

# Operation Manual for HC16 Three-Axis Helmholtz Coil



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## 1. About this Manual

This manual provides the information necessary to help customers install and operate the HC16 Helmholtz Coil from Bartington Instruments. It is one component of Bartington Instruments' Helmholtz Coil System. This manual should therefore be read in conjunction with:

- PA1 Control Power Amplifier Manual OM3225
- CU1 Control Unit OM3224
- CU2 Closed-Loop Module (if applicable) OM3999
- Helmholtz Coil Control Software OM3596.

All manuals are available from the Helmholtz Coil System [Operation Manual page](#). The relevant products outline drawings can be found Helmholtz Coil System [outline drawing page](#).

This manual should also be read in conjunction with the product brochure [DS2613](#) which can also be found on the product page.

Photographs of key components are included, labelled with numbers. A number in the text in square brackets [ ] refers to that label.

Bartington Instruments cannot advise on the integration of this equipment with any third party products.

### 1.1. Symbols Glossary

The following symbols used within this manual call your attention to specific types of information:



**WARNING:** Indicates a situation in which serious bodily injury or death could result if the warning is ignored.



**Caution:** Indicates a situation in which bodily injury or damage to your instrument, or both, could result if the caution is ignored.



Identifies items that must be disposed of safely to prevent unnecessary damage to the environment.

**Note:** Provides useful supporting information on how to make better use of your purchase.

## 2. Safe Use



**WARNING:** This product is not qualified for use in explosive atmospheres or life support systems. Consult Bartington Instruments for advice.



**WARNING:** The electromagnetic field from this product may interfere with the operation of pacemakers and other medical devices. Consult your device's manufacturer before operation.



**WARNING:** In the UK/EU there is legislation that recommends regulation magnetic field exposure amounts. For this reason safe operation should be observed when using the HC16 by referring to the field/distance graphs in [“Appendix B - Magnetic field magnitude versus frequency”](#).



**Caution:** At maximum current input the coils can warm up to temperatures greater than 50°C. Avoid touching the coils during operation.

## 3. Introduction

The HC16 Helmholtz Coil is an assembly of three pairs of Helmholtz coils and includes the base on which the coils are mounted. The coils produce a magnetic field when a current is circulated through it. The amplitude of the field generated is proportional to the current applied. Both DC and AC magnetic field can be generated. The coils are typically used for the calibration of magnetic field sensors, or to generate a stable, controlled field.

A complete system will include:

- HC16: an assembly of three Helmholtz coils.
- PA1 Power Amplifier: See OM3225.
- CU1 Control Unit: the control unit for the system which enables it to interface with a PC-based test, measurement and control system. See OM3224.
- Optional CU2 Closed-Loop Module: allows active cancellation of external DC and AC magnetic field disturbances using the CU2 Reference Magnetometer. See OM3999.

The addition of the acquisition card allows the system to be controlled via a Labview™-based software. A system diagram is shown in [“Appendix A: Connecting the Components of the Helmholtz Coil System”](#).

Recommended accessories:

- Magnetometer and associated mounting jig, which can be supplied in order to check the system at regular intervals.

- Breakout box, enabling access to the signal applied to the coils (Please see “[Appendix C - Helmholtz Coil Breakout Box](#)” for further information). Please contact [sales@bartington.com](mailto:sales@bartington.com) for further information.

As an alternative to the PA1, users with their own power supply can use these with the HC16. Please refer to the product brochure for the maximum current which can be applied to HC16.

