

Human Anatomy Policy

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The University of New England (UNE) School of Rural Medicine undertakes the study and research of Anatomy as a core business activity in association with Hunter New England Area Health (HNEAH) and the University of Newcastle (UoN) as part of the Joint Medical Program (JMP). The study of structural and functional anatomy is also a component of programs of study within the Science discipline at UNE. To this end, anatomical teaching and research activities in the fields of undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental education and/or medical/surgical/scientific anatomy research, involving anatomical examinations may be undertaken. The conduct of these examinations is undertaken in accordance with the Anatomy Act, 1977 and the Human Tissue Act, 1983.

(2) At UNE, anatomical examinations are primarily carried out in the School of Rural Medicine's Anatomy Facility and its Dissection Room, using bodies that have been donated specifically for the purposes of teaching UNE students and those enrolled in UNE short courses. This policy, prepared in collaboration with key organisational stakeholders, provides a framework for the management and utilisation of the University's Anatomy Facility and its Dissection Room as well as UNE's requirements in respect to the receipt, handling, storage and disposal of donated cadavers. This relates to all cadavers and parts thereof, which have been donated directly to or procured by UNE. This document is complemented by an associated procedural document that pays particular attention to the operationalisation of the policy.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This policy applies to all University staff, students, office-bearers of UNE as well as visitors to the Anatomy Facility and its Dissection Room. The policy also relates to the use of any human anatomical specimens, (irrespective of the medium in which they are stored) from the Facility, for any purpose and relies upon the University's current practice and use of research protocols and other policies to ensure robust governance and appropriate use of materials.

(4) The University recognises the magnitude and solemnity of the contribution made by those who donate their bodies for the teaching of anatomy and it is committed to treating the human remains entrusted to its care with the utmost respect and professionalism. In keeping with this commitment, the University requires its employees and students to uphold all legal, public health, and ethical standards associated with the handling of bodies and human tissue samples.

(5) Any activity which undermines its ability to meet UNE's legislative obligations, or which devalues the contribution made by those who donate their bodies for the purposes of the teaching of anatomy to students will be in breach of this policy and subject to disciplinary action (See Section (8) Disciplinary Proceedings).

Section 3 - Policy

Licences to Conduct Anatomical Examinations

(6) Licences to conduct Anatomical Examinations are issued by the Director-General of the Department of Health in accordance with the [Anatomy Act 1977](#). The Director-General may also revoke a licence to conduct Anatomical

Examinations. The University of New England may only conduct Anatomical Examinations when in possession of a valid and current licence.

(7) The University's Anatomy Facilities are covered by a licence to conduct Anatomical Examinations (e.g. mortuaries, laboratories, museums). The holder of the Licence to Conduct the Study and Practice of Anatomy must comply with the standards set out in the [Anatomy Act 1977](#), the [Human Tissue Act 1983](#) and the Public Health Act 1991.

(8) The Head of the School of Rural Medicine is responsible for monitoring the University's compliance within these licensing provisions, and ensuring that the University retains, or where necessary, updates its licence to conduct Anatomical Examinations. In fulfilling this responsibility, the relevant Head of School may seek whatever advice, or assistance which he/she deems necessary.

(9) The Director, Facilities Management Services (FMS), will support the Head of School of Rural Medicine by facilitating funded work to ensure compliance to mortuary standards as set out in section 1.2 above (and any other associated legislation). Although FMS will undertake work to the highest standards possible within the scope of available funding, they will not be ultimately responsible for determining whether precise standards relating to facilities within the Anatomy Laboratory have been met. Responsibility for ensuring compliance will rest with the Head of School and the academic staff member responsible for the Laboratory (who is expected to have or acquire a thorough working knowledge of relevant New South Wales and Federal legislation relating to mortuary standards).

(10) All UNE employees, students and visitors must cooperate with any reasonable request, or instruction, issued by the Head of School of Rural Medicine, or his/her nominees, to enable the University to fulfil its obligations with respect to these licensing requirements.

Access to Anatomy Facilities

(11) The University's anatomy facilities are to be secured at all times. Keys/cards (physical or electronic) to these facilities will only be provided upon completion of the mandatory induction (as explained at Section 4 of this policy, below) and upon the approval of the Head of School or his/her delegate. Once issued with keys/card access to the UNE Anatomy Facility, individuals are responsible for ensuring the facility remains secure. Employees who have been issued with keys/card access will be responsible for admitting all other non-key holding users of the facility and will restrict access to:

- a. Students who require access for teaching and/or research purposes;
- b. Participants in other approved short courses, demonstrations or tours;
- c. University contractors for repair, general maintenance, or safety checks within the facility;
- d. Other users as needs require (i.e. emergency services or repairs);
- e. Other users who are authorised under legislation to gain access in order to perform the official duties of their position.

