

Lab Etiquette

Abdullah Lab, IMMEI, University Hospital Bonn

2025-12-20

Protocol ID: GEN-LAB-ETQ-001

Version: v1

Author: Dillon Corvino

Purpose

This document describes **day-to-day lab etiquette** in the Abdullah Lab.

Its goal is to: - Prevent avoidable friction - Ensure shared spaces remain functional - Make expectations explicit rather than assumed

These guidelines apply to **all lab members** and complement the broader principles described in *Lab Expectations*.

General principle

The lab is a **shared working environment**.

A simple rule applies: > Leave spaces, equipment, and reagents in a state that you would be happy to find them.

Benches and workspaces

Bench use

- Keep benches as clear as possible
- Only keep materials required for current work on the bench
- Return shared items when finished

End of day expectations

At the end of the day:

- Dispose of waste appropriately
- Wipe down the bench if work involved spills or biological material
- Return equipment and reagents to their designated locations

Benches should not accumulate long-term storage or unused items.

Shared equipment

General use

- Treat shared equipment with care
- Follow posted instructions and lab norms
- Do not modify settings without understanding the impact on others

After use

- Clean equipment if required
- Reset settings if you changed them
- Report malfunctions or damage promptly

If equipment is left unusable, the next user is delayed.

Fridges, freezers, and storage

Labelling

All stored items must be clearly labelled with:

- Name or initials
- Contents
- Date

Unlabelled or outdated items may be removed during clean-ups.

Organisation

- Respect designated areas and shelves
 - Do not move or discard others' samples without discussion
 - Avoid overcrowding shared storage
-

Reagents and consumables

- Close containers properly
- Do not return contaminated reagents to stock
- Inform the lab if common reagents are running low
- Do not use unlabelled or expired reagents

If unsure about a reagent's status, ask before using it.

Tissue culture areas

- Follow sterile technique consistently
- Clean work areas before and after use
- Dispose of waste correctly
- Do not leave flasks or plates without clear labelling

Tissue culture spaces must be kept especially orderly to protect all users.

Booking and fairness

Where equipment or space is shared:

- Be considerate of others' time
- Cancel bookings you do not need
- Avoid monopolising resources

If you need extended or unusual access, communicate this in advance.

Noise, interruptions, and shared space awareness

- Be mindful of noise levels in shared areas
 - Keep phone calls and meetings from disrupting others
 - Respect that others may be concentrating or running time-sensitive experiments
-

Food, drink, and personal items

- Follow safety rules regarding food and drink in lab areas
 - Keep personal items out of experimental spaces
 - Store food only in designated areas
-

Problems, mistakes, and accountability

Mistakes happen.

If something goes wrong: - Inform relevant lab members promptly - Do not hide problems or hope they go unnoticed - Work collaboratively to resolve issues

Early communication prevents small problems from becoming larger ones.

Scope

This document focuses on **practical etiquette**, not: - Scientific judgement - Performance evaluation - Institutional policy

When in doubt, default to **clear communication and consideration for others**.

Notes

These guidelines reflect current lab practice and may evolve.

Suggestions for improvement are welcome and should be raised so expectations remain clear and fair.