

Title: Policy on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants

Original Date:

June 15, 2015; November 25, 2015

Effective Date:

November 21, 2024

Approved By:

Board of Governors

President and Vice
Presidents

Date of Approval:

November 21, 2024

Last Review Date:

November 21, 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that Research involving human Participants at the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning (Sheridan) meets the highest ethical standards and that Research is conducted in accordance with the guidelines and standards of the Tri Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans TCPS2 (2022) (TCPS2).

This policy provides instructions to the Sheridan community on how Sheridan, through its Research Ethics Board, will establish principles for maintaining high-quality standards for Research ethics involving human Participants.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Sheridan College Community Members who undertake any Research activities involving human Participants conducted within Sheridan's jurisdiction or under its auspices, regardless of where their Research is conducted. This policy is also applicable to all Researchers, Collaborators, and Partners who use Sheridan College employees, students, equipment and/or facilities for research activities involving human Participants.

3. Definitions

“Autonomy” is the capacity to understand information and to be able to act on it voluntarily; the ability of individuals to use their own judgment to make decisions about their own actions.

“Collaborator” is a party external to Sheridan who contributes to the overall intellectual direction and participate in Research and related activities¹. They may or may not have a legal agreement signed with Sheridan.

¹ Adapted from Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (2024). Roles and eligibility requirements to apply for or hold College and Community Innovation program grant funds. Retrieved from: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/nserc-crsng/eligibility-admissibilite/roles-roles_eng.asp#a3

“Conflict of Interest” is the incompatibility of two or more personal or professional duties, responsibilities, or interests of an individual or institution as they relate to the ethical conduct of Research, such that one cannot be fulfilled without compromising another.

“Minimal-Risk Research” is Research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the Research are no greater than those encountered by Participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the Research.

“Multi-jurisdictional Research” is Research involving multiple institutions and/or multiple Research ethics boards.

“Participant” is an individual whose data, biological materials, or responses to interventions, stimuli or questions by a Researcher are relevant to answering the Research question(s).

“Partner” is a party external to Sheridan who actively participates in the Research and related activities and makes cash and/or in-kind contributions¹. They have a legal agreement signed with Sheridan.

“Principal Investigator” is the Researcher who is responsible for the ethical conduct of the Research, and for the actions of any member of the Research team at a local site.

“Research” is an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systemic investigation.

“Researcher” means anyone working under the aegis of Sheridan engaging in Research, including employees, students, visitors and volunteers, using Sheridan’s facilities, or seeking approval of Sheridan for Research.

“Research Ethics Board (REB)” is a body of faculty and staff Researchers, community members and others with specific expertise established by Sheridan to review the ethical acceptability of all Research involving humans conducted within the institution’s jurisdiction or under its auspices.

“Sheridan Community Member(s)” include students, course Participants, employees, supervisors, student workers, Board of Governors members, members of committees, societies or associations established or recognized by Sheridan, contractors/subcontractors hired by Sheridan (including Sheridan’s Work-Integrated Learning Partners), providers of service or Research, volunteers, visitors or guests, applicants for admission or employment, and others who attend on campus, or who are otherwise connected to Sheridan’s operations.

“The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans - TCPS2 (2022) (TCPS2)” is a joint policy of Canada’s three Federal Research Funding Agencies: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada (SSHRC). This Policy expresses the Agencies’ continuing commitment to the people of Canada to promote the ethical conduct of Research involving humans. In discharging their mandates, the Agencies wish to promote Research that is conducted according to the highest

ethical standards. The Agencies have therefore adopted this Policy as a benchmark for the ethical conduct of Research involving humans (TCPS2, 2022).

