

**School of Medicine**



**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

# Bequest Information

**Information for those who wish to donate their body for anatomical examination  
and instructions for next of kin or executor.**

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## **Introduction**

Thank you for your enquiry about donating your body to the University of Leeds for anatomical examination for education, training and research purposes. This booklet aims to provide you with the information you need to decide whether or not to bequeath your body and, if the decision is yes, to decide the ways in which your body may or may not be used.

Please read the following pages carefully. We do not wish any of the information provided to cause you distress, but we do want you to understand what is involved so that you can make a decision that is appropriate for you.

If you, or any members of your family or close friends, have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of body donation with us, please contact Mrs Sarah Wilson on 0113 3434297.

**Larger print and audio versions of this booklet are available. Please ring on:  
0113 3434297**

## **Anatomical Examination**

The bequest of a body is an immensely generous act that is greatly appreciated and that has far reaching benefits for society. We do all we can to make the best possible use of each precious gift.

Please be assured that for all purposes we keep the bodies securely and treat them with respect and dignity throughout the time that they are in our care. Anatomical examination is defined in the Human Tissue Act (2004) as examination by dissection for the purposes of teaching, studying or research into the structure of the human body. Our work is regulated and licensed by the Human Tissue Authority

At Leeds, anatomy teaching is mainly to students of medicine, other healthcare subjects and related science subjects. We also teach qualified doctors and other health professionals undertaking further training (in surgical procedures, for example) or study. We occasionally teach qualified professionals from other disciplines, such as engineering, when they are working on potentially beneficial

projects that require them to have a clear understanding of anatomy.

As well as being used for educational purposes, parts of your body may be used for medically-relevant research. This research will always be conducted to the highest ethical standards, under the scrutiny of a committee of academic Anatomy staff.

We may charge researchers a fee in connection with the use of your body in their research, but this will be limited to covering the costs that we have incurred, such as those relating to transport, embalming and cremation.

Some of our work is done in collaboration with industry. For example, a firm may sponsor a training course for surgeons, or they may work with us to develop new surgical instruments or techniques. All of this work is done at the University and in strict compliance with the Human Tissue Act (2004). Again, we may charge a fee in connection with the use of your body in such work, but this will be limited to covering the costs that we have incurred.

## **Decisions About Your Consent**

There is no legal limit on the length of time a donated body can be used by the receiving institution. However, if you wish to restrict the time that your body is used, you have the opportunity to do so on the consent form. Once the anatomical examination is complete, your body will be released for disposal according to your wishes. As far as possible, any parts separated from the body during the examination are disposed of with the body.

Under some circumstances, for example where the anatomy is unusual or particularly clear and could benefit education or medical research further, we may wish to retain part of the bequest after the examination is complete and the rest of the body has been cremated or returned to the family/executor for a private funeral. When it becomes necessary to dispose of parts retained in this way, this will be by respectful and sensitive incineration, usually with members of the Anatomy staff in attendance. Please indicate on the consent form whether or not you agree to the retention of parts of your body for further study.

We occasionally transfer parts of a body to another suitably licensed institution. On very rare occasions, we may transfer an entire body. The recipient institution will usually be another University. The same levels of respect, dignity and security will be maintained regardless of where the body, or body parts, are being used. Your body or body parts will only ever be used for the purposes listed on the consent form that you will sign when registering your intention to donate your body to us.

It may be useful for us to prepare images of parts of your body to use for teaching, training or research purposes. Students find such materials extremely valuable, as they can return to them repeatedly as their learning progresses. Please be assured that if you give consent for images of your body to be taken, you will not be identifiable in these images. Again, you can indicate your wishes on the consent form.

## **Organ Donation**

We are not able to accept the bequest of a body if organs (apart from the corneas) have been removed for transplantation. However, it is possible for you to give your consent for anatomical examination and, at the same time, be registered as an organ donor. If, at the time of death, the offer of your organs for transplantation is not taken up, the body can then be offered to the University for anatomical examination.

