

# Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects Policy

**Purpose** To establish principles, practices and procedures to guide and ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects carried out under the auspices of Vancouver Community College, in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, (TCPS), *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*.

- Policy**
1. The College will establish a Research Ethics Board (REB), according to the TCPS – *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* guidelines. The primary responsibility of the REB is to evaluate and monitor the quality and ethical standards and principles of College research activities that involve human subjects. The REB has the authority to cease research activity that has not been approved through the Ethics Review process.
  2. The College will respect the independence and authority delegated to the REB and may not override negative REB decisions reached on the grounds of ethics, without a formal appeal process.
  3. The College will establish a Research Appeal Board, to hear appeals of REB decisions according to the TCPS – *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* guidelines.

**Responsibility** Vice President - Education

## Applies to

1. This policy applies to all researchers engaged in any research activities that include human subjects and involve the College through:
  - a. inclusion of College employees and/or students, either as researchers or participants.
  - b. affiliation between the College and other institutions and/or members of the public.
  - c. non-college individuals or organizations using the College name or its resources and/or conducting research on College students and/or employees.
2. This policy does *not* apply to the normal administering, evaluating or improving of an operation, program, service or activity within the College. Such activities include, but are not limited to, quality assurance studies, performance reviews or testing within normal educational requirements.

## Procedures

1. All research that involves living human subjects requires Ethics Review and approval by the REB before research is started.
2. The REB must also review research involving human remains, cadavers, tissues, biological fluids, embryos, fetuses or genetic material before research is started.
3. Research about a living individual involved in the public arena, or about an artist based exclusively on publicly available information, documents, records, works, performances, archival materials or third-party interviews, is not required to undergo Ethics Review. Such research only requires Ethics Review if the subject is approached directly for interviews or for access to private papers.
4. All researchers applying for Ethics Review are required to complete the tutorial on the TCPS - *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. The tutorial can be found at <http://www.pre-ethics.gc.ca/english/tutorial>.
5. Researchers must submit their request for Ethics

Review on the *Request for Ethical Review Form*, maintained by the REB and available through the Chair.

6. A request for Ethical Review must have a VCC sponsor.
7. If the research is approved, the REB will issue a *Certificate of Ethics Approval* through the REB Chair.
8. The *Certificate of Ethics Approval* is valid for one year from the date of approval.
9. Re-approval must be sought if the research is not completed within one year from the date of approval.
10. Re-approval must be sought if there are any changes to the research design, objectives or procedures.
11. Research conducted by students as part of their curriculum, must follow the procedures developed by the REB.
12. A faculty member must be the Principal Researcher for research projects conducted by students as part of their curriculum.
13. This policy will be reviewed every 24 months.

## Definitions:

- a) **Ethics Review** means the processes and guidelines by which research proposals are evaluated to determine if they meet the quality and ethical principles and standards for research involving human subjects.
- b) **Principal Researcher(s)** means the person(s) primarily responsible for conducting a particular research activity.
- c) **Risk** means the likelihood that something harmful might occur and the magnitude of the harm.
- d) **Minimal Risk** means risk that is considered to be within the range normally encountered by, and acceptable to, the human subject in his/her everyday life.

1. **Policy Sponsor** Vice President - Education

2. **Approvals:**

President \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Education Council Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Operations Council Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Amendments**

President \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Education Council Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Operations Council Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Review Date**