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## Laboratory technician office location

Posted by Anonymous on Fri, 2018-02-16 19:21

Laboratory technician office location: Can anyone help? I'm trying to find out if there are any reg's regarding office space for lab techs and whether lab techs can be "housed" in the prep room where chemicals are stored. Should a laboratory technician's office space be in the preparation room? Common sense suggests that such a placement is inappropriate on OH&S grounds as the preparation room is a work area with well-defined potential hazards. Could you point me to some documentation regarding this?

### Voting:



Average: 5 (2 votes)

### Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

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Showing 1-2 of 2 Responses

## Answer by labsupport on question Laboratory technician office location

Submitted by sat on 16 February 2018

*Answer reviewed 20 February 2023*

You are correct! It is best practice for a laboratory technician's office to be located separate from but located near the preparation laboratory. Configuring the workspaces and floor plans is an important aspect of designing a secondary school science area.

ASSIST has developed [GUIDELINES for the design and planning of secondary school science facilities in Australian schools](https://assist.asta.edu.au/resource/4175/guidelines-design-and-planning-secondary-school-science-facilities-australian-schools) 1 In particular see 3.2 Staff office areas on page 16.

“Laboratory technicians should have an office area with access to a telephone, computer and peripherals for administration tasks that is separate from, but connected to, the preparation laboratory. Similarly, science teachers may also need to have their office space in the science precinct so that they will be close to the science technical resources and staff.

Staff rooms for meals and informal meeting spaces may also be provided but food or drink preparation, storage or washing up *must not be carried out* in the preparation laboratory or teaching laboratories.”

The aspect of having an office space separate from chemicals is very clearly stated in AS 2243.1:2021 Safety in laboratories. Part 1: Planning and operational aspects. Section 2. Planning the laboratory for safety.<sup>2</sup>

#### “2.2.6. Write-up areas

Precautions should be taken to ensure that reading and writing materials do not become contaminated or damaged.

Write-up areas shall be separated from areas where hazardous materials are used or harmful processes are undertaken (refer to AS/NZS 2982)

NOTE Write up areas in laboratories should only be used on a temporary basis and should not be used as a substitute for office areas/activities.”

Education Queensland Organisational Health Unit has produced a very useful fact sheet which outlines science laboratory and preparation area safety.<sup>3</sup> It quotes the Australian Standard (AS2243:1:2021) for planning and operations in laboratories and refers to this clause stating that hazardous material storage and usage areas, as well as harmful processes, must be separated from write-up areas. I draw your attention to the second point of the ‘Key points to remember’ section.

## References

1 Science ASSIST. 2017. GUIDELINES for the design and planning of secondary school science facilities in Australian schools. Retrieved from the Science ASSIST website:

<https://assist.asta.edu.au/resource/4175/guidelines-design-and-planning-secondary-school-science-facilities-australian-schools>

2 Standards Australia. 2021. AS 2243.1: 2021 *Safety in Laboratories, Part 1: 2021 Planning and Operational Aspects*. Sydney, Australia. This extract from AS 2243.1:2021 Safety in laboratories Planning and operational aspects is Reproduced by ASTA with the permission of Standards Australia Limited under licence CLF1222asta. Copyright in AS 2243.1:2021 vests in Standards Australia. Users must not copy or reuse this work without the permission of Standards Australia or the copyright owner.

3 Department of Education Queensland, (2022, June) *Science laboratory and preparation area safety Factsheet*, Retrieved from the Department of Education Queensland website:  
<https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/health-and-wellbeing/workplaces/safety/resources>  
(scroll down to find the factsheet)

## **Answer by nehal.trivediasta on question Laboratory technician office location**

Submitted by on 23 March 2018

Very good question and thanks for the expert answer. The clarification helps a lot.

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