

Policy History
Policy No. RS1
Approving Jurisdiction: President
Administrative Responsibility: Provost and Vice President Academic
Effective Date: April 10, 2012

Research Involving Human Participants Policy

This version is valid until December 30, 2025.

[See Section 2 for version effective on January 1, 2026.](#)

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to promote ethical research practices, protect the interests of human participants, and describe institutional standards and procedures governing research involving human participants in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans (second edition -2010, referenced herein as the “Tri-Council Policy Statement” or “TCPS”) ¹.

SCOPE AND LIMITS

This Policy applies to all research involving human participants conducted under the auspices of Kwantlen Polytechnic University (“Kwantlen”). Research conducted under the auspices of Kwantlen includes, but is not limited to, research where funds are provided through or administered by Kwantlen; research where the researcher’s affiliation with Kwantlen is explicit in contracts, reports or publications; research which utilizes Kwantlen resources (including accountable and professional development time); and research conducted by Kwantlen students as a component of their course or program requirements.

Unless expressly exempted, all research involving human participants requires prior approval by the Research Ethics Board, either by full or delegated review, as outlined in subsequent sections of this Policy.

STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES

¹ At the time of drafting this Policy, the second edition of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans* is the national standard and adherence to it by Kwantlen is required by the tri-council funding agencies. It may be found at:
http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf

In carrying out its responsibilities, the REB will act at all times guided by the Tri-Council Policy Statement, or future standards as may come to stand in its place. In particular the REB will adopt, as Kwantlen's ethical principles, the guiding principles contained and defined within the Tri-Council Policy Statement. The guidelines in this Policy are based on the following three core principles:

- Respect for Persons
- Concern for Welfare
- Justice

DEFINITIONS

Refer to the related Procedures document for definitions which will enhance the reader's interpretation of this Policy.

RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION

AC8 Principles of Academic Freedom

HR1 Conflict of Interest

IM2 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

IM4 Confidentiality

RS2 Integrity in Research and Scholarship

[Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans](#)

RELATED PROCEDURES

Refer to RS1 *Research Involving Human Participants Procedure*

Policy History
Policy No. RS1
Approving Jurisdiction: Board of Governors
Administrative Responsibility: Provost and Vice President Academic
Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Research Involving Humans Policy

A. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

KPU’s strategic goals include: to foster cultural, social and environmental sustainability through our offerings, research and operations; to expand activity, funding, intensity and impact of research, scholarship and innovation partnerships; to foster teaching excellence and expand innovation in teaching, learning and curriculum; to foster decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples; advance anti-racism initiatives across KPU; advance equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility across KPU; ensure continuous improvement of all KPU programs and services; and to be accountable and transparent to its friends, communities, partners, and governments.

KPU is committed to the ethical advancement of knowledge through scholarly activities, including through research involving humans. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all research involving humans carried out under KPU’s auspices comply with the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions (“Tri-Agency Agreement”).

As an institutional signatory to the Tri-Agency Agreement, KPU is required to comply with its requirements set out in the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research, as amended from time to time. Specific to research involving humans, the Agreement requires the following:

“The Institution shall, for all research involving humans carried out under its auspices:

1. comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, as amended;
2. establish, maintain and comply with its own policy and procedures, or have a formal agreement with another institution, that conform to the requirements set out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans;

3. ensure that Researchers are informed of their obligations under the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and provided such training as they may reasonably require;
4. ensure, through the use of financial or other controls, that the Institution's research ethics board ("REB"), or an REB designated by the Institution, has approved the research project before research activities involving humans have commenced, and that REB approval is maintained as long as activities involving humans are carried out. Where appropriate controls are in place, all Grant funds may be released prior to (or pending) REB approval."

According to the TCPS Interpretation on Governance published by Panel on Research Ethics, the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans ("TCPS") requires that the highest governing body of the institution establish the REB (or REBs), define an appropriate reporting relationship with the REB (or REBs), and ensure that REBs have the necessary financial and administrative resources to fulfil their duties. For the highest governing body, a focus on the one that holds the highest administrative rather than academic responsibility is noted in the TCPS Interpretation on Governance. REBs are independent in their decision making and are accountable to the highest body that established them for the process of research ethics review (per Article 6.2 of TCPS).

B. SCOPE AND LIMITS

This Policy applies to all research involving:

1. human participants,
2. human biological materials derived from individuals living or deceased, and/or
3. other human data not otherwise exempted under the TCPS, that is carried out under the auspices of KPU. This includes, but is not limited to, research conducted:
 - a. by KPU employees, students, or volunteers;
 - b. in affiliation with KPU;
 - c. using KPU equipment, space, or resources; and
 - d. in collaboration with other institutions, Indigenous peoples and communities, organizations, or partners, including while under the oversight of multiple REBs.

C. STATEMENT OF POLICY PRINCIPLES

KPU requires research involving humans be conducted in accordance with the TCPS, including the following Core Principles (Chapter 1, TCPS) that underlie respect for human dignity as the minimal standard:

1. **Respect for Persons:** a recognition of the intrinsic value of human beings and the respect and consideration they are due.
2. **Concern for Welfare:** a requirement of researchers and REBs to aim to protect the welfare of participants, and, in some circumstances, to promote that welfare in view of any foreseeable risks associated with the research.
3. **Justice:** an obligation to treat people fairly and equitably.

The University recognizes that research involving Indigenous peoples requires distinct considerations, as outlined in TCPS Chapter 9, and as per the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. Accordingly, given its strategic goal of furthering decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, KPU embraces a fourth principle as follows:

4. **Cultural Safety and Respect for Indigenous Peoples:** A commitment to recognizing and valuing the unique cultural identities, knowledge systems, and traditions of Indigenous peoples. This principle requires researchers and REBs to ensure that research involving Indigenous communities is conducted in a manner that is culturally safe, respectful, and inclusive, actively involving Indigenous peoples in the research process and addressing their specific needs and perspectives.

D. DEFINITIONS

Refer to RS1 Research Involving Humans Procedure for a list of definitions in support of this policy.

E. RELATED POLICIES, REFERENCES, AND LEGISLATION

Related Policies

HR1 Conflict of Interest

IM4 Confidentiality

IM7 Management of Surveys

IM9 Information Security

RS2 Integrity in Research and Scholarship

RS3 Indirect Costs of Research

External Standards and References

Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR Framework), as updated. The current version referenced in this Policy and Procedure is the 2021 edition.

Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS), as updated. Article and chapter references in this Policy and Procedure are with respect to the current edition which is Edition 2 (2022).

Pulling Together: A Guide for Researchers, *Hiłk'ala: A guide for Indigenization of post-secondary institutions. A professional learning series.* Dianne Biin; Deborah Canada; John Chenoweth; and Lou-ann Neel. BC campus, Victoria, B.C.

Committee and Board Documents

REB Terms of Reference (under revision)

Terms of Reference for REB Chair and Vice Chair Nomination Committee (under development)

Legislation

University Act, RSBC 1996 c 468

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, SBC 2019 c44

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSBC 1996 c 165

Agreements

1. Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions
2. Memorandum of Understanding Between Kwantlen Polytechnic University and the University of the Fraser Valley Concerning Research Ethics Board Appeals (“Appeals Agreement”)
3. BC Research Ethics Review Reciprocity Agreement

Strategy Documents

[Kwantlen Polytechnic University Research Data Management Strategy](#)

REB Guidance Documents, ORS Guidelines, and SOPs

Guidance Documents: [Guidance Documents](#)

Guidelines and SOPs from the ORS: [Guidelines & SOPs from the ORS](#)

F. RELATED PROCEDURES

RS1 Research Involving Humans Procedure