



## Kingsmead Testing Services - Your Trusted Testing Partner

**This handy guide provides an overview of the legislation around portable appliance testing, and how it applies to your organisation**

At Kingsmead Testing we're firm believers in providing a high quality service at a fair price. A family company, established since 2004, we're a friendly team and our main goal is protecting you and your employees in the workplace, keeping you compliant.

We provide both fixed installation and portable appliance testing in London, Middlesex, Bucks, Beds, Berks, Oxon, Herts and surrounding areas. For other geographic areas just give us a call.

**Share this document with your colleagues, then [contact us](#) on: 01628 850650 for a detailed quotation**

### We provide:

- First class portable appliance testing service in the public or private sector
- Qualified, highly experienced testing engineers
- Personalised service delivered by a friendly team
- Competitive pricing and a thorough testing service guaranteed
- Wide geographic coverage including London and the Home Counties





## Why Carry Out Fixed Wiring Inspection and Testing?

Periodic inspection and testing of **Fixed Wiring Installations (EICR reports)**, must be carried out as prescribed by the Health and Safety at Work Act to ensure that electrical installations in the workplace are safe for the health and safety of employees, visitors and the general public.

Inspection and testing identifies damage from wear and tear and corrosion, checks for excessive electrical loading, damage from environmental factors and ageing materials. It is also a control measure against electric shock during cleaning and maintenance work at business premises, and it reduces the risk of fire.

Evidence of periodic testing may be required by your insurance company, landlord, mortgage loan company, business partner or a public body. Business owners must be able to prove that they have taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that electrical installations are safe, and periodic testing is one way of proving that you have taken these responsibilities seriously.

Periodic inspection and testing also verifies compliance with current IET electricity wiring regulations.

If you are the new owner or tenant of business premises, it's wise to have the installation checked to ensure compliance. EICR becomes essential after change of use of premises, or following alterations to an original installation. Testing is also important if you make a significant change to the electrical loading of an installation, or if there is any suspicion of damage to the installation. Neglect of faulty electrical apparatus can cause injuries to employees, customers and visitors. It also significantly increases fire risk. In the event of an accident, incident or fire, you could incur lost income, hefty fines and even imprisonment if your business is found to be in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act. Your insurance may also be invalidated.

[Contact us](#) for details of our Periodic Inspection and Testing service.



### Minimum inspection intervals apply to most Fixed Wiring installations:

- Commercial Installations - 5 years
- Industrial Installations - 3 years
- Buildings open to the public - 1 year
- External Installations - 3 years.
- Caravan Parks - 1 year
- Fire Alarms - 1 year
- Short term and site Installations - 3 months



## Why Carry Out Portable Appliance Testing?

1. **SAFETY** - The number one objective of a quality testing regime, and comprehensive health and safety policy is the safety of your workers, visitors to your premises and the general public. This is also the primary objective of PAT testing, so it's important to insist on a high quality testing service with competent, qualified and experienced engineers who have been working in the field for many years.
2. **COMPLIANCE** - The law says you must have a maintenance and inspection regime in place for all portable electrical appliances. Your insurance company may also ask you to tick that box, and offer you lower insurance premiums if you can provide evidence of a testing regime. Or maybe you need to comply because a customer has told you 'no admittance' unless they see a certificate. Make sure that compliance is not just a 'box ticking' exercise, and that your portable appliances are thoroughly inspected, to reduce the risk of injuries, accidents and fire in your workplace.
3. **DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE** - The law requires you to prove that you have done everything reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of your workers and anyone else who comes on site or to your premises. The best way to do this is to provide recent proof of independent, quality appliance testing by an established company.

It's important that you can tick **all three boxes**. Some companies give you compliance, but not safety due to rushed testing. We believe safety is equally important. If there's one item that is going to cause damage, a shock, or a fire, we want to find it, so we provide a service that offers all three: COMPLIANCE, SAFETY and EVIDENCE.

