

ROLE OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (Psych-REC)

Status

The Psychology Departmental Research Ethics Committee (Psych-REC) is a satellite of the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. It is authorized to approve undergraduate projects that are completed in a 12 month period.

Research

1. All research involving human subjects conducted in the Department or by members of the Department (student and faculty) must be submitted to either a Departmental or University-level Research Ethics Board for approval.
2. Faculty members, graduate students, or undergraduate students who have external funding (i.e. through a grant) need make applications for ethics approval to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. All other undergraduate researchers (i.e. honours theses, independent projects) must submit an application to the Psychology Departmental Research Ethics Committee (Psych-REC).
3. Modifications to studies approved by the Psych-REC which affect issues covered by the ethics review must be approved by the Committee.
4. The Psych-REC should be consulted if there is any questions whether a study needs Psych-REC approval.
5. Decisions of the Psych-REC shall be in accordance with the University of Windsor's Guidelines on Research Involving Human Subjects and with any additional applicable guidelines (e.g., CPA, APA).

Other Ethical Issues

The Psychology Departmental Research Ethics Committee shall be available as a consultative body for students and faculty in the Department regarding ethical questions in either research or other areas. Such questions should be addressed to the Psych-REC Chairperson.

Anonymous Data Banks

An anonymous data bank is defined as a previously collected data set which is stored in such a way that subjects or subject groups cannot be individually identified. Studies using only information gathered from anonymous data banks require approval by the Psych-REC, using the form designed for studies that were previously approved. It is the responsibility of the researcher(s) to ensure that a data bank is truly anonymous. It is recommended that custodians of data banks consult with the Departmental Ethics Chairperson regarding the anonymity of their data banks.

PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

1. Application materials are to be submitted in duplicate to the Chairperson of the Psych-REC.
2. The Chairperson is to ensure that the application materials are complete, and submit them for review.
3. Proposed studies will be reviewed by a member of the Psych-REC. These reviewers will attempt to complete their reviews within 10-14 days of a complete application being submitted.
4. The Psych-REC reviewers will make one of four recommendations:
 - a. Approved in its present form
 - b. Pending **minor changes** specified below. (These changes can be made by the student researcher alone, and there is no need to resubmit these changes to the Psych-REC).
 - c. Pending **minor changes & resubmission**. (Changes are specified and resubmission to the Psych-REC for final approval and clearance).
 - d. Pending **major changes**. (Project requires major changes, which are specified, and must be resubmitted before receiving ethical clearance).
5. If changes are required, these will be negotiated between the researcher(s) and the Psych-REC Chairperson, acting on the instruction of the reviewers. Once agreement has been reached, approval shall be granted.
6. If a reviewer has significant concerns about the ethical acceptability of a study (e.g., there is significant risk to subjects, deception is involved, or a comprehensive signed consent form will not be used), the study will be submitted to a meeting of the full departmental committee. The principal researcher (and, in the case of honours or masters students, the faculty advisor) will be invited to attend this meeting.
7. Appeals Process
 - a) If the researcher(s) do not agree to the required changes, the researcher(s) may appeal to the full Psych-REC (in person or in writing).
 - b) If a research proposal is not approved, or the researcher(s) and the Psych-REC do not reach agreement, the researcher(s) may appeal the decision of the Psych-REC to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. In such cases, a copy of the appeal should be submitted to the Departmental Committee.
 - c) Researcher(s) may appeal decisions of the University of Windsor Research Ethics

Board to the President of the University.