EXEC: the Centre for Experimental Economics at the University of York

Information for members of EXEC and users of the EXEC laboratory

General

Welcome. This document gives you an overview of the facilities available at EXEC and how you can use them. EXEC has its own website where you can find lots of relevant information.

hroot

This is the Hamburg registration and organization online tool, written and copyrighted by the University of Hamburg. It is loaded here and all EXEC members should register on it. Through hroot you can register experimental sessions and send out invitations. The developers write (see 'Site credits and contact'): “In order to ease and enhance the cooperation of all interested users of hroot we have set up a GitHub platform in the Internet (https://github.com). There you will always find the latest version of hroot, as well as a wiki with a detailed installation guide.” Please make sure that you close all sessions on hroot when you have run all the sessions for a particular experiment. We send out recruitment messages for hroot every now and again.

EXEC laboratory

This has 32 clients and a server, the latter in a control room at the back of the lab. The lab is physically located on the 2nd floor of the ARRC building; the EXEC website gives details. You will need a swipe card to gain access; you should ask John Hey to obtain one. You will need to book the laboratory both for running experiments and testing the software. We have to share the lab with other people and occasionally it is very heavily booked. If you are a York member of staff, you can find the state of current bookings by going to the Room Bookings and click on Staff Room Booking and then log into Planon, then click on Book a room and then on View room bookings. On the same site you can make a lab booking. Do make sure that you book the lab well in advance.

You should tell the lab manager Mark Wilson well in advance the software setup that you will need for your experiments. He will load that, and only that. We have Z-tree, Visual Basic, Visual Studio and Python in addition to all the usual Office stuff plus Internet servers. Again if you are at York, you can tell Mark through this spreadsheet.
The screens in the lab may be down if the previous users did not want them. You will almost certainly need them. We should warn you that they take quite a time, and lots of effort, to put them up. You should check who is using the lab after you. If it is an experimenter, leave the screens up when you leave; if not leave them down. Please leave the lab and the control room tidy: anything left around will probably be destroyed.

The EXEC server

All EXEC members their own area with username (*firstname.lastname*) and a password (initially the same as the username but you should change it) on the server. If you are a new user, ask Mark Wilson to set up an account for you. We recommended that you construct separate directories within the area of one of the people on each project for each project, and give the other people on the project rights to access the project areas. You will be responsible for managing your own areas.

Z-tree

The server has many different versions of Z-tree in the ‘Z-tree versions’ folder. Make sure that the version you want is copied to the Z-tree folder. Your program should also be there. When you click on the Z-tree icon on the screens, you will be taken there.

Cash

If you need cash for paying your subjects, you can get this from the Cash Office, which is physically located in the Market Place. You should contact them well in advance of the experiment, telling them how much you want and in what denominations. The money will have to be in some University account; if you are transferring it from outside York, you should contact Vim McDermott, the Departmental Resource Manager well in advance.

Receipts

You should keep standard receipts for all experiments that you run. These can be found on the EXEC website. You are responsible for keeping your accounts.

Checklist

When carrying out an experiment you should take the following steps:

1. Make sure that your experiment conforms with the Ethical Statement of EXEC, which you can find on the EXEC website.
2. Get your experiment approved by the Director of EXEC.
3. No deception of subjects will be tolerated.
4. Get the instructions approved by the Director of EXEC, both printed versions and any versions you plan to run on the PCs using PowerPoint.
5. Make an appointment with Mark Wilson to make sure that he will load exactly what you want in the experiment on the PCs in the laboratory.
6. Book the laboratory both for the actual experiment and for testing the software in the laboratory.
7. It may be useful to also book ARC/108 (at the end of the corridor to the left of the lab when leaving it); this is a good place to pay subjects at the end of the experiment.
8. Register the experiment on hroot.
9. Test the experiment in the laboratory.
10. Make sure that all the data that you want is being recorded (preferably on the server).
11. Some three or four days before the experiment, send out invitations using hroot.
12. Several days before the experiment warn the Cash Office as to how much cash you are going to need and in which denominations.
13. A couple of days before the experiment go to the cash office and get the necessary cash in the appropriate denominations.
14. Print out any instructions you need.
15. Print out enough receipts. These should later be given to Vin McDermott (plus a summary) if you have used any money that goes through University channels. You should also give him any residual money you took from the Cash Office but did not use. This does not apply to external users who bring their own cash.
16. Print out from hroot the lists of names of the subjects who are registered for each session.
17. On the day of the experiment, go to the laboratory early and check that everything is set up; you may need to put up the screens; this takes time.
18. Subjects can no longer wait inside the corridor; they have to gather outside the door to the corridor. Put up the welcome sign and go and greet them as they arrive.
19. Make sure that the subjects are treated with respect and that they observe the rules that you have laid down.
20. When the session starts, tell hroot which subjects registered for the experiment have turned up and participated.
21. When the experiment is finished pay the subjects in cash (preferably in Focus Room 2) and make sure that each signs a receipt for the money that they have received. Enter the amounts on hroot.
22. Refer any problems to the Director of EXEC.
23. When the session is over, make sure that you leave the laboratory clean and tidy.
24. When the session is over, back up your data from the server.
25. When all sessions are completed tell hroot that the experiment is over.
26. When all sessions are over give the receipts and any residual money to Vin McDermott.
27. Write up and publish your results, giving due credit to EXEC.

**Anonymity**

We tell our subjects that their responses are completely anonymous and you should make sure that this is true. In particular, do not let them any personal data (such as contact details) on the receipts.

*John Hey*

January 2018