Learning & Teaching Continuity: Course Planning and Delivery Strategies for Teachers at the University of Auckland

13 October 2015
Introduction
The University of Auckland is committed to fulfilling its core academic mission of educating students. It recognizes that events such as earthquakes (e.g. Canterbury), pandemics, health emergencies and prolonged service interruptions are potential threats to learning and teaching continuity. Continuity is at risk through events that either compromise on-campus delivery or through those that prevent assigned teachers from delivering their classes.

Good stewardship requires that the University undertakes appropriate planning and preparation to promote continuity. An important component of this is resilient course design, intended to minimize the potential for disruption of the University’s academic mission. Preparing course syllabi in a manner that supports academic continuity is in the best interests of students and staff and is understood to be a normal aspect of good teaching practice.

Purpose of this Guide
This guide is intended as a guidance rather than policy document and is designed to support teachers in preparing resilient courses and managing an unexpected interruption to teaching, learning and assessment. It has been developed over two years by the University Learning and Teaching Continuity Working Party in consultation with academic and professional colleagues from across the University. All staff with teaching and teaching support responsibilities are encouraged to consider learning continuity and to assume responsibility for being prepared. Hence, this document aims to provide a pragmatic rather than a prescriptive approach.

Relationship to Faculty Business Continuity Plans
In 2015 Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) are being developed for each Faculty under the leadership of the University Risk Office. BCPs provide a high level view of how resources at a Faculty and University level will be mobilised to manage different types of loss (e.g. people, building, IT, equipment) that interrupt our critical business processes (including learning and teaching) and the steps that will be taken to recover operations following an event. For advice on continuing course delivery following a disruption, contact your Faculty’s Business Continuity Leader in the first instance for direction.

This LTCP Guide supports BCPs by walking teachers and other staff responsible for delivering coursework through the steps that can be taken at a course level to build resilience and respond to an interruption.
Guiding Principles for Teachers
This guide presents staff with a number of response actions that can be taken under a variety of scenarios. It is important to remember that it is not so much the actions that teachers take, but rather how they are taken, communicated, and implemented that make a difference to students responses and learning outcomes. The following is a set of principles to help guide staff in their decision-making in a post-disaster environment.
Structure of this Guide
This guide is structured with five main Parts, as illustrated in Figure 01:

- **Part 1: Pre-Course Planning**
  - Course Design
  - Course Syllabus
  - Back-up Teaching Personnel
  - Planning Assignments, Assessment and Grading

- **Part 2: The First Class (Looking Ahead)**
  - Communications
  - Student Responsibility and Agency

- **Part 3: During a Disruption**
  - Student and Staff Welfare
  - Managing Distressed Students
  - Key Resources for Staff and Students

- **Part 4: Ongoing Delivery after a Disruption**
  - Loss of Physical Environment
  - Loss of Virtual Environment
  - Simultaneous Loss of both Physical and Virtual Environments

- **Part 5: Returning to Normality**

![Figure 01: Structure of this Guide](image)

Possible Scenarios
Learning and Teaching Continuity is the process of maintaining teaching and learning in a crisis situation caused by major interruptions to class activities. This includes, but is not limited to, natural disasters, man-made accidents, widespread illness, acts of violence and severe weather conditions. Different disaster scenarios could lead to a loss of our physical environment, our virtual environment (IT systems), or have a simultaneous impact upon both environments.

Rather than attempt to list the various possible scenarios, this guide recognises that there are multiple possible disaster scenarios, with differential impacts on Learning and Teaching, and hence is structured around possible strategies teaching staff could employ in the event of loss of our normal physical and virtual environments. Such strategies are likely to be applicable for staff in the timescales as illustrated in Figure 02:

- **Part 1: Pre-Course Planning**
  - Typically 1-6 months before start of the Semester

- **Part 2: The First Class (Looking Ahead)**
  - During Week 1 of the Semester

- **Part 3: During a Disruption**
  - Any time during teaching
  - Could occur during exams
  - Period dependent upon the severity of the disruption
  - Teaching could be suspended

- **Part 4: Ongoing Delivery after a Disruption**
  - Weeks and months following an event

- **Part 5: Returning to Normality**
  - Months and years following an event

![Figure 02: Applicability of the Strategies in this Guide](image)
PART 1: PRE-COURSE PLANNING

The following is an overview of the generic strategies for designing resilient courses that could be applied by the majority of instructors, regardless of discipline, as part of the standard preparation for course delivery.

