



Policy Title	Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Policy No.	F.1.1
Approval Body	Board of Governors
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic & Applied Research
Next Scheduled Review	May 2028
Effective Date	May 31, 2023

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Vancouver Community College (VCC; the College) recognizes the importance of research to the educational process.

The College is committed to ensuring the highest level of ethical standards in research involving humans and to seeing that participants’ safety, welfare, dignity, and rights are protected.

This Policy and related Procedures establish principles and procedures to guide and ensure the ethical conduct of research involving humans carried out within the jurisdiction of Vancouver Community College or under its auspices. This policy and procedures are compliant with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans –TCPS 2 (2022).

The College’s Research Ethics Board (REB) evaluates and monitors the quality and ethical standards of college research involving humans. The REB has the authority to terminate research activity at VCC that has not been approved through the College’s Ethics Review process.

SCOPE AND LIMITS

This policy applies to any research activities conducted within the jurisdiction of Vancouver Community College or under its auspices that include human participants:

- 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.

This policy does not apply to the normal administration, evaluation, or improvement 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.

DEFINITIONS

Conflict of Interest: A situation in which a researcher's/investigator's personal or financial interests are in conflict or perceived to conflict with the College's interests or mission, or with the proper performance of the employee's job duties, responsibilities, or obligations. A conflict of interest may be actual, potential, or perceived. A perceived conflict of interest can be as detrimental as an actual conflict of interest as such actions similarly undermine or compromise public confidence in the College or the College's trust in the employee's ability to discharge work responsibilities and obligations.

Ethics Review: 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 humans. The College will align its ethics review practices with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

Minimal Risk: Minimal Risk means risk that is within the range normally encountered by, and acceptable to, the participant in everyday life.

Principal Researcher/Principal Investigator: Principal Researcher and Principal Investigator are considered by the College to mean the same thing and will be used interchangeably through these policy and procedures documents; Principal Researcher/Investigator refers to the person responsible and accountable for a particular research project and, by extension, for the ethical conduct of the research and research team members' actions.

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

Risk: The possibility of the occurrence of harm. The level of foreseeable risk posed to participants by their involvement in research is assessed by considering the magnitude or seriousness of the harm and the probability that it will occur, whether to participants or to third parties.

STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES

1. The College ensures oversight of its research activities involving humans by establishing an appropriate structure within the College.
2. In carrying out its responsibilities, the College is at all times guided by the Tri- Council Policy Statement (TCPS) and/or future standards as may come to stand in its place. In particular, the College will adopt as the College's research ethics principles the core principles contained and defined within TCPS:
 - a. Respect for Persons
 - b. Concern for Welfare
 - c. Justice
3. The College will recognize the independence and authority delegated to the REB and may not override, without a formal appeal process, REB decisions reached on the grounds of ethics.
4. The College will establish a fair process to hear appeals, according to the TCPS guidelines.

RELATED RESOURCES

[Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 \(2022\)](#)

VCC Policies and Procedures

- A.3.1 Prevention of Harassment, Discrimination, and Bullying
- A.3.3 Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy (FOIPPA)
- A.3.6 Standards of Employee Conduct and Conflict of Interest
- A.3.9 Records Management
- B.1.13 Honoraria
- D.4.3 Student Non-Academic Conduct
- D.4.5 Academic Integrity
- F.1.1 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Procedures
- F.1.2 Ethics and Integrity in Research and Scholarly Activity