#### 4. HC16 Helmholtz Coil Features

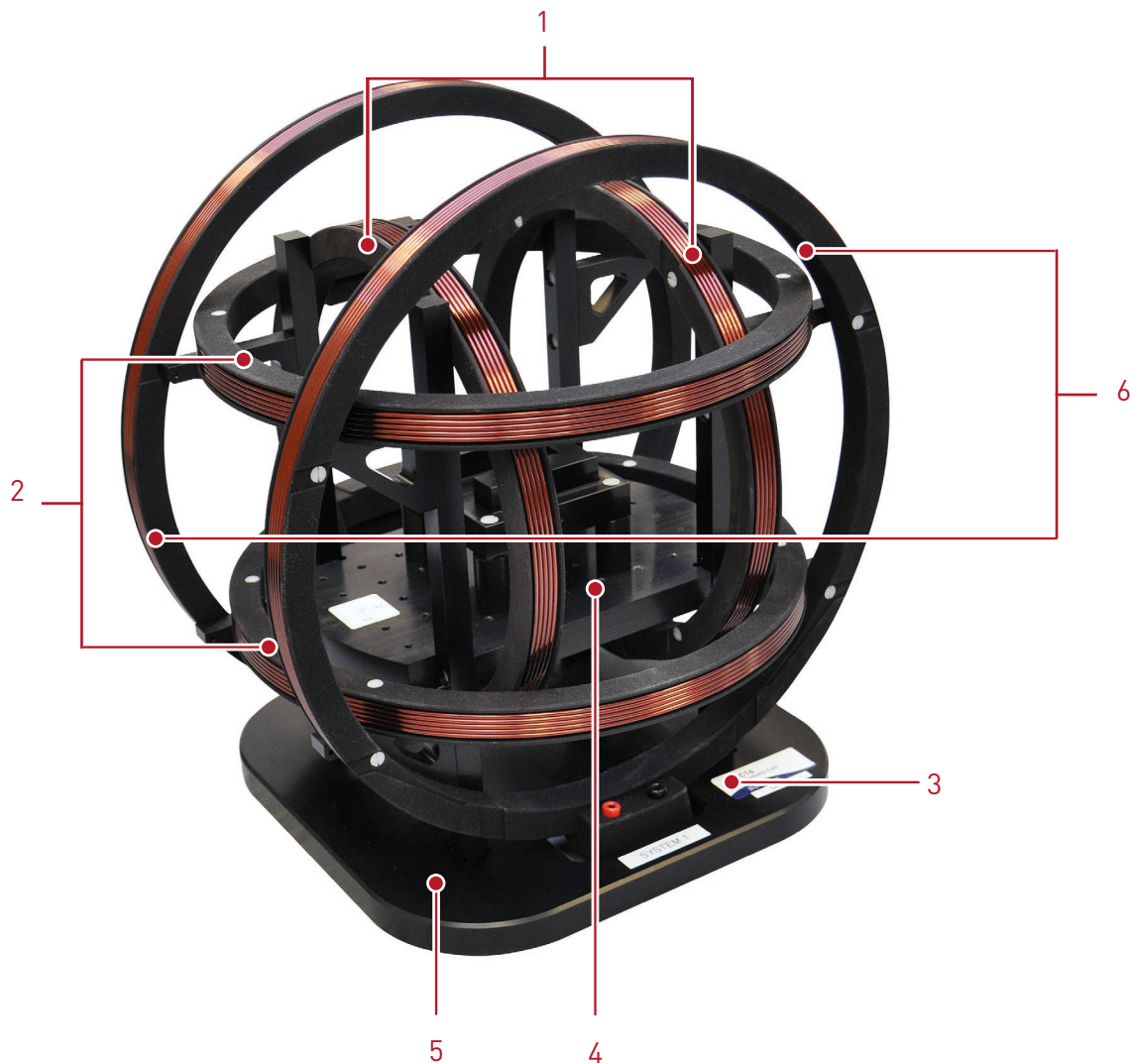


Figure 1. HC16 Three-axis Helmholtz Coil

##### Key

1. X coil pair
2. Y coil pair
3. HC16 product label
4. Mounting table with mounting holes
5. Base
6. Z coil pair

## 5. *Compatibility*

The HC16 is compatible for use with Bartington Instruments PA1 Power Amplifier. For a complete system the CU1 Control Unit is also required, and optionally the CU2 Closed-Loop Module.

