# Laboratory Notebook Keeping Checklist

**About this checklist:**

* Laboratory notebooks may be presented as legal evidence in establishing a date of invention in jurisdictions that aware patents on a ‘first to invent’ basis[[1]](#footnote-1).
* This checklist has been reproduced from the Commonwealth of Australia (2012) Australian Government Intellectual Property Manual.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Requirement** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| All work written up in a permanently bound notebook with consecutively numbered pages. |  |  |  |
| Text written in permanent ink. |  |  |  |
| Errors remain legible, e.g. using strike through, not erased or covered. |  |  |  |
| No blank spaces on a finished page and no skipped pages. To start an entry on a new page, draw a line through any unused portion of the previous page. Never tear out or destroy pages. |  |  |  |
| Each entry made consecutively, signed and dated. |  |  |  |
| Corrections are neat, dated, initialised and witnessed. |  |  |  |
| Information is legible, consistent, chronological and complete, without any blank pages. |  |  |  |
| Entries required to be made at a later date are recorded separately and cross-referenced to earlier entry. |  |  |  |
| Additional material is mounted in the notebook, and dated and identified by signature. |  |  |  |
| All entries witnessed on a regular basis by an impartial reliable party. |  |  |  |
| Laboratory notebooks copied and are appropriately stored in a separate location. |  |  |  |
| Notebooks kept for as long as needed to verify the legitimacy of the work. |  |  |  |
| Details of records of any pre-experimental work concluded in relation to the project, including details of any ideas generated during thinking/discussion sessions with co-workers. |  |  |  |
| All non-standard terms, processes and abbreviations defined. |  |  |  |
| Record of equipment details including manufacturer, model and serial number, indication of purpose of use, and a sketch of equipment set-up. |  |  |  |
| No value judgements made on the protectability of the research. |  |  |  |
| Ensure no unauthorised persons have access to the notebooks to preserve confidentiality. |  |  |  |

1. Commonwealth of Australia (2012) Australian Government Intellectual Property Manual, p.78 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)