

Donation of Your Body for Anatomical Examination, Education or Training and Research

A letter from the department

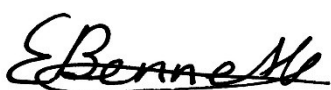
Thank you for your interest in donating your body to the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences at the University of Southampton.

Many generous people feel that they would like their body to have a use after their death. One of the ways to do this is through donating it for medical education. Donated bodies are a valuable resource for teaching the structure and function of the human body to a range of students and qualified professionals including medical, dental, neuroscience, physiotherapy, cardiac physiology, bio-engineering and other allied health professionals.

This booklet aims to provide you with information on who we are, the process of donating your body, and what your body would be used for whilst you are with us.

The Human Tissue Authority (www.hta.gov.uk) regulates the use of bodies for Anatomical Examination, Education or Training and Research under the legal framework set out in the Human Tissue Act 2004. It is the responsibility of the Designated Individual to govern the use of all donated tissue and ensure various standards are always adhered to.

It is important that you understand the information contained within this booklet before making any decisions. We also advise that your next of kin/executors read this booklet as well, so they can inform our team when the time comes. We hope, however, that it will be many years before your wishes need to be considered.



Mr Edward Bennett
HTA Designated Individual



Who are we?

The Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences is the major hub for all anatomy teaching at the University of Southampton. We have a team of dedicated lecturers, technical and administrative staff who strive to support students to the best of their abilities and facilitate a hands-on approach to learning the structure of the human body.



How would my body be used?

Anatomy (the structure of the human body) is the foundation of all medical practices and this is a vital part of the journey to becoming a doctor. We primarily teach our medical students in the early years of their degree utilising a student-centred approach with a resource rich environment of models, radiological imaging, museum specimens but most importantly, the high quality prosecutions (donated material dissected to clearly highlight specific structures) prepared by the experienced staff within the department. This ensures the highest quality anatomical learning. Our students benefit significantly from body donation.

More specifically, once donated, your body may be used for the following purposes:

- **Anatomical examination** – examination (usually through dissection) to teach the structure and function of the human body.
- **Education or training** – training healthcare professionals e.g. in learning surgical techniques.

Whilst we may charge a fee for small courses for education or training, these are transparently costed to account for the use of the facility, staff, equipment and transportation. No profit is ever made from body donation itself.

We have transfer agreements in place with a small selection of other licensed institutions where your body or body parts may be transferred to for education or training.

- **Research** – scientific studies to improve the understanding of the human body.

Please note that, at the University of Southampton, donated bodies are not used for research into specific diseases. Details of other institutions that do undertake specific research (e.g. multiple sclerosis, dementia) can be found on our website. Any research project that does occur only proceeds after receiving ethical approval in compliance with the University's Ethics Policy.

Are all donations accepted?

When the time comes, we aim to build an overall picture of your health to make a judgement to be sure we can fulfil your wishes and appropriately preserve and care for you whilst with us.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that your body will be accepted, and we cannot make a decision about acceptance until the time of death. We strongly

recommend making alternative plans should we have to decline as this reduces uncertainty at a difficult time.

Although not exhaustive, the table below is a list of some reasons which may prevent us accepting a body for anatomical examination:

Postmortem examination
A death overseas
Some infectious or transmissible diseases at point of death e.g. hepatitis, HIV, sepsis
Dementia/Alzheimer's disease – unless we are sure that this has not been caused by prion diseases. If you wish to donate your brain for research into Dementia, please contact the South West Dementia Brain Bank on 0117 414 7821.
Jaundice
Multiple Sclerosis - This depends upon the severity of the condition. If you wish to donate your brain for research into multiple sclerosis, please contact the MS Tissue Bank on 020 7594 9734.
Open wounds such as those from bedsores, varicose ulcers or recent operations which have not healed
Peripheral oedema
Severe obesity or severely underweight. We may also need to decline for a height greater than 200 cm.
Severe arthritic deformity , such that the deceased cannot lie flat
Severe peripheral vascular disease
Muscular dystrophy – where severe muscle wasting has occurred
Some forms of cancer , especially where this has spread across the body
Organs donated for transplantation (except the corneas of your eyes) - contact your GP, or Moorfield's Eye Bank on 020 7253 1199 for a donor card.
Operational restrictions – mainly related to the closure of the facility due to the University's holiday closure or essential maintenance works

It may be the case that other medical schools or tissue repositories within the UK may be able to accept your body with one or more of these conditions. Our consent form gives you the opportunity to decide whether you would be happy for us to explore these alternative options when the time comes (called a referral). If

this is the case, your next of kin/executor will need to bear the cost of transportation.