Course Design

- When designing your course consider the options for incorporating flexible learning approaches for students. If possible, design your course so that it is not dependent on a single delivery mode or platform. Blended or mixed learning approaches use multiple modes of delivery and provide options to flex in the event of an emergency, but require advance preparation of teaching materials.

- If you are designing a new course it is a good opportunity to review alternative learning approaches and incorporate learning continuity as a core component of your pedagogical approach.

- If you have an existing course, or inherit an existing course from another member of staff, consider how you could use learning continuity as part of a course review for an update or refresh of your approach.

Some simple suggestions are as follows:

- Where possible schedule review lecture sessions which could be used in emergency to shift delivery sessions.

- If possible, design your course so that it is as modular as possible rather than sequential (e.g. the loss of session #3 does not impact on sessions #4, #5 or #6).¹

- Build in flexibility in the selection and design of assessment methods.


- See the FHMS TeachingPLUS website for examples illustrating how flexible learning options can be applied to a course’s design: [http://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/teachingplus/](http://flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/teachingplus/)

¹ This is less likely to be possible for larger cohorts who use multiple rooms or some of the University’s larger theatres. Rooms should only be booked when in use, according to University Timetable Policy.
Course Outline

- Finalise your course outline well in advance of the start of the semester. Student learning and university resilience benefit from having the outline finalised well in advance.

- Load your course outline and key course information onto your course site in Canvas. This will ensure that students have on-going access to critical course information and are well aware of assessment dates and plans for delivering course content (see Attachment 1 for an overview of the University’s web presence standard for courses).

- Make your course resources lists available to students online as per Talis Aspire processes, with the support of subject librarians: [http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/sites/public/files/documents/crl-getting-started.pdf](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/sites/public/files/documents/crl-getting-started.pdf)

- Include the following statements in your course outline so that students are aware of the first steps to take should class be interrupted:

  We undertake to maintain the continuity and standard of teaching and learning in all your courses throughout the year. If there are unexpected disruptions the University has contingency plans to ensure that access to your course continues and your assessment is fair, and not compromised. Some adjustments may need to be made in emergencies. You will be kept fully informed by your course co-ordinator, and if disruption occurs you should refer to the University Website for information about how to proceed.

- Place other relevant guidelines for your class (for example how to contact you if the server is down) in an obvious place on the Course Syllabus page in Canvas.

- Provide a printed and electronic copy of your final course outline to your Faculty, School, or Department (as appropriate).

- Prepare a resilience kit for your course. Spending a few minutes making offline versions of your courseware reduces your risk and could save you significant distress. For example, load critical teaching materials on an encrypted memory stick, upload to a cloud server, to the University server and store a physical (printed) version at a location off-campus.

Back-up Teaching Personnel

- Identify colleagues with appropriate expertise and experience who could back you up. Seek and secure their commitment to act as backup tutor(s) in an emergency. It may be appropriate to discuss such arrangements with your HOD.

- Provide these colleagues with access to teaching materials (including lecture recordings). Add your colleagues to your Canvas course site.
Assignments, Assessments & Grading

- Instructors are reminded of the University’s Assessment of Student Learning Policy, which prohibits any changes to approved and published assessment plans without consultation with students and approval by the Academic Head and Dean of Faculty – except in crisis situations (see next bullet point). In the case of changes, these must be agreed and publicised to students within the period of deleting the course from a student’s enrolment without penalty. For the full policy please see: https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/the-university/how-university-works/policy-and-administration/teaching-and-learning/assessment/assessment-student-learning-policy.html

- In crisis mode, teachers may have to make some unilateral decisions very quickly that affect the course in terms of condensing or altering assessment. If the University Crisis Management Team (CMT) declares a Level 2 or Level 3 event that impacts on learning and teaching[^1], instructors are asked, under the directive of their Faculty BCP team leader, to follow the following procedures for implementing emergency changes to assessment plans. This will help to ensure that a consistent and equitable approach to assessment is applied across the University:

