

# 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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

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## 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.