Mounting accessories for Mag-03MS, Mag-13MS, Mag690, Mag648/649 and Mag678/679 are available as an additional option.

## 6. *HC16 Helmholtz Coil Operation*

### 6.1. *Installation*

The HC16 Helmholtz Coil should be installed in a magnetically clean area, that is, an area with small magnetic gradient, and with little magnetic disturbances.

The HC16 should be installed on a non-metallic base and kept away from:

- Large conductive objects which may induce currents, and therefore secondary magnetic fields, when generating AC magnetic fields.
- Sources of magnetic field, either DC (e.g. large objects made of magnetic materials) or AC (e.g. mains powered equipment) as these will distort the magnetic field around them, and may affect the shape and extent of the homogeneous area.

The PA1 includes 3 DC offset controls which are used to compensate for the local DC magnetic field. These will not be able to compensate for large objects which may create a strong localised gradient.

**Note:** The HC16 should be kept a minimum of 3 metres from any potential magnetic interference.

Ideally a magnetic field survey should be carried out to assess the suitability of the site. This can be carried out using a Mag-03 Three-axis fluxgate magnetometer connected to a Spectramag-6 Data Acquisition Unit. Please contact [support@bartington.com](mailto:support@bartington.com) for further assistance.

**Note:** The largest coil of the Helmholtz Coil should be positioned so that the field it generates is in the direction of the lowest ambient field strength. This will reduce the level of DC offset applied, and optimise the maximum field which can be generated in that direction.

## 6.2. Connecting the HC16

The HC16 is a passive coil with no controls of its own. When connected to the PA1 (or any other power supply) and current is circulated through the coils, a magnetic field is induced.

The HC16 connects to the PA1 via the cable supplied. This 5m length cable allows the positioning of the PA1 away from the coils to prevent any interferences. It should be placed in such a way as to not present a trip hazard. The cable is terminated with an 8-way plug that should be connected to the Coil Drive Output Socket on the back of the PA1 Power Amplifier (see OM3225, Connecting the Helmholtz Coil System).

At the coil end, the cable is split in three axes, each split in two (X+ and X-, Y+ and Y- and Z+ and Z-). Each of these is terminated with colour coded banana plugs. The colour coding mimics that on the coil. Connection should be done colour to colour (red to red - start of winding and black to black - end of winding). Please refer to the outline drawing and the label on the mounting table for axes orientation. There is no particular requirement on connecting for example the + and - axis (cable markings) to a specific coil as long as the colour coding on the banana plugs match that on the coil.

For example, the Y axis is the field generated vertically (the two horizontal medium coils). Y+ can be connected either to the top or bottom coil with the red plug going to the red socket and the black plug going to the black socket. The Y- cable will be connected to the other Y unconnected coil.

**Note:** A diagram showing the interconnection of components of the Helmholtz Coil System is given in ["Appendix A: Connecting the Components of the Helmholtz Coil System"](#).

## 6.3. System Checks

Once the HC16 is connected, no mechanical adjustments are needed. Helmholtz Coil System setup, including DC offset adjustments, are done via the PA1 Power Amplifier, using a reference magnetometer (suited to the range in which the user is working and calibrated by or traceable to a recognised international standards institution) mounted in the homogeneous area of the coil. If using the CU1 and a Bartington Instruments magnetometer, the reference sensor can be directly connected to the CU1.

For further details, please refer to PA1 Power Amplifier OM3225.

## 7. Absolute Maximum Power

When using the PA1, or an alternate power supply, the maximum current that may be applied to the HC16 Helmholtz Coil (shown in the product brochure), should not be exceeded.

## 8. Mounting Accessories

A range of mounting accessories are available to mount Bartington Instruments sensors in the centre of the homogeneous area. The Mag-13MS and associated mounting plate is recommended to be used as a reference sensor for periodic checks of the HC16.

