UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

How Do I Get Ethics Approval?

Step 1:
Determine if your project requires Ethics Review.

All research that involves human subjects requires review and approval by a Research Ethics Board (REB) in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement (http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/) **before** the research is started.

Review is required for

- Research involving human remains, cadavers, tissues, biological fluids, embryos or fetuses.
- Observation of human behaviour in a natural environment
- Use of identifiable data

Review is not required for

- Research about a living individual involved in the public arena, or about an artist, based exclusively on publicly available information, documents, records, works, performances, archival materials or third-party interviews.
- Quality assurance studies, performance reviews or testing within normal educational requirements
- Publicly available reports, literature, STATS CAN data

Step 2:
Determine which Research Ethics Board your project should be reviewed by.

The University has established two Research Ethics Boards (REBs). The appropriate REB must approve any project involving the use of human subjects.

The Biomedical Research Ethics Board (Bio-REB) is responsible for the review of all protocols involving human subjects which include:

- Medically invasive physical procedures, invasive interventions and invasive measures (includes administration and testing of drugs);
- Physical interventions that have the potential for adverse effects such as drug, exercise and dietary interventions;
- Surgical procedures such as biopsies, the collection of blood or other specimens;
- Use of permanent health charts or records in accordance with provincial legislation.

The Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB) is responsible for the review of all protocols involving human subjects which include:

- Non-invasive interventions and measures including interviews, surveys, questionnaires, psychological, social or behavioural interventions, non-invasive physiological measures (e.g. heart rate, blood pressure);
- Observation or descriptive research, including drug, dietary, and exercise protocols that are observational in nature with no intervention;
- Audio and/or video recording or other monitoring.

Step 3:
Assess the risk level of your project (minimal risk or above minimal risk).

Minimal risk means that the risk of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Risks of daily life mean those risks encountered in the daily lives of the subjects of the research, considering their actual life situations, as opposed to the daily life of "normal persons" or of "healthy volunteers" as the case may be.

Step 4:
Submit an ethics application to the Ethics Office.

Researchers and graduate students submitting their research proposals for human ethics review must prepare their submissions according to the appropriate guidelines and forms for the relevant Research Ethics Board located at https://vpresearch.usask.ca/researchers/forms.php
The selection of the correct guidelines for preparation of a research submission is important and is governed by the nature of the research, not the home department of the researcher.

Step 5:
Make the requested revisions as suggested by the Research Ethics Board (if necessary).

During the Ethics Review Process the REB will often respond to the researcher with suggested revisions or modifications to the research protocol, consent form, recruitment protocol, etc. These revisions will need to be made and submitted for review **prior** to ethics approval being granted. When submitting the requested revisions only one copy will need to be submitted to the Ethics Office. Revisions can be submitted electronically. Signatures are not required.

Step 6:
Receive the Certificate of Approval and begin the project.

Approval is issued for the protocol and corresponding documents that are described in the application. Changes to any aspect of this protocol (i.e. a change in research method, recruitment of participants, participant population, consenting process, consent form, etc.) require approval from the appropriate REB. A memo describing the changes and the request for approval for the amended protocol should be addressed to the Chair of the REB, care of the Ethics Office.

If you have any questions, contact the Ethics Office at (306)966-2975.