

Guideline

Safety of Portable Electrical Equipment Testing and Tagging

The Electrical Safety Regulation requires regular inspection and testing of specified electrical equipment in accordance with the procedures set out in AS/NZS 3012 *Electrical installations - Construction and demolition sites*, AS/NZS 3760 *In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment* and *Electrical Safety Regulation* sections 82 to 94.

It is the operators responsibility to visually inspect any equipment prior to use, ensure that it is fit for the intended purpose and that cords and leads are run in such a way as to be protected from harm and not present a risk to others.

Double adapters, piggy back plugs, unswitched powerboards and the daisy chaining of powerboards is prohibited in any University operation, removal of these items from service is the responsibility of the person in control of the area.

Testing and tagging of portable equipment is the responsibility of each school or department, possessing the equipment.

All equipment that comprises, wholly or in part, of an electrical lead and plugtop for use with low voltage power (between 50 and 1000 volts AC or 120 and 1500 volts DC) including softwiring systems such as ElSafe and SpeedyWire are considered portable electrical equipment for the purpose of testing and tagging procedures within the University.

The University has a system in place that allows for staff to be trained as 'Competent Persons' for the purpose of testing and tagging. This is primarily for testing and tagging of new equipment, repaired and equipment that may have been misused during the normal test program.

The following table specifies the maximum interval period between inspection and tests by competent persons, if assessment indicates high levels of risk to equipment, or persons operating it, then the intervals must be reduced.

Class of Work	Type of Environment	Interval Between Testing			
		Protectively Earthed	Double Insulated	Residual Current Devices Push Button Test	Time & Button Test
Construction	Construction or Demolition	3 monthly		After connection to a source of supply and daily thereafter	3 monthly
Manufacturing	Factories, workshops, places of work for repair, manufacture, assembly, maintenance or fabrication	6 monthly	12 monthly		12 monthly
Amusement	Work associated with assembly, operation or disassembly of amusement devices and rides	6 monthly	12 monthly		
Service	Equipment or supply cord IS subject to flexing in normal use OR is open to abuse OR in a hostile environment	12 monthly		After connection to a source of supply and then 3 monthly	2 yearly
	Equipment or supply cord is NOT subject to flexing in normal use AND is not open to abuse AND is not in a hostile environment	5 yearly (by documented Risk Assessment)			
Residential type areas of; hotels, residential institutions, motels, boarding houses, halls, hostels, accomodation houses and the like	2 yearly				
Non RCD Protected	All areas not otherwise specified	6 monthly	12 monthly		Not Applicable
Rural Industry	RCD Protected	2 yearly (by documented Risk Assessment)			2 yearly
	Non RCD Protected	12 monthly			Not Applicable
Office	Office Work where the equipment or supply cord is NOT subject to flexing in normal use AND is not open to abuse AND is not in a hostile environment	5 yearly			2 yearly

Records of test and tag are to be held by each school or department for the life of the equipment, or five years, whichever is the lesser.

Records of portable RCD time test are to be held by each school or department for the life of the equipment or five years, whichever is the lesser.

Records of pushbutton test of a portable RCD unit are to be signed and dated by the person performing the test on a durable, non metallic tag attached to the unit.

Records to be kept:

- Register of all portable electrical equipment
- Record of inspection and test

Pass or fail
Test instrument used
Competent Person
Date of test and retest due
Tracking data

- Repair Register

Repairs undertaken
Test results and values
Competent/qualified repairer
Tracking data

Test values (if produced) for the current test and previous test must be kept, except in the case of repair where the records of repair are to be kept for five years.

Under the new regulations each work area is required to be classified into the 'Class of Work' categories outlined in the table attached. It is the responsibility of the Department/School to ensure that these classifications are completed and formally recorded. Advice on classifications can be obtained from the Occupational Health and Safety Unit, Electrical Safety Officer on 33469173.