

Guiding the Graduate Students' Research Ethics Process: A Supervisory Checklist

This checklist is intended to support graduate supervisors as they guide students through the research proposal milestone and research ethics submission process. It aligns with the requirements outlined in [Form TD1: Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal](#) and [Form TD2: Research Ethics Protocol Form for Graduate Student Thesis, Dissertation, or Pilot Project](#). Supervisors are encouraged to review each item collaboratively with their students, answering questions and teaching key aspects of ethical research to ensure all steps are completed accurately and in a timely manner.

The main [FGS page related to ethics](#) is your important starting point.

- ☐ **Before beginning work on the ethics protocol, ensure your student has completed the [TCPS 2: CORE-2022 \(Course on Research Ethics\)](#) and obtained the certificate.**
- ☐ **Collaboratively review [the Responsible Conduct of Research, Senate Policy](#) together with your student to foster a shared understanding of acceptable research practices and avoid misconduct.**

For Form TD1: Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal

Note: Type A - submissions do not require TD forms. After submission, the student's proposal milestone is sent to the supervisor, supervisory committee members and graduate program for review and approval in the [Proposal Milestone system](#).

Types B–G - submissions require the TD and other relevant forms. These forms must first be signed by you (the supervisor), supervisory committee and Graduate Program Director before they are uploaded in the [Proposal Milestone system](#).

- ☐ **Review the [Graduate Student Risk Assessment Guidelines](#) together with your student to determine whether the proposed research involves elevated risk to the student as the researcher.**

- Supervisors should ensure they have read and understood the [guidelines](#) before advising on risk level.
- If the research is deemed to pose elevated risk, complete the Graduate Student Risk Assessment Form collaboratively with the student.
- **Note:** For any research-related travel outside of Canada – even for activities such as archival research – completion of the Risk Assessment Form is prudent. Supervisors are required to sign off on the completed Risk Assessment Form.

Please check that:

- ☐ **All fields of the TD1 form are complete**, including the student's name, email, program, degree and year of study, current status, title of research proposal, etc.
- ☐ **All supervisory committee members are listed on the TD1**, even if their signatures are not required (e.g., when the supervisor checks the attestation box, confirming that all members have reviewed and approved the proposal). All committee members *must* be included on the TD1 form.
- ☐ **All signatures on the TD1 are dated within six months of submission** to the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS).
- ☐ **The student's research proposal aligns with the research protocol type selected on the TD1 form.**

Supervisors should review the student's research proposal together with the student to ensure the correct research protocol type is selected on the TD1 form. The protocol type selected must accurately reflect the nature of the research and the methodology(ies) outlined in the proposal.

Please also review the required [research ethics review forms and processes](#) for details on each research type, ensuring comprehension and accuracy.

Research Protocol Types

- Type A – No human participants, no animals, no biohazards, and no secondary data analysis
- Type B – Human participants, minimum risk
- Type C – Secondary data analysis not conducted as part of a faculty research project
- Type D – Research involving Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples
- Type E – Human participants, data collected under a faculty research grant with HPRC Approval Certificate
- Type F – Research involving animals or biohazards (must be under faculty supervision)
- Type G – Human participants, more than minimal risk or involving clinical trials

- ☐ **All required materials and documentation are included for submission**, particularly for research classified under Types B–G (e.g., recruitment materials, consent forms).

For Form TD2: Research Ethics Protocol Form for Graduate Student Thesis, Dissertation, or Pilot Project

The TD2 form is required for research involving human participants (minimum risk) or secondary data analysis. This includes research classified under Type B and Type C protocol types. Supervisors are responsible for supporting their students in preparing a complete and accurate ethics submission, ensuring all materials align with the research methodology and meet institutional ethics requirements.

☐ **Review the TD2 form's Indigenous Research questions with the student** to determine whether the research requires submission to the Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB) and ensure use of the correct IREB protocol form if applicable.