1. Consider how you would adapt assessment to fit the scenarios in Part 4. Do not assume that students will react positively to a reduction in assessment load; research indicates that this has the potential to increase anxiety and stress levels, primarily due to the risk of having fewer assessment items with greater weights[^2]. A better approach might be to consider keeping the original assessment scheme in place while introducing flexibility around submission dates and methods of submission. An alternative option is to use the Aegrotat/Compassionate Consideration process as a guide in deriving an estimated grade for students. However, the Aegrotat/Compassionate Consideration approach is not operable unless there are already course work outcomes available as a base. The basis of these special passes is that there is clear evidence that had the student not been disadvantaged for reasons beyond their control, they would have passed: https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/current-students/cs-academic-information/cs-examination-information/cs-aegrotat-and-compassionate-consideration.html

2. Submit a copy of all tests and exams in advance of their scheduled dates to the School/Faculty Office (even if it is just the day before). This will allow schools/disciplinary areas to administer tests or exams in the event that an instructor is absent due to any unforeseen circumstance.
An important element of resiliency in course design is the capacity to administer assignments and assessments remotely. You may wish to consider designing your course so that a portion of assignments and activities can be (or are) delivered through alternative means such as Canvas. Further information on Canvas Assessment tools can be found on page 14. One issue to keep in mind is that it is not currently possible to guarantee “test/exam conditions” for online assessments.

Establish a virtual and physical collection point for assignment submission and returns. Remember to communicate arrangements with students.

**Teacher / Student Communication**

Consider how you will communicate with the students in your class in the event of unexpected circumstances. This might be through the communication tools in Canvas or email, but that will depend on the IT infrastructure channels available. Identify the necessary information that you or your students will need to be able to use these means of communication effectively (e.g. home access to a computer, email addresses, familiarity with Canvas) and discuss arrangements with students early on in the course. Note: there is no need to make such arrangements complex, as long as students know the first point of contact and that staff have a plan.

The University’s preferred channels for two-way communication between teachers and students at the course level (as opposed to other university communications) are:
- Nominated Class Rep System (acknowledging that class reps change each semester, and sometimes class reps are not as responsive as they need to be);
- ‘Official’ discussion boards (Canvas/Piazza);
- Nominated course coordinator on staff.

**Key Contacts and Resources**

- Pedagogical advice and support: Heads of Department/Discipline Area, Associate Deans and CLeaR
- Administrative support: Directors of Faculty Operations, ITS
PART 2: THE FIRST CLASS

Students’ Emergency Contact Information

- Remind students to update their emergency contact information which is stored centrally on EPR / CS9.

Communicate Emergency Course Procedures

- Briefly explain to students how they would be notified of an event, by whom, how often and the likely nature of instructions to expect. The University provides first instructions according to emergency protocol, with dissemination of information via a central communication system which is able to push emergency messages to all students and staff via mixed media (texts, email etc.). Course coordinators and teaching staff should only respond once directed. Core messages about an emergency event will be generated by the emergency team and communicated as directed. It is important first messages are accurate with no local guessing.

- Confirm the official channels for two-way communication between teachers and students in your course, making the important distinction between channels for course content versus channels for other communications. During and after an emergency event lines of communication often become blurred, so it is worth taking time to establish planned communication channels.

- Highlight the “key dates” in your course: assignment deadlines, major in-class activities and test dates. Let students know how you will be communicating any changes to these dates. Please keep in mind the restrictions on changing assessments (as noted earlier and defined in the Assessment of Student Learning Policy).

- Whilst one option might be to establish a course specific social-media site as a secondary reference point of information and means of communication, it is not encouraged for a range of reasons. There are copyright challenges, issues relating to control of membership and also the generation of multiple media sites runs the risk of creating mixed messages. Furthermore, not all students will be comfortable using social-media sites such as Facebook.

Establish Student Responsibility & Agency

- Consider allowing some time in the first class for students to make some contacts with their peers. Encourage students to exchange contact information with 2-3 other students in the course. Alternatively, consider facilitating study groups early in the semester, and allow linkages between student peers to establish organically.
• Encourage students to make their own contingency plans, for example making secure back-ups.

• All undergraduate courses should have at least one Class Representative elected by their peers to assist communication between students and staff as per the University’s Class Representation Policy.\(^2\) An option is to appoint student representative(s) as a reference point of information for the course in a continuity situation (should the first primary reference point not be available).

• It is helpful to use regular meetings between Course Co-ordinators and Class Representatives within a subject or Faculty (e.g. Staff Student Consultative Committee meetings, FMHS Deans’ forum) to talk through what would happen in an emergency event.

