



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

SOP NUMBER SCE-009-01	SOP TITLE GENERAL LABORATORY PRACTICE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMS AND CONTROL ENGINEERING
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PART 1

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PART 2

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PART 3

Authoriser	Date of Issue:
Mr. Simon Sammut University Secretary – Office of the Secretary Rectorate	Date of next revision:

PART 4 (To be filled in by OOS, QSU or RSSD)

<input type="checkbox"/> This procedure has been revised and is no longer valid as from: (Write date)	<input type="checkbox"/> Date of NEXT REVISION is extended until: (Max. 4 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> SOP rendered obsolete on: (Write date)
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1. Reason for revision

- 1.1. New SOP

2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1. To provide general instructions for all authorised users making use of all of the facilities operated by the Department of Systems and Control Engineering.
- 2.2. These instructions are to be followed by all authorised users making use of the above-mentioned laboratories.
- 2.3. SOP outlines the Health and Safety considerations covered in the OHS risk assessments performed for the Department of Systems and Control.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. SOP – Standard Operating Procedure
- 3.2. Lab Coordinator - Any authorised person who is accompanying/supervising a group of people or an individual making use of the facilities.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. It is the responsibility of all authorised users making use of all the facilities operated by the Department of Systems and Control Engineering to follow this SOP, and any additional SOPs given to them and to be aware of any additional health and safety measures advised to them.
- 4.2. It is the responsibility of the Lab coordinator, or delegate and authorised users to ensure that this SOP is followed together with the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

5. Health and Safety Requirements

- 5.1. All authorised users and visitors must note the location of the emergency routes.
- 5.2. All authorised users and visitors must note the location of the first aid boxes.
- 5.3. All authorised users and visitors must read the Occupational Health and Safety policy of the University of Malta.

6. Procedure

6.1. General behaviour in the laboratory:

- 6.1.1. No unauthorised people may be allowed in the laboratory.
- 6.1.2. Eating is strictly prohibited in the laboratory. Drinking is strictly prohibited when making use of workbenches or desks that are equipped with laboratory equipment.
- 6.1.3. Wear sensible clothing including footwear. Refer also to the corresponding Health and Safety risk assessment, signage and SOPs.
- 6.1.4. Report any breakages or damages to the laboratory officer or engineer immediately.
- 6.1.5. Leave your work station clean and in good order before leaving the laboratory. Practice good housekeeping to minimize unsafe work conditions such as obstructed exits and safety equipment, cluttered benches, and accumulated electrical waste or otherwise.
- 6.1.6. Do not leave setups unattended without the prior approval of the attending technical staff, and/or academic supervisor.
- 6.1.7. General good conduct in the laboratory, such as no running and no foul play, is expected.

6.2. Using the equipment in the laboratory:

- 6.2.1. Carefully follow the SOP guidelines of the equipment where applicable and the instructions provided by your tutors regarding the respective equipment which you will be using.
- 6.2.2. When required, use CE certified or BS certified adapters with the equipment power plug or with any of your other devices. Kindly ask the laboratory officer or engineer should you require one.
- 6.2.3. Do not bend or strain the equipment cables, especially the more fragile cables such as those of a keyboard and a mouse.

6.3. Setting up a work station:

- 6.3.1. See that the space under the desk is clear from items that interfere with your posture.
- 6.3.2. Get in line with the monitor.
- 6.3.3. Set up the chair to a level such that the elbows are in line with the desk surface.
- 6.3.4. Use the footrest.
- 6.3.5. See that the area around the keyboard is free from any items that interfere with your typing and use of the mouse.
- 6.3.6. See that the keyboard is inclined and placed at least the size of your palm away from the edge of the desktop in order to have enough distance where to rest your wrists.
- 6.3.7. See that there is no glare on the screen; gently turn or tilt as required.
 - 6.3.7.1. *For touch typists*, ensure that the monitor is at the height of your eyes to avoid frequent movements of the head leading to repetitive motions that can harm your neck.
 - 6.3.7.2. *For those who need to look at the keyboard while typing*, the monitor can be left low to avoid frequent movements of the head leading to repetitive motions that can harm your neck.

6.4. For postgraduate students applying for or with authorised out of office hours access to the laboratories:

- 6.4.1. Postgraduate students applying for permission to have access to one of the laboratories of the department outside of office hours are to follow the instructions after discussing with their project supervisor and technical staff manning the laboratory. In addition, students are expected to have completed the forms in Appendix 1 when applying for access to any of the SCE laboratories and Appendix 2 when applying for access to the Biomedical Engineering Laboratory. In addition, all students applying for out of office hours access to any of the SCE laboratories need to attend a Health and Safety briefing.
- 6.4.2. Book the equipment with the relevant technical staff before you plan to use it out of office hours, notifying the staff of your planned usage of the equipment. Booking should be made via email on a session by session basis.
- 6.4.3. Inspect the cables of the equipment before using the equipment which you are authorised to use. Check for any visual dents or damages to the cables and if any damage is noticed, refrain from using the equipment and notify the technical staff immediately. Inspection of cables should be done before using the equipment.

7. References

- 7.1. Occupational Health and Safety policy
(<https://www.um.edu.mt/hrmd/secure/policies/OccupationalHealthandSafetyPolicy.pdf>)
accessed on the 20th April, 2020.
- 7.2. Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment – Department of Systems and Control –
Biomedical Engineering Lab - Faculty of Engineering.
- 7.3. Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment – Department of Systems and Control –
Control Systems Engineering Lab - Faculty of Engineering.

