Organisational Arrangements for the inspection and testing of portable electrical appliances (PAT)

Health and Safety Service
1.0 Purpose
These organisational arrangements outline how the College seeks to manage the electricity and fire risk arising from the use of portable electrical equipment. Its principle aims are:

a) To minimise the risks from working with portable and transportable electrical equipment
b) To comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
c) To comply with the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

It also identifies where the responsibility for electrically testing items owned by different parties lies.

2.0 Scope
This policy applies to electrical equipment that is not part of the fixed electrical installation, but is intended to be connected to the fixed electrical installation, or a generator, by means of a flexible cable and either a plug and socket, spur box, or similar means. The definitions of equipment covered are:

- Portable appliances—appliance of not more than 18kg in mass that is intended to be moved while in operation, or can easily be moved, e.g. toaster, kettle, etc.
- Moveable equipment (sometimes called transportable) – 18kg or less in mass and not fixed, e.g. electric compressor
- Hand held appliance – portable equipment intended to be held in the hand during normal use, e.g. angle grinder, power drill, hedge cutter, etc.
- Stationary equipment – has a mass exceeding 18kg and is not provided with a carrying handle, e.g. washing machine
- Fixed equipment – equipment that is fastened to a support or otherwise secured in a specified location, e.g. hand dryer, wall heater, etc.
- Build in equipment – equipment intended to be installed in a prepared recess or cupboard, e.g. built in oven, dishwasher, etc.
- Information technology equipment – includes electrical business equipment, such as computers, mains powered telecommunications equipment, printers, etc.
- Extension leads and RCD extension leads – used to connect equipment to the fixed installation when a convenient socket outlet is not nearby.

In accordance with this policy, certain items are prohibited for use on College premises – these are:

- Multi-socket adaptors;
- Electrical extensions reels, when used in an office environment.

These arrangements do not apply to the fixed electrical installation system.
3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Director of Estates – is responsible for:
- ensuring equipment owned or rented by the Estates and Facilities Teams are tested in accordance with these arrangements;
- ensuring that the Estates staff responsible for undertaking the testing are trained and competent to do so.

3.2 The Health and Safety Advisor – is responsible for:
- selecting a suitably qualified external testing service provider,
- arranging for the routine testing of all equipment in accordance with these arrangements of all equipment not subject to being tested under by other responsible persons

3.3 Departments/Equipment Owners, whether departments or individuals, are required to:
- ensure their equipment is available for test when the Testing Staff arrive at the site;
- ensure a visual examination is undertaken for newly acquired equipment before first use;
- take out of service any faulty or damaged equipment and to make suitable provision for repair or safe disposal;
- ensure any equipment identified as “failed” by the Testing Staff is not put back into service until repair and retesting has taken place;
- not permit the use of prohibited items, as identified in Section 2 of these arrangements.

3.4 Health and Safety Coordinators – are responsible for:
- ensuring periodic inspections of their area are undertaken, by the department managers, to ensure that all equipment is displaying a valid test sticker and that prohibited items are not in use or available to use.

3.5 Members of Staff - are required to:
- ensure they do not use damaged or faulty equipment;
- report any defective of damaged equipment to their manager or Health and Safety Coordinator;
- ensure they undertake a simple visual examination of any item they purchase, or bring it to work, before first use.

3.6 Service Exclusions

The areas excluded from central testing and required to test their own equipment are:
- IT Services Audio Visual Department – all audio visual equipment
- Catering contract – kitchen equipment
- Cleaning and portering contract – cleaning equipment
4.0 Test Intervals
Test intervals are determined by the risk presented from using the equipment. The specified test intervals for College equipment are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment/Environment</th>
<th>Combined inspection and testing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>operated: (less than 40 volts)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra low voltage: (less than 50 volts AC):</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone equipment, low-voltage desk-lights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop computers, VDU screens</td>
<td>up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopiers, fax machines: Not hand-held.</td>
<td>up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely moved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double insulated (Class II) equipment: Not</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand-held. Moved occasionally, eg fans, table lamps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double insulated (Class II) equipment: Hand-held, eg some floor cleaners, some kitchen</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthened equipment (Class I): Electric kettles, some floor cleaners, some kitchen</td>
<td>Yes, 1–2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment and irons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cables (leads and plugs connected to the above) and mains voltage extension leads and</td>
<td>Yes, 1–5 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>battery-charging equipment</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Where appliances are used in wet environments (eg laboratories) inspection and testing shall be undertaken more frequently, normally annually.

Where appliances such as ceiling mounted projectors are installed, the testing regime will be combined inspection and test upon installation and whenever the appliance is removed for repair, maintenance, etc.

The maximum time period between combined inspections and testing shall be 60 months.

4.0 Records of Testing
Where equipment is subjected to a Combined Inspection and Test, the test results will be recorded and stored electronically.

Where local areas are responsible for testing their own equipment, these records must be stored electronically and made available for auditing when required.

5.0 Equipment Failing Test
When a portable appliance fails test, the College has a duty to ensure it cannot be used to prevent anyone being injured. For this reason, equipment will be dealt with in the following manner:

- If the equipment belongs to the College, the equipment shall be confiscated or the plug removed to ensure the appliance cannot be put back into service by the user, until it has been repaired or replaced.
- If the equipment has been brought onto the premises by an individual and is owned by them, the appliance will be labelled as being failed and a failure notice will be attached to it.
• The individual is responsible for removing the equipment from College premises until it has been repaired or replaced and then re-tested. It must not be used until this has happened.

6.0 Leased Equipment
The responsibility for testing equipment leased to the College lies with the company leasing the equipment to the University. Schools and professional services must ensure that the requirement to conduct portable appliance testing of the equipment is included in the lease contract.

7.0 Training
All staff required to conduct portable appliance testing must have been trained to do so. The Health and Safety Advisor shall determine the level of competence required based on the nature of the testing required.

8.0 Electrical Safety
Electrical equipment must be correctly wired, maintained and tested in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

A suitable number of 13amp wall sockets should be provided to prevent the use of socket multiple adaptor plugs and minimise the use of extension leads.

Use of socket multiple adaptors is not permitted within the College. If socket multiple adaptor plugs are found to be in use during electrical testing, they will be confiscated by the Testing Staff carrying out the testing.

The use of electrical extension leads should be avoided where possible. Where extension leads have to be used, they must be suitably rated, regularly inspected and positioned to ensure they will not be damaged by desk legs, chairs or moving equipment, etc. Extension leads must not be attached to other extension leads (daisy-chained) Extension leads on a cable drum should not be used in an office environment and where they are used they must be fully extended before a load is connected.

Where electrical equipment is to be used in a wet environment, or the equipment can be damaged during use, 110v equipment should be selected where it is available. In all other cases, a residual current device (RCD) must be utilised. Where the circuit does not incorporate a fixed RCD, portable RCD adaptors must be supplied.