Mounting points on the test table are shown in [Figure 1](#) and DR4048.

## 9. Troubleshooting, Care and Maintenance

In the event of any apparent malfunction, please email: [service@bartington.com](mailto:service@bartington.com) or telephone the Bartington Instruments service team on: +44 (0)1993 706565.

## 10. Storage and Transport



**WARNING:** Do not lift by the coils as this may cause mechanical damage to the assembly. Lift only by the base or the table.

The HC16 Assembly is a precision electronic instrument and should be treated as such.

Bartington Instruments has supplied this product in appropriate packaging for transportation. It is recommended that this packaging is used for any future transport.

Refer to the product brochure for this product's maximum environmental, electrical and mechanical ratings.



**Caution:** Exceeding the maximum environmental ratings may cause irreparable damage to the equipment.

## 11. Disposal

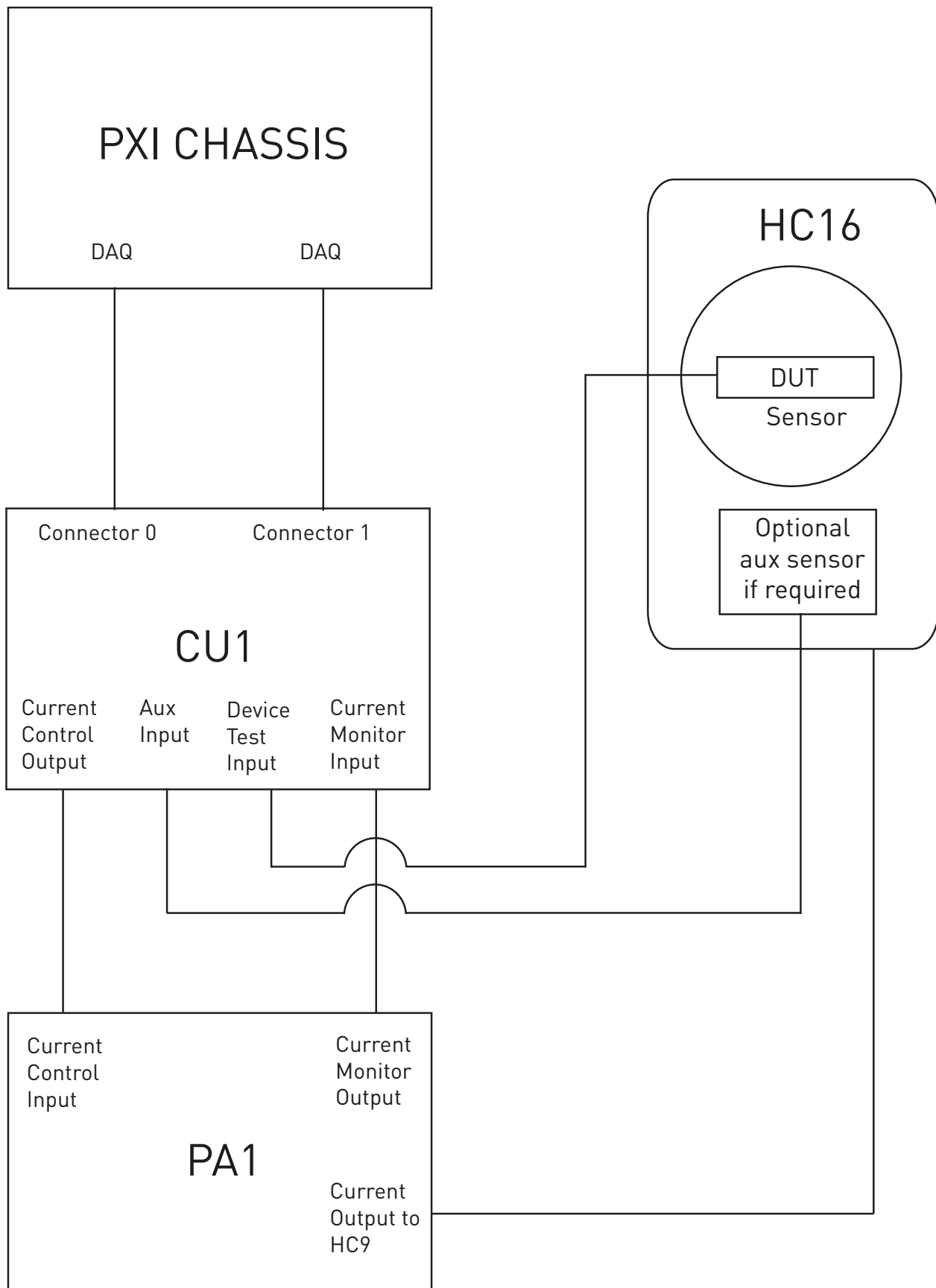
This product should not be disposed of in domestic or municipal waste. For information about disposing of this product safely, check local regulations for disposal of electrical / electronic products.