(12) Students and contractors (other than contracted cleaners) will not be authorised to access and undertake work within the Anatomy Facility without completion of an appropriate induction training session(s), approved by the Head of School.

(13) Under no circumstances are unauthorised persons to be granted access to the University's Anatomy Facility at any time. Any attempt to gain unauthorised access to the Facility, whether the attempt is successful or not, will be considered a breach of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action.

(14) While within the University Anatomy Facility, all individuals are required to comply with the relevant "Anatomy Facility Code of Conduct". The Code will be clearly displayed in the facility. Individuals are responsible for reading the Code and conducting themselves accordingly. Failure to comply with the requirements set out in the Anatomy Facility Code of Conduct may be considered a breach of this policy.

Access to Human Body, Section and Tissue Storage Equipment

(15) Equipment used to store Bodies and/or Human Tissue (e.g. fridges, specimen tanks, Human Tissue bins) are only to be accessed by Anatomy Employees, or those under their immediate supervision. Under no circumstances is any other individual to touch, or otherwise access, this equipment. Any attempt to gain unauthorised access to Body, and/or Human Tissue storage equipment, whether the attempt is successful or not, will be considered to be in breach of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Induction

(16) All individuals must complete a formal induction prior to being admitted to the UNE Anatomy Facility. At a minimum, this induction will cover:

- a. Relevant safety issues (including chemical hazards) and procedural requirements for the facility; and
- b. Applicable University and legislative requirements relating to utilisation of the UNE Anatomy Facility and/or mistreatment of Bodies/Human Tissue, and the consequences of breaching these requirements (refer to Disciplinary Proceedings section).

(17) In addition to the, above, individuals who are likely to see, and/or handle, Bodies or Human Tissue while in the UNE Anatomy Facility must, prior to entering the facility, complete a more comprehensive induction covering:

- a. Professional standards expected with respect to the handling, and treatment, of Bodies and/or Human Tissue; and
- b. Vaccination Standards (a full list of is contained within the definitions section of this Policy).

(18) The Head of School of Rural Medicine will be responsible for ensuring processes are in place to provide all users of the Anatomy Facility with the necessary induction. The Senior Technical Officer and senior academic of the Facility are responsible for carrying out the required inductions. A record will be kept of the names of all participants who complete the induction program.

(19) All staff and students undertaking practical work within the facility must wear nitrile gloves at all times while handling human tissue and cadaveric materials. Staff and students working within the facility should be fully vaccinated as they may be exposed to human blood and blood products. A full list of vaccinations required to be administered to staff and students working within the facility, is contained within the definitions section of this policy.

Receipt, Storage, Handling, Tracking and Disposal of Bodies/Human Tissue

(20) Staff and students are required to familiarise themselves with legislative requirements and related University procedures associated with this policy, pertaining to the receipt, storage, handling, tracking, and disposal of bodies and human tissue, and to ensure that they conduct all their activities in strict adherence to those requirements. To assist students, the University will provide information regarding applicable legislative and procedural requirements.

(21) In the event that the University wishes to retain a body, human body part, or human tissue sample beyond the approved retention date, the University must obtain approval to do so, in accordance with the Anatomy Act, 1977 and any of its associated legislation. Requests for extended retention of bodies or human tissue samples must be lodged well in advance to ensure approval is obtained prior to the expiration of the initial approved retention date.

(22) As part of its schedule or as required, the UNE Audit and Risk Directorate may request access to administrative information associated with the UNE Anatomy Facility. Staff and students are expected to comply with all reasonable requests and instructions of the UNE Audit and Risk Office staff in relation to the conduct of these audits.

Duty of Care

(23) Students and authorised Anatomy Facility users may feel distressed when first encountering human bodies, body parts, sections or tissue, and/or they may raise issues of grief. There is also a slight possibility that a student may recognise a body as a person whom they may have known prior to that person's death (e.g. a relative, friend, or neighbour). School staff members must be aware of these potential problems, and they are expected to respond sympathetically and appropriately.

(24) Students and authorised Anatomy Facility users will have access to University Counsellors to help them resolve such issues.

(25) To enable staff to provide assistance and take steps to rectify the situation and/or to formally debrief those involved, students and authorised Anatomy Facility users are encouraged to inform staff as soon as possible, should a person feel that

- a. there may be a potential problem;
- b. they are experiencing any distress; or
- c. they may have known a donor.