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Principles

Sheridan supports a proportionate approach to human Participants Research review based on the general principle that the more invasive the Research, the greater the level of care that should be put into assessing the Research. To guide Research involving human Participants, Sheridan recognizes the following core TCPS principles to guide ethical Research conduct:

- a. Respect for persons – recognizes the intrinsic value of human beings and the respect and consideration that they are due; incorporates the dual moral obligations to respect Autonomy and to protect those with developing, impaired or diminished Autonomy.
- b. Concern for welfare – recognizes that Researchers and REBs should aim to protect the welfare of Participants; provide Participants with enough information to be able to adequately assess risks and potential benefits associated with their participation in the Research.
- c. Justice – recognizes the obligation to treat people fairly and equitably.
- d. Respect for free and informed consent – recognizes the full and frank disclosure of all information relevant to free and informed consent.
- e. Respect for privacy and confidentiality – privacy refers to an individual’s right to be free from intrusion or interference by others; confidentiality refers to the obligation of an individual or organization to safeguard entrusted information.

4.2 Sheridan Research Ethics Board

Sheridan shall appoint and maintain a Research Ethics Board (REB) which shall work with those individuals who establish and monitor the implementation of policies regarding the Research and treatment of human Participants.

The REB has responsibility for all Research conducted with human Participants at Sheridan and must approve all Research projects involving humans before recruitment of Participants for the Research.

Research involving naturalistic observation of Participants or anonymous secondary data normally does not require REB review. Secondary use of biological human materials for Research purposes will be reviewed by the REB.

Approval of Research projects meeting criteria of minimal risk may be delegated by REB to the REB Chair or their designate on the REB.

The REB will normally only allow Research to be carried out only after the voluntary free and informed consent of the Participant and/or their authorized third party has been given.

4.3 Conflict of Interest

Researchers and REB members must identify and disclose an actual, perceived or potential Conflict of Interest and minimize or otherwise manage those conflicts appropriately.

4.4 Proportionate Approach to Research Ethics Review

The assessment of foreseeable risk determines the level of scrutiny a Research proposal will receive. It involves considering the foreseeable risks, potential benefits, and ethical implications of the Research in the context of initial and continuing review. A delegated review is required for Minimal-Risk Research, while a full review is required for Research that exceeds minimal risk.

4.5 Multi-Jurisdictional Research

- 4.5.1 A Minimal-Risk Research study that has received a recommendation for approval from the Ontario College Multi-Site Expert Panel may undergo a delegated review by the Sheridan REB.
- 4.5.2 A Minimal-Risk Research study that has been approved by a REB from another Canadian REB may undergo a delegated review by the Sheridan REB.
- 4.5.3 A Principal Investigator outside of Sheridan may submit their original Research application for review; if the Sheridan REB requires information not included in the original application, they may request that information before approving the Research study.
- 4.5.4 Sheridan Researchers conducting Research at other institutions must obtain Sheridan REB approval and also seek appropriate external REB approvals.

4.6 Course-Based Research

- 4.6.1 After a course-based REB application has been approved by the Sheridan REB, the ethics review of Minimal-Risk, course-based Research activities with a primarily pedagogical purpose can be delegated to non-REB members.
- 4.6.2 Delegated reviewers who are non-REB members must have experience, expertise, and knowledge comparable to what is expected of a REB member.
- 4.6.3 Delegated reviewers will follow the College's written procedures for the ethics review of course-based Research.

4.7 Compliance

All Research conducted by the Sheridan community that involves human Participants shall comply with the standards stipulated in the TCPS2. The TCPS2 shall be consulted for guidance by the REB members, Principal Investigators, faculty teaching courses with course-based approval, and students.

4.8 Responsible Executive

The Office of the Provost and/or Sheridan's Research Ethics Board will interpret and apply this policy.

Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President, Academic

Contact: Coordinator, Research Ethics Board, sreb@sheridancollege.ca

5. Related Documentation (Procedures/Additional Policies/Forms)

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Academic Integrity Procedure](#)

[Commercialization Policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Guidelines for Generative Artificial Intelligence Use in Research](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Procedure for Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants](#)

[Research Integrity Policy](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Research Data Management](#)

[Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans - TCPS2 \(2022\)](#)

APPENDIX A: [Sheridan Research Ethics Board Application Form](#)