

**RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD****Terms of Reference****August 2023****1.0 Mandate**

The Research Ethics Board (REB) has been established to approve, reject, propose modifications to, or terminate any proposed or ongoing research involving human participants that is conducted within or by members of MacEwan University. REB ensures that all research carried out by investigators meets the highest ethical standards as per the most recent version of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*.

**2.0 Accountability**

- 2.1 REB is an appointed body of, and accountable to, the President of MacEwan University (herein ‘the President’), or to a senior administrator delegated by the President.
- 2.2 The President delegates responsibility for implementation of the ethical conduct of research with human participants to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, who may also delegate to another senior administrator.
- 2.3 The REB is independent in its decision-making with respect to evaluating the ethics of proposed or ongoing human subjects research at MacEwan University.
- 2.4 The REB Chair will report annually on the REB’s activities to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate.
- 2.5 The REB refers to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, any breaches of compliance of the REB’s reviewing mandate and with approved protocols and standard operating procedures (SOPs) or other standards of practice that cannot be corrected by the REB.
- 2.6 The REB has the authority to establish its own procedures and internal policies that do not conflict with those established by the most recent version of the TCPS2 and to make recommendations to the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, for revisions to *MacEwan University Policy: Ethical Review of Research with Human Participants* [herein ‘the Policy’].

**3.0 Functions and Responsibilities**

- 3.1 To ensure that all human participant research protocols presented to the REB receives appropriate documentation and ethical review.
- 3.2 To monitor the ethical conduct of research by requiring researchers to report to the REB in a timely fashion:
  - 3.2.1 any substantive deviations from the approved protocol.
  - 3.2.2 any adverse occurrences associated with their approved protocols.

- 3.3 To provide continuing review in the form of annual protocol renewals, as well as additional monitoring in specific cases as determined in an initial review.
- 3.4 To suspend or withdraw approval for any project that no longer complies with the approved research protocol or where the research ceases to be ethically acceptable.
- 3.5 To facilitate the education of REB members and the University research community by ensuring that they are provided with a basic understanding of the principles involved in research ethics review and continuing education opportunities, as they become available.
- 3.6 To act as a resource to MacEwan University researchers on issues of ethics.

## **4.0 Board Operations**

### 4.1 Review Scope and Standards

#### 4.1.1 REB shall determine:

4.1.1.1 if it is the appropriate body to review the application and whether or not the application is within its jurisdiction or expertise (see *SOP 102: Research Requiring REB Review*).

4.1.1.2 if the research is compliant with the Policy and the most current version of the TCPS2.

### 4.2 Review Process

4.2.1 All protocols will undergo a preliminary review by the REB Chair or designate to determine the appropriate level of review.

4.2.2 All decisions of the REB shall be reached by consensus whenever possible. If one or more members have a serious concern with respect to ethics, the matter is discussed further until resolution and/or the researcher is contacted for additional information. However, if the REB cannot achieve consensus, the decision shall be based on majority vote.

### 4.3 Administrative and Resource Support

4.3.1 Administrative and resource support for the REB shall be provided by the Office of Research Services.

4.3.2 Files, minutes, and other relevant documentation shall be accessible to authorized representatives of the Institution only when necessary to assist internal and external audits, and to facilitate appeals.

