

The Development of Enzyme Based Printable Glucose Sensors

by

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Declaration

I hereby certify that the work embodied in the thesis is my own work, conducted under normal supervision.

The thesis contains published scholarly work of which I am a co-author. For each such work a written statement, endorsed by my co-authors, attesting to my contribution to the joint work has been included.

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Sundus Al-Zuhairi

9 March 2021

Dedication

To souls of my father, Abdulrazzaq, and my nephews, Nabil, and Adam, who left early before achieving their dreams in this life, and to my mother, brothers, and sisters, who taught me nothing is impossible. Patience, positivity, caring and happiness have come from you and your unfailing support.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Organic Thin Film Transistors.....	4
1.3 Biosensors.....	5
1.3.1 Types of Biosensor	6
1.3.1.1 Amperometric sensors.....	6
1.3.1.2 Potentiometric sensors	7
1.3.1.3 Optical sensors.....	8
1.3.1.4 Piezoelectric sensors	8
1.3.1.5 Calorimetric sensors.....	9
1.3.1.6 Impedimetric sensors	10
1.4 Printable sensors.....	11
1.5 Applications of Biosensors	12
1.6 Glucose Biosensors	14
1.7 Saliva	17
1.8 Motivations and Aims	18
Chapter 2: Experimental Procedure and Materials	19

2.1 Materials	19
2.1.1 P3HT	19
2.1.2 PEDOT: PSS	22
2.1.3 Nafion	23
2.1.4 Polyacrylonitrile	25
2.1.5 Glucose oxidase	26
2.1.6 Indium-tin-oxide (ITO)	29
2.2 Device Fabrication	30
2.2.1 Device Architecture	32
2.2.2 Spin-coating	34
2.3 Physical Material Characterisation.....	35
2.3.1 Profilometry	35
2.3.2 Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	36
2.3.3 Atomic Force Microscope (AFM)	37
2.4 Electrical Device Characterisation	41
2.4.1 Transistor Characterisation	41
2.4.2 Sensor Characterisation	43
Chapter 3: Standard Fabrication and Figure of Merit	45
3.1 Introduction.....	45
3.2 Transistor Characterisation	48
3.2.1 Structure	48

3.2.2 Electrical Characterisation	52
3.3 Modifying the Transistor Architecture	54
3.3.1 Replacing PEDOT with Nafion.....	55
3.3.2 Replacing PVPy with PVP.....	58
3.3.4 Introduction of GOX to the sensor structure.....	62
3.4 OTFTs as a saliva glucose sensor	64
3.4.1 Response of sensor to glucose concentration (current vs time)	65
3.4.2 Improving response time by removing the PVP layer.....	74
3.5 Data Analysis	78
3.5.1 Determining a suitable figure of merit (FOM).....	79
3.6 Summary.....	81
Chapter 4: Investigating the Effect of Fabrication Conditions on P3HT and Nafion Films and their Interface within the Sensor.....	82
4.1 Introduction.....	82
4.1.1 Aim	83
4.1.2 Experimental	83
4.2 P3HT Film Characterisation	84
4.2.1 P3HT film thickness as a function of deposition conditions.....	84
4.2.2 Electrical properties of P3HT films as a function of annealing temperature.....	86
4.3 Nafion Film Characterisation.....	91
4.3.1 Nafion film thickness as a function of deposition conditions	91
4.3.2 Electrical properties of Nafion as a function of annealing temperature	93