• Most class representatives run a social media forum for students. However, staff use of such forums as a communication channel in emergencies is not encouraged for reasons outlined previously. Membership in these forums is typically not restricted to enrolled students; non-enrolled 'friends' from other cohorts or completely random people may request to join.

  - **Class Representation policy:**

  - **Class Representation guidelines**

**Other Important Information/Advice/Resources**

• Let students know that they will benefit from the following:
  - Having access to a computer that is not in a University of Auckland computer lab – for example, in a residence room or at home;
  - Ensuring that their contact details are up to date in the university Student Services Online (SSO) system;
  - Getting familiar with their course site in Canvas;
  - Familiarisation with the online library resources;
  - Attending a University and Faculty Orientation. For students who missed University Orientation events, an online version is available at:
  - Information on Campus Health and Counselling services;
  - Information on Student Learning Support.

\(^2\) Larger classes (>200) may require two Class Reps
PART 3: DURING A DISRUPTION

Emergency Response

The key priorities of our emergency procedures are to save lives, protect property, prevent harm to the environment, restore essential University infrastructure and restore academic and administrative functions. For further guidance refer to: https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/human-resources/health-safety-and-wellbeing/emergency-response-and-management.html

Student & Staff Welfare

- The safety and wellbeing of staff and students are paramount in the event of a major disruption. Business Continuity Plans (BCPs) establish the responses by the Faculties and Service Divisions, and should be referred to.

- The University’s legal obligations to ‘educate’ (signed under ‘normal’ business-as-usual scenarios) will be secondary to staff and student welfare in severe cases (“special powers” in cases of emergency).

- The University will take account of the impact of a disruption on student engagement before resuming coursework to ensure that students who are disproportionately affected are not penalised.

Managing Distressed Students

A major event which can severely impact on students’ ability to concentrate on academic work would be led by the University Crisis Management Team. Some strategies that staff can apply to manage the cognitive disruption of students include the following:

- Acknowledge the feelings of uncertainty and anxiety with students, either virtually or in person. While it is impossible to shelter students from actual uncertainty, responding to students in a supportive and understanding manner can help develop a tolerance of ambiguity and build resilience.

- At times when cognitive disruption is high and students are also dealing with difficult personal circumstances, teachers should try to create routine in whatever environment is available, and communicate expectations. If consistent routine is not available, teachers should seek to create routine in other ways. Sending regular communication, or having regular scheduled online events can create a sense of normality, routine and structure.

- Direct students to the CALM (Computer Assisted Learning for the Mind) website: http://www.calm.auckland.ac.nz/index.html
• If you are concerned about a student please use the guidelines below to help guide your actions.

If you are unsure how to handle a situation with a distressed student please call University Health and Counselling on **09 923 7681**

If you consider you or anyone else might be in danger please call **111** or **UniSafe** on **966**

If the situation does not require immediate action but you would like advice on the most appropriate course of action please contact the **Student Proctor** on ext. **87005**

**Recognising Your Own Stress**

• Be mindful that responding to an emergency situation can have an impact upon your own wellbeing. Ignoring a problem poses the risk that it will intensify and may affect more aspects of your life.

• The University provides an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with 24 hour access to confidential, professional services which can help support you. For further information see:
  - [http://www.eapservices.co.nz](http://www.eapservices.co.nz)

  Or contact them directly on **0800 327 669**

• Seek support from a supervisor or reach out to somebody you trust
• Consider arranging a catch up meeting with your HOD.
• If you are a HOD or in a supervisory role arrange catch up meetings with staff on a 1-1 basis

**Key Resources for Staff & Students**

• Students in Distress – Guidelines for University Staff

• University Health and Counselling Service – key contacts:
  - Director, University Health and Counselling Service
    Extension: 88487, DDI: +64 9 923 8487, Mobile: +64 21 237 8660

  - Counselling Lead, University Health and Counselling Service
    Extension: 85304, DDI: +64 9 923 5304, Mobile: +64 21 679 318
PART 4: DELIVERING COURSES AFTER A DISRUPTION

The following section outlines some options for delivering courses under a range of circumstances.

4.1 Loss of Physical Environment (Loss of Face-to-Face Delivery Options)

A health emergency, an act of violence on campus or flooding are examples of events that could lead to classes being suspended. In these instances the University Crisis Management Team would lead the recovery. The following tools and resources are available to help teachers and students continue coursework when they have no access to lecture halls/campus. This scenario assumes that IT infrastructure is operational. The focus of this section therefore is on options available for staff within the UoA LMS (Canvas) and digitised reading list system (Talis). Such options may be supplemented by other third-party tools/platforms.