- We guarantee our clients a thorough testing service, so cables and appliances that cannot be reached or examined for any reason will not be passed.
- We will immediately explain to the duty holder or responsible person that we cannot test a certain appliance, and discuss a solution.
- We work hard to exceed expectations wherever possible, so we hope you will find this thorough and professional approach refreshing.





## Do You Need PAT Testing?

Portable Appliance Testing, is an important way of ensuring the safe working condition of electrical appliances. And safe electrical appliances reduce the risk of injury to employees, and fire at your premises or working site.

**There's no specific legal requirement for PAT Testing per se, however many pieces of legislation require the regular maintenance and inspection of fixed wiring electrical installations, and portable appliances.**

The Electricity At Work Regulations 1989 cover every kettle, fax, copier, computer, extension lead, etc, including 110V equipment, in a business, temporary work site or public place. The Construction and Design Management Regulations 2015 cover all electrical items in use on a construction site, and in a domestic home where refurbishment works are being carried out. In fact, if it is electrical and has a plug on it, whether it is in regular use or not, then it must be maintained safely and, in the event of an accident or incident, testing certificates may be a key element in your defence against a fine or even imprisonment.

**What about agency workers or subcontractors?** You should check that anyone working for your organisation is carrying out their own regime of maintenance and inspection, even if they are responsible for their own health and safety. Just as a customer might ask to check your health and safety procedures, and equipment testing records prior to allowing you to carry out work for them, you should carry out an appraisal of all workers and/or subcontractors to ensure that they are qualified, insured and competent, and working to recognised standards. These checks should be made at induction and each year thereafter. This is one of the ways a responsible organisation demonstrates that it has taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees, workers, visitors and the general public.



### Did you Know?

Most business premises are also workplaces, so the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) applies, even in a private home, where employees such as care workers are being sent to fulfill a contract. HASAWA is one of the few pieces of legislation that carry '**reverse onus of proof**'. This means that in the event of an accident or incident, **the onus is on the business owner to prove that all reasonably practicable steps were taken to ensure the safety of employees and all other persons using the premises**; inspection and testing records are one way of proving this." Grant Foster, MD, KTS



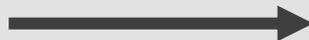
## PAT Testing Drivers

### Legislation



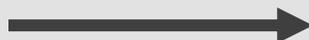
Primary legislation and European Regulations are the main drivers for regular maintenance and inspection routines. Pre-qualification bodies such as CHAS in the construction sector also require formal evidence of regular maintenance and inspection.

### Risk Assessments



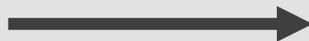
A good Health and Safety regime is created by assessing risk in every part of the workplace, and reducing risk as far as practicably possible. This will include regular inspection and testing.

### H&S Policy



An organisation's Health and Safety Policy will set out the minimum standards agreed and sanctioned by senior management, and ensure they are reviewed at least once a year.

### Employee Safety



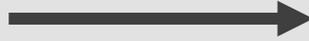
At the core of good Health and Safety practice is the health and wellbeing of employees, visitors and the general public. Regular maintenance and inspection is key to reducing risk.

### Reduced Fire Risk



All electrical appliances and fixed wiring installations have the potential to develop faults and deteriorate over time. Regular testing is the best way to identify and manage faults.

### Customer Demand



Your customers may ask you to provide evidence of maintenance and inspection before you can work for them. Your PAT testing company should retain copies of all your testing records, and remind you when testing is due again.

### Did you Know?

**PAT testing makes good business sense.** PAT testing is not on the statute books, but regular maintenance and inspection is required, so any responsible organisation should insist on testing at regular intervals to ensure SAFETY and not just COMPLIANCE. PAT testing by a third party organisation such as Kingsmead Testing also provides valuable evidence of compliance, plus peace of mind that the job has been done properly.



