

'Best practices' factsheet

Data from the electronic laboratory notebook at the end of the thesis

The electronic laboratory notebook is essential for managing and documenting research data. It guarantees authorship and the precedence of research results, serving as evidence in the event of a dispute.

What steps must a PhD student take regarding the data in their electronic laboratory notebook once their thesis is complete?

For most of the actions listed below, it is recommended that they be carried out as the thesis work progresses.

1. Check the naming conventions for all entries (experiments, resources and templates), ensuring they comply with the naming rules established for the project and that no entry is left 'untitled'.

2. Ask your thesis supervisor to sign the entries using the approver's role.

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Request action

Select action

Sign

Select collaborator

Supervisor

Close
Save



Add signature

Adding your signature will cryptographically sign the content of this entry, and the signature will be stored alongside the content at the time of signature, in an archive, visible as attachment (masked by default because archived).

Select a meaning for this signature

Approval

Enter your passphrase to unlock your secret key:

Cancel
Add your signature

3. Sign the entries with the author's role and add a timestamp.



Add signature

Adding your signature will cryptographically sign the content of this entry, and the signature will be stored alongside the content at the time of signature, in an archive, visible as attachment (masked by default because archived).

Select a meaning for this signature

Authorship

Enter your passphrase to unlock your secret key:

Cancel
Add your signature



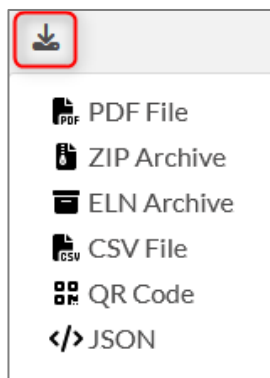
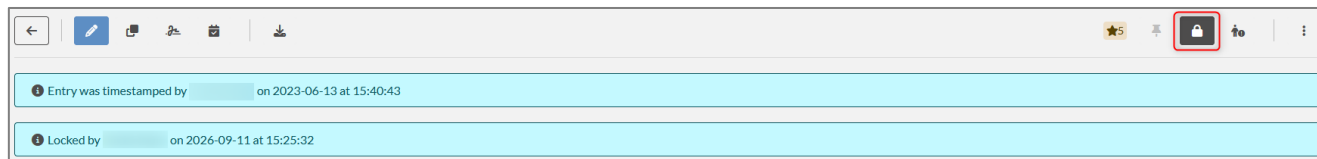
Timestamp Entry

Timestamping an entry will create an irrefutable proof that the data was present at this point in time. You can timestamp an entry as many times as necessary: an immutable timestamp archive will be created each time, and stored as attachment.

With Trusted Timestamping (RFC3161), a cryptographic hash of your data is sent to a trusted third party. They reply with a token containing the current time, and they sign the token with their private key.

Cancel
Timestamp

4. Lock the entries so that they can no longer be edited by other users who have editing rights for them.



5. If necessary, export the entries to keep a copy.

- The .pdf format will allow you to keep copies of the entries in their formatted state.
- The .csv and .eln formats will make it easier to import the copied entries into another instance of an electronic laboratory notebook that is compatible with these file formats.

6. Ask the admins of your eLabFTW team to archive your user account. To find out who the admin(s) of your team are, go to the [Directory of Open Science networks of the Université de Lorraine](#)

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Need help?

The ADOC Lorraine Data support service is here to help you use the electronic lab notebook. Please email donnees-recherche@univ-lorraine.fr.

Would you like to find out more about data management towards the end of your PhD?

A practical guide entitled [What to do with your PhD research data? Key points to know](#) is available.