



University
of Windsor

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Previous to 2023-24, the Psychology Department had a satellite ethics committee to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board. That committee has been dissolved and a new student ethics subcommittee at the REB has been established for honours theses. The new REB subcommittee has been authorized to provide clearance for *low-risk* 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 have ethics 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 Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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 Student Ethics REB subcommittee.
- The Chair of the REB and the Chair of the Student Ethics Subcommittee are available to consult about whether a project should be submitted to the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board or the Student Ethics REB subcommittee.
- Modifications to studies with clearance from the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee must be submitted for review and clearance by the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee.
- Decisions of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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 Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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 Student Ethics REB subcommittee Chair.

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 Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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 chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee regarding the anonymity of their data banks.

PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

1. Application materials are to be submitted as an emailed PDF file to the Chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee through the studentethics@uwindsor.ca mailbox..

2. The chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee will ensure the application is complete and distribute it to a member of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee for formal review.

In the case of an application for use of archival data (Form A), the chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee will use discretion in determining whether a formal review is undertaken or if application can be cleared without a formal review.

In the case of an application for use of data from an ongoing project with clearance (Form B), the chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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, ethics clearance will be provided to the student researcher for documentation purposes only.

3. The application will be reviewed by a member of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee. The reviewer will attempt to submit their review within 10 business days of a complete application being sent to the reviewer.

4. The chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee will also conduct a review of the submission and prepare feedback in the form of a report that incorporates the comments provided by both reviewers. This report will be emailed to the student researcher and their supervisor, usually within 15 business 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 of a specified document]*

c. *Revisions and/or clarifications required - see following page(s). Resubmission to the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee 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 chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee in the report. The student researcher will be asked to submit a revised application addressing the feedback and requested changes.

If significant concerns about ethical issues are identified by the reviewers during the review process (e.g., there is significant risk to participants, deception is involved), the chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee will consult with the University REB Chair. If, after discussion with the University REB Chair and in consideration of the reviewers' input, the chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee believes that the application warrants review at the level of the University REB, this will be communicated by the chair of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee to the student researcher and supervisor and University REB Chair by email.

6. Appeals Process

- a) If the student researcher does not agree to the required changes, they may appeal to the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee Psych-REC (by email).
- b) If an application is not cleared, the student researcher may appeal the decision of the Student Ethics REB Subcommittee to the University REB.
- c) The student researcher may appeal decisions of the University REB to the President of the University.