Guidance on requirements for Material Transfer Agreements

The Human Tissue Act requires that a Material Transfer Agreement is in place to cover the transfer of “relevant material” between establishments

**Material Transfer Agreement**
Agreement established between organisations that governs the transfer of one or more materials from the owner/provider to a third party.

**Relevant Material**
As set out in the Human Tissue Act –
http://www.hta.gov.uk/legislationpoliciesandcodesofpractice/definitionofrelevantmaterial.cfm

This guidance sets out the University of Cambridge procedures that govern the transfer, both outgoing and incoming, of relevant material between the Clinical School and a recipient organisation.

**Incoming tissue transfers**

MTAs received by researchers from external parties for incoming tissue MUST be reviewed by a member of the contracts team in the Research Office BEFORE the tissue is transferred as terms need to be checked carefully against any applicable funding terms

**Outgoing tissue transfers**

An MTA must be put in place by a member of the contracts team in the Research Office before tissue is transferred

**To ensure that this is done as efficiently as possible researchers should supply the following information**

**Outgoing transfers**
Recipient institution, name and address
Recipient scientist’s name
Transferring researcher’s name
Copy of the consent form, PIS and ethics approval letter for the study under which the tissue was collected
Description of the tissue to be transferred
A lay summary of the use of the tissue
Funding details for the research which originally generated the tissue, including the RG number of the grant if available

**Incoming transfers**
Transferring institution, name and address
Transferring Scientist’s name/department
Recipient researcher’s name
Description of the tissue to be transferred
A lay summary of the use of the tissue
Funding details for the research requiring the tissue, including the RG number of the grant if available

**Identifiable tissue samples**
Whenever possible it is good practice for research to be conducted on coded or completely anonymised samples. In the event that identifiable information is requested by third parties or collaborators it should be ensured that any duty of confidence is not be breached. The terms of the original consent should be checked to see whether the proposed use by third parties is covered and if not, then consent should be sought if necessary. **It should be stressed that identifiable tissue should not be passed on unless consent is in place.**

It is worth noting that where tissue samples are referred to in the legislation as anonymous it does not mean that these are irreversibly unlinked. Coded samples are classed as anonymous by the Human Tissue Authority provided that the investigator does not, and is not likely to come into possession of, information that will identify the donor.