

# Health and Safety Standard: Use of Portable Electric Heaters

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## 1. Introduction

Any need for supplemental heating **must** be referred to Estates, who, following assessment, will if deemed appropriate supply temporary heaters. However, where offices have additional electrical portable heating supplied by either the Department or individual members of staff due to some historic reason, there is a clear need to provide general guidance in respect to fire safety and the potential source of fire ignition.

## 2. Types of heaters

Open Electrical Bar, Halogen and Convector Heaters, these types of portable fire should not be used within the University.

<b>Do not use open electrical bar fires;</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Do not use halogen type heaters;</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Do not use convector including fan heaters.</b>		<b>X</b>

### 3. Recommended heater type

Whilst it is recognised that individuals or rooms may require additional heating during inclement weather, it is strongly recommended that the Departments purchase / supply the Oil Filled (Radiant) Radiator type heaters. These heaters are not as likely to be affected by conditions that may cause them to overheat and are much safer than electrical bar / convector fan heaters types.

<p><b>If you need to use a portable heater, it is recommended that Oil Filled (Radiant) Radiator type is safest.</b></p>		<p><b>✓</b></p>
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#### 3.2 General safety measures for all portable heaters - please ensure:

- That heaters are well clear of curtains and furnishings
- That electric heaters are not placed under desks
- That heaters with time-switches are set (deactivated) so that they cannot switch themselves on out of hours when not supervised by staff
- That you do not sit too close to a heater, with certain types of heaters you could set light to your clothes or your chair - sit at least 1 metre (3 feet) away
- Both Department and staff/student heaters in the workplace should be inspected and tested as 'Portable Electrical Appliances'

If you notice any of these danger signs, stop using the appliance immediately:


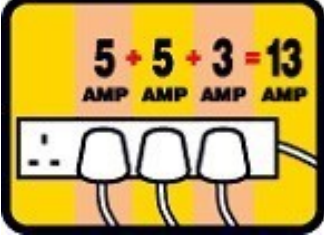
- Staining, sooting or discoloration of the appliance or surrounding areas
- A strange smell when the appliance is working

#### 3.3 General electrical safety when using portable heaters

There is a real possibility of overloading electrical sockets when using portable electrical heaters and the potential use of heaters plugged into cuboid electrical plug adaptors and extension cables.

**It is recommended that:**

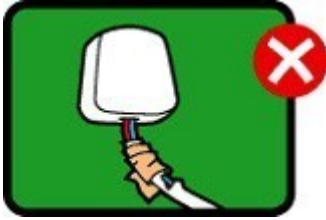


- Cuboid adaptors are prohibited and that only 4/6 Way Gang Individually Switched UK Fused Mains Extension Lead are used by Departments and individuals, where there is a need for additional electrical sockets
- Maximum load for any one socket should not exceed 13 amps. Extension cables should be replaced with additional wall sockets (through Estates), where necessary, to reduce the need for these cables
- Where an extension lead is required then additional electrical adaptors should not be piggybacked onto an existing extension cable.

Do not use cuboid adaptors;		X
Only use 4/6 Way Gang Individually Switched UK fused Mains Extension Lead with a length of flex. The Maximum load for any one socket should not exceed 13 amps:		✓

#### 4. UK Electrical supply

You are reminded that the UK electrical supply is **230 Volts (not 110 volts)** and only electrical equipment purchased in the UK should be used. However, if you need to use 110-volt equipment then you must have an approved voltage, plug/pin converter, and ensure that you ask for advice and assistance (from the shop/supplier) on the voltage/pin compatibility and specific voltage requirements you require.

- **ONLY USE 230v equipment with an appropriate and correctly designed plug or adaptor**
- **Do not use adapters on pendant light fittings**
- **Do not allow flexes to trail across floors**

<p>Check electrical leads and plugs for wear &amp; tear and faulty wiring.</p> <p>Throw away and replace damaged cables. Never use tape to mend or join cable.</p> <p>Frayed leads or exposed internal wires are fire risks;</p>		<p><b>X</b></p>
<p><b>Always use the correct fuse in fused plugs - Plugs in the UK are generally fitted with a 3A or 13A fuse.</b></p>		
<p>For appliances up to 700w you need to use a 3A fuse (i.e. Desk Lamp, Mobile Phone Charger, Television, DVD, Computer, Printers, Refrigerators);</p>		<p><b>✓</b></p>
<p>For appliances over 700w, you need to use a 13A fuse (i.e. Washing Machine, Microwave, Kettle, Toaster, Iron, Hair Dryer / Curlers, Fan (Portable), Coffee Maker &amp; portable heaters etc.);</p>		<p><b>✓</b></p>