

# Job Description

**Job Title:** Manager, Research Ethics

**Department:** Office of Research

**Reports To:** Chief Ethics Officer, Research Ethics

**Jobs Reporting:** None

**Salary Grade:** USG 10

**Effective Date:** June 2017

## **Primary Purpose**

The incumbent ensures the ethical acceptability of human research applications relating to social science and humanities oriented research. Secondarily, the incumbent assumes a leadership role for ORE activities relating to the orientation and training of uWaterloo faculty, staff, and students in the areas of research ethics and research integrity.

## **Key Accountabilities**

*List the major responsibilities of the job, divided into 3 to 5 broad categories. These should reflect 80 - 90% of "what" the job does not the "how". Insert a category heading and in bullet form below, state specific responsibilities.*

**Independently manage the administrative process and operations of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and the Psychology Delegated Ethics Review Committee (DERC):**

- Ensure operational processes are in place to enhance and support uWaterloo's ability to conduct social science and humanities research.
- Apply subjective judgment and established risk assessment techniques to assess applications to decide on appropriate review route (i.e. whether committee or delegated review).
- Serve as secretariat for HREC/DERC to ensure conformity with federal (e.g. TCPS) and institutional (e.g. Terms of Reference) requirements for the administration and operation of HREC/DERC. Liaise with DERC administrative coordinator to ensure application of standard operating procedures and policies associated with DERC review as appropriate.
- Ensure HREC agendas, minutes and feedback provided to researchers are produced in an accurate, complete and timely manner.
- Review research processes and issues associated with conducting social science and humanities research in order to provide advice to HREC/DERC as required. It is rare that an application would be encountered which includes issues which HREC/DERC has not seen before.
- Anticipate issues and ensure appropriate background information is available to facilitate HREC/DERC decision making. This would typically involve reminding HREC/DERC of existing institutional, TCPS guidelines, policies.
- Foster effective working relationships with Chair, HREC members, and Psychology DERC reviewers.
- Ensure effective and efficient HREC and DERC operations; anticipate emerging issues. Advise Senior Manager if changes are required to operational expectations.
- Identify opportunities for ongoing professional development for HREC and DERC members.
- Conduct all committee member orientations and monitor quality of HREC and DERC reviews to ensure required technical competencies are achieved.
- Identify areas which may create risk or institutional liability. If the Manager identified issues, they will bring these to the attention of the Chief Ethics Officer to develop possible solutions.
- Screen protocols for non-compliance with institutional or other compliance obligations and provide guidance to researchers on how to achieve compliance.
- Produce annual activity reports on HREC/DERC activities for the Director and the Senior Manager to include into the ORE annual report.

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**On behalf of HREC, independently conduct delegated ethical reviews and assess research ethics applications for ethical acceptability and compliance with a broad range of international, national and institutional guidelines:**

- Conduct all delegated ethical reviews for 2 of the 6 uWaterloo faculties i.e., Arts, Environment and other areas (e.g., university colleges) not handled by either the Senior Manager or Chief Ethics Officer to ensure continued ethical acceptability of this research via approval of modifications and annual renewals.
- Handle independent analysis but mostly within prescribed processes and well-articulated guidelines.
- May be required to develop or refine standard operating procedures relating to a single institution's processes (e.g., uWaterloo HREC or DERC).
- Compliance obligations are primarily national or provincial in scope. Compliance obligations tend to be well understood within the broader ethics community and some prototype solutions may be available from other institutions.
- Make recommendations to the Senior Manager on opportunities to clarify requirements via the development of new guidelines or standard operating procedures.
- Ensure compliance with broad TCPS and other requirements (e.g. privacy laws) which affect funding and statutory compliance obligations.

**Ensure SOPs relating to HREC and DERC operations are complete and current:**

- Update all SOPs related to HREC (400 series to ensure accurate and efficient process and appropriate compliance and quality control.
- Make recommendations to Senior Manager concerning revisions required to delegated review series (200 series) to better support DERC operations.
- Serve as central ORE contact for all DERC enquiries and support.
- Provide training to DERC members on SOPs or ethics system as required to ensure compliance with SOPs and Terms of Reference.

**Conduct training and outreach activities for internal audiences (e.g., faculties, other departments):**

- Represent ORE professionally at internal seminars, webinars and informal networking events (e.g. brown bag lunches) designed to improve researchers' knowledge of ethical issues
- Initiate training activities to enhance the skill set of uWaterloo researchers.
- Provide seminars, speaking engagements to internal audiences which focus on improving the knowledge of the broader community about research ethics.
- Develop effective working relationships with relevant bodies and associations within the organization (e.g. Secretariat, faculties, Institutional Analysis and Planning).
- Make recommendations to the Sr. Manager, ORE on the annual communications plan for the ORE including the assessment of gaps and the identification of key initiatives and timelines which would be useful to include.
- Maintain and update the content on the ORE website as directed by the Senior Manager

**Provide leadership on the developing new training initiatives and resources to ensure uWaterloo researchers have appropriate resources available:**

- Initiate discussions with researchers and the RECs to provide new training opportunities using webinars, seminars and Learn on both ethics and research integrity topics.
- Review the use of existing online courses (e.g. CITI Canada, TCPS) and develop a plan and initiatives to improve the take-up rate.
- Work with the ORE staff, IAP, HREC, DERC, and CREC Chairs to identify skill or knowledge gaps and improve competencies and develop a plan to conduct other training initiatives (e.g. seminars, brown bag lunches) as appropriate with these non-researcher groups.
- Regularly monitor training available from other sources and communicate these opportunities to ORE staff or researchers as appropriate.
- Evaluate and monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of various training initiatives and make recommendations for change to the Chief Ethics Officer.

### **Required Qualifications**

*If hiring today, what would be the required education, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities?*

#### **Education**

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- Completion of a Master's degree in a discipline related to social sciences and humanities oriented research; CITI and TCPS Certified; professional designation related to ethics review or administration an asset.

## **Experience**

- 5-7 years of progressive research or research administration experience.
- Well versed in research ethics, the TCPS2, and the conduct of research studies in varied settings
- Project management and/or other experience with a proven track-record including simultaneous management of multiple projects.
- Experience with the direct delivery of training material
- Independent, proactive administrator with exceptional communication (oral and written), organizational and presentation skills, ensuring effective interaction broadly within the University and with external agencies.
- Must have initiative, the ability to be flexible, and strong problem-solving skills.
- Strong analytical skills, be able to interpret accurately, and apply agency and institutional regulations, policies and guidelines.
- The ability to work with confidential information, to work independently and as part of a team, and the capacity to work effectively and efficiently in a complex, fast-paced and changing environment with numerous deadlines and priorities is essential.

## **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Research and project management experience overseeing multiple projects at any given time
- Research ethics administrative experience
- Competencies will include strategic thinking, people management, conflict resolutions, persuasion, interpersonal, organizational and communication skills.
- Excellent working knowledge of the TCPS2
- Prior use and experience with an online, web based system

## **Nature and Scope**

- Contacts:** Internally, communicates with all employees in all groups and departments and at all levels to deal with, influence and motivate others, and to promote, justify and settle highly sensitive matters.
- Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible and accountable for ensuring HREC operations are effective and compliant. Initiate self-development activities to ensure knowledge is current and complete
- Decision-Making Authority:** Responsible and accountable for establishing the priorities for the training initiatives undertaken by the department and addressing the changes to departmental plans by consulting directly with the Director and REC Chairs as appropriate.
- Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of a management position operating within an office environment.
- Working Environment:** Minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions typical of a managerial position exposed to stress and pressure; may occasionally attend networking and other meetings in external locations.