
Research Ethics for Human Participants

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Policy Statement

BCIT endorses and applies the principles set out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS2) "Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans."¹ These principles and guidelines have been widely adopted by diverse research disciplines. They express common standards, values, and aspirations of the research community: Respect for human dignity is expressed through the three core principles of Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare, and Justice.

Accordingly, this policy along with its accompanying procedure are intended to ensure that the highest ethical standards in the conduct of research involving human participants are maintained at BCIT in compliance with the TCPS2.

Purpose of Policy

This document describes how BCIT applies the Tri-Council policy. BCIT uses the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS2) and the International Conference on Harmonization (ICH) "Good Clinical Practice: Consolidated Guideline" as references and educational resources in developing and implementing this Policy.

This policy and its associated procedure provide guidance to researchers in how to maintain ethical practices in research involving human participants. This policy also defines the roles and responsibilities of the BCIT Research Ethics Board and other parties involved in approving and conducting such research.

¹ Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

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Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to all persons engaged in research using human participants at BCIT, including BCIT faculty, staff, students, and research participants, as well as BCIT administrators.

Related Documents and Legislation

BCIT Policies

1500 Code of Conduct
 2501 Contracts
 5101 Student Regulations
 5102 Student Code of Conduct (Non-academic)
 5701 Academic Freedom
 7507 Harassment and Discrimination
 7512 Occupational Health and Safety
 6600 Integrity in Research
 6601 Intellectual Property
 6700 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

External Documents

Tri-Council Policy Statement: "Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans"
 – Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research
 – Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
 "Good Clinical Practice: Consolidated Guideline"
 – International Conference on Harmonization (ICH)

Definitions

REB: The BCIT Research Ethics Board

Research: An undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation.

Scope of Research Requiring Review

All research associated with BCIT that involves living human participants and/or human biological materials requires review and written approval by the REB. See the associated procedure for details about inclusions and exemptions.

Ethics Review Agreements with Other Institutions or Organizations

In order to facilitate collaborative research projects involving researchers, data or participants from more than one institution, and in order to avoid a duplication of efforts with respect to research ethics reviews, BCIT through its authorized signatories may enter into ethics review agreements. An Ethics Review Agreement may be limited to a specific type of Research.

Prior to entering into an Ethics Review Agreement with another institution, the Institute must:

- take into account the manner in which the other institution's research ethics board conducts research ethics reviews;
- ensure that the agreement includes a commitment to adhere to the requirements of TCPS2 with respect to multi-jurisdictional research; and
- consult with the Chairs of the REBs.

Background

Researchers have a professional responsibility to adhere to the ethical norms and codes of conduct appropriate to their respective disciplines. When researchers are engaged in research supported by BCIT, the Institute may, in some circumstances, be liable for any consequences of this research. Furthermore, most funding agencies require ethics reviews of research proposals that involve the use of human participants. For these reasons, policy and procedures are required to direct that appropriate safeguards be provided. This policy provides appropriate direction, so that BCIT may conduct research on human participants, of a standard acceptable to all of the major granting agencies and regulatory bodies.

Norms for the ethics of research involving human participants are developed and refined within an ever-evolving societal context, elements of which include the need for research and the research community, moral imperatives and ethical principles, and the law. Researchers at BCIT must demonstrate that appropriate methods will be used to protect the rights and interests of the participants in the conduct of research.

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge, and understanding, and to examining cultural dynamics. Researchers undertake or fund research involving human participants for many reasons. An ethic of research involving human participants should include two essential components:

1. The selection and achievement of acceptable ends
2. The acceptable means to those ends

The first component is directed at defining acceptable ends in terms of the benefits of research for participants, for associated groups, and for the advancement of knowledge. The second component is directed at ethically appropriate means of conducting research.

The law affects and regulates the standards and conduct of research involving human participants in a variety of ways, such as privacy, confidentiality, intellectual property, competence, and in many other areas. Human rights legislation prohibits discrimination on a variety of grounds. In addition, most documents on research ethics prohibit discrimination and

recognize equal treatment as fundamental. Research should also respect the spirit of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, particularly the sections dealing with life, liberty and the security of the person.

Duties and Responsibilities

Vice President Academic

The Vice President Academic has ultimate responsibility for implementing and ensuring compliance with this policy. Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its associated procedures are referred to the Vice President Academic, whose decision is final.

Authority of the Research Ethics Board

All research projects involving human participants, undertaken by members of the BCIT community—including all administrators, faculty, staff and students, including students carrying out research as part of class assignments and institutional research—fall within the jurisdiction of the BCIT Research Ethics Board (REB). The BCIT REB's jurisdiction applies, irrespective of the source of financial support (if any), or the project location, as long as the investigator represents the work as BCIT research.

Projects conducted by researchers from outside the BCIT community who access Institute resources (equipment, personnel, or participants), may also fall within the jurisdiction of the BCIT REB.

The BCIT REB applies the principles set out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS2) "Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans,"² and in accordance with this policy's accompanying procedure document³. Those procedures may be updated from time to time to accommodate future approved amendments to the Tri-Council Policy, or for BCIT research activities.

The REB is mandated by the Board of Governors to accept, reject, propose modifications to, or terminate any proposed or ongoing BCIT research that is subject to REB review. The complete terms of reference for the REB is found in the accompanying procedure.

The BCIT REB reports directly to the Board of Governors and is administratively responsible to the Vice President Academic.

Article 6.2 of the Tri-Council Policy requires that BCIT provide adequate resources and an annual budget to support the administrative processes and educational activities required by the REB so that the Institute as a whole remains in compliance with TCPS2.

Departments and Schools

Individual departments are expected to support and train students to design and conduct their research projects according to the TCPS2 ethical standards.

Researchers

Researchers are responsible for respecting the principles set out in the TCPS2, and complying with this policy and its associated procedure.

² Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

³ The document "Research Ethics for Human Participants Procedure" is available at: https://www.bcit.ca/files/pdf/policies/6500_pr1.pdf

Procedures Associated With This Policy

6500-PR1, Ethical Practice in Research Involving Human Participants

Forms Associated With This Policy

See Procedure 6500-PR1 for list of forms.

Amendment History

1. Created	1999 Feb 02
2. Revision 1	2001 Jun 19
3. Revision 2	2006 Feb 07
4. Revision 3	2007 Feb 13
5. Revision 4	2011 May 04
6. Revision 5	2018 Mar 20

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