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A Free Quote**



## PAT Testing Explained

Look across the room at a piece of electrical equipment, perhaps a computer, water cooler, toaster or fridge. Can you tell if its earth wire is internally in contact with the exposed metal work? How good is the insulation? What's the condition of the wires inside the plug? Are the live and neutral wires reversed at the plug end or inside the appliance? (the appliance would still function with 'reversed polarity', but it's potentially very dangerous). Is that slight shock you and your colleagues get from the fridge really just static? Without formal visual inspection and testing, we cannot know if equipment is safe, or whether it needs to be repaired or replaced.

As we have mentioned, there is no specific legal requirement for PAT testing of electrical equipment in either the workplace or, in the case of any landlord or company-supplied electrical equipment in rented accommodation, or residential care homes. However it is a legal requirement that such electrical equipment is 'safe, well-maintained and suitable for the purpose for which it is being used'. As a business owner or facilities manager, how would you prove that the necessary steps have been taken in the case of an accident, fire or other incident?

The only way to determine whether electrical equipment is 'safe, well-maintained and suitable for the purpose for which it is being used', is if it is routinely, formally visually-inspected and instrument-tested ('PAT Tested'), and records maintained.

**PAT Testing is the best way to ensure that such equipment, at the time of the inspection and testing at least, is indeed 'safe, well-maintained and suitable for the purpose for which it is being used'.**



### Did you Know?

**Lack of testing and maintenance can affect your insurance.** Your company's insurance may be invalidated if you are not carrying out regular maintenance and inspection. Duty holders or responsible people should check with their insurance company to find out what is expected in terms of frequency of testing, especially if you operate within an industry that's considered higher risk, such as aviation or construction.



## PAT Testing and The Law

Electrical testing protocols are governed by primary legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA), and secondary legislation in the form of Regulations such as the Construction and Design Management Regs 2015 (CDM), and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER).

The Electricity At Work Regulations 1989 cover every electrical appliance, including 110V equipment, in a business or public place. The Construction and Design Management Regulations 2015 covers all electrical items in use on a construction site, and in a domestic home where refurbishment works are being carried out. If it is electrical, whether it is in regular use or not, then it must be maintained safely and, in the event of an accident or incident, thorough testing certificates may be a key element in your defence against a heavy fine or even imprisonment.

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE): **"The frequency of inspection and testing depends upon the type of equipment and the environment it is used in. For example, a power tool used on a construction site should be examined more frequently than a lamp in a hotel bedroom.** For guidance on suggested frequencies of inspection and testing, see: [Maintaining portable and transportable electrical equipment.](#)

**Do you work with self-employed contractors?** It is your responsibility to ensure they are also maintaining and inspecting their portable electrical appliances. You should be reviewing this information at recruitment, and each year thereafter during an annual appraisal process, where you check that they are able to work with your company for another year, even if they are responsible for their own health and safety.

**Put them in touch with us for convenient and efficient, quality testing of tools, cables and equipment.**

### Did you Know?

The Construction and Design Management Regulations 2015 are imposed **in addition** to HASAWA to control the increased risks in the construction industry. Previously only for very large construction projects, the 2015 update brought all domestic refurbishment work into scope, requiring all 240V tools and cables to be inspected every 12 months, and all 110V tools and cables to be inspected every 90 days. If your employees work on site, or in a domestic setting, power tools should be inspected at these intervals, and records kept as evidence in case of inspection, or in the event of an accident or incident.





## PAT Test Certificates

In the event of an accident or incident, you may be required to prove that you have taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees, visitors to your premises and the general public. PAT testing certificates are important documents that should be retained for around five years as evidence of a regular testing regime. Your certificates should show your entire asset register, including leads. They should be detailed, and give plenty of information about each appliance, including results for all tests.

Details of failed appliances should be included in test reports. If your PAT testing company does not give you a report detailing failed appliances and the action the engineer has taken to remove them from service, then ask why? This is part of the job.

