## APPENDIX 2

**User checks and formal visual inspections**

**User checks**

These should be carried out before relevant electrical equipment is used, with the equipment disconnected. Employees should look for:

* damage to the lead including fraying, cuts or heavy scuffing, e.g., from floor box covers;
* damage to plugs, e.g., to the cover or bent pins;
* tape applied to leads to join them together;
* coloured wires visible where the lead joins the plug (e.g. the cable is not being gripped where it enters the plug);
* damage to the outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws;
* signs of overheating, such as burn marks, distortion, melting or staining on the plug, lead, or piece of equipment;
* equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions, such as wet or dusty environments or where water spills are possible; and
* cables trapped under furniture, or in floor boxes in particular cutting or crushing by the cover.

**Formal Visual inspections**

To carry out a visual inspection you don’t need to be an electrician, but you do need to know what to look for and you must also have sufficient knowledge to avoid danger to yourself and others.

Basic training can equip you (or a member of staff) with appropriate basic electrical knowledge to enable you to carry out a visual inspection competently.

As part of the visual inspection, you should consider whether:

* the electrical equipment is being used in accordance with its intended use;
* the equipment is suitable for the job;
* there has been any change of circumstances;
* a user has reported any issues.

Visual inspection should include the checks carried out by the user and where appropriate, a competent person can include removing the plug cover and checking internally that:

* there are no signs of internal damage, overheating or water damage to the plug;
* the correct fuse is in use; this must be a proper fuse; a grub screw, piece of wire, nail, etc, must never be used;
* the wires including the earth, where fitted, are attached to the correct terminal (see **Figure 1**);
* the terminal screws are tight, but must not be overtightened;
* the cord grip is holding the outer part (sheath) of the cable tightly; and
* no bare wire is visible other than at the terminals; no coloured individual wire insulation is visible outside the plug cover or through the outer protective sleeve.

For equipment/cables fitted with moulded sealed plugs only the fuse can be checked.

A diagram of a wire plug
