

HYMS Body Donation Information

Frequently Asked Questions



This document contains questions that we are frequently asked in relation to donating your body to us. Further information can be found online by following this link – <https://www.hta.gov.uk/faqs/body-donation-faqs>

a) If I complete a consent form, can you guarantee that my body will be accepted?

We are extremely grateful to all those who bequeath their bodies to us. Unfortunately, there are some circumstances (listed in the Body Donation Information booklet) in which we have to decline a bequest.

b) What happens if a bequest is not accepted?

Your relatives or executor should proceed with normal arrangements for burial or cremation.

c) Can I withdraw my consent if I change my mind?

Yes, consent can be withdrawn in writing at any time.

d) Is my consent form signed many years ago still valid?

Yes, but we would recommend that you would contact us to get an updated version of our consent form and information pack.

e) Can I donate my body if I am also on the NHS organ donor register?

We are not able to accept the bequest of a body if organs have been removed for transplantation (with the exception of corneas). However, it is possible for you to give your consent for anatomical examination and, at the same time, be registered as an organ donor, your next of kin should know which route would be your preferred option.

f) Can I consent on behalf of someone to donate their body if I have been granted “power of attorney”?

No. The Human Tissue Act 2004 requires a positive decision to be made by the person, themselves, before their death.

g) What happens if the death occurs outside office hours, such as a weekend?

Arrangements should be made to transfer the deceased to a local funeral director with refrigeration facilities and a telephone call made to us the next working day, although acceptance cannot be guaranteed.

h) What happens if the death occurs during major public holidays, such as Christmas?

The university is closed over Christmas and New Year and as such is unable to accept bodies. During these times next of kin are advised to make their own arrangements for a funeral.

i) What does my relatives/executor do at the time of death?

Your relatives or executor should notify the university as soon as possible so a decision can be made regarding acceptance.

j) How long will my body be kept by the medical school?

If you grant the medical school your consent to keep your body indefinitely, we will keep the body or parts of it as long as they are still in usable condition. If however you choose to restrict our use of your body to 3 years then we will arrange for disposal within the 3-year timeframe.

k) How will be my body be disposed of?

The medical school pay for a committal at our local crematorium, with the ashes either scattered in the garden of remembrance or collected by a relative, according to your wishes. The body can be returned to the family for a private funeral if this is required, but would be at the families expense.

l) What is meant by “anatomical examination”?

Anatomical examination means dissection of the body for the purposes of teaching, studying, or researching into, the gross structure of the human body - See more at: <https://www.hta.gov.uk/donating-your-body>

m) What is meant by “prion disease”?

Several conditions fall under the term prion diseases. A prion is a type of protein that can trigger normal proteins in the brain to fold abnormally. Prion diseases can affect both humans and animals and are sometimes transmitted to humans by infected meat products. The most common form of prion disease that affects humans is Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).