

Portable Appliance Testing			
Policy✓	Code of Practice...	Guidance...	Procedure...
Organisation-wide✓		Local...	
Presented to the University Health & Safety Committee for Consultation			
Chairperson Dr Manuel Alonso	Date	May 2 nd 2024	Review date 2027
The purpose of presenting this documents to the University Health and Safety Committee Standard 3 year re-fresh✓Changes in practice and/or legislation... New Policy...			

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1. Introduction

This Policy specifies the University's requirements for inspecting and testing portable electrical appliances: to reduce the risk of injury or fire; and to meet our legal and insurance obligations.

2. Definition

A portable electrical appliance is any item of equipment with a lead and a plug and which is normally moved around or can be moved and is connected to the mains supply by a standard 3 pin plugs. Examples include power tools, vacuum cleaners, kitchen appliances, heaters, photocopiers, computers, etc. *This list is **not** exhaustive and if there is any doubt on what should be included visit the [HSE website](https://www.hse.gov.uk/), or contact the Health, Safety and Environment Team (healthandsafety@brunel.ac.uk) .*

3. Scope

The policy applies to all portable electrical appliances on campus, including all such equipment owned by staff, visitors, contractors and students, with the sole exception of appliances brought in to residential accommodation by occupants for personal use specifically in their room only. Regarding residential accommodation, items placed in communal areas i.e. kitchens shall be deemed not for personal use and this Policy will apply. The safety of personal equipment brought in to residential accommodation remains the responsibility of the owner – students should consult with the residences team to discuss the terms applied in their contracts. Contractors must also read and sign the Site Handbook which has further information on requirements surrounding tools and equipment.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 Executive Deans of College, Directors and/or the Heads of Departments are responsible for compliance with this Policy and ensuring measures are in place to test and maintain portable equipment within their area(s) of responsibility. In addition, staff and students are themselves each responsible for the correct use of equipment and for reporting any faults or damage.
- 4.2 All users are responsible for ensuring that there is no visible damage to the electrical equipment, leads and plugs, which they use. They should report any fault or damage to their supervisor, manager (including residential), or laboratory or workshop technician, as appropriate. Faulty or damaged electrical equipment should be labelled as such and should be immediately taken out of use by physical removal, removal of the plug, or equivalent means of ensuring that it cannot be used.

5. Arrangements for Inspection and Testing

5.1 Formal Inspection ¹ and Testing ²

Inspection and Testing must be arranged by the responsible College/Department/Division or Institute, and a regular schedule of inspections recorded and implemented. Information on external companies who can PA Test on campus can be gotten from the Estates Department (Estates-Helpdesk@brunel.ac.uk)

The different types of equipment, leads and plugs must be formally inspected and/or tested by a Competent Person in line with the requirements set out in Table 1.

5.2 In addition to the requirements set out in Table 1:

It is advisable that all portable electrical equipment which is brought into a College, Institute or Service and which has been purchased must be inspected and tested before use (regardless of any previous history of inspection or test); and added to the equipment register for that area using an equivalent system to Table 1.

5.3 **Competent Persons**

A competent person can be:

- A suitably trained person within the College, Institute and/or Support Service. Advice on competency requirements can be obtained from the Health, Safety and Environment Team.
- An approved contractor employed by a College, Institute and/or Support Service to carry out the task. (The Estates team are responsible for identifying and engaging appropriate PAT contractors. Please contact Procurement Department for information on Estates approved contractors for PAT at Brunel University London).
- A suitably trained person from one College, Institute and/or Support Service working for a second College, Institute and/or Support Service.

6. **Record Keeping**

- 6.1 The College, Institute and/or Support Service should keep an inventory of appliances, showing the frequency and results of the formal inspections and tests. The form in Table 2 could be used for this purpose.
- 6.2 Appliances should be labelled, tagged or marked to identify the Competent Person and to show the date of the last and next inspection / test.

7. **Faults**

- 7.1.1 In the event of failure to satisfy visual inspection or to meet test criteria, the Competent Person must ensure that the item is not re-used until the fault has been corrected (either by the Competent Person or by alternative electrically competent agency) and has been re-inspected and retested.
- 7.1.2 If faults cannot be rectified, the Competent Person must arrange for the appliance to be taken out of use and safely disposed of.

¹ **Formal Inspection** is a formal visual examination by a competent person, looking for cuts, abrasions and any signs of overheating or other damage.

² **Testing** involves specialised equipment to carry out the following tests:

- a) Earth Continuity Testing, i.e. measurement of the resistance of the earth path between the appliance and the plug.
- b) Insulation Resistance Testing, i.e. measurement of the integrity of the insulation on the lead.
- c) Leakage Current Testing.

TABLE 1

Non-Exhaustive List of Portable Appliances and Maximum Intervals for Inspections and Tests and for further reference please see HSE indg 236 *Maintaining portable electric equipment in low-risk environments*

NB1 College, Institute and/or Support Service where equipment is subject to heavy or continuous use, or whose equipment is used in a variety of environments, e.g. in catering, maintenance activities, etc., may need to reduce the maximum intervals indicated below.

NB2 A Combined Inspection and Test includes a Formal Visual Inspection.

Type of Appliance	Formal Visual Inspection Required	Combined Inspection and Test Required
Battery Operated (less than 20volts)	No	No
Extra low voltage appliances, e.g. low voltage desk lights	No	No
IT equipment, e.g. computers, monitors, and fax machines or copiers	3 years	No if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
240V extension leads	N/A	Yes at yearly intervals
Kitchen-type earthed equipment, e.g. kettles, hotplates, stirrers, fridges	N/A	Yes at yearly intervals
Laboratory and workshop equipment	N/A	Yes at yearly intervals

Double insulated equipment which is not handheld but is occasionally moved, e.g. fans, table lamps, slide projectors	Yes at four-yearly intervals	Plug and Lead at four-yearly intervals
Double insulated hand-held appliances, e.g. drills and floor cleaners	Yes at yearly intervals	Plug and Lead at yearly intervals
Other	Seek advice	Seek advice

Table 2 - Report of Formal Inspection / Combined Inspection and Test of a Portable Appliance

School / Department _____ **Item Description** _____

Item ID _____

Date of Inspection/ Test	Location	Item ID	Visual Inspection (VI) or Combined Inspection/ Test (CIT)	Pass (P) or Fail (F)	If applicable, repairs made or item taken out of use/ Any other comment	Next Due Date