

**UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO (uW)
OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS**

CERTIFICATE OF SCIENTIFIC MERIT REVIEW OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

TCPS2, Article 2.7, requires the uW Research Ethics Committee (i.e. either HREC or CREC) to ensure that all research protocols involving human participants that are judged to be “above minimal risk” has undergone a scholarly review for scientific merit. This scholarly review is required in order to allow the REC to assess whether or not an appropriate risk/benefit ratio exists.

Typically this scientific review occurs via independent peer review at funding agencies at the national and provincial levels (i.e., CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, etc.) For agencies that utilize peer review, this would normally fulfill the requirements for scientific merit review.

For research that is either unfunded, funded by agencies or sponsors that do not use peer review or for research which represents pilot or thesis research for students, the researcher may be asked to provide the REC with proof that the proposed “above minimal risk” research has undergone an internal scientific review. In most cases involving student research, the department may require the student to prepare and defend a thesis or dissertation proposal. This departmental research proposal defense process will normally satisfy the need for internal scientific review.

In cases where no such proposal defense has occurred, the researcher must provide other evidence of the scientific integrity of the proposed research to the REC. An internal committee may be struck comprised of individuals with the necessary expertise to assess the integrity of the proposed protocol having considered the hypotheses/objectives, methods and contributions of the proposed research to ensure that the involvement of human participants is warranted and that the “above minimal risk” research has scientific integrity. Alternatively, the REC may be asked to comment on the scholarly integrity of the research.

In cases where no such internal expertise exists, the REC may be required to solicit external opinions on the scholarly integrity of the research.

<i>Principal Investigator(s):</i>	1. 2.	<i>Department:</i>	1. 2.
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<i>Co-Investigator(s):</i>	1. 2.	<i>Department:</i>	1. 2.
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<i>Student Investigator:</i>	<i>Department:</i>
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Title of Project:

<i>Purpose of Project:</i>	Unfunded Research Other	Pilot Research	Thesis Research	Contract Research
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<i>Level of Project:</i>	Faculty	Post doctoral	Graduate	Undergraduate
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<i>Project Start Date:</i>	<i>Project Completion Date:</i>
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Note: A copy of the corresponding ORE application must be provided to the Committee on Scientific Merit Review

1. Briefly explain the scientific hypothesis(es)/objectives of this project. Include another sheet, if required.

2. Briefly explain what new information is expected from this research and its anticipated value to humans. Use another sheet, if required.

Opinion of Committee on Scientific Merit Review

During the scientific merit review process, the hypothesis(es)/objectives, methods and contributions of the proposed research have been reviewed by the uW Internal Committee listed below:

1. *Based on the outcome of this review, the proposed research is considered to have scientific merit and has the Committee's support.*

Yes No

2. *Based on the outcome of this review, the proposed research involving human participants is considered to have scientific merit as outlined in the ORE application and on this form.*

Yes No

Committee's Comments:

Names of 3 Committee Members:
(Minimum)

Signatures of Committee Members:

Date: _____