

A brief guide to Approved Document E sound insulation testing

What is sound insulation testing?

Sound insulation testing is the assessment of the sound insulation performance of party walls and party floors between different dwellings. Testing is required once the property is nearing final completion and determines if the minimum Building Regulation Approved Document E 'Resistance to the passage of sound' standard has been met.

Do I need a sound test?

All new and converted dwelling houses and flats for residential purpose require sound testing to Approved Document E standard. This also includes a room or suite of rooms which is not a dwelling house or a flat but which is used by one or more persons to live and sleep.

Is my build ready for a sound test?

Sound insulation tests are undertaken when the development is 'pre-completed'. This means that the test rooms should be at a stage where just final finishing, painting and carpets are required.

- ✓ Windows should be fully installed, glazed & closable
- ✓ Trickle vents and other ventilation systems should be fitted
- ✓ Internal & external doors must be hung, glazed & closable
- ✓ All wall, floors & ceiling constructions must be completed
- ✓ Skirting boards should all be fitted
- ✓ Electrical sockets, TV Aerial sockets & light switches should be fitted
- ✓ Rooms must be clear of building materials, tools & unfurnished
- ✓ No cosmetic floor coverings should be fitted (i.e. laminate, carpet, vinyl)
- ✓ No trades should be working in the dwellings during the tests
- ✓ Access to rooms either side of the separating element is essential
- ✓ Non-tester access to the rooms is prohibited during testing
- ✓ No noisy construction & site operations to occur nearby during testing
- ✓ Provision of 240v 50Hz mains power is required within the dwellings

What are the common points of failure?

Sound insulation performance varies for many reasons. Assuming correct designs and material selection, the most common factor influencing performance is poor workmanship. Detailing is critical in maximising on site performance & the prevention of sound flanking. More information can be obtained from our free guide.

How do I get design advice for my project?

Our expert acoustic consultants can review the designs, provide advice and carry out on site inspections during the build process to check specifically for any workmanship issues that could result in sound testing failure.

How long does sound insulation testing take?

The time taken for testing varies with site conditions, but generally a set of tests on houses takes about one to two hours and a set of tests on flats take between two and three hours.

How much does sound insulation testing cost?

The cost depends upon the number and type of tests required. We will provide free quotations within 24 hours.

How will I know if I have passed?

Where possible, Soundguard Acoustics will provide preliminary test results before we leave the site. We will follow this with a fully documented and signed report which will be emailed to you within 5 - 7 working days of your sound test.

What do I do if I fail the sound test?

In line with the regulations you are required to carry out remedial works to ensure the development meets the relevant performance requirements and re-test. If you don't know what to do by way of remedial works then Soundguard Acoustics can advise you.

What are Robust Details?

For new house and flat developments, Robust Details may be used to eliminate the need for end of build pre-completion testing. Robust Details are high performance constructions that are capable of providing consistent & good sound insulation but do require that the design is registered with, and approved by, Robust Details Ltd (RDL).

FREE developers guide to Approved Doc E

Soundguard Acoustics provides a FREE guide to Approved Document E sound insulation testing. The guide includes advice on common points of sound test failure, how to build for the best sound performance & includes download links for the full Approved Document E regulations.

Contact us for your free copy

Sound Testing?



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