**The Importance of qualifications:** Many companies offering PAT testing services will state the importance of being NICEIC / ECA registered. Whilst this is something to look out for, we would suggest that competence and experience are even more important. As well having City and Guilds 2377 qualification, the engineer should carry out this work **regularly**, and be a **highly experienced testing engineer**. Some organisations choose to test in-house, but their engineers only carry out testing work once a year. Many low-cost testing companies send out engineers who have little 'on the job' experience, leaving them unsure how to test some items.

**We do this work every day. Don't risk working with inexperienced engineers.**



### No Inspection and Maintenance Records?

- You may be increasing the risk of fire or injury at your premises
- You may be in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 or the Construction and Design Management Regulations 2015
- Your insurance policy may be invalidated
- You may be subject to prosecution by the HSE, an employee, or a private individual
- You may be subject to a fine or imprisonment
- A poor health and safety record may damage your company's reputation



## PAT Testing Myths

- **I don't need PAT testing!** If you have business premises, place workers in a workplace, or work as a subcontractor, a regular maintenance and inspection routine should be part of your health and safety procedures. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act you are responsible for your own health and safety and for the health and safety of others in the workplace. So be safe, remain compliant and get evidence of testing and inspection from a third party PAT testing company. In addition, have a fixed wiring inspection carried out at your premises.
- **PAT testing is the end of the story!** In addition to PAT testing, systematic visual inspections should be carried out at regular intervals, and before use of electrical items. Records should be kept of these inspections. This is especially true of leads and cables. Even a thorough formal test will not guard against future damage or deterioration, so interim visual inspections are vital.
- **PAT testing must be carried out every year!** The duty holder or responsible person must carry out a risk assessment and decide on frequency based on the type of appliances, the working environment and the level of risk. If you are operating in a high-risk industry such as construction, PAT testing is required every year for 240V tools, and every 3 months for 110V tools and cables.
- **Only some items need testing!** Even though some appliances may not need an annual test, a blanket test may be easier, simply because having a company in to test only certain appliances can create additional work. For example, someone must label all the appliances, repeat visits may be more costly over time, and record-keeping can become complicated. This said, we are happy to quote for whatever is required.
- **I can carry out my own tests!** In-house PAT testing is conducted by some organisations, however even if the person is fully qualified with a City & Guilds 2377 certificate, they may not be competent if only testing 2 days per year.
- **The cheapest quote will do!** Some PAT engineers are in a race to notch up as many tests as they can in a day, due to unrealistically low unit prices. A busy workstation with inaccessible leads and difficult partitions cannot be tested in double-quick time without sacrificing quality. Do you want SAFETY, or COMPLIANCE? The answer should be BOTH!
- **Everything is safe now!** One of the main myths about PAT testing is that when a company receives its PAT certificate, everything in the workplace is safe. A certificate means the appliances were safe at the time and place where they were checked, and that the business is taking reasonably practicable steps to reduce risk. Ongoing visual inspections are still essential to ensure that electrical equipment remains in safe working condition until the next formal test.
- **I don't need to worry about agency workers or sub-contractors!** Actually, you should be checking that anyone working for your organisation is carrying out their own regime of maintenance and inspection, even if they are responsible for their own health and safety. Just as a customer might ask to check your health and safety procedures, and equipment testing records prior to allowing you to carry out work for them, you should be carrying out regular appraisals of all workers and subcontractors to ensure that they are still qualified, insured and competent, and working to recognised standards. This is one of the ways a responsible organisation demonstrates that it has taken all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees, workers, visitors and the general public.



## Keeping In Touch

### **Kingsmead Testing, your trusted testing partner**

For more information [visit our web site using this link](#)

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[www.kingsmeadtesting.co.uk](http://www.kingsmeadtesting.co.uk)  
**01628 850650**  
[info@kingsmeadtesting.co.uk](mailto:info@kingsmeadtesting.co.uk)

1 Chapman Lane, Flackwell Heath,  
High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 9AZ