### 11.1. Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations



This product complies fully with Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS) and WEEE Regulations current at the time of printing.



*Appendix A: Connecting the Components of the Helmholtz Coil System*

## Appendix B - Magnetic field magnitude versus frequency

The curve of magnetic field generated versus frequency for the largest coil is shown in Figure 2.

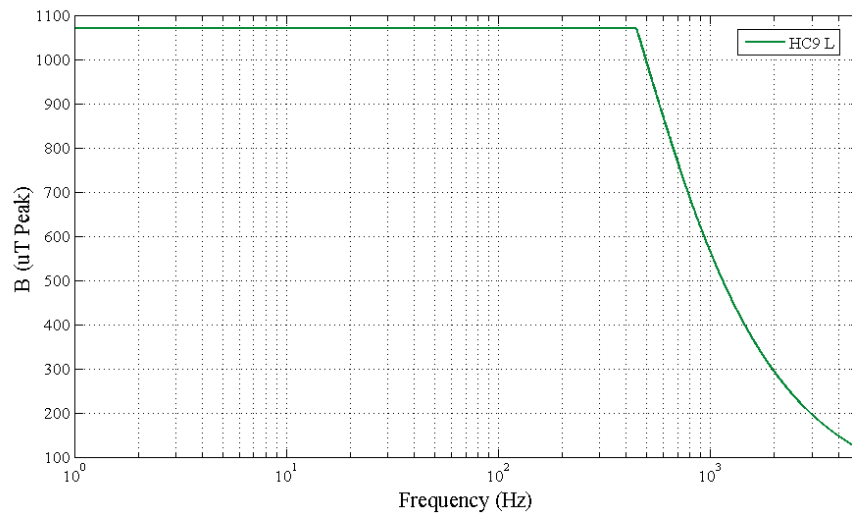
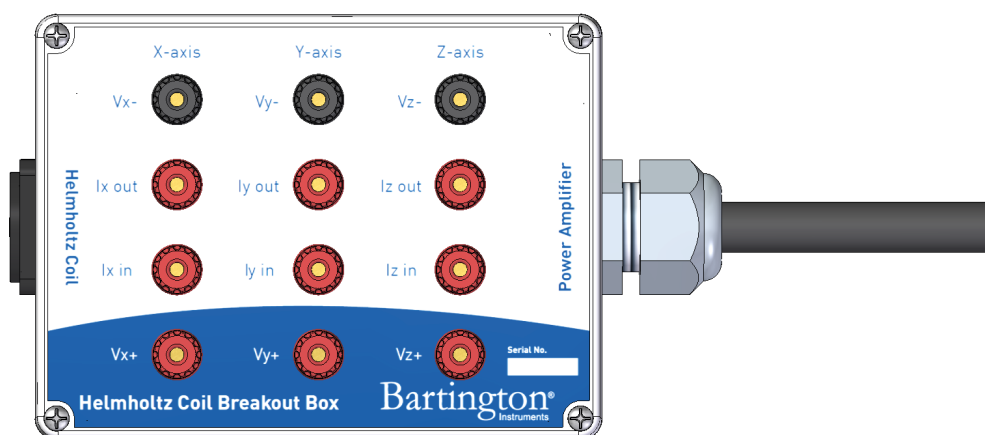


