office from which the respective processes operate to as catastrophic as the destruction of the building.</p>
6.2	 <p><b>Equipment</b> This disaster scenario describes situations where <b>critical, specialised equipment is not available</b>. This focuses on key equipment with long lead times / which would take longer to replace.</p>
6.3	 <p><b>Technology</b> This scenario describes situations where the <b>IT systems are unavailable</b> for an extended period. The scenario also includes the loss of key data and IT infrastructure.</p>
6.4	 <p><b>Human Resources</b> This disaster scenario describes situations where <b>staff who are responsible for delivering the critical value adding activities are not available</b>. This could range from a key person in charge of a specific system/process being off ill, to an epidemic/pandemic resulting in most staff being off ill or where there is loss of lives.</p>
6.5	 <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors</b> This disaster scenario describes situations where <b>key suppliers/ service providers</b> cease to provide the required products/services.</p>
6.6	 <p><b>Vital Records</b> This disaster scenario describes situations where <b>vital records</b> are lost</p>

## 6.1 Critical enabler – Building(s)

In the event that the building(s) of UCT become unavailable, a combination of the following solutions may be applied in order to continue urgent and critical business operations:

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Diversification	<p><b>Remote working</b></p> <p>Enable personnel to work remotely where appropriate in order to continue the operations of the respective business areas.</p>	<p>No action required by University Management as this solution is already in place.</p> <p>All critical staff members at UCT currently have the capacity to work remotely.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Post incident acquisition*	<p><b>Third party arrangements</b></p> <p>Identify a third party which can provide suitable office facilities within the local area.</p>	<p>Make prior arrangements with a suitable supplier(s), preferably in the form of a sourcing agreement. The agreement should include specific SLAs that are aligned to the business requirements.</p> <p>This arrangement i.e., a concluded sourcing agreement and agreed SLAs will assist in making it possible for the business requirements to be met by the supplier within short notice and or within acceptable timeframes.</p>	Immediately	Properties & Services (P&S)

\*Owing to the site-specific nature of the services rendered, exceptions have been observed withing most of the faculties and some PASS business areas (in particular, the Baxter Theatre, Student Development, and Properties & Services). The recommended strategy for these areas is post-incident acquisition.

## 6.2 Critical Enabler - Equipment

In the event of the loss of specialised equipment, the following solution may be applied in order to continue urgent and critical business operations:

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Post incident acquisition	<p><b>Third party arrangements</b></p> <p>UCT has already identified third party service providers which can provide maintenance, repair or replacement services.</p> <p>Alternatively, UCT can source new equipment following procurement procedures following a disruption.</p>	No action required by University Management	Not applicable	Not applicable

## 6.3 Critical Enabler - Technology

In the event of the loss of technology, the following solution may be applied in order to continue urgent and critical business operations:

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Diversification	Two copies of a system and its data are in separate locations that are kept synchronised and live.	<p>The solutions associated with recovering business systems are excluded from the scope of this document, however they are catered for separately in the IT Disaster Recovery Strategy document, which can be made available on request from ICTS.</p> <p>The requirements of the business will be taken further by IT to ensure that there is alignment between the business requirements and IT DR capability.</p>	Short term	ICTS

## 6.4 Critical Enabler - Human Resources

In the event of the loss of Human Resources, a combination of solutions listed in the table that follows may be applied to continue urgent and critical business functions:

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Diversification	<b>Hybrid working</b> Personnel are working at different locations at the same time performing similar tasks and activities.	University Management, should develop and implement a suitable policy that will ensure that at any given time, there is proportion of staff working from home and at the office at the same time performing similar tasks and activities in parallel.	Short term	UCT HR
Post incident acquisition	<b>Third party arrangements</b> Acquire external resources through normal recruitment processes.	Each business area should document and maintain enabling documents such as role descriptions, induction manuals, training content or material and SOPs to ensure that the internal and external incumbents can be expeditiously prepared to perform the required functions.	Medium term	UCT HR
	<b>Redeploy staff</b> Redeploy skilled resources from unaffected business areas within UCT. These resources can be skilled or can be trained to become skilled to perform similar functions.			
	<b>Delegation appointments</b> Implement delegation as appropriate and in line with the internal delegation policy of UCT.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Additionally, the following measures can be implemented to mitigate the loss of Human Resources:

DETAILS	WHEN	BY
Implement a formal company-wide initiative aimed at cross skilling, talent mapping and succession planning.  This will be particularly helpful during a disruption as this will enable the organization to draw from a pool of internal resources within a short period of time.	Medium term	UCT HR
Make prior arrangements with suitable recruitment agencies to provide resources when the needed arises.  This arrangement can be formalised in an agreement or MOU.	Medium term	UCT HR

## 6.5 Critical Enabler – 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Vendors/Suppliers

In the event of an unavailability of, or default by key third parties, a combination of the strategies listed in the table that follows may be applied to continue urgent and critical business processes:

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Diversification	For the 3rd party vendors/suppliers that supports the Tier 0 - 2 critical value adding activities, separate 3rd party vendors/suppliers should be appointed and provide same services concurrently to UCT.	<p>UCT should undertake an initiative through normal procurement processes to appoint two or more 3rd party vendors/suppliers that will be rendering the same service concurrently.</p> <p>This will ensure that there is continuity should one supplier default or become unavailable.</p>	Immediately	Procurement & Payment Services
Implement BCM SLAs	For the 3rd party vendors/suppliers that supports the Tier 3 and above critical value adding activities, UCT should implement BCM SLAs.	<p>UCT should undertake an initiative(s) to implement the following BCM SLAs in the existing and new agreements with the suppliers:</p> <p>Suppliers should provide evidence of their BC Plan and procedures that will allow them to continue functioning in the event they are impacted by an incident;</p> <p>Suppliers have to be evaluated through an assessment in order to verify compliance with UCT's business requirements and policies; and</p> <p>Suppliers should be subject to an audit by a suitably qualified external auditor appointed by UCT in order to verify the correct implementation of BC plan and procedure.</p>	Medium term	Procurement & Payment Services

