

**GUIDE TO EXPEDITED RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

(September, 2009)

1) WHO CAN REQUEST EXPEDITED REVIEW?

So long as your research is considered to be no more than minimal risk, you may submit your research ethics protocol to the Psychology Research Ethics Board (PREB), regardless of whether your research is grant funded or not, or whether you are requesting use of the subject pool or not.

2) TYPES OF RESEARCH ELIGIBLE FOR EXPEDITED REVIEW:

a) The research projects must be no more than minimal risk. The standard of minimal risk is defined as follows:

If potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research then the research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk.

b) The research participants must be drawn from the general adult population, capable of giving free and informed consent, and may not include vulnerable subjects such as children, persons who are not legally competent to consent, mentally incompetent persons, prisoners, legal wards or the therapeutically dependent. (In the case of children, the PREB may agree that some exceptions are acceptable for Expedited Review if the research carries absolutely no risk.)

c) In general, the projects should not involve any highly personal, sensitive or incriminating topics or questions which could place participants at risk or cause embarrassment. However, the types of measures that typically have been used in psychology experiments, and have been approved in the past, such as clinical measures, attitudes toward groups of people, measures of sexual behavior or health, and that have been used in studies reported in the journals of the American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), are appropriate.

d) The projects must not manipulate behaviour of participants beyond the range of normal classroom activity or daily life. Manipulations that typically have been used in psychology experiments and reported in APA and CPA journals are appropriate.

e) In general, the projects should not involve physically invasive contact with the research participants. (For exceptions see the HSREB Guidelines ~ Categories of Review)

f) The projects should not withhold key information that could influence a participant's decision to participate in the research.

g) The projects should not involve the kind of deception that had a participant known about it in advance they likely would not have agreed to participate. Minor deceptions of the type that typically have been used in psychology experiments and reported in APA and CPA journals are appropriate.

Finally, review and approval by the Psychology Research Ethics Board or any other university ethics review committee in no way relieves the individual researcher of the ultimate responsibility for the ethical conduct of his or her research. Thesis advisors should take an active interest in their students' research and be particularly aware of possible ethical concerns.

3) IMPORTANT RESEARCH ETHICS DOCUMENTS: All investigators should be familiar with the following documents.

a) UWO Guidelines on Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects:

<http://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics/nonmed/3g001-guideline-nmreb-main-feb%202002.pdf>

b) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans:

http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/pdf/TCPS%20June2003_E.pdf

4) OBTAINING APPROVAL:

a) To obtain approval for your study, complete the Psychology Expedited REB Form. Submit this form, with additional required material, e.g., letter of information, evidence of prior research ethics approval, feedback sheet, and the like to *Clive Seligman, Chair*, PREB (mailbox in psychology department).

b) Your reviewed submission form will be returned to your mailbox (or your advisor's/sponsor's mailbox) within a few days, with either an approval notice or feedback on required changes that need to be made before the project can be approved. Occasionally, your request may be sent to the full PREB for consideration of approval.

c) When you have received the approval notice, please bring it and your completed submission form to Daniella Chirila in Room 7416 (or leave in her mailbox) for filing, whether you are using the department's subject pool or not. If you are using the subject pool, Daniella will give you an ID Nr. and password.

5) ADVICE ON PREPARING A LETTER OF INFORMATION, CONSENT FORM, FEEDBACK SHEET, AND SIGN-UP POSTER.

Each of these pages should include the title of the project at the top.

a) **The Letter of Information** should include: (1) a brief description of the task the research participants are agreeing to perform; (2) a statement that the data will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only; (3) a statement of how many credits the research participants will receive for participation; (4) a statement that participants may terminate the experiment at any time or refuse to answer any question without loss of promised credits; (5) a statement that there are no known risks to participation, or a statement of the risks; (6) a statement that research participants will receive written feedback at the end of the session and that they will have a chance to ask questions about the study; (7) if there will be audio or video recording during the session, a promise that the tapes will be erased at the research participants wishes at any time.

b) **The Consent Form** should include the following sentence: I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

The consent form should be dated and signed by both the participant and the experimenter. These names should also be printed. The consent form should be on a separate page from the letter of information.

c) **The Feedback Sheet** is a 1- page description of the purpose of your experiment, what you hope to find, and how the research participants assisted you. It is given to the research participants at the end of the experimental session. Include 3-4 references. End with your name and status in the Department (Graduate Student, Faculty, or Honors student). Always include a name, office, and telephone number where participants can direct questions (usually the faculty member involved in the research).

