

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Unlabelled or outdated items may be removed during clean-ups.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