Note that both Canvas and Talis are both cloud-based systems, with multiple back-ups and redundancy in order to provide a resilient infrastructure system. Even if the University’s servers were to be impacted by a disaster scenario cloud-based systems should remain operational.

Communicating with Students in your Course

Creating an online environment that promotes a sense of community, and in which staff are accessible, can aid significantly in the reduction of anxiety and uncertainty in a post disaster environment. Staff have access to a number of tools which allow for synchronous instruction (teacher and students are logged into the virtual learning environment at the same time), where students and teachers can communicate with one another in a protected platform. In a disruption when students are dispersed across numerous off-campus locations, these tools can build a sense of community for students through live interaction using audio and video. Some options are:

- **Chat** - allows students to interact with other students and their teacher in real time.

- **Conversations** - a messaging tool used instead of email to communicate with a course, a group, or an individual.

- **Discussions** - an integrated system for online class discussions, allowing both instructors and students to start and contribute to as many discussion topics as desired. Discussions can also be created within student groups.

- **Conferences** – see page 14.
Note: While online and electronic communication can serve their purpose, instructors may be able to find other creative ways to communicate with students in a face-to-face environment. For example:

- Meeting groups of students in locations off campus (e.g. cafes, sports halls, schools);
- Arranging site visits;
- Meeting outside in the Domain/Albert Park (subject to weather).

Delivering Lectures & Tutorials

- **Lecture-Recordings:** Lecture recordings have a potential benefit of providing a back-up for the future, which can then be uploaded onto the LMS should the physical environment become inaccessible. Even if you do not post the lecture recordings on the LMS for your current students, consider using them as a resource for post-course reviews and as a potential back-up for the future. The lecture theatre recording system is in place across the City Campus, Epsom Campus, Tamaki Campus and Grafton Campus for most lecture theatres. Recorded lectures are retained at least until the next course delivery, and for not more than two years (unless requested otherwise), so unless the interval between delivering courses is more than 2 years there should be a backup option for you if you wish to use this resource. Links to the Lecture Recording Guidelines and support resources are:

- **Camtasia:** The University has a site licence for Camtasia Studio for Windows or Mac. Camtasia Studio is a video-based screen capturing software program. It is analogous to using a video camera to record a screen. However, unlike using a video camera, the software is installed on a desktop computer or laptop, so that screen captures are directly recorded to a digital video format with high quality audio. Camtasia can also be customized to capture the entire screen, a specific window, or a user-defined region. Screen capture videos can be recorded with or without voice narration, and can be annotated after recording. While Camtasia was originally designed for creating software tutorials, it has other powerful applications. Support resources and online tutorials are available on the staff intranet at:

- **Web Conferencing:** Web Conferencing is an application in Canvas which enables web-based video conferencing and live streaming, where students and teachers can collaborate in real time. This type of lecture delivery using technology can be very effective for large classes, but requires advance planning and familiarity with the system to be effective. Hence, it may be useful to trial and practice the tool in advance, or to use it as part of your normal teaching practice.
Delivering Assessment

- **Peer-Review Assignments**: Peer-Review approaches can be implemented with a small amount of preparation and can be effective way of creating some interaction between student peers in an online environment. The Peer-Review Assignment application in Canvas enables students to comment on submitted assignments and learning about their work by assessing others. Peer review assignments can be automatically or manually allocated to students.

- **Quizzes**: There are a range of user quizzes, which can be used to give assessments or to create student surveys. Instructors can administer different kinds of quizzes: a practice quiz, graded quiz, graded survey, ungraded survey. Instructors can give feedback on questions. Consideration should be given to the re-design of quizzes for online delivery, including considerations of open-book approaches, group-based collaborative tests, or self-assessment. In a post-disaster environment consideration could be given to using quizzes as a replacement for exams, (but we would not normally recommend such use of quizzes in business as normal). Increased use of quizzes as a formative assessment could augment what might normally happen in tutorials, for example, and could provide instructors additional data for summative assessment.

Other

- **Turnitin**: Turnitin has optional functionality for peer review approaches, similar in principle to the peer-Review Assignment application in Canvas. Workflow options enable anonymous reviews, and assessment questions can be set to guide peer feedback.

