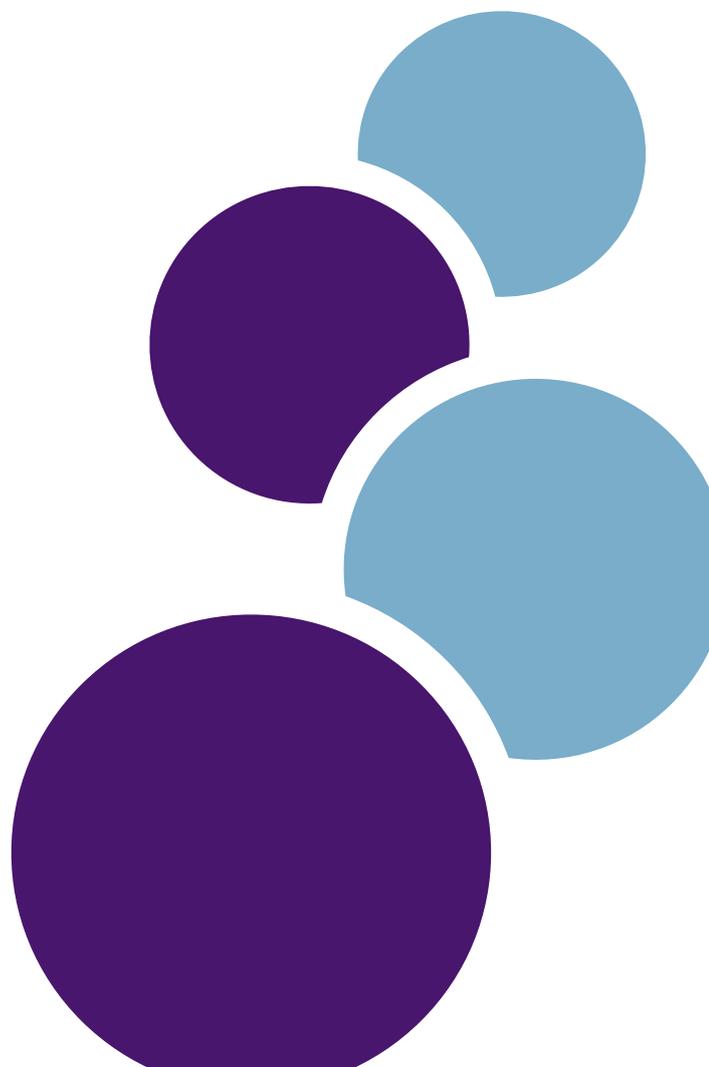


HTA guidelines: filming or photographing of bodies or body parts that have been donated to medical schools or surgical training centres

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What is the Human Tissue Authority?

1. The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) is a statutory regulator, established in 2005, to oversee compliance with the [Human Tissue Act 2004 \(HT Act\)](#). We license organisations that remove, store and use human bodies and tissues for certain purposes. We aim to maintain public confidence that human tissue and organs are used safely, ethically, and with proper consent, which is a fundamental principle of the HT Act.
2. We often receive enquiries about filming or taking photographs of activities that we regulate or that take place on HTA-licensed premises, for example:
 - different parts of the living donation process;
 - the use of donated bodies for training in medical schools or surgical training centres;
 - post mortem examinations in mortuaries;
 - organ transplants in hospitals.
3. When we refer to photography and filming in this guidance, we intend to capture any recorded, still or live-images, regardless of how they are shown.
4. This guidance is for anyone considering filming or taking photographs of a body or body part that has been donated to a medical school or surgical training centre, or activities taking place within those settings. This might include staff from these centres or journalists. Further detail can be found in our [Codes of Practice](#) or on our [website](#).

What is the HTA's role in body donation?

5. Donated bodies and tissues are invaluable resources for training or for research. The HTA licenses and inspects organisations that use donated bodies or body parts for education and training, including medical schools and surgical training centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We set standards on all aspects of practice and make sure that licensed establishments operate to these standards. We also make sure that medical schools and surgical training centres remove, store, and use bodies and body

parts in an appropriate, respectful and well-managed way, and that the wishes of individual patients and their families are respected. We also provide [general information to the public on body donation](#).

6. In order for a person to donate their body, we advise them to contact their [local medical school](#). The medical school will give further information about donation and ask the potential donor to sign a consent form. The medical school must make sure that it has appropriate consent from the donor in life for the donation and what may be done with their body. Body donation consent forms often include an option for the potential donor to give their consent for images and filming.
7. Each HTA licensed establishment has to nominate a person, the Designated Individual (DI), under whose supervision the licensed activities take place. Under the HT Act, the DI's responsibilities include ensuring that suitable people are carrying out the licensed activities and that they are using suitable practices. They are also responsible for ensuring that there are procedures in place governing access by any visitors.
8. DIs usually contact the HTA if they are approached by anyone wishing to film or photograph activities taking place and we encourage them to do so.

Filming or photographing a donated body or body part in a medical school or surgical training centre

9. We recognise the importance of images in education, and while the making and displaying of images (including photographs, films and electronic images) fall outside of the scope of the HT Act, and cannot be formally regulated, we expect establishments to take care not to compromise the dignity of the deceased, and to put systems in place to prevent the inappropriate use of images.
10. We consider it important to seek prior consent in respect of any filming, photography and use of such footage (including publication, live-streaming or subsequent broadcast). Ideally, consent should be sought from the donor before they die. If this has not happened, permission should be sought from family members or relatives. For human material that was already being held when the HTA Act came into force, we would advise that the guidance set out in the preceding paragraph is followed unless there are any factors in any documented consent that would preclude the making of images.
11. In the spirit of the consent that must be given for activities covered by the HT

Act, we advise that filming is not contrary to the consent given by the individual or their family, and that the deceased and their family are treated with dignity and respect.

12. The anonymity of the deceased should be maintained, unless consent has been given for their identity to be made public.
13. The information in our Codes or Practice on [Consent](#) and [Anatomical Examination](#) can help ensure that the individual person and their family are given due consideration throughout the process of filming or photographing. The General Medical Council's (GMC) publication '[Making and using visual and audio recordings of patients](#)' may also be a useful resource.

Please note:

Consideration should be given to the rights of any other individuals whose personal information is photographed or filmed at the same time as footage is taken of the body or body part (e.g. the images or voices of people who are present at an anatomical examination).

It remains the responsibility of the person or organisation who collects and uses such personal information to respect the rights of any individuals involved, and to comply with applicable laws regarding the collection and use of such information, including data protection laws.

You can also speak to the HTA for further information; please [contact our press office](#) (020 7269 1912)