

Lab Expectations

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Purpose

This document outlines the **shared expectations** for all members of the Abdullah Lab.

Its purpose is to: - Provide clarity on how the lab functions day to day - Set common standards for conduct, communication, and responsibility - Support a professional, respectful, and productive research environment

These expectations apply to **all lab members**, including PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, technicians, and visiting researchers.

General principles

The Abdullah Lab values: - Scientific integrity and reproducibility - Mutual respect and professionalism - Open communication - Shared responsibility for the lab environment

Expectations are framed to support independence while ensuring that work remains transparent, collaborative, and reproducible.

Professional conduct

Lab members are expected to: - Treat colleagues with respect at all times - Communicate constructively, even in disagreement - Be reliable and follow through on agreed tasks - Contribute positively to the lab environment

Discriminatory, dismissive, or unprofessional behaviour is not acceptable.

Concerns should be raised early, either directly or via a supervisor, before issues escalate.

Scientific integrity and documentation

All work conducted in the lab must meet high standards of scientific integrity.

Expectations include: - Experiments are planned thoughtfully and documented clearly - Data are recorded contemporaneously and accurately - Deviations from protocols are noted - Data and reagents are traceable

Lab members must follow the lab's **Data Management and Reproducibility Standards**, including:

- Use of experiment IDs - Consistent file and folder naming - Appropriate data storage - Clear reagent labelling

Both **paper and electronic lab notebooks are acceptable**, provided records are complete, legible, and up to date.

Communication norms

Day-to-day communication

- **Mattermost** is the primary platform for day-to-day lab communication
- Use Mattermost for quick questions, coordination, and updates
- Email should be used for formal communication, external contacts, or administrative matters

Meetings

- PhD students are expected to have **regular supervisor meetings**, typically **weekly or biweekly**, as agreed with their supervisor
- Lab members should come prepared to meetings with:
 - Key updates
 - Questions or points requiring input
 - Relevant figures or data when appropriate

Meeting frequency and format may evolve over time and should be revisited as projects progress.

Ownership and responsibility

Lab members are expected to take ownership of their work.

This includes responsibility for: - Experimental planning and execution - Proper documentation and data storage - Maintenance of personal reagents and samples - Cleaning up after experiments - Following up on results and action items

Asking for help is encouraged, particularly when blocked or uncertain.

Waiting too long to raise issues can slow progress and create avoidable problems.

Shared resources and lab citizenship

The lab relies on shared resources, including equipment, reagents, and space.

Expectations include: - Leaving shared equipment clean and ready for the next user - Returning reagents and consumables to their correct location - Clearly labelling personal materials - Reporting broken equipment, low stock, or safety issues promptly

Good lab citizenship is essential for a functional and supportive environment.

Safety and compliance

All lab members must: - Follow applicable safety regulations and institutional requirements - Complete required inductions (e.g. S2, iFET) before performing relevant work - Adhere to animal facility rules when applicable

If unsure about safety or compliance, lab members are expected to **pause work and ask**.

No experiment is urgent enough to justify unsafe practices.

Expectations around supervision

Supervision is a shared responsibility.

Supervisors commit to: - Regular meetings and availability for discussion - Clear communication of priorities and expectations - Constructive feedback on data and progress - Support in training, troubleshooting, and career development - Guidance on publications, presentations, and PhD milestones

Lab members are encouraged to communicate openly about challenges, workload, and progress.

Raising issues and resolving problems

If issues arise (scientific, organisational, or interpersonal): - Raise them early - Where possible, discuss directly with the relevant person - If needed, involve a supervisor or senior lab member

The goal is resolution, not blame.

Scope and limitations

This document: - Describes **how the lab operates** - Sets shared expectations and norms

It does **not**: - Replace institutional policies - Override safety regulations - Define employment contracts

Notes

These expectations are intended to evolve with the lab.

Suggestions for improvement or clarification are welcome and should be raised so this document remains accurate and useful.