

Policy

Procedure

College Standard

Standard Operating Procedure

Guideline

Local Practice



Policy Title	Policy No.	
Human Research Ethics	E-1.56	
Executive Responsible	Administrator Responsible	
Vice President Academic	Associate Vice President Academic	
Approving Body	Approval Date	Date of Next Review
Executive Committee	January 6, 2026	January 2031
Associated Procedure and Resources		
Human Research Ethics Procedure		

PURPOSE

This policy and its associated procedures explain how the College of New Caledonia (“CNC” or the “the College”) will ethically conduct research involving human participants with respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice. It explains how CNC’s Research Ethics Board (REB) reviews ethics proposals, makes decisions, and oversees ethical conduct of research. It also describes how to appeal REB decisions.

This policy ensures that research at the College is conducted following the highest ethical standards set out in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS-2)*.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all research that involves living human participants, or any human biological materials, and involves:

- a) College students, faculty, and/or employees (either as a principal investigator, member of a research team, or a participant);
- b) An affiliation between the College and any other institution or person; or
- c) The College’s name, authority, resources, or property.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. CNC is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in research involving human participants and human biological materials.
2. The President delegates responsibility to the CNC Research Ethics Board (REB) to oversee the ethics review for all research activities involving human participants at CNC.
3. The College will provide reasonable resources required for the REB to operate, including administrative support and faculty workload accommodation for the Chair of the REB.

4. The REB will:
 - 4.1 be established and maintained according to the standards set out in the most recent *TCPS-2*;
 - 4.2 make decisions independently from the College, functioning impartially;
 - 4.3 provide timely, reasonable, and well-documented decisions to Principal Investigators;
 - 4.4 evaluate ethics applications using the most recent version of the *TCPS-2* as a minimum standard;
 - 4.5 review the ethical acceptability of all research projects with a level of scrutiny proportionate to the level of risk associated with human participation; and
 - 4.6 not advise or dictate whether the research topic is appropriate, nor the effectiveness of research methodology.

5. When conducting research involving human participants or human biological materials, all researchers associated with CNC or conducting research on a CNC campus will:
 - 5.1 wait to start their research until after they have received approval from the REB;
 - 5.2 maintain REB approval for the duration of the project;
 - 5.3 follow all relevant legislation, the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS), and this policy and associated procedures; and
 - 5.4 satisfy the REB that the proposed research meets the standards for ethical conduct involving human participants.

6. The College is committed to decolonizing research at CNC, recognizing that academic research involving Indigenous peoples has often resulted in little or no benefit to the communities involved, and, in many instances is still causing harm.

All research at the College that is directed at or purposefully impacting Indigenous communities or Indigenous peoples will comply with Chapter 9 of the TCPS and will:

- 6.1 respect and value Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing;
 - 6.2 actively engage with the Indigenous community throughout the research process;
 - 6.3 demonstrate cultural safety and respect for Indigenous traditions, practices and protocols;
 - 6.4 aim to provide tangible benefits to the Indigenous community involved in the research and be relevant to community needs and priorities;
 - 6.5 strive for equitable partnerships, ensuring Indigenous peoples are partners in the research, not only participants; and
 - 6.6 respect Indigenous authority structures and comply with community customs, codes or practices, and research protocols.
7. The College is equally committed to applying the principles outlined in Section 6 of this policy to research involving other equity deserving or historically, persistently, or systematically marginalized communities. Researchers must ensure their projects are informed by meaningful engagement and aligned with the needs and priorities of the communities involved and:

- 7.1 respect and value diverse knowledge and ways of knowing, including those that may fall outside traditional academic frameworks;
 - 7.2 actively engage with equity deserving or historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized communities throughout the research process;
 - 7.3 demonstrate cultural safety and respect for the traditions, practices, and protocols of the communities involved;
 - 7.4 aim to provide tangible benefits to the communities involved in the research and be relevant to community needs and priorities; and
 - 7.5 strive for equitable partnerships, ensuring equity deserving or historically, persistently, or systemically marginalized people are partners in the research, not only participants.
8. All those involved in research or in reviewing research under this policy will safeguard all information entrusted to them and will neither misuse nor wrongfully disclose it.
 - 8.1 Research teams will follow all requirements relating to applicable federal or provincial privacy law within the scope of the research.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

