



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 provide clearance for undergraduate projects that are to be completed within a 12-month period.

Research

- All research involving human participants 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 clearance.
- Faculty members, graduate students, or undergraduate students who have external funding (i.e. through a grant) must submit applications for ethics clearance to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (REB) using the appropriate REB form. All other undergraduate researchers (i.e. honours theses, independent projects) should consider the Psychology Departmental Research Ethics Committee (Psych-REC) the likely review body for their submission although the student researcher and their supervisor may choose to submit directly to the REB rather than the Psych-REC.
- The Psych-REC Chairperson is available to consult about whether a project should be submitted to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.
- The Psych-REC Chairperson should be consulted if there is any questions about whether a project requires clearance from the Psych-REC.
- Modifications to studies with clearance from the Psych-REC must be submitted for review and clearance by the Psych-REC.
- 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., TCPS2, CPA, APA).

Other Ethical Issues

The Psych-REC shall be available as a consultative body for students and faculty in the Department regarding questions about ethical issues in research. 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 participants or participant groups cannot be individually identified. Studies using only information gathered from anonymous data banks require clearance by the Psych-REC, using the appropriate form (see the Decision Flow Chart posted to the departmental webpage). 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 REC Chairperson regarding the anonymity of their data banks.

PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

1. Application materials are to be submitted as one printed copy, with original signatures, and one emailed PDF file to the Chair of the Psych-REC.

NOTE: Due to the circumstances arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, student researchers should submit the application as a single PDF attached to an email to the Psych-REC Chair. The single PDF should contain all required materials. No printed copy should be submitted.

2. The REC Chair will ensure the application is complete, and distribute it to two members of the Psych-REC for formal review.
 - i. In the case of an application for use of archival data (Form A), the Psych-REC Chair will use discretion in determining whether a formal review is undertaken or if application can be cleared without a formal review.
 - ii. In the case of an application for use of data from an ongoing project with clearance (Form B), the Psych-REC Chair will not subject the application to formal review because such a review has already been undertaken. Upon confirmation that a completed Form B and all required supporting documentation has been received, REC clearance will be provided to the student researcher for documentation purposes only.
3. The application will be reviewed by two members of the Psych-REC. These reviewers will attempt to submit their reviews to the Psych-REC Chair within 7-10 days of a complete application being received.
4. The Psych-REC Chair will also conduct a review of the submission and prepare feedback in the form of a report that incorporates the review comments provided by the pair of reviewers. This report will be emailed to the student researcher and their supervisor, usually within 10-14 days of a complete application being received. The report will include one of the following summary statements:
 - a. *Cleared in its present form.*
 - b. *Clearance is contingent upon...[typically provision to the Psych-REC of a specified document]*
 - c. *Revisions and/or clarifications required - see following page(s). Resubmission to the Ethics Committee is required.* These changes should be made by the student in direct consultation with their faculty supervisor. The faculty supervisor is responsible for

ensuring that these changes are made by the student and followed. These changes must be shown in yellow highlighter on the resubmission from the student.

5. If changes are required, these will be communicated to the student researcher by the Psych-REC Chair in the report. The student researcher will be asked to submit a revised application, addressing the feedback and requested changes.
 - i. If significant concerns about ethical issues are identified by Psych-REC reviewers during the review process (e.g., there is significant risk to participants, deception is involved), the Psych-REC Chair will consult with the University REB Chair. When possible, and in line with the input of the University REB Chair, the Psych-REC Chair will seek to communicate these concerns to the student researcher and supervisor with a view to finding a way to proceed with the study with the REC. If, after discussion with the University REB Chair and in consideration of Psych-REC reviewers' input, the Psych-REC Chair views the application as one that warrants review at the level of the University REB, this will be communicated by the Psych-REC Chair to the student researcher and supervisor and University REB Chair.
6. Appeals Process
 - a) If the student researcher does not agree to the required changes, they may appeal to the full Psych-REC (by email/in writing).
 - b) If an application is not cleared, the student researcher may appeal the decision of the Psych-REC to the University REB. A copy of the appeal should be submitted to the Psych-REC.
 - c) The student researcher may appeal decisions of the University REB to the President of the University.