RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
Terms of Reference
(September 21, 2016)

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 Grant MacEwan University. REB ensures that all research carried out by investigators meets the highest ethical standards as per the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS-2).

2.0 Accountability

2.1 REB is an appointed body of, and accountable to, Academic Governance Council. In its decision-making with respect to evaluating the ethics of proposed or ongoing human subjects research at MacEwan University, REB is administratively independent.

2.2 The Chair will report annually on the REB’s activities to the Provost and Vice-President Academic (Provost) and to Academic Governance Council (AGC).

2.3 REB refers to the Provost and Vice President Academic any breaches of compliance of REB’s reviewing mandate and with approved protocols and standard operating procedures (SOPs) or other standards of practice that cannot be corrected by REB.

2.4 REB has the authority to establish its own procedures and internal policies that do not conflict with those established by the Academic Governance Council or TCPS-2 and to make recommendations to the Academic Governance Council for revisions to University Policy or the Terms of Reference of the Board.

3.0 Functions and Responsibilities

3.1 To ensure that all human participant research protocols presented to REB receive 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 modifications 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 principals 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.

4.1.1.2 if the research is in compliance with MacEwan University policy: Ethical Review of Research with Human Participants and the TCPS 2.

4.2 Review Process

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

4.2.2 All decisions of 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 REB cannot achieve consensus, the decision shall be based on majority vote.

4.2.3 Procedures for reconsiderations and appeals are outlined in MacEwan University policy: Ethical Review of Research with Human Participants.

4.3 Administrative and Resource Support

4.3.1 Administrative and resource support for 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 Provost and Vice President Academic may, in consultation with the REB Chair, organize the members of the REB to create area specializations as determined appropriate from time to time by the Provost and Vice President Academic.
5.2 An REB shall consist of at least 12 current members, including both men and women, and meeting the following conditions:

5.2.1 At least eight full-time University faculty recommended by AGC and appointed by the Provost and Vice President Academic, including:
   5.2.1.1 At least one member of the continuing or limited term full-time faculty from each of the University’s Faculties/Schools except Continuing Education. Those holding senior academic administrative appointments shall not be eligible for selection to the REB.
   5.2.1.2 In the event that the Provost and Vice President Academic 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.
   5.2.1.3 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.

5.2.2 Two community members who have no affiliation with MacEwan University to be selected by the Provost and Vice President Academic.

5.2.3 Two members who are full-time students at the University.
   5.2.3.1 Student members are to be appointed by the Students Association of MacEwan University.

5.2.4 The Research Ethics Coordinator in the Office of Research Services shall provide administrative support in a non-voting capacity to the REB.

5.2.5 The Provost and Vice President Academic shall appoint the Chair of the REB from among the faculty members of REB. In consultation with the REB Chair, the Provost and Vice President Academic may also appoint a Vice Chair of the REB.

5.2.6 Temporary or substitute members may be appointed by the Provost and Vice President Academic on an ad hoc basis as may be required to adjudicate individual cases where specific expertise is not available on the sitting 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 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 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 shall meet face-to-face approximately monthly between the months of September and June. 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, one community member, and, for adjudication of applications for research involving students, at least one student member of the REB.

7.1.2 REB members may be considered to be 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 at least seven out of the ten regular monthly meetings.

7.2.2 Members who fail to attend the required number of meetings without extenuating circumstances may be required by the Provost and Vice President Academic to resign.

7.3 Agenda

7.3.1 In addition to the agenda items considered as part of its regular business, REB will place on its agenda for consideration agenda items directed to its attention by the Provost and Vice President Academic or by the Academic Governance Council.

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)