

CODE OF PRACTICE – ELECTRICAL

Designated Contacts

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Electricity at Work Regulations (1989) came into force on 1 April 1990 under the Health and Safety at work etc. Act 1974.
- 1.2 The Company has a duty under the Act to provide a safe working environment and a further duty to see that the Regulations are complied with. Under Sections 3(1) and 4 of the Act, the Company also has the same duty to persons not in its environment or who may use its premises, i.e. customers etc.
- 1.3 In compliance with these duties, the Company has therefore complied the following Code of Practice which institutes routines for the systematic checking of all electrical installations and equipment in company premises and the recording of the results of those checks.

2. Application

- 2.1 There are four different areas where systematic checks and safety routines need to be applied:
 - (a) **Electrical installations** - that is, the permanently installed electrical wiring system of the premises which provides for the normal day-to-day requirements of electrical power and lighting.
 - (b) **Temporary electrical installations** - this should include temporary wiring installed to supply power for a onsite event.
 - (c) **Apparatus** - this includes any piece of equipment having an electrical plug for connection to the main electrical supply, no matter by whom owned or provided.
 - (d) **Live working** - it should not be necessary in any school for work to be carried out on mains equipment which is live, so this section is mostly irrelevant to schools **except** in the case of certain demonstrations in science laboratories.



2.2 The Code of Practice will consider the action to be taken by the Company in each of the above areas.

3. Electrical Installations

3.1 In general, the testing of fixed electrical installations which have been correctly installed in accordance with the present (15th) or previous editions of the Regulations of the Institution of Electrical Engineers will not be a concern. An existing rolling programme of inspections has been developed resulting in the electrical installations being fully tested at the recommended five year intervals.

3.2 Nevertheless, some fixed installations, particularly socket outlets, may be subject to damage or abuse. Staff should be alert to this possibility and institute a more frequent visual inspection where experience suggests that it may be necessary. Any cases of damage or abuse should be dealt with so as to isolate staff and customers from contact with the damaged installation.

4. Temporary Electrical Installations

4.1 Onsite equipment is expensive to buy and often infrequently used. Equipment should be inspected before being energised.

4.2 Upon occasion, there is a need to take an electrical supply outside for the purposes of temporary lighting, amplification etc. In such cases, a particularly high standard of protection is important and this may be achieved by the use of residual current operated circuit breakers (RCCBs), also known as residual current devices (RCDs).

5. Appliances

5.1 Recording

Before any system can be set up for the regular inspection of electrical appliances, it is necessary that a record be made of all the electrical appliances which exist, however obtained.



The following is **essential**:

- (a) That any item which has an electrical plug attached to it is included;
- (b) That it is possible to distinguish similar items of equipment one from another. This may simply involve listing the serial number. Where there is no serial number the item will need to be permanently marked in some way so that it is uniquely identifiable;
- (b) That all obsolete equipment which does not comply with current regulations is rendered inoperable and disposed of, and that broken or redundant equipment is put to one side for repair or disposal.

5.2 Testing

Once each person making the list is satisfied that they have a complete list of all electrical appliances in the area which they are covering, a test record card should be completed for each item. A suggested standard record form for portable apparatus can be found in Appendix 1 and may be freely photocopied.

Most electrical equipment only requires inspection, but some will also require testing. The tests should be carried out by a competent person. All equipment which passes the test, should be labelled with the date of the test. Any equipment which fails, should be taken out of use and sent for repair by a competent technician. Details of the checks to be carried out are set out in Appendix 2. Testing routines are contained in Appendix 3.

All Class 1 (earthed) hand-held portable electrical equipment such as drills, saws, irons, hand lamps etc. should be subject to a detailed inspection and test by a competent person who should record the results in the register at least every twelve months.

Records of these formal inspections for all portable electrical equipment should be maintained centrally and the equipment should be clearly labelled with the date of the inspection and outcome.



5.3 Privately owned electrical appliances

It sometimes happens that if staff brings privately owned electrical equipment into school. Usually, this is done as a temporary expedient and for a particular purpose.

Nevertheless, whatever the purpose may be, no such appliances should be permitted unless the tests specified in Appendix 2 have been carried out by a competent person and a label certifying that this has been done and has been attached to the appliance.

If the appliance is to remain in the premises for any length of time, a record card should be raised in the normal manner, but marked that the appliance is privately owned. Staff should be encouraged to remove such appliances as soon as their purpose has been served.