8. List of Appendices/Worksheets

- 8.1. Appendix 1: Application Form for the use of Laboratories Outside Normal office hours and During
Unsupervised Periods.
- 8.2. Appendix 2: Arising points for the attention of Postgrad Students Authorized to use the
Biomedical Engineering Laboratory outside of Office Hours and during Unsupervised Periods –
Systems and Control Engineering Department.

Appendix 1: Application Form for the use of Laboratories Outside Normal office hours and During Unsupervised Periods.

Faculty of Engineering

USE OF LABORATORIES OUTSIDE NORMAL OFFICE HOURS¹ AND DURING UNSUPERVISED PERIODS²

I request permission to access the following laboratory outside normal office hours and unsupervised period:

Laboratory Name: _____ Department: _____

Academic Year(s): _____

If permission is granted, I agree to abide by University Health and Safety Policy, Faculty and respective Departmental regulations, and by the conditions indicated below:

1. When using the Laboratory during office hours, I will notify the responsible Laboratory staff, or in the absence of the Laboratory staff, I will notify another Department laboratory staff or the project supervisor. I may not perform any work that carries with it risk of personal accident or injury.
2. I will not allow unauthorized persons in the laboratory or the Engineering building at any time.
3. I may not perform any work with exposed electrical terminals at voltages capable of electrocution, except when this is supervised by laboratory staff and all necessary safety precautions have been taken.
4. Experimental laboratory work shall not be carried out in an unoccupied building, except when this is explicitly allowed for specific authorized equipment. No permission will be given to use machine tools unsupervised by laboratory staff.
5. I will sign-in and sign-out the visitors log-book of the laboratory.
6. I will switch off all lighting and equipment used prior to departure from the laboratory, and also lock all doors and windows if the laboratory is being vacated.
7. I shall abide by any set Standard Operating Procedures and Standard Safety Procedures and shall inform my Supervisor and the laboratory staff should there be a need to deviate from these. I can only switch on and use specific equipment authorized, I may not switch on or use any unauthorised equipment.
8. I assume full responsibility for my health and safety during my work here and declare that I am aware of all nearby power-off switches, fire point, first-aid points, emergency exits and procedures.
9. I accept that the access to the Engineering laboratories after office hours and/or during

¹ Normal office hours are: from 1st October to 15th June from 08:00 hours to 17:00 hours, and from 16th June to 30th September from 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours, from Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.

² Unsupervised periods are those periods during normal office hours when there is an absence of supervision by a laboratory officer, for example, due to lunch breaks or off-campus events etc.

unsupervised periods can be refused or withdrawn at any time and that failure to comply to Faculty and Departmental policies will result in loss of after-hours access to labs, and possibly the application of any disciplinary penalties as prescribed by University regulations.

10. I accept that access to the Laboratories will not be given prior to the signature of this form. The signed form is to be submitted to the respective Departmental Systems Engineer.
11. I accept and acknowledge that I will be entering the laboratory entirely at my own risk and I consequently waive all claims which I may have against the University of Malta, and its staff for any reason whatsoever.
12. Accepted applicants may be given an RFID cards and/or mechanical keys to access the Labs. This cards and keys shall be returned upon completion of studies or expiry of the granted access period.
13. Making copies of the keys/cards is strictly prohibited, and violation of this rule would result in an indefinite suspension of access after-hours and payment for the expenses to change door locks.
14. I will notify the University of Malta immediately of any matter or event affecting in any manner the warranties and representations given herein.
15. I agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the University of Malta and its staff, from and against all losses, expenses, damages, and costs resulting from my entry to the Laboratory.

Name of Student	Signature	Date
This permit is not transferable to others.		

Approval by Head of Department	Approved / Not approved
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Period granted:	_____
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Signature of Head of Department:	_____
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Statement of Head of Department:

- I endorse the student's request to access the indicated laboratory
- In the absence of staff supervision, a minimum of two students, having been granted permission, are required to stay after hours within the same floor of the premises.

Name of Supervisor	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____

Appendix 2: Arising points for the attention of Postgrad Students Authorized to use the Biomedical Engineering Laboratory outside of Office Hours and during Unsupervised Periods – Systems and Control Engineering Department.

Department of Systems and Control Engineering
Arising points for the attention of Postgrad Students Authorized to use the Laboratory outside of Office Hours and during Unsupervised Periods

Setting up the work station

The following are the main points to have the workstation ergonomically friendly:

- a. See that under the desk is clear from items that will interfere with your posture.
- b. Get in line with monitor.
- c. Set up the chair to a level that the elbows are in line with the desk surface.
- d. Use the footrest.
- e. See that the area around the keyboard is free from any items that can interfere with your typing and use of mouse.
- f. See that the keyboard is inclined and at least the size of your palm away from the edge in order to have enough distance where to rest your wrists.
- g. See that there is no glare on the screen; gently turn or tilt as required.

For touch typists:

Monitor has to be at the height of your eyes to avoid frequent movements of the head thus making repetitive motions that can harm your neck.

For those who need to look at the keyboard:

Monitor can be left low to avoid frequent movements of the head thus making repetitive motions that can harm your neck.

If using the SMI Eye-Gaze Tracker

Since the equipment is thoroughly based on eye movement and reflexes, a short break is required to minimise the stress. I would recommend that every half an hour there will be a change of person or a five-minute break.

I have read, understood and will follow the above recommendations stated in the risk assessment.

I have read and understood the Risk Assessment of the Laboratory to which I am granted access, outside of normal office hours¹ and during unsupervised periods².

Student name

Signature

Date