4.4 P3HT/Nafion Bilayer Characterisation	95
4.4.1 Electrical properties of P3HT/Nafion Bilayer as a function of annealing temperature	96
4.5 Characterising the Effect of the Addition of Water to the Component Layers.....	102
4.5.1 Characterising the effect of the addition of water on P3HT films	103
4.5.2 Characterising the effect of the addition of water on Nafion films.....	107
4.5.3 Characterising the effect of the addition of water on the P3HT/Nafion bilayers.	109
4.6 Characterising the Effect on Sensor Characteristics of Device Annealing Temperature.	113
4.7 Conclusion	116
Chapter 5: PAN Film Fabrication and PAN-mediated Devices	118
5.1 Introduction.....	118
5.2 Experimental	124
5.2.1 Materials and method	124
5.2.2 Preparation of the polymer (PAN) membrane	125
5.2.2.1 Preparation of wet PAN films using spin coating	125
5.2.2.2 Preparation of wet PAN films using the drawing bar technique	128
5.3 Controlling and characterising the properties of the PAN film	130
5.4 Effects of PAN on the response of devices to glucose solution addition	150
5.5 Conclusion	153
Chapter 6: Modifying the Approach to Glucose Sensing to Mitigate Variance in Device Response.....	154

6.1 Introduction.....	154
6.1.1 Potential sources of variation in device response.....	155
6.1.2 Possible approaches for mitigating sensor variation	158
6.2 Description of the adopted approach.....	160
6.2.1 Experimental	161
6.3 Dual Device Data With/Without PAN (DD1 and DD2)	162
6.4 Dual Device Data with Isolated Devices (DD3).....	174
6.5 Conclusion	183
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Future work.....	184
7.1 Conclusions.....	184
7.2 Future work.....	185
7.3 Summary.....	187
References	188

Abstract

The main goal of this thesis is to develop an easy to fabricate and sensitive biosensor based on organic materials capable of monitoring saliva glucose concentration in people with diabetes.

In Chapter 3 we focus on designing, fabricating and characterising flexible organic thin film transistor- (OTFT-) based sensors suitable for salivary glucose sensing. We employed different device architectures utilising poly-3-hexylthiophene (P3HT) as the semiconductor layer, dielectric layers of either poly(vinyl-pyridine) (PVPy) or poly(vinyl-phenol) (PVP) and poly(3,4-ethylenedioxythiophene) poly(styrenesulfonate) (PEDOT:PSS) as a gate material, to produce trial OTFTs. Our results demonstrated that compared with the initial architecture of ITO/P3HT/PVPy/PEDOT:PSS, when PVPy was replaced with PVP the off current was increased. Nafion was chosen as an appropriate replacement for PEDOT: PSS in the final (ITO/P3HT/Nafion:GOX) sensor device due to the acidity of PEDOT:PSS, with the dielectric layer being removed to improve device response time. The mechanism of signal transduction in these devices is via protonic doping of the P3HT channel and thus acidic PEDOT:PSS leads to a large off current in the device. Upon the replacement of PEDOT:PSS by the Nafion:GOX mixture, a working prototype sensor was produced of architecture ITO/P3HT/PVP/Nafion:GOX.

Chapter 4 focuses on the establishing the mechanisms behind the formation and the effect of mixed interlayers between the Nafion proton transport layer and P3HT semiconductor material. Surprisingly high conductivity was obtained for P3HT/Nafion bilayers, in excess of the native conductivity of either pristine

material, due to intermixing of the materials and doping of the P3HT. Our results suggested that the annealing condition giving the best device performance is a postproduction treatment at 50 °C. A full study of the effect of thermal annealing and the addition of water to pristine P3HT and Nafion and bilayers was undertaken.

Chapter 5 explores the use of a porous capping layer to encapsulate GOX in the device and control the volume and location of added analyte. The phase inversion technique was used to produce the porous polyacrylonitrile (PAN) films for this purpose. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and atomic force microscopy (AFM) techniques were employed to investigate the resultant membrane morphology of the PAN films. Our results show that the PAN films are highly porous and suitable for the capping application and ITO/P3HT/Nafion:GOX/PAN devices showed improved sensitivity to glucose in to the range of salivary glucose levels (SGL) in humans.

Finally, in Chapter 6, the device architecture was redesigned to incorporate a non-GOX containing reference sensor in an attempt to mitigate device-based variation. Sources of sensor output variation is discussed and we observe that the addition of a reference sensor seems to merely add an additional source of variance.