If a donation is declined, we regret that we are unable to make any financial contributions to any funeral arrangements.

I understand I need to consent for this, how does that work?

Consent for “Anatomical Examination” can only be given by yourself, with sufficient mental capacity to make the decision. Consent cannot be given by someone else, even if they are a next of kin, executor or have lasting power of attorney. Specific wording for “Anatomical Examination, Education or Training and Research” is required and so you should ideally fill out a consent form (at the end of this booklet).

In almost every case, anatomical examination is concluded within three years and your body released during this time. However, we often find it beneficial to retain body parts because the structures are clear, there might be an interesting variation or a localised pathology. If you consent for ‘no restriction on the length of time your body or body parts may be retained’, this offers the maximum flexibility for your body and allows us to retain parts for a longer time. You are also welcome to restrict this time so that no parts of your body are kept beyond three years. In certain circumstances, your body may be used within one month of arrival.

We may find it useful to photograph or film your body or body parts for education, training, research or publication purposes. This may also include anatomical drawing and illustration, obtaining medical imagery (e.g. CT or MRI scans) and 3D scanning. This offers a holistic view of the human body in the teaching of our students. Please rest assured that if you provide consent for this, you will not be identifiable in these images.

By signing our consent forms, we request your permission to access parts of your medical history to assist with our donation process. It is helpful for you to inform your GP of your intentions to donate your body to us, so they are aware when the time comes.

“An invaluable educational resource, but also a newfound respect for human life.”

Medical student, third year

Is that all I need to do to be registered?

You'll need to have a witness to you filling out and signing the consent form and they'll also need to sign the form themselves in your presence. You'll need to do this twice so you can have one copy of the consent form to keep with your will/legal papers and then you'll need to return the other copy to us for our records. Once this is done and we have checked that the form is filled correctly and the consent is valid, we will confirm you are registered on our Programme. We will also send you a body donation card which you can carry with you, similar to an organ donation card.

“ With every donation comes the opportunity to learn something new. ”

CLAS Staff Member

Given the legal requirements for consent to only be provided by the donor, please note that we may reject consent forms where it is clear that the donor has not filled in the information themselves or the witness has not signed the form with the donor present.

Your witness should be someone that can attest your signature. It may be necessary for us to contact them to check the validity of your consent. Often, people choose a member of their family or their GP.

Can I consent in my will?

You can consent in your will or legal papers but a statement similar to the below must be included:

I wish to donate my body after my death. I understand that it may be used for anatomical examination, education or training relating to medical education and research in connection with the functioning of the human body.

It is also useful to include whether your body parts can be retained after anatomical examination has concluded and whether non-identifiable images can be prepared and used. This avoids any ambiguity or interpretation when your wishes are reviewed after your death.

If you have concerns about appropriate wording, please get in touch. The easiest thing to do would be to fill in one of our consent forms which ensures everything in this booklet is covered.

What if I'm unable to write?

We understand that it is not always possible to obtain written consent if you are physically unable to write. You must have sufficient mental capacity to make the decision to donate and you can then nominate someone to fill out a representative consent form, available on our website. The decisions in the form must still be yours.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can withdraw your consent at any time, but this request must only come from you, someone else cannot do it for you. We will need written confirmation of your wish to withdraw either via email or as a letter. Once confirmed, you will be withdrawn from our Programme and we will advise you to destroy your copy of the consent form.

Can I donate my organs as well?