(26) All student and authorised Anatomy Facility users' concerns will be treated confidentially.

Photographs and Images of Human Bodies, Sections, or Tissues

(27) Students/staff/researchers are not to take cameras, videos, mobile phones or any other device capable of transmitting data, capturing images or audio (including X-ray, ultrasound, CT etc.) into the Anatomy Facility (or any other on or off-campus facility where human Bodies, sections or Human Tissues may be stored or made available) without the explicit permission of the Head of School or his/her delegate.

(28) In the event that a student wishes to record an image of a Body or Human Tissue for teaching or research purposes he/she must obtain written approval in accordance with the associated Procedures. Anatomical sketches, such as those used for course notes, are exempt from this requirement on the proviso that they do not depict personal information as defined by the Health Records Information Privacy Act, 2002 (NSW).

(29) Permission to record an image of a Body, Body Part, or Human Tissue may be granted by the Head of School or his/her delegate, providing that the image does not contain any personal or identifying information, and only where she/he is satisfied:

- a. that the necessary consent has been provided by the donor; and
- b. that the recording fulfils a valid teaching, or research need.

(30) Where permission to record an image is granted, the image must be used solely for the approved purpose. Under no circumstances is the image to be used in any manner which goes beyond the scope of the approval.

Disciplinary Proceedings

(31) All UNE Representatives and Students must comply with this Policy. A failure to comply with this policy may amount to misconduct/serious misconduct and/or unsatisfactory performance. The University of New England reserves the right to instruct individuals (including staff, students and visitors) to vacate its facilities and/or premises, and it will enforce this through legal means (i.e. the Police) where necessary.

(32) Failure to follow the reasonable directions of supervisors, or other authorised UNE Representatives (e.g. UNE Safety and Security Officers, or any employee acting in relation to the performance of their duties as a University

employee) is considered to be a breach of this policy, as is any subsequent action which directly, or indirectly, undermines the intent of those directions.

(33) Internal disciplinary action will be managed as stated in the UNE Staff Enterprise Agreement.

(34) Participation in any activity which directly or indirectly breaches State or Federal law, may be subject to internal and/or external disciplinary proceedings. Where observed, the University of New England will report illegal activity to the appropriate authorities (e.g. the Police). The University's Chief Legal and Governance Officer, the Director Facilities Management Services and the Head of UNE Safety and Security, must be informed in all cases of potential offences under the Crimes Act, 1900 (NSW) and these persons will be responsible for liaison with external bodies including law enforcement agencies, should an event arise.

Authorisation

(35) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 29 of the [University of New England Act](#), makes this University Policy.

(36) University Representatives and Students must observe this Policy in relation to University matters.

(37) In the event of a conflict between this Policy and any School policy or practice, this Rule shall take precedence.

(38) The Rule Administrator (Head of School Rural Medicine) is authorised to make procedures for the operation of this University Policy. The procedures and guidelines must be compatible with the provisions of this Rule.

(39) This Policy operates as and from the Effective Date.

(40) Previous University policies and related documents on Human Anatomy are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Policy.

(41) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this University Policy, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to this Policy where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of the Policy would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must be documented in writing and must state the reason for the exception.

Section 4 - Definitions

For the purpose of this policy

(42) Anatomical Examination means the examination of a body, body part, or section, including the dissection of a body, body part, or section, for the purposes of educational purposes. This excludes a formal forensic medical post mortem examination.

(43) Anatomy Employee means a UNE Representative, specifically employed for the discipline of Anatomy in the School of Rural Medicine who requires access to human bodies, body parts, sections, and/or tissue for the purposes of teaching anatomy for educational purposes.

(44) Body means a dead human body, which may also be referred to as a cadaver.

(45) Body Part(sectioned part) means a separated portion of a human body.

(46) Confidential means the non-disclosure of "personal information" as described within the NSW Health Records and Information Privacy Act, 2002.

(47) Human Tissue means an organ, or other part of a human body.

(48) Licence Holder means the person approved by the Department of Health as the anatomy Licence holder.

(49) Vaccination Standards

- a. Students enrolled within the School of Rural Medicine must provide evidence that they have been immunized against the following, as outlined by NSW Health (procedures relating to "Occupational assessment, screening and vaccination against specified infectious diseases")
 - i. Diphtheria
 - ii. Tetanus
 - iii. Pertussis
 - iv. Hepatitis B
 - v. Measles, Mumps, Rubella
 - vi. Varicella
 - vii. TB

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent) contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.