

PAT Testing Policy



Definition

PAT – Portable Appliance Testing

A portable electrical appliance is any item that can be moved, connected or disconnected from an electrical supply. Portable appliances generally have a lead and a plug.

Introduction

This policy is intended to give staff guidance when it comes to tests or inspections on site. Electrical equipment must be maintained in good condition to mitigate against risk, but the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 does not say how this must be done must do this or how often. However it does say that there is a joint responsibility to maintain all electrical equipment, regardless of whom it belongs to (i.e. campus, contractor, resident or student). Therefore there must be a level of decision-making regarding the level of maintenance that is needed, and this should be risk-based (i.e. dependent on the risk of an item being or becoming faulty).

Types of Test

Not every electrical item needs a portable appliance test (PAT Test). In some cases a simple User Check or Visual Inspection is enough (for example checking for loose cables or signs of fire damage, and if possible checking inside the plug for internal damage, bare wires and correct fuse).

Also, whilst some equipment (eg kettles) may need a PAT Test, it does not necessarily mean it has to be tested every year.

Purpose

The purpose of testing is to ensure that all electrical equipment on campus is as far as is reasonably practical safe.

This is a preventative action to help lower the risk of:

Fire

Electric shock

Personal Injury

This policy document gives guidance to line managers and staff concerning portable appliance testing.

Procedure

All equipment should receive a Visual Inspection by a person trained and with responsibility for PAT Testing upon installation. If that equipment is not double insulated, it must be PAT tested.

For basic office equipment that is not going to be moved around (e.g. desktops), a yearly Visual Inspection will be adequate, and it must be PAT tested every 5 years.

For equipment that moves around (e.g. laptops, kettles, laminators and extension leads) it is recommended that these items must be PAT tested annually.

Note: A PAT test only gives an indication of safety at the time of the test. It is vital that all staff know how to carry out a User Check at regular intervals and to ensure that any equipment faults are reported to the supervisor or line manager (for example if a vacuum cleaner is faulty)

All Test findings must be recorded. Record of Testing gives evidence to identify where there may need to be a change in the schedule of Testing or Inspecting. It also provides evidence to external bodies that appropriate internal checks are being undertaken.

User Check

A User Check should be carried out by the person who uses the equipment. The User Check is to look for:

- Damage to the leads including fraying, cuts or heavy scuffing;
- Damage to the plug, eg to the cover or bent pins;
- Tape applied to the lead to join leads together;
- Coloured wires visible where the lead joins the plug;
- Damage to outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws;
- Signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug, lead or equipment;
- Equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions, such as wet or dusty environments, or where water spills are possible;
- Cables that have been trapped under furniture.

Visual Inspection

A Visual Inspection must be carried out by a trained staff member with some basic electrical knowledge (e.g. Maintenance Team, Health & Safety Officer):

- Ensure the equipment is being used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions;
- The equipment is suitable for the job;
- Has there been any change of circumstances eg office move?
- Does the user have any issues?
- Are there any signs of internal damage, overheating or water damage to the plug?
- Does it have the correct fuse fitted?
- Are the wires attached to the correct terminals?
- The terminal screws tight?
- No bare wires visible other than at the terminals.

Portable Appliance Test [PAT Test]

This must be carried out only by staff who hold a current certificate in PAT Testing.

Earthed Equipment [Class 1]

This is equipment that has an earth connection. If there is a fault within the equipment, there is a possibility that the outside of the equipment could cause an electric shock if the earth connection is not there. As a result, it is recommended that Class 1 equipment has a PAT Test to ensure the earth connection is sound.

Double insulated equipment

Class 2 equipment is sometimes referred to as 'double insulated' this means that there is extra insulation within the construction of the equipment to prevent accidental contact with live parts, even if there is a fault. Class 2 equipment does not need an earth connection to maintain safety. It will not need a PAT Test, although you should ensure that User Checks and Visual Inspections are carried out as the integrity of the equipment is a key safety feature.

Anything that 'moves around' should be PAT Tested

Items that move around, such as kettles, vacuum cleaners, portable heaters, fans, desk lamps, radios, irons toasters, extension leads (including for laptops etc) should be PAT Tested.

WHAT SHOULD BE TESTED AND WHEN

This list is indicative and not exhaustive – if in doubt, PAT Test the equipment.

Equipment	User check	Visual Check	User, Visual and PAT test
Battery Operated	No	No	No
Less than 50volts AC Eg telephones	No	No	No
Desktops computers	Yes	Yes Every 3 years	Yes Every 5 years
Equipment that is rarely moved eg photocopier	No	Yes Every 3 Years	Yes every 5 years
Earthed equipment [class1] eg kettles, irons	Yes	No	Yes once a year
Extention leads & Charging units	Yes	No	Yes once a year
Double insulated Class 2	Yes	Yes Annually	Yes Every 5 years

Process

All results must be logged, with date and type of test. All failed items must be reported to an appropriate person to enable an assessment of the risk associated with the initial test. Options resulting from the assessment may include but are not restricted to re-testing, removal and/or replacement of the item.

PORTABLE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE CHECK

Name:

Location:

Item	Type of Test (tick all that apply)		Result (circle)		Action Required (circle)		
			Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	User Check (by user)		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	Visual Investigation		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	PAT Test		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	User Check (by user)		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	Visual Investigation		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	PAT Test		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	User Check (by user)		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	Visual Investigation		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	PAT Test		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	User Check (by user)		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	Visual Investigation		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
	PAT Test		Pass	Fail	None	Refer to H&S/Campus Mgmt	Removed from use
Management Use only	If an item fails, a further risk assessment must be taken						
Review	Comments:						
Re-test	Comments						
Additional Test(s)	Comments						
Remove*	Comments						
<i>If item(s) removed, note how implications have been addressed eg replacement</i>							

