



UBC Okanagan Behavioural Research Ethics Board

UBC Okanagan BREB

Tip Sheet for Graduate Students

General tips

- Write your application in the third person rather than the first person.
- Make sure your supervisor reviews your application and supporting documents.
- Don't cut and paste from your research proposal - the ethics application requires concrete and specific information of a very different order to the higher-level, 'big picture' requirements of proposals.
- Be as concise as possible to ensure that the reviewer does not have to sift through irrelevant information, but ensure that you provide *enough* detail – especially regarding what will happen to participants in your study.
- Often your study design evolves as you write the application, so ensure you go back over it to check for inconsistencies, especially around: inclusion/exclusion criteria, recruitment, number of participants, etc. Be sure to check the application AND all of the attachments.
- Be sure to consult the guidance notes that accompany each question; they are found in the blue boxes to the right side of each question in the application.

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Tips on answering application questions

Question 1.1 (Principal Investigator): Your supervisor must be the PI on the application because they take primary responsibility for the study.

Question 1.2 (Primary contact): ensure you are listed as the primary contact.

Question 1.3 (Co-investigators): ensure you are listed as a co-investigator.

Question 4.4 (Peer review): Your committee approval is deemed to be sufficient evidence of peer review.

Question 4.5 (Minimal risk): Your default assumption should be that your study IS minimal risk, unless it involves both a 'vulnerable population' and a sensitive research topic. 4.5.B provides an opportunity to explain to the reviewer why your study constitutes minimal risk so take advantage of it!

Question 5.1 A (Research summary): Make it clear that the study is being conducted for dissertation (or thesis) purposes.

Question 5.4 (Recruitment): It is important to consider 'power-over' relationships in recruitment, especially if those involved in recruitment have a pre-existing relationship with prospective participants.

Question 5.5 (Use of records): Be aware that access to records as an employee or intern does not give you the right to access those records for the purposes of research. You need to follow the same steps you would follow in obtaining permission to use the records if you were an outsider.

Question 6.2 (Study risks): 'N/A' is never considered an adequate response to this question. If you don't think your study involves any risks, explain why. The BREB wants to see evidence of thought and reflection. If you have identified study risks ensure to explain how they will be mitigated.

Question 6.8 (Capacity for consent): Please be aware that participants under the age of majority (19 in B.C.) may be able to provide their own consent if you can demonstrate that they have the capacity to understand the study. However, if you are working in institutional contexts (e.g. Vancouver School Board), their consent requirements must be adhered to.

Question 7.1 (External approvals): it is up to you to learn what external approvals (if any) are necessary for your study. If you are working in an international setting, and there are no institutional ethics approvals required in that setting (either because they don't exist or because they only occur if you are affiliated with an institution at your fieldwork site), this should be explained in 7.1.F.

Question 7.2 (Number of participants): estimates are fine, but make sure your estimates are consistent throughout the application, consent documents, etc.

Question 7.3 (Research qualifications): State your specific as well as general qualifications (e.g., knowledge of/experience with study population) and the experience of your supervisor.

Question 8.5 (Data retention): Study data must be kept for 5 years after publication. If you are planning to keep your data indefinitely, make sure you explain how it will be stored. It is the PI's responsibility to ensure all data is stored in a secure manner in a UBC facility.

Question 9.1 (Research proposal): a copy of dissertation research proposal should be attached, along with any applications for grant funding associated with your study.

Question 9.2 (Consent documents): unless you are requesting a waiver of consent, ensure that a consent form is attached to 9.2. For example, if you are obtaining consent orally, you must still attach an oral consent script to 9.2.

Question 9.5 (Questionnaires, interviews, tests): if you are doing a study with an emergent design you may not be able to provide attachments. However, in this case you should provide (at minimum) a general overview of interview themes/content in question 5.6).

Section 9: Ensure that ALL documents provided to participants or posted as part of the recruitment include the current UBC logo, Place of Mind.