

Document Title: Research Tissue Bank Freezer Storage, Maintenance and Breakdown

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Staff involved in development: <i>Job titles only</i>	Senior R&D Manager, R&D Operational Manager, Clinical Project Managers
Document author/owner:	Research Tissue Bank Team / Senior R&D Manager
Directorate:	Research and Development
Department:	Research and Development
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Summary of Amendments

Version Number	Modification:
V1	Reviewed, updated and combined PRO/TE/TBR/022 and PRO/TE/TBR/019
V2	Reviewed and updated to include Mesobank power outage procedure and completion of routine maintenance logs

Key related documents:	DN361 Biological Materials for Research Use Policy DN001 Document Control Procedures Activity Location Guide TScan Manual SOP029 Freezers: Management of Research and Development Freezers Risk Assessments RAC/RD/TBR/016 - Freezer breakdown contingency RAC/RD/TBR/006 - Event of storage failure and loss of relevant material
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Key Points of this Document

1 Purpose and Contents

- This SOP sets out the requirements for the maintenance and monitoring of refrigerators and freezers used to store relevant material held under HTA license 12212 for research purposes or stored for NHS REC-approved studies with planned storage under the license at the end of the study. It also outlines best practices for samples of non-relevant material or those stored under NHS REC approval without planned future storage under the license.
- The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) standards for research require processes to ensure the robust maintenance and monitoring of storage units housing human samples for research.
- The temperatures of some of the freezers are connected to the T-Scan continual monitoring system. – see TScan user manual for instructions.
- Tissue bank samples are stored in -80°C or -70°C freezers and are labelled with an anonymised number that can be traced back to the tissue bank database. The freezers are set to operate with a 10°C deviation on either side of the set temperature.
- Mesobank samples are stored in -80°C freezers and are labelled with a unique 9-digit barcode that can be traced back to a donor using the web based Mesobank sample tracker application. Mesobank freezers are set to operate between -65°C and -90°C.
- Both Research Tissue Banks display freezer maps on the freezer doors, which detail summary sample locations which can be linked to specific locations on the database.
- In the event of a freezer failure, additional capacity is to be used to provide temporary storage to prevent degradation of the samples.

2 Roles & Responsibilities

- a. The Designated Individual is responsible for ensuring that processes are in place to provide assurance and evidence of compliance with the HTA standards.
- b. Ensure the temperature of a freezer is at the required level before opening it. If the temperature has risen to above -75°C do not open the freezer until it has reached the required temperature of -80°C. The freezer temperatures are automatically recorded via the T-Scan monitoring system.
- c. If the temperature is outside of the expected range the alarm will sound to indicate this, unless it has been muted. Perform the following checks before calling an engineer:

Check if a member of Tissue Bank or Mesobank has recently accessed the freezer.

Prolonged opening of the freezer door will cause the temperature to rise and the alarm to sound. This is not a problem, and the freezer will reach the correct temperature once the freezer door is kept closed.

Ensure the freezer unit is plugged in and the power to the unit is functioning. If there is no power, contact the University Security Team on 01223 331818. See if the freezer is over filled. If this is the case reduce the load of the freezer.

Ensure the door is closed properly and locked.

Check if the air intake vent is blocked. If it is, remove the obstruction.

Check the filter of the freezer.

Check the set temperature is correct.

If the above checks do not highlight the cause of the temperature change, then an engineer should be called. Current servicing contract and contact details can be found on the Equipment Master List - S:\shared\R&D\Pathology\Equipment.

3 Policy

- a. This SOP is mandatory and, as per the Trust's Information Governance and Records Management framework, non-compliance with it may result in disciplinary procedures.

4 Procedure

4.1 Temperature alarm limits

The – 80 freezers should be operated between -65 and -90°C. Failure to do so could result in malfunction of the freezers. If the temperature is outside of this range, contact estates or the company providing the maintenance contract.

4.2 Isolating the Alarm

When carrying out large sample retrievals, auditing or cleaning/defrosting, it is possible to isolate the alarm system via the T-Scan monitoring system website. This prevents expected alarm notifications being sent to users whilst known maintenance/retrievals are taking place. Refer to manual.

4.3 Cleaning and monitoring

The detergent used for cleaning the freezers should be made up following the manufacturer's instructions.

Weekly Tasks:

- Ensure the floor area around all freezers is clear of any obstructions.

- Check the status of the Back-up Freezer:
 - Confirm its location.
 - Verify that it is empty.
 - Ensure no alarm indicators are active.
- Update the Backup tab in the Freezer Routine Maintenance Log.

Monthly Tasks:

- Use the scraper to remove frost from both the chamber and the inner door.
- Clean:
 - Air intake port
 - Condenser filter
 - Exterior and interior surfaces
 - Accessories
- Verify that the audible freezer alarm is functioning correctly.
- Once all tasks are complete, update the Freezer Routine Maintenance Log.

Annually:

- Check if a full defrost is required.

4.4 Freezer temperature monitoring – see Tscan user manual

- a. Login to T-Scan
The username and passwords will be issued to relevant members of staff who need access to monitor the freezers. Contact R&D Managers or Tissue Bank Team leader if required.
- b. Users have 5 attempts to login, after 5 unsuccessful attempts, the user is blocked from attempting to login for 10 minutes, this is a security measure designed to avoid circumvention of password security utilising repeated login attempts.
- c. The sensors installed on site can be accessed through the Real-Time sensors page which displays all the sensors being monitored on site. Each single sensor is displayed as a “Sensor bubble” on the default view. For full instructions refer to the user manual.