If your student's research involves Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), Communities, Lands and Nations, this must specifically be reviewed by the Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB). Please collaboratively review the five (5) questions listed on the TD2 form under Indigenous Research to determine if your student's protocol must be reviewed by the IREB. If so, applications must be submitted using the [Indigenous REB Protocol Form](#).

☐ **Assist your student in determining whether their proposed research qualifies as *minimum risk***, based on the definitions provided in the TD2 form and institutional guidelines. If More than Minimal Risk, do NOT use the TD2 form. Submit [HPRC Protocol Form](#).

☐ **If your student's proposed research is part of a faculty-led project**, do NOT use the TD2 form and instead consult [Form TD4: Statement of Relationship between Proposal and Existing Approved Research/Facilities](#) and ensure it is completed and submitted as required. Be sure to also include a copy of the associated ethics approval certificate as part of the student's submission.

☐ **If your student's research involves animals or biohazards**, ensure the [Form TD4: Statement of Relationship between Proposal and Existing Approved Research/Facilities](#) is completed and that a copy of the associated Animal Care Committee (ACC) Certificate and/or Biosafety Permit is included with the submission.

☐ **If your student's research involves secondary data analysis**, collaboratively review the [Secondary Data Analysis Guidelines](#) to ensure proper handling, storage, and permissions.

☐ **If your student's research involves another institution**, confirm that they have consulted with the relevant institution(s) to determine and obtain any necessary administrative permissions.

☐ **Through instructional dialogue, assist your student in completing Part B, Questions 1-4 of the TD2 form**, ensuring all required information related to project description, participants, recruitment and inducements is accurate and thorough.

☐ **Ensure that the methodology (or methodologies) agreed upon by the supervisory committee in the proposal is clearly and consistently reflected in the ORE protocol's question five submitted for ethics review.**

☐ Confirm that any use of audio, video, or photographic recording is clearly justified in the ethics submission and that this is appropriately detailed in the participant consent forms.

☐ Assist your student in clearly articulating what is required of participants for each methodology used in the study. This includes ensuring all elements of Section 5C of the TD2 form are fully addressed (e.g., activities and types of information involved, time commitment, setting, materials, procedures).

☐ **Facilitate a discussion with your student regarding potential participant risks -** including physical, psychological/emotional, social, data-related, deception-based, or other forms of risk - and collaboratively identify appropriate mitigation strategies to address them in the ethics submission.

☐ **If your student's proposed research involves secondary data analysis** (i.e., the analysis of data involving human participants collected for a purpose other than that for which it was originally collected in order to pursue a research interest which is distinct from that of the original work), **collaboratively review the [Secondary Data Analysis Guidelines](#)** to ensure proper understanding and compliance.

☐ **Discuss with your student any apparent, actual, or potential conflicts of interest**, and review relevant guidance to determine whether these should be disclosed in the ethics application. Collaboratively review the [Conflict of Interest Disclosure with Respect to Graduate Student Education](#) for more information.

☐ **Support your student in enacting informed consent**, which is central to the protection of research participants.

☐ Ensure your student uses the appropriate [Informed Consent Template](#).

☐ Through instructional dialogue, review all aspects of informed consent with your student, making sure all required components are included.

☐ Review all final versions of consent materials (e.g., written, verbal, online) prior to submission.

☐ **Together with your student, please review the [Data Security Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants](#)** , provide best practice ideas and assist them to respond to the questions related to data security and confidentiality.

☐ **Assist your student in understanding all aspects of the Student Declaration prior to signing.**

☐ Please review the relevant [Senate Policy on Research Involving Human Participants](#) together.

☐ **As the student's supervisor, please review all aspects of the supervisory declaration in advance of your signature.**

☐ **Please review the Document Checklist with your student,** avoiding missing documents where possible.

☐ **Assist your student's timely submission of their ethics and proposal documents via the relevant portal,** when you deem their documents are complete. GPAs are helpful with this step.

We thank you for the dedicated time you spend with your graduate student, in the completion of their ethics protocol forms. As a teachable moment, demystifying aspects related to research ethics will enable stronger research going forward.

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