- **Custom platforms** created by faculties.

Receiving & Returning Student Assignments

- **Assignments / SpeedGrader**: This enables staff to receive, view and grade student assignment submissions on a single screen. The tool allows teachers to return feedback to students in a variety of forms: as an individual text file, as annotations in a student’s assignment, or as an audio commentary.

Other

- **Turnitin**: The online marking function of Turnitin allows staff to gather and annotate student assignments, give feedback using a rubric, and return marked assignments to students electronically. The Turnitin Gradebook is integrated with Canvas Gradebook.

Distributing Learning Resources

- **Talis Aspire**: Provides bookmarking and list building tools which enable you to create digital reading lists for your course. The system ensures integrated digital content, with direct access to electronic resources available from the library including ebooks and digitised content. Other benefits include integrated analytics and management of copyright clearance.
Office / Consultation Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canvas</th>
<th>Chat: There is potential for teachers to use the Canvas Chat tool to conduct virtual office hours.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Skype for Business: Skype for Business is a Microsoft collaborative tool that integrates with Outlook and provides productivity features that include instant messaging, voice and video conferencing, online meetings with screen-sharing and virtual whiteboards. More information, with videos and FAQ’s, is available on the following: <a href="https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/central-services/computing-and-technology/skype-for-business-2015.html">https://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/en/central-services/computing-and-technology/skype-for-business-2015.html</a></td>
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Working from Home or Remote Environment

When the campus or teaching facilities cannot be accessed, staff will have the option of working at home or remote environment. The following minimum capability will be needed to work effectively off campus:

- An internet-capable device
- Internet access
- VPN access (if you need to access files on the UoA server)
- Sufficient bandwidth
4.2. Loss of Virtual Environment: (Loss of LMS and UoA IT Systems)

The Crisis Management Team would lead the University’s recovery from a cyber-attack or an earthquake or other event that damages the University’s data centre that could lead to the loss of our Learning Management System. The following tools and resources are available to help teachers and students to continue coursework when they have no access to the UoA LMS and/or other UoA hosted systems. This scenario assumes that we still have power and access to campus.

In such a scenario having back-up copies of your teaching materials in soft and hard copy will become extremely useful. Consider making a backup soft copy on an encrypted memory stick and hard copy of key documents in a filing cabinet. During a disruption there may not be time to access a filing cabinet so keeping a back-up copy at home could be helpful.

Communicating with Students in your Course

- Use class time to deliver key messages. It is a good idea to repeat key messages 3 times / summarise on the whiteboard / ask students to make notes.

- Ask students who are in attendance to make a note of anybody missing, and to make a point of passing on key messages to friends and peers.

- Use alternative communication tools which may still be operational outside of the LMS and UoA systems. Examples include:
  - Alternative staff and student e-mail accounts (using Microsoft in the Cloud): All University of Auckland staff and students have upi@aucklanduni.ac.nz email addresses which are linked to their g-mail accounts;
  - Tele-conferencing for smaller classes;
  - Skype: allows you to conduct a teleconference call;
  - Google Chat is a possible tool useful for one-on-one conversations;
  - Create a Telephone Hotline: Turn your voicemail box into a telephone hotline. Update your greeting with timely information about the status of your course(s).

- Student consultation undertaken in preparation of this guideline indicated that students would prefer to receive text notifications. Staff at University of Canterbury found texting to be an effective means of communication in the Canterbury post-earthquake environment. Consider setting up a text network for your class.

Delivering Lectures and Tutorials

- Consider making some lecture materials available on a public social media site (e.g. Youtube). Consider copyright issues carefully. Copyright licences would be breached if licenced content was included and made publically available. One approach is to ensure that access is restricted to students enrolled in a particular course, however, that may be
hard to achieve in practice. If you don’t wish to post your own lecture(s) you could identify some existing online lectures for your students.

- Tele-conferencing for smaller classes.

**Delivering Assessment**

- Face-to-face options (assuming that exams and tests can proceed).

- Set assignments which can be undertaken outside the LMS. Consideration should be given to ensure that all students have access to course materials on an equitable basis for assignments and exam revision.

- Consider delaying the assessment until after the emergency (dependent upon scale and timing).

**Receiving and Returning Student Assignments**

- **Turnitin**: Although Turnitin is well known for checking plagiarism, it also includes a tool for online marking with annotation (pdf, Word and PowerPoint) and rubrics.  

