Usage Guidelines

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." (Henry Ford)

Please print and read these guidelines carefully.
You will be asked to sign this document at your next visit in the centre!

An introductory training that includes completion of a ‘User Registration Form’ and brief formal orientation is mandatory for all users before beginning to use the cytometry centre. Start-up session is provided for use of the FACS Calibur, LSRII, LSR Fortessa, FACS Array, Luminex System BioPlex 200 analyzers and the Coulter CellCounter.

No Access to the analyzers will be allowed without receiving training directly from IFCC Staff and registering for the usage of the centre via iLAB system:
https://abdn.corefacilities.org//service_center/show_external/3348

Only IFCC team staff operates BD Influx high-speed sorter and all experiments must be discussed and scheduled with a Cytometry employee in advance.

The Cytometry Centre serves a large number of users. The following general guidelines will help us keep the Centre tidy, avoid misunderstandings and time wasting, and enable you to get the most out of our state of the art Centre.

1. **PLAN YOUR EXPERIMENTS CAREFULLY.** Our experts are always available to consult on protocols and procedures prior to implementation and we strongly recommend you to come to us before starting any new experiment so as to avoid any expensive mistakes. This includes confirming that the fluorescent labels and their combinations can be analyzed on the instrumentation we have available in the Centre.

2. **BRING WITH YOU**
Make sure you bring with you everything you need to process your samples:
PBS, Pipettes, Tips, Gloves, etc. We will NOT provide the above items. We can supply these items in case of emergency for external users only.

3. **TAKE AWAY WITH YOU**
Racks, ice buckets, pipettes, used tips and anything else you have brought with you. Anything left in the laboratory will be discarded.

4. **SERVICE TIME**
Our analysers are accessible for your use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, different regulations apply during normal working hours (9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday) and outside normal working hours.
   a. If you use the instruments out of hours (5pm – 9am Monday to Friday, or at weekends), ensure that you have filled in an OUT OF HOURS form, which can be provided in advance by our staff.
b. If you use the instruments during normal working hours, you can expect them to be warmed up and quality controlled, ready for your use.

c. Although we can be in earlier and later than the normal working hours, you CAN’T necessarily count on it unless you have arranged it with us in advance. Therefore, outside normal working hours, life gets a bit more complex:
   i. Check in advance to confirm that you know the correct start-up or shutdown procedures.
   ii. If you are starting the instruments in the morning before 9 am, allow about 30 min for the lasers to warm up before use.
   iii. If you are working after 5pm, check the calendar book to see if you are the last booked user for the equipment that day. If you are, then shut down the instrument according to the shutdown procedure you have been shown during your training. As last booked user for the day it is your responsibility to shut down the instrument.
   iv. Make sure you comply with any relevant lone worker procedures.

5. **SHOW UP ON TIME.**

Use iLab Organizer ([https://abdn.corefacilities.org//service_center/show_external/3348](https://abdn.corefacilities.org//service_center/show_external/3348)) for booking the instruments. Please book accurately and as early as possible. If any machine is fully booked on a particular day, we cannot guarantee you will be able to read your samples.

You should give notice to the cytometry staff if you need to cancel an appointment with our staff; otherwise you will be charged for the booking. Please read the Cancellation section point 7!

If you are late and run into the next users appointment you must stop acquiring your samples and finish at a later time, unless you have an agreement with the next user.

If you are going to be late for a sorting appointment by more than one hour then it is your obligation to check to see if your sort can still be done because other sorts may be scheduled on the same day. If there are other sorts scheduled then they will have priority.

6. **CANCELLATION**

The analysers are often heavily used and time is at a premium. Last minute cancellations of time booked are a real inconvenience to people who are trying to plan experiments around availability.

PLEASE NOTE: Repeated cancellations or failure to cancel may result in you being charged for your booking(s). These charges will be made at the discretion of the Head of the Centre.

**Analysers:**
- Booked analysers can be cancelled up to 4 hours before hand without charge.
- Cancellation should be done on iLab system within the 4 hours before the starts.

