

Guidelines for Inter-Institutional Research (REB Approved - July 2001)

As collaborative research between faculty members at different institutions and between faculty members and community partners become more common, there is a desire that researchers are not unnecessarily hindered in their research activities by a multiplicity of administrative procedures, includes multiple REB reviews. However, each institution and institutional REB has an obligation to ensure that the research activity is appropriately reviewed and that the most rigorous standards for the protection of research participants are adhered to. The TCPS and Brock's approved policies and procedures are viewed as the minimal standard for Brock faculty members, graduate students, and staff members who are engaged in research involving human subjects.

Principal Investigator from Brock University

When the Brock researcher is the Principal Investigator of the collaborative research project or the principal investigator of a sub-project, the Brock REB shall be considered the primary REB and Brock's policies and procedures apply.

Principal Investigator from another Institution

When a faculty member, staff member, or student of Brock University is part of a collaborative research team whose research activities involve human subjects, he or she must submit an application for ethical review to the Brock REB. However, when the Principal Investigator of the collaborative research project or sub-project holds a primary appointment at another institution with a duly constituted and/or certified REB, the Brock researcher (co-PI) may request an expedited review of the application for ethics clearance. At Brock, an expedited review is a review completed by two members of the Brock REB, subject to the following:

- Completion of appropriate forms, as approved by the Brock REB (this could be the application for ethics clearance submitted to the other duly constituted REB);
- Submission of consent forms, etc., as required and appropriate
- Submission of the approval letter from the other institution's REB, clearly identifying the Brock faculty member as a co-investigator

Note: The Brock REB is not obliged to accept another institution's review as being acceptable for any research conducted by a Brock University faculty member, student or staff member.

Principles of institutional accountability require each local REB to be responsible for the ethical acceptability of research undertaken within its institution. However, in multicentred research, when several REBs consider the same proposal from the perspective of their respective institutions, they may reach different conclusions on one or more aspects of the proposed research. To facilitate the coordination of ethics review, when submitting a proposal for multi-centred research, the researcher may wish to distinguish between core elements of the research - that cannot be altered without invalidating the pooling of data from the participating institutions - and those elements that can be altered to comply with local requirements without invalidating the research project. REBs also may wish to coordinate their reviews of multi-centred projects and to communicate any concerns that they may have with other REBs reviewing the same project. The needed communication would be facilitated if the researcher provides information on the institutional REBs that will consider the project.