The T-Scan system is used to review freezer temperature trends monthly. This is used to observe if there is a trend indicating freezer failure i.e. Increase in temperature over time, or if there have been any significant ad hoc temperature changes which may affect sample quality.

If a trend is observed:

Increase in temperature

1. Review freezer maintenance and ensure filters are cleaned.
2. Move to weekly monitoring of the temperature trend.
3. Arrange a freezer service.

Decrease in temperature

1. Move to weekly monitoring of temperature trend.
2. Arrange a freezer service.

4.5 Defrosting a freezer

Before defrosting a freezer make sure there is adequate space in other units for samples to be temporarily relocated to. Any sample relocation should be undertaken by two members of staff with the appropriate personal protective equipment, sample transport boxes and sufficient dry ice to keep the samples in a frozen state. Any transfer of samples should be carried out as efficiently and speedily as possible.

Keep a dated record of the interim sample location(s).

To defrost the freezer, switch off the power, leave the door open, place adequate absorbent material on the floor to keep it dry.

DO NOT use any sharp tools for removing frost.

Switch freezer back on and allow to reach desired temperature before replacing the contents.

4.6 Servicing

- a. The freezers are serviced annually, as per SOP029 Freezers: Management of Research and Development Freezers.

4.7 Freezer Failure

- a. If there is a freezer failure T-Scan will alarm, and they will contact someone on the emergency contact list by systematically going from one contact to another until they have contacted someone who can investigate the cause of the alarm. The person(s) who acknowledges the notification will be required to log onto T-Scan to make a contingency plan, this may require keeping an eye on the temperature remotely or a visit onsite to rearrange samples from the affected freezers.
- b. In the event of a temperature alarm a designated person will attend the freezer and check the freezer concerned for obvious fault i.e. door open. If there is nothing obvious a plan for the transfer of samples should be considered, see next point. The freezers own alarm

can be silenced by pressing the buzzer button on the control panel. If the alarm continues the audible alarm will sound again after 30 minutes.

- c. If the freezer has failed, first ascertain where the free storage space is in the other freezers, before opening the failed freezer's door.
- d. Ascertain how many samples are in the failed freezer, being mindful that the "door open" time should be kept to an absolute minimum to maintain the low temperature within the failed freezer as long as possible.
- e. Calculate how much temporary storage is required and map that into the available storage space.
- f. If the freezers temperature is -40 °C or above for the -70°C freezer or -50°C or above for the -80°C freezer samples should be transferred to other freezers.
- g. Using the appropriate equipment move the samples from the failed freezer, one rack at a time, ensuring that "door open" time is kept to a minimum.
- h. Record the location of the samples that have been moved by putting a notice on the front of the freezer the samples have been moved from informing where they have been moved to. If the racks have been positioned in the same locations within the Back-up Freezer, move the existing freezer map to the front of the Back-up Freezer. If not, update the map to reflect the temporary storage arrangement.
- i. At the earliest opportunity, contact the buildings manager or freezer maintenance contractor and arrange an engineer visit to repair the failed freezer.
- j. Do not return the samples to the failed freezer until after the repair has been completed and the freezer is at the required temperature.
- k. Once the samples have been returned to the repaired freezer, update the front of the freezers.

4.8 Power Outage Room 1.R005 Equipment Park

The Mesobank freezers are located on the first floor of the HLRI in room 1.R005 Equipment Park. They are not connected to the HLRI back-up generator. In the event of a power outage affecting room 1.R005 Equipment Park:

- Remove the extension leads from Locker FF-108, which is located on the first floor of the HLRI in the admin area. The combination to open the locker can be found in DOC002 Useful Numbers (Meso/TB only) which can be accessed via IQM.
- Disconnect the freezer power supply plug from the plug socket in room 1.R005 Equipment Park and connect it to the extension lead.

- Run the extension lead into room 1.R029 Freezer Store 1.1 (on exiting room 1.R005 Equipment Park, turn right, the Freezer Store can be found on the opposite side of the corridor).
- Connect the extension lead to an unused 'red' plug socket. The Mesobank freezers will now be connected to the HLRI back-up generator.

5 Risk Management / Liability / Monitoring & Audit

- The R&D SOP Committee will ensure that this SOP and any future changes to this document are adequately disseminated.
- The R&D Department will monitor adherence to this SOP via the routine audit and monitoring of individual clinical trials and the Trust's auditors will monitor this SOP as part of their audit of Research Governance. From time to time, the SOP may also be inspected by external regulatory agencies (e.g. Care Quality Commission, Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency).
- In exceptional circumstances it might be necessary to deviate from this SOP for which written approval of the Senior R&D Manager should be gained before any action is taken. SOP deviations should be recorded including details of alternative procedures followed and filed in the Investigator and Sponsor Master File.
- The Research and Development Directorate is responsible for the ratification of this procedure.

Further Document Information

Approved by: <i>Management/Clinical Directorate Group</i>	Research and Development Directorate
Approval date: <i>(this version)</i>	Current approved version date
Ratified by Board of Directors/ Committee of the Board of Directors:	STET
Date:	N/A
This document supports: <i>Standards and legislation</i>	Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004 and all associated amendments. UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research version 3.3 (07/11/17) and authorised amendments thereafter Human Tissue Act 2004

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Groups	Disability	Race	Gender	Age	Sexual orientation	Religious & belief	Other
Yes/No	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Positive/Negative							
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