

Service Level Agreement for the Image Resource Facility Research Operations, St George's University of London

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Communication: all inquiries from new users should be directed via email to irf@sgul.ac.uk; subject to staff availability all communications will be acknowledged within three working days. Response times for requests for quotes and costings will be subject to the scale of the request. Requests for training sessions will be responded to within 3 working days to establish a suitable date for training (subject to equipment and staff availability).

Service Definition: The Image Resource Facility (IRF) provides access to Light microscopy (LM) and Flow cytometry/FACS equipment for the analysis of prepared samples. Dedicated laboratory space is available for the complete preparation of tissue and cells for use in Immunohisto/cytochemistry, Histology, Paraffin wax embedding (tissue only), Sectioning and Cryosectioning of frozen tissue. All Service users can access the available resources once trained to competency and after completion of a general induction with appropriate risk assessment. Training sessions are charged at the hourly rate of the equipment in use.

Work requiring the available resources can be done on behalf of a user by IRF staff, and this is charged at the rate of the equipment/consumables cost and technician time. A quote will be generated and agreed upon before work commences.

A full list of available resources can be viewed on the [IRF Website](#).

Service User Responsibility: Any samples submitted for processing by IRF staff must be of sufficient quality for the work required; discussions with IRF staff on point of inquiry will establish the required state of the sample (e.g. specific fixative, specific shape/composition). If samples of insufficient quality or of non-standard circumstances are submitted, it will be agreed that the outcome of the work cannot be guaranteed and the IRF will not be liable for the usability of the outcome. All users of equipment must ensure that the equipment is left in a clean and serviceable condition at the end of their session – if this is found to not be the case, users must report the state of the equipment to IRF staff either in person or via email (irf@sgul.ac.uk).

Outcomes and Service Expectations:

For all work carried out by IRF staff on behalf of users:

A clear outcome (including amount of output eg. Number of slides generated per tissue block for histology) will be established before the work commences: this will be included in the final quotation prior the commencement of work. If suitable quality of material is supplied, all samples prepared by IRF staff will be guaranteed to be of usable quality.

For training and autonomous use of IRF resources:

Training session durations vary with equipment used and required techniques – training will be considered complete once a user demonstrates competency (as determined by technical staff) in the operation of the equipment in question. Continuous *ad-hoc* support will be available for the remainder of the scheduled session. All equipment is maintained by IRF staff and will be available for trained users to book during IRF opening hours.

Booking Equipment: All sessions *must* be booked on the IRF booking system – PPMS. Equipment access is only guaranteed with a valid booking; users must ensure that they have concluded their session at the exact time of expiry of their booking and preferential access will be given to a user with a booking. Sessions can be cancelled *before they are due to commence* by the user via PPMS or by contacting IRF staff. Any unattended bookings may be charged. When there is disruption to the availability of equipment, appropriate notice will be provided via PPMS and remedial action will be taken subject to the service contract of the equipment in question. When applicable, alternative equipment use in lieu of unavailable equipment can be discussed with IRF staff.

Acknowledgement and Authorship: Any publications generated as a result of IRF resources should be acknowledged as part of the standard acknowledgement process using the following template: We acknowledge the use of the Image Resource Facility, St George's University. Where service level technical support has been given by IRF staff, the following statement should be included in the methods section of any publication: Histology, IHC, TEM, LM (delete as appropriate) was performed by Image Resource Facility, St Georges University. Where significant technical and creative input is given by IRF staff they should be named as an author on the publication. This will be ascertained as part of the service and research collaboration relationship. Publications include all submitted student thesis, abstracts, posters and scientific papers.

Examples of contributions meriting co-authorship include developing or adapting protocols to suit samples or materials, designing or re-designing experiments, or extensive data analysis and interpretation.

It is requested that any publications using IRF resources are listed on the booking system Publications page – this gives the IRF a means of demonstrating contribution to research, provides signposting for specific technical application for other potential users of the facility and contributes to the review capabilities of the IRF with regard to the services it provides and areas of support that can be delivered to the research community.

Issues, Complaints, Feedback: Please direct any correspondence regarding issues not covered in this document, complaints, or feedback to irf@sgul.ac.uk.

Confidentiality: Unless otherwise agreed it is expected that any patient or human tissue samples handled by IRF staff are:

1. Being provided by researchers according to the Human Tissue Authority guidance, have permission to be used, with appropriate Human Tissue Act authorisation or Ethics Committee approvals. Evidence will be required.
2. Anonymised prior to transport to the facility.
3. As appropriate, required IRF staff will sign confidentiality/non-disclosure agreements pertaining to work carried out in the facility after consultation with the Head of the IRF and Director of Research Operations.