

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORTS

Compliance Guide | Industrial & Commercial Fixed Wire Testing

An EICR assesses the condition of an existing electrical installation at the time of inspection and testing. It identifies damage, deterioration, defects and conditions that may give rise to danger, and records observations and recommendations. This guide is intended for facilities managers, maintenance teams and commercial property duty holders.

01 | Legal duties and relevant standards

The **Electricity at Work Regulations 1989** require electrical systems used at work to be maintained, so far as is reasonably practicable, to prevent danger. They do not impose a universal three- or five-year EICR interval on every workplace. **BS 7671, Part 6** sets out periodic inspection and testing requirements and reporting arrangements. The **IET Guidance Note 3** provides further practical guidance. The applicable edition and any relevant sector-specific requirements should be checked at the time of inspection.

02 | Inspection frequency and risk

Intervals should reflect installation type, use, age, condition, maintenance history, external influences and previous reports. Commonly referenced initial recommendations are around **five years for many commercial installations** and **three years for many industrial installations**, but these are guidance rather than blanket legal deadlines. A competent inspector should recommend the next inspection date based on the actual installation. Change of occupancy, damage, alterations or adverse conditions may justify earlier inspection.

03 | Scope and limitations

Agree the extent of inspection and testing before attendance: premises and buildings, distribution boards, submains, final circuits, machinery-related fixed wiring, accessible accessories and any areas excluded. Where sampling is proposed, document the rationale, sample size and agreed limitations. Sampling should be appropriate to the installation and findings; an EICR should not be described as a 100% inspection if it is not. Limitations must be recorded and must not conceal known safety concerns.

04 | Safe working and operational sites

Inspection may involve isolation, access to switchgear, dead testing and controlled live measurements where justified. A safe system of work, competent persons and suitable procedures are required. Plan isolations with the site to minimise disruption, particularly around production lines, servers, critical services and continuously operated equipment.

05 | What an EICR examines

Typical inspection includes supply characteristics, earthing and bonding, protective devices, distribution equipment, signs of overheating or damage, suitability for environmental conditions, cable support, isolation and switching, identification and accessible circuit accessories. Testing may include continuity, insulation resistance, polarity, earth fault loop impedance, prospective fault current and RCD performance, as appropriate to the installation and the agreed scope.

06 | Classification codes

Observations are assigned codes reflecting the risk identified. These are not simply labels for whether an installation matches the latest edition of BS 7671: an older installation is not automatically unsafe solely because standards have changed.

CODE	MEANING / ACTION
C1	Danger present — immediate action required to remove the danger.
C2	Potentially dangerous — urgent remedial action required.
C3	Improvement recommended — does not by itself make the report unsatisfactory.
FI	Further investigation required without delay to determine whether danger exists.

07 | Satisfactory and unsatisfactory outcomes

An EICR is normally assessed as **unsatisfactory** where one or more C1, C2 or FI observations are recorded. C3 observations alone do not make a report unsatisfactory. The overall assessment relates to the inspected installation and agreed extent, not to uninspected equipment or excluded areas.

08 | Findings, urgency and communication

Dangerous findings should be communicated promptly to the person responsible for the installation, with immediate precautions considered for C1 conditions. C2 issues require urgent action, and FI observations require investigation without delay. The report should provide enough detail to locate each observation and understand the necessary next steps.

09 | Inspection records and traceability

A meaningful EICR should include installation details, extent and limitations, supply and earthing particulars, schedules of inspections and circuit test results, observations and codes, the overall assessment and a recommended date for the next inspection. Testing should be undertaken using suitable, maintained instruments and by competent personnel.

10 | Remedial works and verification

After receiving an unsatisfactory report, the duty holder should arrange suitable corrective action and any necessary further investigation. Remedial works must be appropriately inspected, tested and documented. An Electrical Installation Certificate or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate may be appropriate depending on the work carried out. A new full EICR is not automatically required after every repair; retain the original report with the supporting remedial certification and evidence.

11 | Common industrial and commercial considerations

High-load distribution, MCCBs, older boards, submains, machinery supplies, variable-speed drives, operational shutdown constraints, harsh environments and extensive final-circuit networks can affect the testing method and access required. The inspection plan should account for equipment sensitivity, possible disruption and the practical need for agreed isolations.

EICR COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Before inspection	Confirm duty holder, site access, records, agreed extent, limitations and isolation arrangements.
During inspection	Use competent personnel; document visual findings, test results and inaccessible areas.
Risk coding	Apply C1, C2, C3 and FI consistently, with clear locations and descriptions.
Report review	Check overall assessment, circuit schedules, observations and next-inspection recommendation.
Follow-up	Act promptly on danger, commission repairs/investigation and retain completion records.

The QUEST Electrical approach

QUEST Electrical provides industrial and commercial EICR inspection and testing with recorded circuit results, clear reporting and recommendations. Where remedial works are required, these can be assessed and quoted separately, with certification issued for works undertaken as appropriate. Testing is planned around site operations while maintaining the required safety standards.

Important: This publication is general guidance, not legal advice or a substitute for a site-specific inspection, risk assessment or the current standards. Inspection intervals and requirements vary by installation and jurisdiction.