With the nature of organ donation being an opt-out scheme, it is perfectly reasonable for your name to be on the NHS register and to be registered for body donation with us. When the time comes, organ donation would take priority but if the offer of transplantation is not taken up, your body can then be offered for donation. We are unable to accept a body donation where organs (except corneas) have been removed for transplantation as this can interfere with the preservation process.

Am I too old?

There is no upper age limit on donation so as long as you are 18 or over, you could be accepted. Our oldest donor so far was 103!

Do I need to live close to Southampton?

We are usually only able to accept donations from within postcode areas beginning with BH, DT, PO, SO or SP. If you move house, please notify us of your new address either by giving us a call or using the online form on our website. If you move outside of these areas, into one that is covered by another institution, we can help you in transferring your consent to them. You can choose to stay registered with us, but your next of kind/executor will be responsible for any additional costs involved for transportation.

Will there be a funeral service if I donate my body?

You can let us know your preferences on our consent form and your next of kin/executor will confirm these in the paperwork they fill out if we accept the donation.

If we are able to accept, the Faculty of Medicine covers the cost of our funeral director partners in collecting the deceased and transporting them within our catchment area. We do not cover the costs of any funeral directors before this point. Once anatomical examination has completed, we then cover the cost of a modest committal service and cremation with the option for ashes to be scattered or returned to the family. No payment is made to the donors or their families.

The majority of donors/their families ask us to arrange their funeral and cremation, but it is possible for a sealed coffin to be returned to the family so private funeral arrangements can take place. If this is the case, all expenses involved will become the responsibility of the next of kin/executor.

We welcome you or donor's families getting in touch with us to discuss your wishes. We also appreciate that these may change after some time has passed since your death and so we always contact your family again to re-confirm before arranging the funeral.

We invite relatives of our donors to a Thanksgiving service every few years to commemorate the invaluable gift and the impact it has had on our staff and students. Since the Faculty of Medicine opened in 1971, hundreds of generous individuals have donated their bodies and this allows us to offer a small gesture of appreciation for the selflessness of these people, often referred to as "silent teachers". If you are unable to attend the service, we will ask if you would like a copy of the tributes made by staff and students about all the donors accepted during that period.

What if I have further questions?

You can either email us at clas@soton.ac.uk or give us a call on 02380 592630. Our office is open Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm and you can always leave a message for us to give you a call back as soon as possible.

What if something goes wrong or I am not satisfied?

We aim to provide a high-quality service with the greatest of respect to each and every individual who comes into contact with our department. If, at any time, you would like to give us feedback on your experiences including if you feel a complaint is justified, please write to the Designated Individual at:

Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences (CLAS)
Division of Medical Education
Mailpoint 845
Level B, South Academic Block
Southampton General Hospital, Tremona Road
Southampton, SO16 6YD

Alternatively, you can email clas@soton.ac.uk for the attention of the Designated Individual.

Instructions to donors

Step 1

Complete and sign TWO copies of the consent form at the end of this booklet. An extra consent form can be downloaded from our website. Make sure you fill out and sign these forms with a witness present who could attest your signature.

Step 2

Keep one copy with your will/legal papers and return the other copy to the address at the top of the consent form. If you have requested a donation pack from us, use the freepost envelope provided. Note that you do not need to add anything to the freepost envelope e.g. our address.

Step 3

You'll hear from us either to confirm that you are registered on our Programme or if anything else is needed. Make sure you advise your next of kin/executors and GP surgery of your intentions to donate and where the paperwork can be found.

Instructions for the next of kin/executors

Step 1

If the death takes place in a hospital, staff will organise the deceased to be taken to the hospital mortuary. You should contact the bereavement services team who will be able to support you.

If the death takes place at home or in the community, please contact a funeral director of your choice to collect the deceased and take them to their Chapel of Rest at the cost of the donor's estate.

We are unfortunately unable to accept if the deceased is not kept under refrigerated conditions for more than two days.

Step 2

Please contact us as soon as possible. You can leave a voicemail if this happens out of hours and we will get back to you the next working day.

We will ask you several questions about the donor, including their health history. We will then contact their GP surgery to obtain further medical information to assess if we are able to accept. We work to a five-to-seven-day period following the date of death which includes bank holidays and weekends. Any information you can provide to help us build an overall picture of the donor's health will be useful.