Chapter 7 summarises results and discusses potential further studies.

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Schematic showing the layer structure of OTFTs where V_{gs} is the gate-source voltage and V_{ds} is the drain-source voltage	2
Figure 1.2: External system is one of the main components of a biosensor.	5
Figure 1.3: Iterative glucose biosensor development plan.....	18
Figure 2.1: Chemical structure of P3HT.....	20
Figure 2.2: Chemical structure of poly(3,4-ethylenedioxythiophene) doped with poly(styrene sulfonate) (PEDOT:PSS) used as a transport conductive polymer.....	22
Figure 2.3: Chemical structure of Nafion.....	23
Figure 2.4: Chemical structure of PAN.....	25
Figure 2.5: Glucose oxidase structure	27
Figure 2.6: Schematic depicting FAD being reduced to $FADH_2$	27
Figure 2.7: Schematic depicting the $FADH_2$ is oxidized to FAD.....	28
Figure 2.8: Photograph of the patterned ITO coated glass substrates used for fabrication of OTFTs and sensors.....	30
Figure 2.9: A schematic representation of the fabrication of a standard glucose biosensor.....	32
Figure 2.10: WS-400A-6NPP/LITE spin coater.....	34
Figure 2.11: DektakXT stylus profiler used to measure the thickness of films	36
Figure 2.12: Photograph of the Zeiss Sigma ZP-FE-SEM.....	37
Figure 2.13: Schematic diagram of the AFM in tapping mode.....	40
Figure 2.14: AFM from Asylum Research (Cypher scanning microscope) used in this project.....	40

Figure 2.15: Keithley 2400 Source Meters used for transistor measurement...	42
Figure 2.16: Schematic illustrating (a) The Typical output characteristic of the transistor fabrication from P3HT solution in chloroform, (b) The transfer curve of the same device.....	42
Figure 2.17: Schematic illustrating output characteristic of electrical sensor.....	44
Figure 2.18: Schematic representing current response versus time for water	44
Figure 3.1: Different thin film transistors architectures: (a) bottom-gate bottom contact, (b) bottom-gate top-contact, (c) top-gate bottom-contact, (d) top-gate top-contact	49
Figure 3.2: Basic device architecture and dielectric (PVPy).....	50
Figure 3.3: Schematic diagram shows steps of the fabricated OTFTs device...	50
Figure 3.4: Chemical structure of the poly(3,4-ethylenedioxythiophene)-phene): poly (styrene) sulfonate (PEDOT: PSS)	51
Figure 3.5: Standard OTFTs device (PVPy dielectric) with PEDOT: PSS gate electrode. (a) Output characteristic with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to -1.9 V and (V_{GS}) = 0.4 V to -1.4 V (b) Transfer characteristics (V_{GS}) = 0 V to -1.5 V and (V_{DS}) = -1.4 V. (c) Gate leakage with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to -1.9 V and (V_{GS}) = 0.4 V to -1.4 V.	53
Figure 3.6: The off-set gate structure of device with Nafion.....	56
Figure 3.7: Standard OTFTs device (PVPy dielectric) with Nafion gate electrode. (a) output characteristic with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to -1.9 and (V_{GS}) = 0.4 V to -2.4 V. (b) Transfer characteristics with (V_{GS}) = 0 V to -2.4 V and (V_{DS}) = -2.4 V. (c) Gate leakage current with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to -1.9 V and (V_{GS}) = 0.4 V to -2.4 V.....	57
Figure 3.8: Chemical structure of PVP (a) and PVPy (b).....	58
Figure 3.9: Standard OTFTs device of materials used. (a) (PVP dielectric), (b) (PVPy dielectric)	59
Figure 3.10: (a) Standard OTFTs device (PVP dielectric) with PEDOT: PSS gate electrode. (a) output characteristic with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to - 1.9 V and (V_{GS}) = 0V to - 1.4 V (b) Transfer characteristics with (V_{GS}) = 0 V to - 1.4 V and (V_{DS}) = - 1.4 V. (c) Gate leakage current with (V_{DS}) = 0 V to - 1.9 V and (V_{GS}) = 0 V to -1.4 V.....	61

