Learning in Practical Environments

Throughout your studies you will perform exercises in practical environments such as laboratories, site visits or field work.

Practical exercises are designed to help you:
- apply your theoretical understanding in a tactile way
- expand your theoretical understanding
- use techniques and equipment safely and correctly
- develop skills such as time management.

Most practical exercises consist of three major parts.
1. Preliminary work or 'pre-labs', which involve preparing for the exercise.
2. The exercise itself, where you will perform the activity under the guidance of an educator.
3. A post-exercise submission to be completed within the session or at a later date. These can take the form of work such as reports or presentations.

You will be provided with detailed guidelines for each exercise you undertake. Below are some general tips on how to prepare for your exercise, minimise stress during your session, and complete any submissions.

Before the exercise:

Read the materials and procedures for your exercise 2 to 3 days prior to your session (highlight key concepts, procedures and measurements).

Ask yourself: **what am I trying to determine** in this exercise?

If a method is provided **summarise the key steps** in a dedicated notebook.

Complete and pass any **pre-exercise activities** such as quizzes, risk assessments or additional reading.

During the exercise:

Arrive on time! Educators generally provide context, useful tips and safety warnings at the start of the session.

Ask your educator for clarification of the material and procedures.

Discuss your understanding and predictions with other students and the educator.

Take detailed notes of procedures, observations and measurements in a dedicated notebook.
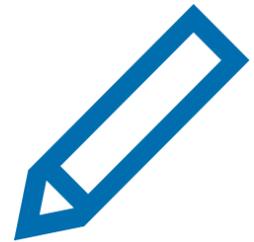
After the exercise:

Consult the assessment guide and/or marking rubric for any required submissions.

Clarify points of confusion with your educators and/or other students (unit forums are an ideal place).

Complete any required submissions within the time allocated.

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