Client Handbook

Backlogs

Backlogs

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Our collaboration

We are very pleased to be working with you, thank you for choosing Backlogs as your histopathology partner.

Backlogs provides end-to-end cellular pathology services. Since 2005, Backlogs has worked with more than 100 NHS Trusts and has reported over 1.3 million patient cases. Therefore, we understand how important it is to work collaboratively with NHS Hospitals to report in a timely manner and support patient care.

We are on the NHS framework and easy to work with. By harnessing a national network of over 180 specialist consultant pathologists based around the country, Backlogs is now acknowledged by many NHS Trusts as a trusted partner. We can provide services such as:

- Microtomy
- End to end wet tissue processing with glass slides or digital images
- Digital reporting with access to the online portal and an integrated slide viewer
- Integration options
- MDT support if required

Contact details

Telephone	01480 498 250
Out of hours emergencies	07935 502 376
Email	support@backlogs.co.uk
Website	https://www.hcahealthcare.co.uk/backlogs
Post	Backlogs Limited, Silvaco Technology Centre, Compass Point, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, PE27 5JL

Hours of service

9am – 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Backlogs

Scope of service

Backlogs works with a wide range of specialist pathologists who undertake EQA in their reporting specialisms. Many of our consultants are the specialism lead in their own NHS Trust. We can also provide support for MDTs if required.

As such, Backlogs can provide support for the service lines below:

Gastrointestinal Pathology	**Dermatopathology**
Gynaecology Including Colposcopy	**Head and Neck including Endocrine**
Bone and soft tissue	**Breast**
Hepatobiliary	**Urology**
Respiratory	**Haematopathology**
Diagnostic cytopathology (non-gynaecological)	**Placenta / Products of Conception**

Other case types may be able to be reported upon request.

New client set-up

New referrers are supported by our National Accounts Manager, who will guide you through the onboarding process, outline the information required, and work with you to establish a Service Level Agreement - either directly with Backlogs or via the Health Trust Europe framework. The aim is to ensure the service is tailored to your organisation's needs.

We will provide log in details for you to access our reporting platform, PathHub. Each user will receive a username, password, and memorable word, along with two-factor authentication details for secure login. Training will then be arranged to help users navigate the platform and monitor the progress of cases through the online portal.

Sending samples

Sample request forms and criteria for sample acceptance

Every sample must be accompanied by a sample request form or LIMS printout that includes, at minimum, the following three identifiers:

- Patient forename and surname
- Patient date of birth
- Laboratory accession number

You can send your existing sample request form, and they can be typed or handwritten.

The information provided must match between the sample/ slide and the request form or LIMS printout. Any discrepancies will be highlighted to you and, where the discrepancy cannot be resolved, the sample and request form will be returned to the sender for resolution prior to any further processing. All samples, apart from small biopsies, require a macroscopic description to be included to aid the pathologist when reporting the slides.

Sending microscope slides

Collections can be organised on a regular or ad-hoc basis as required. We use a secure tracked courier and packaging materials are provided by us.

Organising a Courier Collection

To arrange a collection, contact our team at **support@backlogs.co.uk** or call **01480 498 250**. Collections are normally booked for the next working day, with couriers arriving between 9:00 and 16:30. We use E-courier/ Parcelforce for transporting microscope slides, though other providers may be used when required.

Packaging materials are supplied in advance. If you need additional packaging, please give at least one day's notice so more can be sent to you.

Collections are free of charge for 20 cases or more, unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with a member of the management team.

We will also require a list of all case numbers included in the shipment to meet UKAS requirements. This list should be emailed to **support@backlogs.co.uk** once all cases have been packed.

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Packing Instructions for Nine-Slide Trays (Glass Slides Only)

1. Use the Backlogs transport boxes designed for nine-slide trays. Fill trays with nine slides wherever possible to avoid partially filled trays. Backlogs will separate cases into individual trays on arrival.
2. Place one empty tray at the bottom of the stack, then add two empty trays upside down on top.
3. Secure the entire stack with elastic bands: one around each end and one lengthways.
4. Wrap the stack tightly in bubble wrap and secure it beneath the internal strings inside the transport box.
5. Put all paperwork in the designated slot at the back of the box. If the paperwork does not fit, place it in a separate envelope and put this inside the transport bag.
6. Close the transport box and fasten all fixings securely.
7. Apply a cable tie around the short side of the box and under the handle, then tighten.
8. Seal the box inside the transport bag, which can hold up to two boxes.
9. Attach the courier label provided by the Backlogs team.

Backlogs supplies bubble wrap and a new cable tie with each transport box.

Packaging Instructions for Twenty-Slide Trays (Glass Slides Only)

1. Use the Backlogs large transport boxes designed for twenty-slide trays. Fill each tray completely so there are no gaps; Backlogs will separate slides into individual cases on receipt.
2. Secure the full stack of trays with elastic bands: one around each end and one lengthways to hold the flaps firmly in place.
3. Wrap the entire stack in bubble wrap, then place the paperwork on top before securing everything tightly beneath the white strings inside the transport box.
4. If any paperwork does not fit inside the box, place it in a separate envelope and put this inside the same transport bag.
5. Close the transport box and secure it using elastic bands on each end, one horizontal band across the centre, and a cable tie threaded through the small hole.
6. Seal the box inside the transport bag.
7. Attach the courier label provided by the Backlogs team.

Backlogs supplies bubble wrap, a cable tie, and elastic bands with each transport box.

Return of cases

Slides are collected from the pathologists by overnight courier as soon as possible after reporting and returned to Backlogs, where all slides and paperwork are checked and any discrepancies addressed. Slides and paperwork are returned to the hospitals either the same day or the next day.