Figure 3.11: Photo of OTFTs based glucose sensors (P3HT/PVP/GOX: Nafion).....	63
Figure 3.12: Schematic representation of the cross section view of the (P3HT/PVP/GOX: Nafion)	63
Figure 3.13: Device arcticture of ITO / P3HT/PVP/ Nafion: GOX.....	66
Figure 3.14: Figure 3.14: a, b, c and d show duplicate current ($-I_D$) vs time outputs for these devices for the 0.01, 0.1, 1 and 10 mM glucose solutions, respectively. Arrows are represented the event at 300s.....	68
Figure 3.15: a) Figure 3.15: (a) Typical 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM current-time responses for the ITO/P3HT/PVP/Nafion:GOX device structure, whilst (b) shows the same data normalised to 0 μ A at $t = 280$ second, just prior to the addition of the analyte. (c) shows the change in current after 1800 s as a function of glucose concentration. Arrows are shown the plateau current location on the curve.....	71
Figure 3.16: Simplified diagram for OTFT glucose sensing mechanism . a) Glucose diffuses to the GOX in the Nafion matrix whereupon H_2O_2 generated . b) The H_2O_2 is oxidised and protons are generated . c) : Protons then diffuse to and dope the P3HT channel.....	73
Figure 3.17: Schematic of OTFTs based sensor of ITO/P3HT/Nafion:GOX	74
Figure 3.18: (a) Typical 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM current-time responses for the ITO/P3HT/Nafion: GOX device structure, whilst (b) shows the same data normalised to 0 μ A at $t = 280$ second, just prior to the addition of the analyte. (c) shows the change in current after 1800 s as a function of glucose concentration.....	76
Figure 3.19: Current-time responses for the ITO/P3HT/Nafion:GOX device structure highlighting the improvement in response time normalised data for the 1 mM glucose PVP and Non-PVP devices.....	77
Figure 4.1: P3HT film thickness at different concentrations as presented in Table 4.1.....	87
Figure 4.2: Device configuration for P3HT two-terminal measurements	87
Figure 4.3: Figure 4.3: I-V characteristics of the 71 nm P3HT film with varying annealing temperatures (50 $^{\circ}$ C, 70 $^{\circ}$ C, 90 $^{\circ}$ C, 110 $^{\circ}$ C, 150 $^{\circ}$ C, 200 $^{\circ}$ C and 250 $^{\circ}$ C)	88

Figure 4.4: I-V characteristics of the 113 nm P3HT film with varying annealing temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C)	89
Figure 4.5: I-V characteristics of the 135 nm P3HT film with varying annealing temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C)	90
Figure 4.6: Thickness for spin-coated Nafion film as a function of spin-speed	92
Figure 4.7: Device configuration for Nafion two-terminal measurements	94
Figure 4.8: I-V characteristics of Nafion films with varying annealing temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C).	94
Figure 4.9: Device configuration for Nafion/P3HT two-terminal measurements	95
Figure 4.10: Output characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion at 71 nm with varying the temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C).	97
Figure 4.11: Output characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion at 113 nm with varying the temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C).	98
Figure 4.12: Output characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion, 135 nm with varying the temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C).	99
Figure 4.13: Schematic diagrams illustrating the difference in current pathways between devices with thick and thin P3HT layers: (a) thinner P3HT layer device and (b) thicker P3HT layer device	100
Figure 4.14: IV Characteristic of P3HT/Nafion bilayer film annealed at 50 °C with P3HT thickness 71 nm, 113 nm and 135 nm	101

