

Research Ethics Policy			
Revision Number	2	Accountability	Chief Academic Officer (CAO)
Policy Number	737	Operational Responsibility	Program Directors
Date of Approval	March 17, 2025	Last Reviewed	March 2025
Approval Authority	Board of Directors	Next Review	March 2027

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all research conducted at LaSalle College Vancouver upholds the highest ethical standards, respects the rights and well-being of participants, maintains integrity, and contributes positively to society. This policy outlines the principles and procedures that guide the ethical conduct of research at our institution.

Scope

At LaSalle College Vancouver, we recognize the importance of upholding the highest ethical standards in research conducted within our institution. The Research Ethics Committee (REC) serves as the governing body responsible for reviewing, approving, and monitoring all research involving human participants or sensitive data conducted by faculty, staff, or students affiliated with the College.

Policy Statement

The Research Ethics Committee shall consist of members appointed by the college administration, including faculty members representing diverse academic disciplines, community representatives, and individuals with expertise in research ethics. The chair of the committee will be appointed by the CAO.

Ethical Principles

All research conducted at LaSalle College Vancouver must adhere to the following ethical principles:

- **Respect for Human Dignity:** Researchers must respect the rights, privacy, and autonomy of all individuals participating in research.
- **Beneficence:** Researchers should ensure that the potential benefits of the research outweigh any risks to participants.
- **Justice:** Researchers must ensure fair and equitable treatment of all participants and avoid discrimination or exploitation.
- **Integrity:** Researchers must conduct their research with honesty, transparency, and accuracy, and avoid fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism.
- **Confidentiality:** Researchers must protect the confidentiality of participants' personal information and data collected during the research process.
- **Free and Informed Consent:** Researchers must obtain free and informed consent from all participants before involving them in any research activity.

Exclusions

There are no exclusions to the policy.

Provisions

Requirements for Free and Informed Consent

- **Voluntary Participation:** Participation in research must be voluntary, and participants should not be coerced, pressured, or unduly influenced to participate. Researchers must clearly communicate to participants that their involvement is entirely voluntary, and they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
- **Information Disclosure:** Researchers must provide participants with clear and comprehensive information about the research study, including its purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and any compensation or incentives offered. This information must be communicated in a language and format that is understandable to the participants.
- **Capacity to Consent:** Researchers must ensure that participants have the capacity to provide informed consent. This requires that participants are competent to understand the nature of the research, its potential consequences, and their rights as research participants. Special care must be taken when obtaining consent from vulnerable populations, such as minors, individuals with cognitive impairments, or those in dependent relationships.
- **Opportunity to Ask Questions:** Researchers must provide participants with the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification about the research study before consenting to participate. Researchers should encourage open communication and address any concerns or doubts raised by participants.
- **Documentation of Consent:** Researchers must obtain written consent from participants or their legally authorized representatives before involving them in any research activity. Informed consent forms must be signed and dated by the participant or their representative and the researcher. A copy of the signed consent form must be provided to the participant, and the original form must be retained by the researcher for record-keeping purposes.

Responsibilities

- **Researchers:** Researchers are responsible for conducting their research in accordance with ethical principles, obtaining informed consent from participants, and ensuring the integrity and accuracy of their research findings.
- **Faculty Advisors:** Faculty advisors are responsible for providing guidance and mentorship to researchers, ensuring that research projects comply with ethical standards, and promoting a culture of research integrity.
- **Research Ethics Committee (REC):** The REC is responsible for reviewing and approving all research proposals involving human participants to ensure compliance with ethical standards. The REC may also provide guidance and support to researchers in addressing ethical issues.
- **College Administration:** The college administration is responsible for providing resources, training, and support to researchers, promoting awareness of research ethics, and enforcing compliance with this policy.

Training and Education

All researchers, faculty, and students involved in research at LaSalle College Vancouver must complete training in research ethics and human subjects protection. The College will provide resources, workshops, and educational materials to support ethical research conduct.

Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in sanctions, including suspension or termination of research privileges, academic penalties, or disciplinary action. Serious breaches of research ethics may be reported to appropriate regulatory authorities.

In addition to the above-mentioned fundamental principles, any research conducted on LCV premises or involves LCV personnel (students, faculty, and/or staff members) must meet the following criteria:

- It must adhere to the principles and criteria outlined herein “LCV Research Ethics Policy” document.
- It must strictly adhere to the guidelines delineated in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2) (2022) available at: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2022.html
- It must have the official approval of the Research Ethics Committee (REC).
- It must have the official written approval of LCV Chief Academic Officer.

N.B. LCV has the right to revoke its approval at any point in the research process if any of the above listed criteria is not strictly adhered to.

Supporting Procedures

- Researchers must submit a detailed research proposal, including a description of the research aims, methods, participants, risks, benefits, and ethical considerations, to the Research Ethics Committee (REC) for review.
- The REC will conduct an initial review of the proposal to determine its compliance with ethical standards. Incomplete or unclear proposals may be returned to the researcher for revisions.
- If the proposal meets ethical standards, the REC will approve the research with or without modifications. If significant ethical concerns are identified, the REC may reject the proposal or request further revisions.
- Researchers must obtain free and informed consent from all participants before involving them in any research activity. Informed consent forms must clearly explain the purpose of the research, potential risks and benefits, and participants' rights.
- Researchers must promptly report any adverse events or deviations from the approved research protocol to the REC.
- The REC might conduct periodic audits or reviews of approved research projects to ensure ongoing compliance with ethical standards.

Further Information

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Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2) (2022) available at: https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2022.html