



POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Name	Ethics of Research Involving Human Participants		
Policy #	1102	Category	Research and Scholarly Activity
Policy Sponsor	Associate Vice-President Applied Research and Innovation	Previous Revision Date	March 16, 2012
Policy Approved by	President & CEO	Issue or Revision Date	June 4, 2020
Procedures Approved by	Provost & Vice-President, Academic	Review Date	June 2025

See the related [PROCEDURES](#).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the requirements for ethical conduct of research with human participants for all those involved in any capacity in all research under the auspices of Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all research involving human participants undertaken by members of, or conducted at, Saskatchewan Polytechnic including all Saskatchewan Polytechnic management, faculty, staff, trainees, associates, affiliates, and students (including students carrying out research as part of class assignments) irrespective of the source of funding (if any) and irrespective of the location of the project so long as the researcher represents the work as Saskatchewan Polytechnic research. Projects conducted by researchers outside the Saskatchewan Polytechnic community who access Saskatchewan Polytechnic resources (either equipment or members of the Saskatchewan Polytechnic community) will also fall within the jurisdiction of the policy.

Research at Saskatchewan Polytechnic which is conducted as part of the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing (SCBScN) program with the University of Regina is not subject to this policy. This research is instead reviewed by the University of Regina Research Ethics Board and subject to the University of Regina policies on research ethics.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. When humans, human tissues or human data are used in the course of applied research or other comparable activities, it is the primary concern of Saskatchewan Polytechnic that the rights of the participants are respected and protected and that the procedures followed comply with ethical, scientific, methodological, medical, and legal standards.
2. Saskatchewan Polytechnic follows the national standards articulated in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, as revised from time to time. The guiding principles of this policy statement are:

- a. Respect for persons, including the recognition of the intrinsic value of human beings and respect for the autonomy of research participants. Respect for autonomy is normally reflected in the requirement to seek free and informed consent from participants both prior to and during their participation in a research project.
 - b. Concern for welfare is broadly construed to mean all aspects of a person's life, including their physical and mental health, spiritual well-being, and other elements of their life circumstances. Concern for welfare includes respect for the person's privacy and confidentiality and requires that Research Ethics Boards (REB) and researchers adopt an attitude that aims to protect the welfare of research participants, minimize foreseeable risks to those participants and their communities, and inform research participants of those risks.
 - c. Justice requires that people be treated equitably and fairly. The principle of justice takes into account the vulnerability of the person, the difference in power between participant and researcher, and seeks to equitably distribute the risks and benefits of research participation.
3. Saskatchewan Polytechnic recognizes that historically, research involving Indigenous peoples in Canada has been defined and carried out primarily by non-Indigenous researchers. The approaches used have not generally reflected Indigenous world views, and the research has not necessarily benefited Indigenous peoples or communities. With this context in mind, Saskatchewan Polytechnic researchers will follow a framework for the ethical conduct of research involving Indigenous peoples, as outlined in the procedures.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Research at Saskatchewan Polytechnic will be conducted under the highest standards of ethical integrity and in accordance with the following responsibilities:

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is responsible for establishing Research Ethics Boards, defining their reporting relationships, ensuring the REBs have sufficient support to carry out their duties and supporting and promoting the independence of the REBs in their decision making. Saskatchewan Polytechnic also has the authority to enter into an affiliation agreement with another institution to act as Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Research Ethics Board of Record.

The Office of Applied Research and Innovation is responsible for supporting Saskatchewan Polytechnic's participation in applied research involving humans and for ensuring that the rights of research participants are protected and that Saskatchewan Polytechnic is in compliance with funding agencies, national guidelines, and international standards.

The Research Ethics Boards (REBs) are responsible for the review of the ethical acceptability of research under the auspices of or within the jurisdiction of Saskatchewan Polytechnic, including approving, rejecting, proposing modification to, or terminating any proposed or ongoing research involving humans. REBs will adhere to the Tri Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and, where required, to provincial, national and international guidelines and regulations.

Researchers are responsible for obtaining all the required approvals and conducting their research according to the principles and procedures found in the relevant Saskatchewan Polytechnic, provincial, national and international guidelines.

POLICY

1. All research projects involving human participants require prior review and approval by a Research Ethics Board.

2. All research projects shall be scientifically valid and/or appropriate in a scholarly sense and the benefits to knowledge that will result from such research warrant the investment of time, effort and risks to be incurred by the number of human participants for which the research is planned.
3. Saskatchewan Polytechnic considers the improper treatment of human participants in research to be a serious offence, subject to severe penalties, including, but not limited to, the withdrawal of privileges to conduct research involving human participants or disciplinary action.
4. Saskatchewan Polytechnic and all persons involved in the ethics review process shall act in such a manner as to ensure that there is not infringement of the academic freedom of researchers. However, Saskatchewan Polytechnic and its researchers also recognize that with freedom comes responsibility, including the responsibility to ensure that research involving human participants meets high scientific and ethical standards.

DEFINITIONS

Applied Research: a systematic study to gain the knowledge or understanding necessary to determine the means by which a recognized and specific need may be met.

Applied Research Project: Applied Research undertaken with an intended inquiry, examination, defined question or hypothesis, start and end dates, deliverables, and budget (if applicable).

Human participant is a person or an individual who, by virtue of his/her involvement in a data gathering situation or activity, is a primary source of data or information.

Human research refers to research that will involve a collection of human specimen, data or information from persons, through intervention or otherwise. This human research may include, but is not limited to, procedures of low degree of invasiveness such as surveys, interviews, naturalistic observations, exercise or psychometric testing, examination of patient records, as well as more invasive procedures such as blood sampling or administration of substance.

Minimal risk means the risk of harm anticipated in the proposed research is not greater or more likely than the risk normally encountered in life.

Principal Instructor/Investigator: The instructor or researcher with overall responsibility for the direction of a protocol or an Applied Research Project.

Research is a systematic investigation with the intent to facilitate a deeper and broader understanding of a phenomenon or experience, or to establish facts, principles and generalizable knowledge.

Research ethics protocol is a document submitted by an applicant (e.g., a Saskatchewan Polytechnic employee) for consideration by the Research Ethics Board. This document contains a detailed description of the rationale to conduct human research and the purpose of the study, including the procedures to be followed during the study and managing the results.

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

Policy 1101 Applied Research Integrity

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION OR REGULATIONS

Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, TCPS 2 (2018)