Figure 4.15: Relationship between thickness of P3HT and the P3HT/Nafion bilayer resistance. The resistance error is estimated to be 10 %.....	102
Figure 4.16: Cross-sectional schematic of P3HT sample with water addition as used in this study.....	103
Figure 4.17: Output characteristics of the bilayers film P3HT/Water, P3HT 71 nm at the following annealing temperatures: 50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	105
Figure 4.18: Output characteristics of the bilayers film P3HT/Water, P3HT 113 nm at the following annealing temperatures: 50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	106
Figure 4.19: Output characteristics of the bilayers film P3HT/Water, P3HT 135 nm at the following annealing temperatures: 50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	107
Figure 4.20: Cross-sectional schematic of Nafion samples with water addition as used in this study.....	108
Figure 4.21: Output characteristics of the bilayers film Nafion/ Water with varying the temperatures (50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C,110 °C,150 °C,200 °C and 250 °C).....	109
Figure 4.22: Cross-sectional schematic of P3HT/Nafion samples with water addition as used in this study.....	110
Figure 4.23: I-V characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion bilayer with /water addition for a 71 nm thick P3HT film. The bilayer was annealed at50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	111
Figure 4.24: I-V characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion bilayer with /water addition for a 113 nm thick P3HT film. The bilayer was annealed at 50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	112
Figure 4.25: I-V characteristics of the P3HT/Nafion bilayer with water addition for a 135 nm thick P3HT film. The bilayer was annealed at 50 °C, 70 °C, 90 °C, 110 °C, 150 °C, 200 °C and 250 °C.....	113
Figure 4.26: Plots of $I_{D(max)}-I_{D(800s)}$ as a function of glucose concentration (0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM) for P3HT / Nafion: GOX devices annealed at a) 50°C, b) 90°C, c) 150°C and d) 200°C. Error bars represent one standard deviation for a minimum of 6 replicate measurements.....	115
Figure 5.1: Chemical structure of PAN.....	119

Figure 5.2: (a) Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO). (b) N, N-Dimethylformamide (DMF).....	125
Figure 5.3: Schematic depicting the steps of preparing a thick phase inverted, porous PAN film.....	127
Figure 5.4: Schematic of the draw bar technique.....	129
Figure 5.5: Schematic representation of the cross-section view of the draw bar technique.....	129
Figure 5.6: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of acetone treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN-DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO 3D.....	132
Figure 5.7: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of chloroform treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN- DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO 3D.....	133
Figure 5.8: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of propanol treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN-DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO 3D.....	134
Figure 5.9: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of deionised water treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN- DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO.....	135
Figure 5.10: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of methanol treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN-DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO 3D.....	136
Figure 5.11: 5 μm \times 5 μm scale topography and corresponding phase images of ethanol treated PAN films by AFM in tapping mode (a) PAN-DMF and PAN-DMF 3D (b) PAN-DMSO and PAN -DMSO 3D.....	137
Figure 5.12: SEM micrographs (at 2 kV and 200, 000 x magnification) of PAN films using DMF as a solvent and water as a non – solvent annealed at: (a) 35 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 100 nm), (b) 50 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (Scale bar is 200 nm), (c) 100 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 100 nm), (d) 150 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 200 nm).....	141
Figure 5.13: SEM micrographs (at 2 kV and 100, 000 x magnification) of PAN films using DMF as a solvent and water as a non – solvent annealed at: (a) 35 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 100 nm), (b) 50 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 200 nm), (c) 100 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 100 nm), (d) 150 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ (scale bar is 200 nm).....	142
Figure 5.14: SEM micrographs (at 2 kV and the scale bars are 1 μm) of PAN films using DMF as a solvent and water as a non – solvent annealed at: (a) 35	

°C (magnification is 50, 000 x), (b) 50 °C (magnification is 20, 000 x), (c) 100 °C (magnification is 50, 000 x), (d) 150 °C (magnification is 50, 000 x)143

