Human Tissue Act ʹ Guidance for Lancaster University Researchers

1. Summary
A Human Tissue Authority (HTA) licence is needed for the storage of material for use in unspecified
research. Lancaster University does not hold a HTA licence. Any research at Lancaster involving
human tissue which will be kept for the duration of the project must be approved by the NHS
Research Ethics Committee (NHS REC). Tissue cannot be stored for future unspecified projects.

2. Material covered by the HTA
The fundamental concept of relevant material is that if a sample is known to contain even a single
cell that has come from a human body, then the sample should be classified as relevant material.
Follow this link to a full list of relevant materials

3. Licence exemption-requirements
 Specific research projects undertaken with approval from the NHS REC, or for which approval is
pending, do not require an HTA licence. The human tissue can only be kept for the length of time
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 Storage that is incidental to transportation or with the intent to render material acellular does
not require an HTA licence.
 Tissue must not be retained for future, unspecified, research after the expiry of project-specific
NHS REC ethical approval. However, an application for ethical approval for a new specific
research project using the same tissue can be made to the NHS REC. This should be done in
good time to pre-empt the expiry of the original project-specific ethical approval. When
applying for an extension to an existing ethical approval, please copy ethics@lan