Figure 2. HC16 Predicted Field (Peak  $\mu\text{T}$ ) vs Frequency. (Largest coil shown)

## Appendix C - Helmholtz Coil Breakout Box

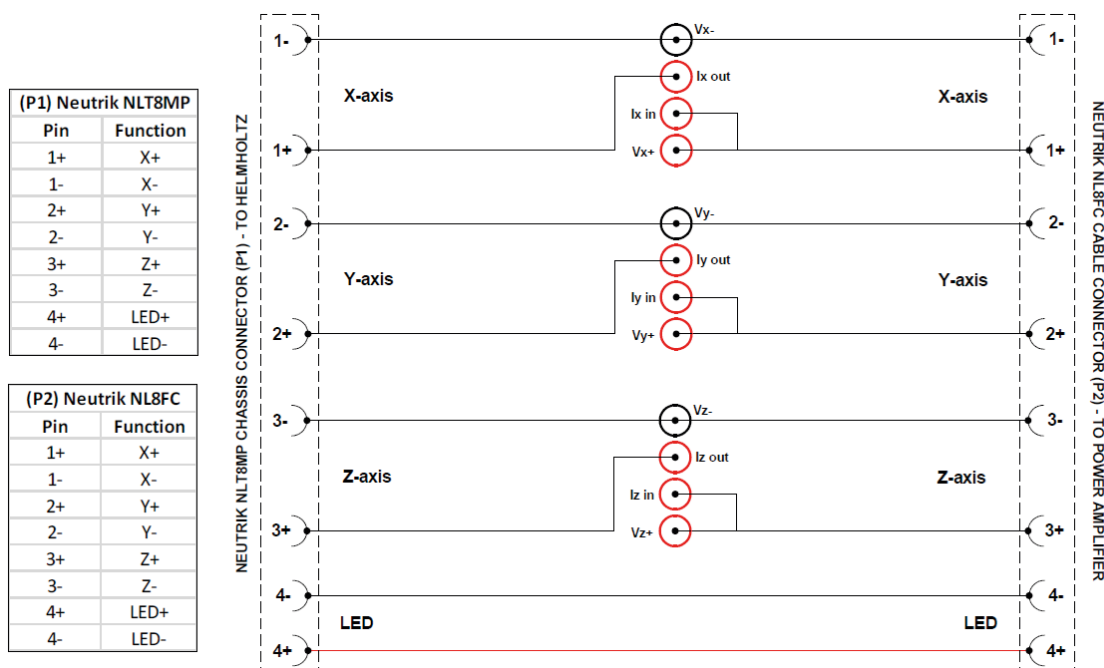
The Helmholtz Coil Breakout Box can be purchased separately for use between the HC16 Helmholtz Coils and the PA1 Power Amplifier. It is used to monitor the current and voltage from each axis. This can be done separately or in conjunction with the other axes.

The box consists of 12 terminals; positive and negative voltage terminals, and current in and out terminals, for each axis. Connections can be made using 4 mm banana plugs.



The voltage can be measured across the **Vx+** and **Vx-** terminals on each axis. During normal operation the **I in** and **I out** terminals will be connected together by a short wire link. To measure the current, the appropriate link should be removed and replaced with an ammeter.

The connection diagram for the breakout box can be found below. See also the outline drawing on the Bartington Instruments website.



**Caution:** Do not interconnect the negative return signals.

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