

RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Revised April 6th 2016)

Preamble:

The principle goals of the RERC are:

1. To protect human research participants from harm
2. To support applicants to do their research following the ethical guidelines set out by the *TCPS2 - Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2010)*, with only necessary RERC intervention

The Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC) is a university committee with a variety of functions and goals. The committee aims to conduct its duties in a collegial way that assists King's faculty in their research endeavours. RERC functions are primarily to assess consistency of applications with TCPS2, review requests for special consideration by applicants, and to educate faculty members on how to meet or exceed TCPS2 standards.

Statement of Confidentiality:

RERC meetings, documents, and web-based discussions are in-camera. Members are required to maintain confidentiality and to protect the privacy and identity of the individuals involved, even when charged with consulting outside the committee on an issue.

Conflict of Interest:

A perceived conflict of interest by any committee member (regarding the applicant or project) will be brought to the attention of the RERC Chair (E.g. If the applicant collaborates with a RERC member). A conflict of interest for the Chair will be brought to the attention of the committee as a whole. When a committee member is in a conflict of interest the member will leave the room while the rest of the committee deliberates on the application and makes a decision.

Option to Consult:

The RERC Chair will act in a consultative capacity for those Researchers who would like to discuss their research project and its ethical aspects.

Tri-Council Online Module Training:

All members on the King's University College Research Ethics Review Committee are required to complete the *TCPS2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics (Core)*, an on-line course completed in 8 modules, within 1 month of appointment, and prior to actively participating in the ethics review process. It is also strongly recommended for applicants to complete the Tri-Council Training before uploading their first submission so researchers are familiar with ethical policies, guidelines and standards.

(<http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>).

Membership:

The term for each newly constituted RERC shall commence on July 1 of each year. The length of term for all RERC's members is 3 years as approved by Faculty Council, except for the two student representatives, where the term is one year. It is recommended that any applications still under consideration on that date be the responsibility of the outgoing chair and committee.

The RERC shall consist of at least **nine** members, reflecting the university community's diversity, who have broad expertise in the methods or in the areas of research that are covered by the RERC with at least one member with expertise in research ethics. One member must be recruited from the broader community with experience in research, preferably as a research participant. **Within the nine members: 5 from faculty [three from Social Sciences or Interdisciplinary Studies (one from Psychology), one from Arts, and one from Social Work];** one student representative to be chosen by the student members of Faculty Council from among the student members of Faculty Council and one graduate student representative (to be chosen by the Graduate Student Body of the King's University College); one representative of the King's University College community (to be chosen after consultation with various

bodies, for example, Staff Association and P.A.O.A.); and a volunteer expert consultant from the broader community to provide advice (e.g., legal expertise) regarding specific submissions as needed. ~~Ex-officio: King's University College Principal and Academic Dean or Associate Academic Dean.~~ A quorum will be three members including at least two faculty members. The Chairperson of the Committee will be elected by Faculty Council from among the tenured faculty members on the Committee, who have served at least one year on the Committee in the past five years. The term for Chairperson is one year. All members, including the Chairperson, will have a vote at all times, with the understanding that consensus is preferable to voting.

Duties of the Research Ethics Review Committee

1. A proportionate approach to research ethics review will be used. *TCPS 2* recognizes two levels of review, delegated and full board review. Research proposals that appear to be of minimal risk to participants are usually assigned to delegated review. Anything that appears to be greater than minimal risk is assigned to full-board review. **A delegated review normally involves one or more members of the Research Ethics Review Committee who are assigned to assess the research proposal and recommend its approval or rejection to the Research Ethics Review Committee Chair.**
2. To review faculty research projects for consistency with *TCPS2* prior to the research being done. This applies to all research projects involving the use of human participants (whether non-funded or funded either extramurally or intramurally) [see *Conditions of Appointment for Faculty 2014*, Appendix E, "Guide to the Proper Conduct of Research at King's University College."]
3. **Student research projects will undergo review by the RERC or some body authorized by the RERC and approval will be provided on one of three levels:**
 - a. **A designated instructor or instructors within each department or School, who will have completed TCPS 2 training, will provide an initial review of the student projects originating from that department or School. This initial review will either result in approval or referral to the RERC because of residual ethical concerns.**
 - b. **Three Faculty members and the Administrative Assistant to the RERC will constitute a subcommittee as needed. Since most proposals come from the Department of Psychology, a representative from Psychology shall be a member of the subcommittee. The RERC will delegate authority to approve submissions by students to the subcommittee.**
 - c. **When the subcommittee is unable to reach a unanimous decision, the Chair will be notified and a decision will be made whether to go with the majority decision or to refer to the whole committee.**
4. To review policies for ethics review of research involving human participants, which shall be devised and submitted to the Committee by each department/school/ interdisciplinary programme, and included in the respective statement of policies and procedures.
5. To ensure that up-to-date versions of the *TCPS2 - Tri-Council Policy Statement* be made available in the Library Reserve Collection and a link from the King's University College web site. A current statement of policy and instructions for submission shall be made available on the King's University College web site. Included on this website will be a link to the online module training (<http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>) and recommendation that researchers complete this training prior to submitting requests for research ethics review.
6. The Committee shall meet at regular intervals (at least thrice annually) to review submissions (insert link to meeting schedule). The Committee shall consider submissions from faculty or students of King's University College only. Failure to comply with research ethics guidelines shall be reported to the Academic Dean for appropriate consideration.