

The *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* states that anyone involved in research is required to retain clear, accurate and complete records of all research and where possible, must allow access and reference to these records by interested parties.

The laboratory notebook provides a record with sufficient detail to enable anyone with a certain level of expertise to be able to understand what was done. There should be enough information included so that experiments can be independently reproduced based on the information recorded.

*Laboratory notebooks remain the property of The University of Newcastle and must remain at the University of Newcastle even if you leave the University. In each laboratory a logbook should be kept of the various notebook numbers, locations and where any other files or data (electronic or otherwise) relating to the notebooks are stored.*

### Essential Requirements for Laboratory Notebooks

Laboratory Notebooks must:

- Be bound and have consecutively numbered pages
- Record the date on every entry page
- Have entries made in permanent ink (ballpoint pen / biro)
- Strike through blank sections using a single diagonal line
- Include notes such as new ideas and plans for experiments
- Include the purpose of each experiment
- Be completed as the experiment is carried out, with each page signed and dated. Results are to be entered immediately as obtained
- Include definitions for non-standard terms and abbreviations
- For related work carried out by another person, the data must be entered in notebook as soon as received
- Include photographs, graphs and other non-easily recordable data with glue, signed and dated across the border to show when added. Large or bulky results, such as large computer printouts, may need to be kept separately
- Have each page signed and dated by at least one witness\* who understands the experiment and, ideally, who observed the experiment

\*The witness should not be a co-inventor of any invention embodied in the experiment being witnessed. Critical experiments should not be conducted by co-inventors. Laboratory technicians working under direct instruction of the inventor, using standard manipulations, and who are not required to solve problems in order to perform the experiment will likely satisfy this requirement

Laboratory Notebooks must not:

- Have incorrect entries erased. These instead should be struck through with a single line
- Have erasers, correction tape or correction fluid used. When corrections are necessary, the correction should be made on the current page with a reference back to the page containing the error and the reason for the correction

- Have pages that have been signed and witnessed altered
- Have signatures backdated

Electronic records are permitted if using Electronic Laboratory Notebook software, provided they can be shown to reliably and accurately identify who created the entry and the date the entry was created, as well as ensuring that the entry cannot be amended without full details of the amendment (content, date and person) being recorded.