Figure 5.15: Cross-sectional SEM micrographs (at 2 kV) of PAN films using DMF as a solvent and water as a non-solvent annealed at: (a) 50 °C (magnification is 10, 000 x and the scale bar is 2 μ m), (b) 100 °C (magnification is 10, 000 x and the scale bar is 1 μ m) and (c) 150 °C (magnification is 12, 000 x and the scale bar is 2 μ m).....144

Figure 5.16: Effect of annealing on PAN membranes. a) Photograph of the PAN annealed at 50°C, b) Photograph of the PAN annealed at 100°C, c) Photograph of the PAN annealed at 150°C d) Photograph of the PAN annealed at 200°C, e) Photograph of the PAN annealed at 250°C145

Figure 5.17: Effect of the volume of PAN solution on the thickness of spin coated PAN films. Errors are one standard deviation for a minimum of 5 measurements.....148

Figure 5.18: Effect of the number of layers of tape used in the draw bar guide rails on the thickness of PAN membrane. Errors are one standard deviation for a minimum of 5 measurements.....149

Figure 5.19: Typical I_D vs t curves for PAN containing glucose sensors treated with glucose of concentrations 0 μ M to 10 μ M.....151

Figure 5.20: Calibration for PAN containing glucose sensors treated with glucose of concentrations 0 μ M to 10 μ M normalised to $I_{D(240s)} = 0$ A and using the I_D at t = 800 s as the FOM.....152

Figure 6.1: Device configuration for DD1 showing a single PAN layer spanning the full substrate. One of the sides contains GOX and the other side has no GOX. One drop of glucose analyte (0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM) is deposited in the centre of the PAN layer.....163

Figure 6.2: Top-down view of DD1.163

Figure 6.3: Typical I_D versus time for glucose concentrations a (0 mM), b (0.01 mM), c (0.1 mM), d (1 mM) and e (10 mM) (0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM) where the glucose analyte is dropped in the middle of DD1 at t = 200s.....166

Figure 6.4: Typical DD1 current response versus time for glucose concentrations of; a 0 mM, b 0.01 mM, c 0.1 mM, d 1 mM and e 10 mM. The reference data has been subtracted from the test data and the resulting plot is normalised to $I_D = 0$ A at t = 240s seconds, just before glucose analyte addition.....167

Figure 6.5: Typical ΔI_D vs t curves normalised to $t = 240s$ for DD1.....	168
Figure 6.6: Calibration curve for DD1 glucose testing using the change in current at $\Delta I_{D,T=800s} - \Delta I_{D,t=240s}$ A after addition of 0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM glucose analyte, for a minimum of 6 tests at each glucose concentration. The error bars represent one standard deviation from the average.....	168
Figure 6.7: Device configuration for DD2. One of the sides contains GOX and the other side no GOX. One drops of glucose analyte (0 mM, 1 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM) is deposited on the top of each side of the device.....	169
Figure 6.8: Top-down view of DD2. One of the sides contains GOX and the other side No GOX.....	170
Figure 6.9: Typical DD2 current response versus time for glucose concentrations of; a 0 mM, b 0.01 mM, c 0.1 mM, d 1 mM and e 10 mM. The reference data has been subtracted from the test data and the resulting plot is normalised to $I_D = 0$ A at $t = 240s$ seconds, just before glucose analyte addition.....	171
Figure 6.10: Typical ΔI_D vs t curves normalised to $t = 240s$ for DD2.....	172
Figure 6.11: Calibration curve for DD2 glucose testing using the change in current at $\Delta I_{D,T=800s} - \Delta I_{D,t=240s}$ A after addition of 0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM glucose analyte, for a minimum of 6 tests at each glucose concentration. The error bars represent one standard deviation from the average.....	173
Figure 6.12: Device configuration for DD3 showing PAN layer on both sides. One of the sides contains GOX and the other side No GOX. One drop of glucose analyte (0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1, 1 mM and 10 mM) is deposited on the top of the PAN on each side of the separated device.....	174
Figure 6.13: Top-down view of DD3.....	175
Figure 6.14: Typical DD3 current response versus time for glucose concentrations of; a 0 mM, b 0.01 mM, c 0.1 mM, d 1 mM and e 10 mM. The reference data has been subtracted from the test data and the resulting plot is normalised to $I_D = 0$ A at $t = 240s$ seconds, just before glucose analyte addition.....	176
Figure 6.15: Typical ΔI_D vs t curves normalised to $t = 240s$ for DD3.	177

