

Instructions for use of the VACS email service (also known as ‘the bones email’ service)

If you have any questions about any of this please call for advice. Our in-office hours number is 01382 388825, if there is no answer or for out-of-hours please email bones@dundee.ac.uk with your query since this email address is monitored at all times.

Please take a number of images of the bones –the images need to be from directly above the bone and from the side if possible. For long bones an end-on image can also be useful.

Each image needs:

- To be taken against a contrasting background if possible (this might not be possible if the bone(s) is still *in situ*).
- To contain a scale.

Save as a jpeg (or equivalent) and email to bones@dundee.ac.uk

Please include contact information such as a phone number so that we can get back with a response.

We aim to have a reply to you within an hour during office hours and within 2 hours at other times. Staff will answer your queries during evenings and weekends but an email late at night might not be answered until the next morning. If an answer is urgently needed please call and make us aware on the numbers above. Once we have responded we also supply a short report for your records.

We have been running this service for a number of years with great success but do occasionally find problems most of which we know how to deal with. I have listed a couple below:

Problem 1: No response to email

As noted above we aim to respond to you within an hour, if you do not hear back within that time it is possible that your email did not arrive. Some forces call ahead to let us know that a case is coming in, whilst this is not a requisite, if you do not hear back within the hour, please do call and find out what is happening.

Problem 2: Email not getting through

This does happen occasionally. It may be due to the size of the email attachments. Reducing the size of the email by limiting the number of images might help. We are often able to identify bones from very few images and the responding anthropologist will contact you and ask if they need more images in order to come to a conclusion. Some forces have the capability to send images as a pdf which also reduces size. Force firewalls can also cause delay-again please do use the phone numbers above to call and ask if you are not sure.