When slides are scanned and digitised at Backlogs, slides will remain at our office until reported. We will aim to return slides and paperwork within 7 days of reporting.

Where an alert is raised to refer a case to MDT, these slides will be separated and returned to the sending hospital urgently.

Urgent samples

Urgent samples can be accepted if the request form is clearly marked as urgent. These cases are prioritised by the Backlogs administration team, and the reporting pathologist will make every effort to ensure they are reviewed promptly.

If a case becomes urgent after it has already been sent, the sending hospital should contact the Backlogs admin team at **support@backlogs.co.uk** or **01480 498 250** so the case can be expedited.

Once an urgent case has been reported, an email alert will be sent automatically from the reporting platform to the designated recipient addresses.

Requests for extra work such as levels, stains or IHC

Pre-stained slides:

If pre-stained slides were sent to Backlogs for reporting, when a pathologist requires extra work, an email is automatically generated and sent to you. Additional slides should be packaged and sent to Backlogs as soon as possible.

If you are unable to carry out the further work (e.g. for unusual immunos), please get in touch with us as soon as possible. For requests for molecular tests or genetic testing, Backlogs can support these being carried out and will charge these at cost to the sending hospital.

Turnaround times

See Service Level Agreement with your Trust for specific arrangements. For general routine cases, Backlogs aims to report 90% within 4 days of receipt.

Backlogs

Accessing reports online

Results are available to be accessed via our secure online portal facility **https://www.hcahealthcare.co.uk/backlogs** immediately upon clinical authorisation by the reporting pathologist.

Clients receive a list three times per day (09:00, 12:00, 15:00) identifying any new cases that have been reported and not accessed since the last list was generated. Clients can, at any time, log in to PathHub to review the progress of cases and download a PDF copy of an authorised report.

The report can then be printed or copied directly into your LIMS. Opened reports are marked on the system and can then be hidden on the list of cases on the home screen. This enables users to easily identify newly reported cases.

Contact the Backlogs Admin team for forgotten passwords or problems logging in to the portal at **support@backlogs.co.uk** or 01480 498 250.

Types of investigation

Backlogs will accept the following sample types:

Histology:

- Stained slides
- Unstained slides – only where the test requested by the Backlogs pathologist is outside of the sending laboratory repertoire. We send all unstained slides to HSL Advanced Diagnostics – please see section Referral Laboratories for further details. Backlogs may cross charge these at cost depending on the test requested.

Non-gynaecological cytology:

- PAP/ Giemsa/ H&E-stained slides

- Special stains and immunocytochemistry completed by the sending hospital.

Our pathologists

Backlogs requires every reporting pathologist to meet the following professional standards:

- Be listed on the UK GMC Specialist Register for Histopathology / Cellular Pathology.
- Maintain ongoing CPD through the Royal College of Pathologists or an equivalent recognised body.
- Hold active membership with a UK medical defence organisation.
- Participate in the relevant EQA scheme(s) where offered for their specialty.
- Be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

We prefer pathologists who hold a tenured NHS post, although in certain circumstances we may work with untenured pathologists, provided they undergo annual appraisals that meet NHS standard requirements. Evidence of all required credentials is collected and reviewed at least annually for every pathologist.

Pathologists must notify Backlogs immediately if they become subject to any poor-performance investigation, whether arising from an EQA scheme or from their NHS employer.

In addition to external requirements, Backlogs conducts a regular programme of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) for all reporting pathologists.

Governance

Backlogs is a UKAS accredited medical laboratory no. 21408 and is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Backlogs' Quality Management System underpins the company's aim of providing a responsive and flexible system that supports its clients in the delivery of their clinical service. Please contact us at **support@backlogs.co.uk** for the attention of the Operations Manager if you would like more details on our quality policies.

Privacy policy and Information Governance

Backlogs takes patient privacy very seriously and complies with all appropriate legislation in respect of data, information and data security. It also has a duty to comply with guidance issued by the Department of Health, the Information Commissioner, by other advisory groups, and by professional bodies.

Backlogs is governed by its Information Governance Policy which sets out how the organisation will meet its legal obligations and NHS Information Governance (NHSIG) requirements concerning confidentiality and information security standards. All staff complete mandatory Information Governance training annually.

To access the NHSIG toolkit for Backlogs please use the below link:

https://www.dsptoolkit.nhs.uk/OrganisationSearch/NW6

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Should you wish to discuss the details of our policy or to query the use of specific personal information please email **support@backlogs.co.uk** (for the attention of the Operations Manager) or call us on 01480 498 250.

Case reviews

Backlogs can offer a full case review service according to RCPath case review guidelines. Please contact us on **support@backlogs.co.uk** (for the attention of the Operations Manager) or call us on 01480 498 250 to discuss your requirements

Referral laboratories

For pre-stained slides sent to Backlogs, any additional work (e.g. levels, special stains or immunohistochemistry) requested by the reporting pathologist is generally carried out by the originating laboratory. If this is not possible, then we refer to Health Services Laboratories – Advanced Diagnostics. Please see website for available tests at **http://www.hsl-ad.com/**

(UKAS reference 9007)

HSL Advanced Diagnostics
Ground Floor
60 Whitfield Street
London
W1T 4EU

Complaints procedure

We take any complaints very seriously. All formal complaints are logged as CAPA's and are managed through Q-Pulse. As part of the company's Quality Management System (QMS), we develop suitable corrective actions in response to all complaints and, where appropriate, use these as opportunities for staff training and development.

Should you wish to raise an issue or find out more about our complaints policy, please contact us on 01480 498 250 or **support@backlogs.co.uk** (for the attention of the Quality Manager).