Figure 6.16: Calibration curve for DD3 glucose testing using the change in current at Av $\Delta I_{D,T=800s} - \Delta I_{D,t=240s}$ A after addition of 0 mM, 0.01 mM, 0.1 mM, 1 mM and 10 mM glucose analyte, for a minimum of 6 tests at each glucose concentration. The error bars represent one standard deviation from the average.....	177
Figure 6.17: Comparison of glucose calibration curves for DD1 (yellow dots), DD2 (orange dots), DD3 (red dots) and the optimised device presented in Chapter 5 (maroon dots). Error bars have been removed for clarity and dotted lines have been added to aid the eye.....	181
Figure 6.18: 1 standard deviation of the average I_D values as a function of glucose concentration for the data points presented in Figure 6.17	181
Figure 6.19: Data in Figure 6.20 presented as a percentage error of the data presented in Figure 6.17.....	182

List of Tables

Table 4.1: Average P3HT film thickness for films spun from different concentrations in chloroform.....	85
Table 4.2: Thickness for spin-coated Nafion films as a function of spin-speed.....	92
Table 4.3: The average current and resistance of P3HT/Nafion bilayers with different P3HT thickness at V=1 V.....	101
Table 6.1: The variations observed B2B = batch to batch variation; D2D = device to device variation.....	158

List of Abbreviations

OLEDs	organic light-emitting diodes
OTFTs	organic thin-film transistors
P3HT	poly (3-hexylthiophene)
Si-NW	silicon nano-wires
ZnO	zinc oxide
V_{DS}	drain source voltage
I_D	drain current
Au	gold
Pt	platinum
C	carbon
Ag	silver
AgCl	silver chloride
GOX	glucose oxidase
ISE	ion-selective electrode
BW	bulk wave
SAW	surface acoustic wave
QCM	quartz-crystal microbalances
DNA	redox proteins (cytochrome)
GluOx	glucose oxidase
BGL	blood glucose levels
GDH	glucose dehydrogenase
SGL	salivary glucose level
UV - vis	UV- visible spectroscopy
OPV	organic photovoltaic
Mw	weight average molecular weight

Mn	number average molecular weight
COE	Centre for Organic Electronics
PAN	polyacrylonitrile
FAD	flavin adenine dinucleotide
Ω	ohm
nm	nano metre
$^{\circ}\text{C}$	degree celsius
rpm	revolutions per minute
PVP	poly (4 - vinyl phenol)
PVPy	poly (vinyl - pyridine)
SEM	scanning electron microscopy
AFM	atomic force microscopy
μL	micro
PoC	point of care
ITO	indium tin oxide
I - V	current - voltage
V	voltage
mM	molar
DD1	dual device unbroken with pan, single drop of analyte
DD2	dual device unbroken without pan, two drops
DD3	dual device broken with pan, two drops
PET	polyethylene terephthalate
cm	centimetre
DMSO	dimethyl sulfonate
DMF	N, N-dimethylformamide
$\text{C}_3\text{H}_6\text{O}$	acetone

CHCl_3	chloroform
CH_3OH	methanol
$\text{C}_3\text{H}_8\text{O}$	isopropanol
CH_5OH	ethanol
T_g	glass transition temperature