Safe isolation method statement

Obtain a permit to work, if required, and ensure any necessary risk assessments and/or additional method statements have been prepared if necessary. Obtain permission for isolation of the supply from the client or from a site contact/duty holder who holds authority. Verify that anybody who will be affected by the loss of supply is aware of what is happening and has taken appropriate measures, i.e., shutting down computers, securing alternative means of lighting, etc.

Inspect the approved GS38 voltage indicator you are about to use to ensure it shows no outward signs of fault or mistreatment such as a cracked casing or damaged leads. Probes should have exposed tips no greater than 4mm, preferably 2mm. Test the voltage indicator for correct operation by using a proving unit or by placing it across a known live source. Models requiring batteries should still indicate a voltage present even if the batteries are flat.

Identify the circuit to be isolated either at its origin or at the nearest isolation point and switch the isolator or protective device into the OFF position.

Affix a warning notice at the isolation point to indicate you are working on the circuit and attach a lock-off device. Ensure there is only one key for the lock and place it into your pocket to keep it upon your person. If multiple electricians are working on site, use a multi-lock hasp ensuring each electrician retains their own unique key for their particular lock to prevent premature re-energising of the circuit.

At the point to be worked on, apply the voltage indicator probes as follows:

Single phase:

Line to Neutral
Line to Earth
Neutral to Earth

Three phase:

L1 to Neutral
L2 to Neutral
L3 to Neutral
L1 to Earth
L2 to Earth
L3 to Earth
L1 to L2
L1 to L3
L2 to L3
Neutral to Earth

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Assuming no voltage is present, verify the GS38 voltage indicator is still operating correctly by using a proving unit or by placing it across a known live source.

If the voltage indicator is proven to be working and has indicated the circuit is dead, work may commence.

Do not use a non-contact voltage indicator because such devices may give false readings.
Do not use a multimeter as these instruments can give an improper indication if set incorrectly.
Do not flick it with your finger to see if you get a tingle even if you have "got away with it" before.

It may be desirable to test the point where work is to take place prior to isolation to first ensure voltage readings are present and to expectations. The HSE says of live working:

"It is never absolutely safe to work on live electrical equipment. There are few circumstances where it is necessary to work live, and this must only be done after it has been determined that it is unreasonable for the work to be done dead. Even if working live can be justified, many precautions are needed to make sure that the risk is reduced 'so far as is reasonably practicable"

Sometimes fault finding and testing requires access to live parts, or it may be required to confirm the point to be worked on is in a known state before power is removed to help confirm the correct circuit has been isolated. Live testing should never be performed when it makes the operator uncomfortable or concerned, or where uncovering live parts exposes others to risk. If covers are to be removed, appropriate steps must be taken such as barriers being in place and competent, skilled supervision being present.

Please sign below if you agree with **all** of the following statements:

I have been formally trained in safe isolation.
I have access to a GS38 voltage indicator, appropriate lock-off device(s), padlock and warning sign.
I have been given a copy of this procedure for my own reference.
I have access to a proving unit.
I have read and understood the above procedure and agree to abide by it.
If I am unsure about any aspect of the procedure whilst working on site, I will seek advice before proceeding.
I will not undertake any task if I feel uncomfortable or lack confidence.

Signed: _____ Date: _____