Health and Safety Services

UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH
Part of London and South East University Group

Guidance on Electrical Safety

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1. Overview

The document provides guidelines to ensure the safe use of electrical equipment, preventing fires, shocks, and burns. It highlights key steps to ensure electrical safety, such as conducting visual inspections, actions to take upon finding faulty equipment, safe usage practices, and information on PAT testing services.

2. Definitions

"PAT Testing" - Portable appliance testing, It involves examining electrical appliances and equipment to ensure they are safe to use.

3. Guidance

Damaged, faulty or poorly connected electrical equipment can cause fires, shocks and burns. Make sure that the equipment you use is safe by visually checking equipment and cables regularly. Most faults can be spotted first by looking, but if you have any doubts call a qualified electrician to make a thorough check.

3.1. Visual inspection - what to look for:

You must switch off and disconnect (unplug) equipment before inspecting.

Once the equipment has been switched off and disconnected look for these danger signs:

- Damage to the cable covering
- Damage to the plug - is the casing cracked, or the pins bent?
- Taped or other 'home-made' joins in the lead
- The outer covering of the cable is not gripped where it enters the plug or Equipment (see if the coloured insulation or copper of the internal wires are showing)
- Overheating - brown burn marks on plug, equipment or socket

Label any faulty electrical equipment with **'do not use'** signs, take it out of use and report it via the Facilities helpdesk. Encourage other staff to report any faults or damaged equipment too.

Always

- Look to see that equipment and cables are in good condition before using equipment.
- Ensure that cables supplied by the socket manufacturer are used to connect workstation sockets together.
- Isolate, label and report faulty equipment immediately.
- Keep electrical cables off wet areas such as draining boards and wet worksurfaces in kitchenettes.
- Disconnect electrical equipment before cleaning it.
- Reconnect connectors and / or plugs fully before placing them back into use.

Never

- Handle electrical equipment with wet hands.
- Try to repair equipment (unless qualified to do so).

- Trail electrical cables where they can be rubbed or cut e.g. under a door or heavy furniture.
- Allow cables to become tangled, chinked or poorly aligned in the connectors or sockets.
- Plug more than six individually fused sockets (rated at 3.15amps each) into one (13 Amp BS1363) UK plug.

3.2. Portable Appliance testing

For further information on the testing of electrical equipment (portable appliances) please refer to the electrical equipment testing policy (portable appliances) provided by the Estates and Facilities Directorate.

4. Further information

4.1. Related HSE Guidance:

Further general guidance on Electrical Safety can be found on Health and Safety Executive (HSE) web pages; Electricity at work: Safe working practices HSG85

4.2. Related University documents:

- ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT TESTING POLICY (PORTABLE APPLIANCES)

5. Document History

Details of previous reviews are as follows:

Review Date	Reviewer	Summary of Review
24-Jul-25	Anastaisa Liasides – Health and Safety Advisor	Transferred guidance document to new template – V25.1. Included HSE related links to electricity at work: safe working practices, and Link to current FM helpdesk / EFD PAT testing Policy.
29-10-26	Chantelle Marriott H&S Advisor	Updated with new logo

This document will be reviewed at least annually hereafter.