- **Student Services Stall**: Submission of paper (hard) copy of assignments to a Faculty / Departmental student services stall.

- Maintain records of marks and grades using spreadsheets (password protected) so that these can be uploaded to Canvas later when systems are restored.

**Distributing Learning Resources**

- **Photocopier**: There is likely to be high demand on photocopiers in such an event so consider outsourcing photocopying to an external printer if you can. Have a backup (hard copy) of key resources available in advance.

- **Course Handbooks**: Some courses currently absorb the cost of producing a comprehensive course guide which is provided free-of-charge to enrolled students. This means students all have ready access to this relatively cheap, low-tech ‘insurance’ backup option if all technology fails. There are also pedagogical merits to providing hard-copy notes/encouraging annotation by hand too. See:  
Office / Consultation Hours

- Establish regular office hours.
- Post your availability on a note on your door.
- Doodle ([www.doodle.com](http://www.doodle.com)) is a useful free tool to posting available times, in which students can self-select options.

4.3. Simultaneous Loss of Physical and Virtual Environments

A major disaster such as a power outage or major earthquake on campus could result in a simultaneous disruption to both the physical and virtual (IT) infrastructure. The University Crisis Management Team would manage the recovery with assistance from ITS. This section assumes that such a scenario is confined to the University precinct and that staff and students are able to work at other venues or from home.

In the event of loss of power there are various considerations relating to use of premises, and it is unlikely that you will be able to use building and facilities safely. Check with your Faculty Business Continuity Leaders the procedures and options for gaining access to facilities. There are some back-up power generation options available to facilities management staff. For example, the Data Centre has stand-by power systems. Our LMS is cloud-based and as such should be resilient against localised power outages, but unforeseen circumstances could result in limitations to access / functionality.

Liaise with your Faculty Business Continuity leaders about the possibility of using alternative venues (e.g. conference facilities, other educational establishments, public spaces). If you are able to work from alternative premises then the options and strategies outlined in Section 4.1 may be applicable.

If you are able to work from home then the options and strategies outlined in Section 4.2 may be applicable. However, remember that some of your students may not have power, for example, those who are in halls of residence and hence may not be able to access online resources.

In an extreme scenario it may be necessary to close the University for a period of time until some options start to come on line. In such an event all staff and students will be notified via the University Crisis Management Team.

The following strategies supplement options outlined in Sections 4.1 and 4.2.

**Communicating with Students in your Course**

- Consider ways of using your smart phone (e.g. as a hot spot to enable internet connection).
- Find a wifi zone (e.g. a café, telecom booth, etc.)
Delivering Lectures and Tutorials

• Consider more traditional teaching options such as whiteboards, blackboards and flip-chart pads.

• Replace lectures with workshop-style tutorials.

Delivering Assessment

• Consider whether assessments such as assignments can be realistically completed by students without access to power (e.g. to computers and other equipment). If necessary follow procedures to amend the content of assignments to make them more suitable for completion by hand (e.g. a critical essay by hand).

• Delay assessment until after the emergency. This will depend on scale and timing. Human needs by necessity must come first.

• Set up tests and exams in alternative venues.

Receiving and Returning Student Assignments

• Establish an alternative point for submission of assignments in paper format.

Distributing Learning Resources

• Ask students to take notes (note-taking is a good skill for students to develop).

Office / Consultation Hours

• Set up consultation times at an alternative venue.
PART 5: RETURNING TO BUSINESS AS USUAL

‘Un-freezing’ Temporary Workaround Practices

In the months and years after a disaster event some work-around practices established initially as temporary procedures to respond to the scenario may become defacto business as usual. Some workaround procedures may prove to be particularly effective and enhance learning outcomes for students, in which case cementing them into normal teaching practice is entirely sensible (good practice). Other workarounds may be less satisfactory and whilst they might facilitate best endeavours in response to an emergency, they should not be allowed to continue into ongoing practice. Considerations could include the following

- Undertake a review of changes made to teaching pedagogy, course assessments, and teacher-student communications.

- Review any changes made to assessments via AS_64 during / after the disaster scenario. Review the outcomes and consider amending assessments back to original arrangements or modify as appropriate.

- Review the use of the LMS, lecture recordings and other flexible / blended learning options.

