

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need an REB review?

Any research done at Bow Valley College and/or by Bow Valley College faculty, staff, and/or students, or that uses Bow Valley College faculty, staff, and/or students as participants requires an ethics review. This ensures that all research is conducted in a fair and ethical manner.

As well, in order to maintain our eligibility for grant funding from organizations such as the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), strict adherence to ethical guidelines for all research conducted in the College is required.

What is an REB Review?

A REB review looks at potential risks and benefits of research studies, and determines if there is an appropriate balance between the two. It also ensures that the researchers are diligent in protecting their participants from any physical, social, or psychological harm during the course of the research.

Is my project exempt from an REB review?

Projects are only exempt from REB review if:

- a) Information is legally accessible to the public and appropriately protected by law (e.g., registries of death, court judgments, public archives and publicly available statistics); and/or
- b) The information is publicly accessible and there is no reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g., existing stored documentary material, records, or publications, which may or may not include identifiable information)

Certain projects may not require ethics review. These include non-research activities that utilize methods traditionally used in research, not limited to:

- Quality assurance and quality improvement studies
- Program evaluation activities
- Performance reviews
- Testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes
- Creative practices

What does Minimal Risk mean?

Minimal risk is defined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement as “research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relates to the research” (Chapter 2, Part B).

What is a quorum for the Research Ethics Board?

A quorum is the minimum required number of members to sit at a REB meeting; in this case, a quorum is 60% of the members/alternates of the REB, including the Chairperson.

What is the difference between anonymous and confidential?

Anonymous means that any information is not identifiable by name to a specific participant.

Confidential means that the information is private, secret, not universally available, or known to only a select few.

Where can I find the BVC ethics application?

Ethics applications can be found on the Bow Valley College website, at <https://bowvalleycollege.ca/teaching-and-research/research-and-innovation/research-at-bow-valley-college/research-ethics/research-ethics-application-forms>

How do I submit an application for review?

You can submit a completed, signed copy of your ethics application to researchethics@bowvalleycollege.ca.

How do I fill out the BVC Ethics application form?

If you require assistance in filling out your form, or if you have any questions, please contact the REB at researchethics@bowvalleycollege.ca.

What needs to be on my Informed Consent form?

You can find a checklist of the items that must be included on any [Informed Consent](#) form on the BVC website.

How often does the Board meet?

The REB meets once a month provided an application has been submitted. The full schedule of ethics application deadlines and REB meeting dates can be found on the BVC website.

How long will it take to get a decision from the ethics review board once my application is submitted?

Once your application has been received, the REB will meet to discuss it. You will receive a decision regarding your application status within two weeks of the meeting. You will have two (2) weeks to make any necessary revisions, after which final approval will be given. If your application is not approved, you may re-submit it for the next ethics deadline.

Can I send out an invitation to participate in my research before I receive my approval letter from the REB?

No, you must wait until you have received your full ethics approval before you begin inviting people to participate in your research study.

I am a researcher at another institution and I would like to do research involving BVC students as participants. Do I need an ethics review?

Yes, any research that involves BVC faculty, staff, and/or students requires a BVC research ethics review. However, if you have already obtained ethics approval from your own institution, and depending on the nature of your study, you may be eligible for an expedited review. Please see the criteria relating to expedited review on the BVC website.

Can I become a member of the REB?

Research ethics board members are chosen based on the criteria necessary for proper ethics review. These members are approved by the VP Learning and serve one year terms. If you have interest in becoming a member, please fill out the Membership Application Form and submit it to researchethics@bowvalleycollege.ca. If you would like more information on what the REB does and what the responsibilities of REB members are, please email researchethics@bowvalleycollege.ca.

What if I have research ethics approval from another College?

If you have research ethics approval from an institution other than BVC that is compliant with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants* [TCPS2 2022], you may be eligible for an expedited ethics review.

Do I need to report back to BVC or the REB about the results of my project?

Researchers are required to submit an annual research status form to the Research Ethics Board, which notes the progress that the study has made, and any unanticipated events (e.g., limited recruitment of participants, lack of discussion in focus groups, etc.). Researchers also must submit a Study Completion form when they have completed their research.

Where can I find more information on research ethics?

The TCPS2 (2022) is the basis of BVC's ethics policy. [Here](#) is a downloadable version of this document.

What if my project changes or I need more time to complete it?

If you need to change an aspect of your project, or require more time to complete your project, you are required to report it to the REB for consideration. Fill out a Request for Modification/Extension of an Approved Project and submit it to researchethics@bowvalleycollege.ca.

What if I don't get approval?

If you submit an ethics application to the REB and it is not approved, you have several options. You can make the recommended/required changes and re-submit your ethics application for review, you could revise the entire project and re-submit it as a new ethics application, or you could focus on a new project. If you have questions about the decision regarding your ethics application, you can contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Board.

Am I eligible for an expedited review?

An expedited review is for ethics applications that fall under a specific set of guidelines, and will result in the application being reviewed by only the Chair and another member of the REB, instead of a full REB review.

The criteria for an expedited review include any of the following, however approval of a request for an expedited review remains at the discretion of the REB Chair:

- Study has already been approved by a Research Ethics Board (REB) of a Canadian university, college, or hospital, where such REB is compliant with the TCPS2, 2022 and any applicable legislation;
- Study involves minor revisions of a previously approved project;



- Study involves secondary use of research data (as per Article 3.2 of the TCPS2, 2022 "secondary use of research" is "the use in research of data contained in records collected for a purpose other than the research itself") which cannot be linked to individuals; and/or
- Study involves only minimal risk
- Study does not involve biomedical procedures