9. The responsibilities of the Vice President Academic (VPA) or designate include:
 - 9.1 after receiving the recommendation of the REB, appointing the REB Chair and considering whether it is operationally practicable to appoint the Chair;
 - 9.2 upon recommendation by the REB Chair, removing REB members who do not meet standards set out in these procedures;
 - 9.3 reviewing an annual report provided by the REB Chair; and
 - 9.4 receiving appeal requests and arranging for an external appeal board to review the appeal.
10. The responsibilities of all REB members include:
 - 10.1 completing the most up to date TCPS2 training within 30 calendar days of appointment to the REB and before voting in any REB meetings;
 - 10.2 receiving, evaluating, and approving or denying applications for ethical review;
 - 10.3 reviewing ongoing projects for compliance;
 - 10.4 reviewing and responding to reports of non-compliance or complaints of improper research involving human participants;
 - 10.5 Receiving REB membership nominations and confirming new REB members;
 - 10.6 recommending an REB Chair to the VPA; and
 - 10.7 informing the REB coordinator of any conflict of interest related to a research proposal and excusing themselves from that REB review.
11. The responsibilities of the REB Chair include:
 - 11.1 providing overall leadership for the REB including monitoring decisions for reasonable consistency and ensuring decisions are recorded accurately and clearly;

- 11.2 communicating REB decisions, in writing, to principal investigators as quickly as possible;
 - 11.3 determining whether a research proposal requires a full or delegated REB review;
 - 11.4 assigning delegated reviews to REB members in an equitable manner based on each member's subject matter expertise.
 - 11.5 responding to any inquiries from national research councils and appropriate government authorities related to confidentiality, conflict of interest, or ethical compliance;
 - 11.6 providing an annual report to the VPA or designate on the activities of the REB; and
 - 11.7 staying current with research ethics initiatives and best and/or wise practices.
12. The responsibilities of the REB Coordinator include:
- 12.1 calling for applications to join the REB;
 - 12.2 completing the most up to date TCPS2 training;
 - 12.3 scheduling and taking minutes at REB meetings;
 - 12.4 maintaining an active membership list and relevant membership documentation including member credentials and qualifications;
 - 12.5 providing administrative assistance to the REB Chair, as required;
 - 12.6 arranging ongoing training activities for REB members;
 - 12.7 maintaining a list of active research approved by the REB; and
 - 12.8 maintaining comprehensive records of all research ethics proposals and decisions in compliance with TCPS-2.

Definitions and Acronyms	
Ethical Acceptability	Effort by the Principal Investigator to design research where risks have been minimized by preventing potential harms and minimizing their potential negative impacts. Outstanding potential harms and negative impacts are reasonable in relation to the potential benefits of the study.
Participant	An individual whose data, biological materials, or responses to interventions, stimuli, or questions by a researcher are relevant to answering the research question(s). Also referred to as a "human participant."
Principal Investigator	The researcher responsible for the ethical conduct of the study, and for any actions of any member of the research team. When students are assigned to do research projects in classrooms, the instructor is the Principal Investigator.
Research Team	All of the researchers that are contributing to the research project under ethical review, including the Principal Investigator.
Scrutiny	Careful and critical observation or examination.

TCPS-2	The Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. As a condition of funding, the Agencies require that researchers and their institutions apply the ethical principles and the articles of this Policy and be guided by the Application sections of the articles regardless of whether funding is provided by Tri-Council.
Supporting Information	
Related Policies, Forms, Documents, Websites	Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms Tri Council Policy Statement: Ethics Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2 2022) CNC Research Ethics Board Terms of Reference