- Consider options for enhancing resilience in the future.
OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for special needs students

Arrangements should be in hand already once the student notifies their needs, for example:

- Animations and videos may need to be transcribed to achieve equitable access for students with hearing impairments.
- Websites and course materials need to be accessible for students with visual impairments.
- Students with other learning disabilities may qualify for sitting tests and exams under special conditions.

Dealing with students in placements in hospitals and schools

- Ensure that you have a communication strategy for off-campus learning sites such as hospitals and schools (e.g. consider methods of communication and key staff). Students may be called upon to take an active role in these settings in the event of a disaster. These distant sites may be affected by a disaster that spares central Auckland. In that circumstance there needs to be a way of ensuring continuance of learning and teaching. This may require:
  - Bringing students back to Auckland and finding placements;
  - Managing a cohort who are in isolation;
  - Delivering alternative activities via online systems.

Feedback on these Guidelines

Feedback on these guidelines is very welcome. We would be interested in further practical suggestions, case studies, and possible learning and teaching tools that staff and students could use to enhance our resilience.

We also welcome suggestions for keeping an ongoing engagement on learning and teaching continuity. For example options for ongoing dialogues, debate and awareness.
Attachment 1: University of Auckland Minimum Web Presence

**Campus 1**
- Announcements
- Syllabus
- Assignments
- Grades
- Modules
- Discussions
- People

**Add urgent and Just-in-time information and reminders**
"Set as Entry page from week 3"

**Add:**
- Course contacts
- Course description
- Learning outcomes
- Assignment due dates and course milestone dates
- Course/Department policies
"Set as Entry page weeks 1-3"

**Create assignment "shells" with due dates**
"Add assignment information and submission links"
"Add rubrics"
"Use Speedgrader"

**Enter and publish grades**
"Add feedback via rubrics and Speedgrader comments"

**Add Talis reading list/s**
"Add learning resources: lecture slide handouts; lecture notes and/or recordings"

"Add class & group discussions"

*Recommended*
Attachment 2: Continuity Checklist for Teachers

The following is a simple self-assessment checklist designed to help teachers prepare for a possible disruption to campus operations.

**Initial Check-list (for use during business as usual)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Self-check</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I have discussed teaching and learning continuity arrangements with colleagues at some point in the last 12 months (e.g. Departmental meeting, team meeting, etc).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I know who my Faculty Business Continuity Manager is.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Course Outline has been finalised and a printed copy made.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Course Outline and key course information are loaded onto course site in Canvas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Copy of course materials saved onto a back-up memory stick (or similar) and stored offsite.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Printed copies of key materials have been made and stored off-site.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My students know how to contact me in an emergency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I have a way to facilitate discussion with groups of students remotely.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students have a way to contact each other and collaborate online.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am enabled to work from home. I have a laptop or a home based PC with VPN loaded which enables me log onto the University Systems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I have some lecture recordings from previous years which I can use to deliver material via the LMS in the event that lecture theatres are not available.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I have discussed with a colleague options for covering some of my teaching in an emergency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I have considered options for increasing the resilience of my course, such as adopting blended learning methods and using a range of assessments, rather than a single assessment method.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>My contact details are up to date.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After an Event Check-list (for use after a disaster scenario)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Self-check</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I take taken some time out to reflect and to consider my own well-being.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have established regular lines of communication with students on my courses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I have found a colleague who can help me with options such as co-teaching or implementing alternative flexible learning options.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I have reviewed / trialled some of the practical options and suggestions in the UoA Guidelines for Teachers (this guide) to help with different scenarios.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I’m set up to work at home or remotely as appropriate for the situation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I have made appropriate amendments to assessments to suit the scenario. I have obtained the necessary sign-off from my HOD using form AS_64.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I have established visibility and means of access for my students (even if it is just an online option).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Endnotes

[1] As defined by the University Emergency Management Statute. The statute defines “Emergency” as an event, occurrence or circumstance beyond the control of the Council that:
(a) adversely affects the premises, buildings or facilities of the University; or its supporting infrastructure; or its staff or students; such that a substantial part or parts of the University are required to close, be quarantined or restricted (at the behest of any local or national authority or voluntarily) for a period of more than five days; and/or
(b) prevents the delivery or undertaking of normal day to day management functions; and
(c) is declared such by the Council.


[3] These strategies are based on findings of a student survey conducted following the Christchurch earthquakes to generate a model of constructive practice for instructors responding to a crisis. (See Wright and Wordsworth, 2013)