# Research Models Retention Policy

## Scope

BVS stores cryopreserved embryos and sperm on behalf of UoE researchers in liquid nitrogen storage tanks. There are several options for researchers to archive their research models, including commercial providers and cryopreservation of qualifying strains by the Central Transgenic Core (CTC). [Contact BVS](https://www.ed.ac.uk/bioresearch-veterinary-services) if you are interested in discussing options for cryopreservation.

Cryostores are available for the following resources:

* Sperm and embryos frozen by CTC, sperm and embryos imported on behalf of the researcher through the BVS import process
* Sperm and embryos obtained from other sources may be covered pending agreement on case-by-case basis

With limited storage space available, and a growing overhead in terms of management, BVS requires that cryopreserved assets do not remain in storage *ad infinitum*. The retention policy sets out options available to manage these assets when the responsible person leaves the University, for any reason.

## Process

When the person responsible for cryopreserved stocks is due to leave the University, or BVS determines that they have already left the University, reasonable attempts will be made to make contact with the responsible person. If contact cannot be made, then any remaining individuals associated with the responsible person will be contacted to act as their proxy. If no proxy can be identified, then option 3 below will be followed.

On contacting the responsible person (or their proxy) there are three courses of action that may be taken. All samples in storage must comply with the options below, in any combination of routes, so that the entire sample holding is compliant with this policy.

1. Stored samples will be exported to the new work place or an archiving institution at the cost of the responsible person
2. Stored samples will be transferred to another UoE researcher who takes on ownership
3. Stored samples will be discarded

BVS offers PIs a 2 year window to make new storage or ownership arrangements after the responsible person has left the UoE.

In all cases, retention of samples remains at the discretion of BVS management.