## 5.0 Structure/Composition

5.1 The REB shall consist of at least eight current members, meeting the following conditions:

- 5.1.1 At least six full-time University faculty recommended to and appointed by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, including:
  - 5.1.1.1 At least one member of the continuing or limited term full-time faculty from each of the University's Faculties/Schools except Continuing Education and Libraries. Those holding senior academic administrative appointments shall not be eligible for selection to the REB.
  - 5.1.1.2 If the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, cannot secure the desired membership from each Faculty/School, the number of faculty positions available for nomination may be redistributed to other Faculties/Schools to ensure the total faculty membership.
  - 5.1.1.3 Membership on an REB shall require one or more of: expertise in relevant research disciplines, fields and methodologies covered by REB; knowledge of human research ethics at a level able to provide guidance to the REB in identifying and addressing ethics issues; and, knowledge of relevant legal issues related to human subjects research, where appropriate.
- 5.1.2 At least one community member who has no affiliation with MacEwan University to be recommended to and appointed by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate.
- 5.1.3 At least one, to a maximum of two, student member(s) in good academic standing, appointed by the Students Association of MacEwan University.
- 5.1.4 The Research Ethics Officer, or delegate, in the Office of Research Services shall provide support in a non-voting capacity to the REB.
- 5.1.5 The Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, shall appoint the Chair of the REB from among the faculty members of REB, in conjunction with the appropriate Faculty Dean. In consultation with the REB Chair, the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, may also appoint a Vice Chair of the REB.
- 5.1.6 At the discretion of the REB Chair, the REB may invite an ad hoc advisor to assist in the review of issues that require expertise beyond or in addition to that available on the REB.

## 6.0 Terms of Appointment

- 6.1 Members will normally serve two-year terms, except for student members who may serve one-year terms. Terms may be renewed to a maximum of four consecutive terms or eight consecutive years of service.
- 6.2 Members wishing to serve on REB after eight consecutive years of service may reapply after a period of one year after their membership has expired.
- 6.3 Membership will be staggered to ensure appropriate balance and to maintain continuity.
- 6.4 The Chair of the REB shall be appointed by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, for a period of two years, renewable to a total of four consecutive years of service as Chair.
- 6.5 A Vice-Chair of the REB may be appointed by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, for a period of one or two years, renewable to a total of four consecutive years of service as Vice-Chair.

## 7.0 Meetings and Attendance

- 7.1 The REB will meet regularly to discharge their responsibilities and will normally meet face to face to review proposed research that is not assigned to delegated review. Dates of REB meetings shall be made public to the University community.
- 7.1.1 Quorum for a meeting will be six members, which must include the Chair or Vice Chair, a subject matter expert, an individual knowledgeable in ethics, and a community member.
- 7.1.2 REB members may be marked as present at a meeting if connected in real time by technological means such as telephone or video link.
- 7.2 Attendance
- 7.2.1 REB members will normally be required to attend and participate in monthly meetings.
- 7.2.2 Members who fail to attend the majority of meetings without extenuating circumstances may be required by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, or delegate, to resign.

## 8.0 Reconsiderations and Appeals

- 8.1 Researchers have the right to request, and REBs have an obligation to provide, prompt reconsideration of decisions affecting a research project.
- 8.2 An appeal committee with documented processes, including selection of membership, (see *SOP 410 Reconsiderations and Appeals*) shall handle appeals from researchers when, after reconsideration, the REB has refused ethics approval of the research.
- 8.3 Membership of the appeal committee shall exclude any current member of the REB, and any individual who may have a conflict of interest, whether real or perceived, with the REB or the researcher.

## 9.0 Non-Compliance

- 9.1 MacEwan University requires that all faculty members, staff, students, and representatives of MacEwan, as defined in section 3.1, to adhere to REB Policies and Procedures.
- 9.2 The university considers non-compliance and the inappropriate treatment of human participants to be a serious offence, subject to penalties.
- 9.3 Acts of non-compliance are outlined in *SOP 903: Non-Compliance*.
- 9.4 All acts of non-compliance will be reviewed and documented on a case-by-case basis by MacEwan's REB and may involve the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.
- 9.5 Any disciplinary actions will consider the severity of non-compliance, and the frequency with which the researcher's actions were deemed non-compliant.

### **Approved by the Associate Vice-President, Research**

Reviewed by the Research Ethics Board in May 2023

Revised August 10, 2023

August 29, 2023: revised Terms of Reference approved, effective August 30, 2023

### **Approved by Academic Governance Council**

September 18, 2012 (Motion AGC-05-09-18-2012)

Reviewed by Research Ethics Board on April 29, 2016

Revised August 4, 2016

September 20, 2016: revised Terms of Reference approved, effective September 21, 2016 (motion AGC-02-09-20-2016)