To register as an organ donor, please call 0300 123 2323 or use the online form available at:

<https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/register-to-donate/>

To give consent for anatomical examination (whether or not you are a registered organ donor), please use the consent forms in this booklet.

## **Acceptance of a Bequest**

We are extremely grateful to all those who bequeath their bodies to us. Unfortunately, though, there are some circumstances in which we have to decline a bequest.



Unfortunately, this means that **no guarantee can be given that a bequest will be accepted**. If the donation cannot be accepted, responsibility for burial or cremation rests with the executor or next of kin.

Although not absolute, the following is a guide to some reasons for *not* accepting a bequest:

1. **Post mortem examination**
2. **Transmissible disease** for example, Hepatitis, HIV, septicaemia.
3. **Some forms of dementia**
4. **Jaundice**
5. **Severe bedsores or varicose ulcers:** the Doctor or Nurse will be asked about the presence of bedsores or ulcers. We are unable to accept deep sores
6. **Peripheral vascular disease:** severe vascular disease of the limbs and severe

diabetes with evidence of vascular disease would be unacceptable

7. **Recent major surgery** where the wound has not healed

8. **Some forms of cancer**

9. **Arthritic deformity:** very severe deformity of the joints and spine

10. **Severe obesity**

11. **Organs (other than corneas) removed for transplantation:**

If you are a registered organ donor but wish to donate your body for anatomical examination in the event that your organs are unsuitable for transplantation, you must give separate written consent for anatomical examination using the forms in this booklet

12. **University operational limitations**

We are sometimes unable to accept bodies because of operational limitations at the University. As an example, we

cannot accept further donations when our storage facility is fully occupied. The absence of key staff may also prevent us from accepting a bequest.

Following your death, we will make enquiries with the relevant medical staff (e.g. your G.P. or hospital doctor) to ascertain whether or not your body will be suitable for anatomical examination. If your body is not suitable, your relatives or executor will be informed as soon as possible so they may make funeral arrangements.

### **The Consent Form**

If, having considered the above information, you wish to bequeath your body for anatomical examination, please complete the consent form in the middle of this booklet. Two copies of the form are provided; you should complete both. You should sign the forms in the presence of a witness, who should then complete the section on the reverse of the forms.

Please return one copy of the completed form using the enclosed envelope. Your wishes will then be registered on our system.

Keep the other copy of the completed consent form, and this booklet, with your Will or personal papers. It is advisable also to inform your relatives, executor and doctor of your intention.

### **Inclusion of Consent in a Will**

You may wish to include instructions about your bequest in a Will, though it is not necessary to do so if you have completed and returned a copy of the consent form in this booklet.

One possible form of words for this is as follows:

*“I wish, if circumstances at the time permit, to bequeath my body after death for anatomical examination under the provisions of the Human Tissue Act (2004) and direct that it be offered to the University of Leeds for this purpose.”*

Even where you have indicated your wishes in a Will, please also complete and return a copy of the consent form in this booklet.

### **Withdrawal of Consent**

You are, of course, able to withdraw your consent at any time. If you wish to do this, simply destroy your copy of the completed consent form and write to us to let us know that you have withdrawn consent. Please use the following address for this purpose:

Mrs Sarah Wilson  
Room 9.07  
Worsley Building  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT.

### **Procedure at the Time of Death**

Your relatives or executor should notify the University by telephone as soon as possible after your death.

The University Bequest Office, run by Mrs Sarah Wilson, is open **Monday to Friday**

**8.30am to 4.30pm, telephone (0113) 343 4297.** If a call between these hours is met by the answerphone, we will respond to the message left as soon as possible.

**Outside office hours, a call should be made to University Security on (0113) 343 5494;** they will pass on the required information. If the call is late in the evening, it may be next day before we respond.

If your relatives or executor are unable to make contact on the above numbers, they should telephone the main University of Leeds switchboard and ask for the office dealing with body donation. The main University number is currently **0113 243 1751**. They may need to check this with directory enquiries or on the University of Leeds website (currently [www.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.leeds.ac.uk)).