Step 3

You will need to make an appointment with the registry office for the region to register the death. You can go ahead and do this before a final decision on acceptance has been made.

If we accept the donation, we will ask our funeral director partners to contact you and talk through the next steps. There will be several forms to complete to prepare for the eventual cremation of the donor. Although our funeral director partners will support you with this, we will need a copy of the original Certificate for Burial or Cremation (the "green form") and an original copy of the death certificate. You will receive these after registering the death.

We will cover the cost of our funeral director partners collecting the deceased from a Chapel of Rest, hospital mortuary or similar once we have made the decision to accept. We regret that we cannot cover any cost prior to this time.

If we have to decline the donation, we will contact you back as soon as possible. In this case, any costs related to the funeral will defer back to yourself/the donor's estate.

Tel. CLAS: 02380 592630

Human Tissue Act 2004 – Bequeaths Consent Form

Part A: To be completed by the person making the donation.

(Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS)

Title: _____ Surname/family name: _____

Forename(s): _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel no.: _____

Date of birth: _____ Religion/faith group (if applicable): _____

Email address (if applicable): _____

I WISH TO DONATE MY BODY AFTER MY DEATH. I UNDERSTAND THAT IT MAY BE USED FOR:

- **ANATOMICAL EXAMINATION, EDUCATION OR TRAINING RELATING TO MEDICAL EDUCATION**
- **RESEARCH IN CONNECTION WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF THE HUMAN BODY**

Please tick either 1 or 2:

1. ☐ I do not place a restriction on the length of time my body or body parts may be retained.
2. ☐ No part of my body may be kept for more than 3 years.

Please tick 3, if appropriate:

3. ☐ I consent to the use of images of my body or body parts. I understand that they will be used for the purposes of education, training, research and publication and that I will not be identifiable in these images.

I confirm that I have read and understood the information in the "Donation of Your Body to the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences" Information Pack. I give my permission for parts of my medical history to be obtained and reviewed to assist the donation process but am aware that there is no guarantee that my body will be accepted.

Signature of the donor: _____ **Date:** _____

Part B: To be completed by the witness to the above decision by the donor.

I confirm I have witnessed _____ completing Part A of this form.

Surname: _____ Forename(s): _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel no.: _____

Relationship to donor: _____

Signature of the witness: _____ **Date:** _____

SIGNATURES – TO BE SIGNED AND DATED BY BOTH DONOR AND WITNESS IN EACH OTHER'S PRESENCE ON THE SAME DATE

Part C: Preferences for burial or cremation after Anatomical Examination, Education, Training and Research is complete

Please tick either 1, 2 or 3:

1. ☐ University of Southampton to arrange the cremation with the return of the ashes to the next of kin or executor
 2. ☐ University of Southampton to arrange the cremation and arrange for the ashes to be scattered in the garden of remembrance at Southampton crematorium
 3. ☐ Next of Kin or Executor to arrange private funeral arrangements. The University of Southampton will return the remains to the next of kin/executor.
All expenses involved in such arrangements will become the responsibility of the next of kin/executor.
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The Centre for Learning Anatomical Science is unable to guarantee that a donation will be accepted. This can be for a number of reasons as detailed in Appendix 1 of the “Donation of Your Body to the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences” Information Pack.

A referral to another institution may be attempted should we be unable to accept. Any conveyancing costs* involved in this arrangement will become the responsibility of the next of kin/executor and they will need to agree to this.

☐ Please tick this box if you **DO** want us to attempt a referral.

☐ Please tick this box if you **DO NOT** want us to attempt a referral.

*Conveyancing costs will be discussed and agreed with next of kin/executor should a referral be appropriate

Complete TWO copies of the form in full (both sides).

Keep ONE copy of the form, with the “Donation of Your Body to the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences” Information Pack and your will/legal papers.

Return ONE copy to the Centre for Learning Anatomical Sciences using the address at the top of the form (Appendix 2).

By completing this form, you agree for your information to be retained on our secure database and agree to be contacted in the future in relation to the donation.