The feedback sheet is important because participation in an experiment is intended to be a learning experience, especially for first-year students taking an introductory psychology course.

At the bottom of the Feedback Sheet include the following statement: If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Director of the Office of Research Ethics at ethics@uwo.ca or 661-3036.

d) The Poster is a 2-3 sentence description of what you expect the research participant to do (e.g., fill in questionnaires, memorize words, etc.). For single-credit studies, in terms of the duration of the session, you can only say that “*The study will take less than one hour*” (e.g., you cannot say “This experiment takes only 40 minutes”). Do not hype the ‘advertising’ of your study.

6) RESEARCH SUBJECT POOL REGULATIONS

a) All Psychology 1000/1200 students will be required to obtain six research credits. One credit (or half-credit) will be given each time a student appears for an experiment regardless of whether he/she participates in it. Additional whole or half credits may be given for experiments lasting more than one hour. No monetary compensation may be given to students for participating in an experiment.

b) For whole credit studies, sessions cannot be scheduled less than 45 minutes apart, because studies are supposed to take more than 30 minutes (or be “doubled up” with another short duration study). For half-credit studies, sessions cannot be scheduled less than 15 minutes apart, for the same reason.

c) Unless the procedures or materials do not make sense for certain individuals (e.g., a questionnaire on menstrual pain cannot be completed by men), particular groups of students should not be excluded from participating in studies. Therefore, study descriptions should not, normally, indicate any research subject specifications (e.g., “English as a first language”); participation in the research subject pool is intended to be an educational experience, and all Psychology 1000/1200 students should have access to the same variety of experimental choices.

d) Experimenters and research participants are expected to arrive on time at the designated experimental locations. **If experimenters cannot be on time or come at all, they must arrange for alternates to run the experiments for them.** We require students to let us know 24 hours in advance if they cannot participate in an experiment. Any experimenter, student, or faculty member who arrives late or fails to appear for an experiment will be regarded as guilty of a breach of professional ethics.

e) Psychology 1000/1200 teaching assistants must not solicit student research participation in their labs or classes. Also, experimenters are not permitted to call back previous research subjects for a new study, or to exchange lists of research subjects with other experimenters.

f) In single-session studies, experimenters should assign credit on the Research Participation System **immediately after the experiment.**

In the case of two-part studies, some experimenters call their research subjects to arrange or confirm a second session. Students should not be called after 10:00 p.m., and they should not be made to feel guilty, etc., if they have decided not to participate in the second session. The experimenter, only, books these follow-up appointments on the Research Participation System.

g) If a student appears for an experiment and demands credit but refuses to participate in the experiment, it is best to take the student out of the room, give him or her the feedback sheet and credit, and send them on their way.

This avoids disruption. In the case of a two- or three-hour study, give them one credit only for showing up. If they complain about the one credit, send them to the coordinator, who will explain that if they do not participate, only one credit is earned.

h) IMPORTANT: REMEMBER, PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND ALL RESEARCH SUBJECTS SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT AT ALL TIMES.

7) INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPERIMENTERS USING THE RESEARCH PARTICIPATION POOL

a) The experimenter will set up appointment times for experiments on the Research Participation System on the Internet.

b) Students will sign up for experiments on the Research Participation System.

c) In addition, the student research participants **MUST BRING** the “[Personal Experiment Participation Record](#)” sheet to experiments. Prior to the first experiment the student should fill in his/her name and Student No. in the blanks provided on the record sheet. Then the experimenter will enter the Experiment ID#, date, experimenter’s signature, and the number of credits.

d) After each session, the experimenter will assign credit on the Research Participation System.

e) If credits or no shows are not assigned promptly after experimental sessions, the Coordinator of the Research Participation Pool will contact the experimenter.

f) Students may check their participation record at: <http://psyclone2.psych.uwo.ca/intropsy> regularly. Therefore, any unreported Credits can be dealt with by students on an ongoing basis should any problems arise. It will be the student’s responsibility to check this record against his/her own “[Personal Experiment Participation Record](#)” sheet.

8) EXPERIMENTERS' DOS AND DON'TS

DO:

- a) Ensure that all documentation is complete and signed by Clive Seligman, Chair, Psychology Expedited Research Ethics Board (REEB)
- b) Call in to the coordinator if you are sick.
- c) Enter Shows and No Shows into the research Participation System promptly after the experiment is over.
- d) Credit must be given to research participants just for showing up even though they may decide not to participate.
- e) The experimenter (only) books follow-up appointments for two-part studies.

DON'T:

- a) Do not cancel booked appointments.