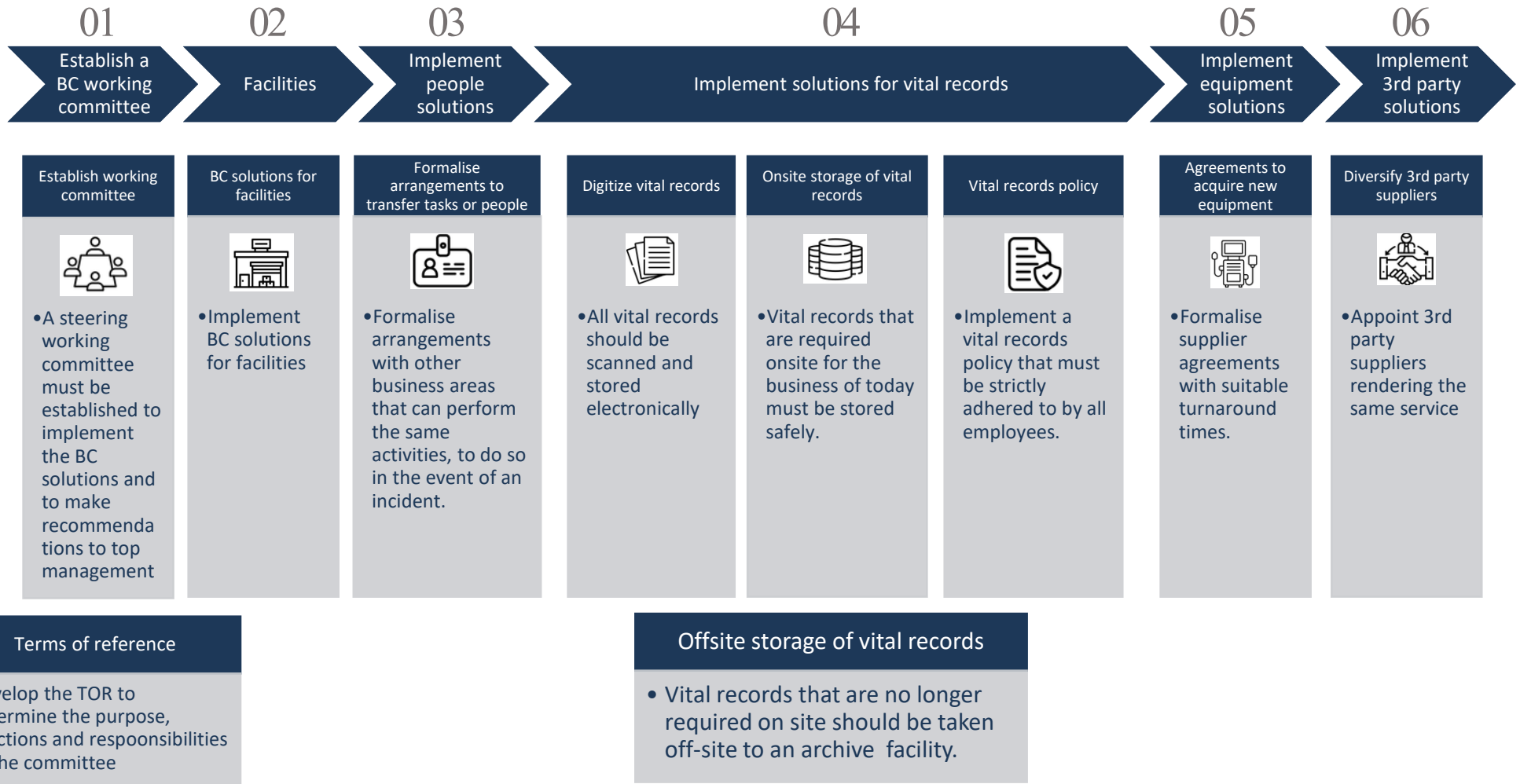
## 6.6 Critical Enabler - Vital records

In the event of the loss of vital records, a combination of solutions listed in the tables that follow may be applied to continue urgent and critical business functions.

Selected BC Solution(s)	Details	Action Items/Initiatives	When	By
Diversification	Vital records should be digitised. Copies of the data should be in separate locations and kept synchronised and live.	<p>It is recommended that UCT should investigate and implement a suitable digitisation transformation initiative.</p> <p>For the business of today, it is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vital records that are required onsite for the business of today must be stored safely;</li> <li>• All vital records that have a retention requirement should be scanned and stored electronically; and</li> <li>• Vital records that are no longer required on site but have a retention requirement should be taken to an offsite archive facility.</li> </ul> <p>All records that do not have a retention requirement, should be securely destroyed in line with the policy of UCT.</p> <p>Further, it is recommended that UCT should develop a suitable policy and procedure for management and handling of vital records, this policy must be strictly adhered to by all employees.</p>	Medium term	ICTS

## 7. Way forward

This section provides a list of initiatives derived from the selected business continuity solutions plus the establishment of a business continuity working group which will finalise the list of initiatives to be implemented, determine the exact timelines and appropriate roles.





## Contact

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