**Cancellations less than 4 hours ahead will be charged at full cost unless taken up by another user!**

**Cell Sorter:**
- Sorts can be cancelled up to 24 hours beforehand without charge.
• Cancellation can only be done via Cytometry team (by phone or email). 
Cancellations less than 24 hours ahead will be charged at full cost unless taken up by another user.

7. SORTING:
Send your sorting request via iLab system. Cell sorting can be booked at any time of the day starting from 11am. Earlier sorts are not possible because of the warm-up calibration time. It is essential that bookings for sorts are made in advance as our experts will carry them out. Please be aware that some users need to book the sorter for a whole day. You are therefore advised to plan and book your experiments well in advance and to discuss your experimental protocol with us to ensure that sorting is feasible.

8. DATA STORAGE
a. Data files should always be recorded directly on the instrument's computer hard drive. Do not record data on attached devices because it will be lost.
b. Server data transfer: Please use the Cytometry shared drive on our server (\uoa.abdn.ac.uk\global\CLSM\School of Medical Sciences\Repositories\Cytometry) to transfer data files and then retrieve it from your computer.
c. Data transfer on USB memory sticks and external hard drives are not allowed!
Any error caused by an external device will be prosecuted, which may result in legal proceedings against you and banish from using the centre again! Exceptions to this provision are possible subject to agreement with our cytometry centre and IT department. Please contact the Cytometry team if you need any advice on this!
d. Cytometry Staff are not responsible for data files left on Cytometry computers. All users are advised to take their files with them and store them elsewhere safely.
e. YOU are responsible for your own data! Therefore take with you all the data, files or analysis you have done.

IMPORTANT!
The Cytometry Centre is NOT responsible for loss of your data, so please make sure that you have saved your data properly.

CLEARANCE of Software and Workstation!
All instrument and analysis computers are cleaned regularly. Any files left on any computer will be deleted without further notice in order to keep space free on the hard drive.

If you need any help or advice on Data Storage options, Please get in touch with our core staff. We are happy to support you in this matter.

9. DATA ANALYSIS is available on workstations located at IMS Level2 Room2.26. There are MAC’s and Windows based computing systems for the usage of CellQuest, Diva, FlowJo and FCSExpress. FCS Express is also available on the server (V:\FCS-Express). Ask the core staff for getting access to this.
RESPONSIBILITY

UPDATES about charges and services are available on Cytometry Centre homepage and on the iLAB system. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure they are aware of any changes, either by checking the website or by contacting staff members.

→ All users are responsible for daily maintenance of the machine. After use, every user should follow the FACS Calibur, LSR Fortessa, LSRII, FACS Array, BioPLEX 200 and Coulter Counter Start-up and Shut-down maintenance procedure.

→ Users that do not follow the rules, for example running unfiltered cells that clump and clog the machine, leaving the machine on, not doing End-of-Run maintenance and making sure that the waste is emptied and the sheath tank is filled, etc. will be identified and excluded from using the instruments !!

THESE INSTRUMENTS ARE COMMON EQUIPMENT AND HAVE TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT SO THAT WE MAY OPERATE THEM FOR A LONG TIME WITHOUT INCURRING ADDITIONAL EXPENSE OR BREAKDOWNS DUE TO MISUSE.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Scientists are reminded to include the services of the Cytometry Centre in their grant applications and we will be happy to assist in designing any future projects. This will ensure that the Cytometry Centre is an appropriate venue for the proposed research, that the project design incorporates the efficient use of the Cytometry, and that the costly resources of the Centre are used for the greatest scientific benefit.

For any details on the organization or the design of future projects please contact out IFCC experts.

PUBLICATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Any formal presentations or publications resulting from work performed in IFCC should be acknowledged and a reprint should be provided. The following statement is suggested: "We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Iain Fraser Cytometry Centre at the University of Aberdeen."

Finally we would like to invite and encourage everyone using our unique, cutting-edge cytometry centre for their Research.

We are strongly convinced that Cytometry will contribute and improve your success in your Research. Therefore let’s come together, keep together and work together as Michael Jordan:

“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.”

Your IFCC Team