During the major public holidays at Christmas and New Year, the University is closed, and as such is unable to accept bodies. During these times, next of kin are advised to make their own arrangements for a funeral in the normal way.

***If death occurs in a hospital***, the body should be held under refrigerated conditions in the hospital mortuary. The maximum time for holding is dependent on the refrigeration.

***If death occurs at home or at a nursing home***, the body should be removed to a local funeral director with refrigeration facilities. If the deceased has to be taken to an undertaker's premises it is important for relatives to understand that the transport and the cost of the undertaker must be borne by the next of kin or the donor's estate.

Before a decision on acceptance of the body by the University can be made, we will contact the last doctor in attendance (i.e. the doctor certifying the death) to discuss the cause of death and any relevant medical history.

**No guarantee can be given that a bequest will be accepted.**

Your relatives or executor will be informed within a short time about the decision.

***If the bequest is accepted:***

1. Your relatives or executor should register the death with the Registrar, making sure to tell him/her about your wish to donate your body for anatomical examination. The registrar will issue them with a **green certificate** (Certificate of Burial or Cremation) and a **death certificate**. Information about registering a death is available on [www.directgov.co.uk](http://www.directgov.co.uk)
  
2. Once your body has arrived at the University, we will send your relatives or executor an **Authorisation 1 Form** to complete. This includes questions about your eventual funeral arrangements, so please make sure that they are aware of your wishes on this matter.
  
3. Your relatives or executor should then send the following documents to us:
  - the completed **Authorisation 1 Form**



- a copy of the **death certificate**
- the original of the deceased's **consent** (where available).

These should be sent to:

Mrs Sarah Wilson  
Room 9.07  
Worsley Building  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT.

Please be aware that if your body has had to be maintained at an undertaker's prior to acceptance, the cost of this will be borne by your next of kin or estate.

If a bequest is accepted from outside our normal catchment area, your next of kin or executor will be asked to pay the costs of transporting your body to the University. Please ensure that your relatives are aware of this.

Once the formalities of acceptance are finished, we normally do not write to your relatives or executor again, other than to inform them of the date and time of the Memorial Service and/or to let them know that the ashes are available for private disposal, if they have asked for this information to be supplied.

***If the bequest is not accepted***, your relatives or executor should proceed with normal arrangements for burial or cremation. It is regretted that the University cannot make any financial contribution to these private arrangements.

### **Eventual Funeral and Memorial Service**

When a bequest has been accepted, all eventual expenses and arrangements for a simple cremation at a local crematorium, including the scattering of the ashes in the Garden of Remembrance, are normally borne by the University.

Please be aware that your relatives or executors will not be present at the cremation.

However, arrangements can be made for the ashes to be retained and returned to the relatives or executor for private disposal.

Friends and relatives of those who bequeathed their bodies are invited to join staff and students for a Memorial Service in the University Great Hall. This service, which usually takes place once a year, fosters a spirit of shared celebration, remembrance and thankfulness, reflecting and respecting the values, beliefs and worldviews of all those being remembered. For most relatives and friends, this service would be equivalent to a funeral service.

If your relatives wish to make arrangements for a burial service or other private funeral arrangements, they should contact a funeral director (they will have already advised us of this intention when they returned the Authorisation 1 Form to us). In such circumstances, all expenses involved in such arrangements become the responsibility of the next of kin or executors.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for considering donating your body for anatomical examination.

**Dr David Roberts  
Designated Individual for Anatomy  
University of Leeds**

## **Comments, Concerns and Complaints**

The University values the views of potential donors and their families about all aspects of the bequest process. If you have comments, concerns or questions about the donation process or any part of your dealings with us, please contact:

Mrs Sarah Wilson  
Anatomy Facilities Manager  
Room 9.07  
Worsley Building  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT  
bequests@leeds.ac.uk tel. 0113 343 4297

or

Dr David Roberts  
Designated Individual for Anatomy  
Room 9.06a  
Worsley Building  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT  
[d.j.h.roberts@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:d.j.h.roberts@leeds.ac.uk) tel. 0113 343 4294