Faculty of Business Administration Ethics Committee

Primary Research Checklist

All work term students who are conducting primary research for their work reports must include the following with the proposal. This will be reviewed by the Faculty of Business Administration Ethics Committee. An explanation of each of these requirements is attached.

Please indicate below that you have included all required documentation with your proposal.

❒ Summary of Research

❒ Statement of Ethical Issues

❒ A completed copy of all data collection instruments (surveys, questionnaires, interview guides)

❒ Consent Form

❒ Related Documents (if applicable)

Student's Signature

This form and the appropriate documentation must be submitted with your proposal. Your proposal will not be considered by the Ethics Committee until all documentation is completed. Your proposal will be forwarded to a marker after the Ethics Committee approves the research ethics component.

The following is an explanation of the documentation that is required for the Ethics Committee. Please ensure that you read this carefully. Proposals will not be considered until all documentation is received. You should refer to www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans for more details regarding these requirements.

1. **Summary of Research** - The committee must have enough information to consider the proposed research in its appropriate context. The Summary of Research must include:
    i. Scope and objectives of the proposed research
    ii. Research Question and/or expected outcome of the study
    iii. Research plans and methods, including target population, and/or sample; estimated sample size; sampling method; type of research design; data analysis plan.
    iv. The social relevance or practical importance of the proposed research.

2. **Statement of Ethical Issues** – The following topics must be addressed:
    i. Harms and Benefits – Harm can come in a variety of forms including physical, psychological, emotional, social, financial and economical. Be careful to neither underestimate nor overestimate the potential for harm. Similarly, the benefits of participating in a study must be presented accurately. For details regarding harms and benefits assessment, please go to the **Harms and Benefits** section of www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans.
    ii. Free and Informed Consent[1] – The basic principle of Free and Informed Consent is that anyone who is a subject of research should participate in the research voluntarily and with full information about what the research involves. **Free consent** means that participants must agree to take part in the research freely and without coercion or special inducement. **Informed consent** means that researchers have provided participants with as much information as they can. Researchers must provide clear evidence that they have a process in place so that potential research participants have an opportunity to provide meaningful and informed consent. Students must provide documentation which clearly shows that all potential research participants have had an opportunity to provide meaningful and informed consent. The **Consent Form** template is provided with this document. Students should read the section regarding **Free and Informed Consent** at www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans for details regarding this topic.

[1] There shall not be any persons under the age of 18 included in primary research for the Business Co-operative Education Work Reports

iii. Privacy and Confidentiality – Students must include an explanation regarding how participants' privacy and confidentiality will be protected. Matters such as the storage of data, access to personal information by such people as transcribers, and the potential use of data by others must be addressed in this section. In addition, it is important to include how the final report and study results will be used and who will access to the report.

3. **Data Collection Instrument–** The student must include, with the proposal, a copy of the each questionnaire, survey and/or interview guide which will be used to collect data. These should be complete, i.e. how they will be presented to the research participants. If changes are made to the data collection instrument(s) after the Ethics Committee has granted approval, the student must submit the new instrument for approval before he/she can proceed.

4. **Consent Form** – As mentioned above, a template of the consent form is included with this document. The Consent form must be prepared for the proposed study and submitted for approval. Please note that consent forms completed by potential research participants must not be included with the final report as this would breach confidentiality.

5. **Related Documents –** The student must submit any material with which participants or potential participants may come into contact. These may include:
    i. Recruiting materials such as advertisements, letter of initial contact, recruiting phone call script or guide;
    ii. Cover letter for questionnaire:
    iii. Approval from data holder for use of secondary data when a study involves secondary use of data collected for other purposes.

Consent Form *(template)*

Title: *Title of research project*

Researcher(s): *Student's Name*
Contact Information

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled "*title of research project*."

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any other information given to you by the researcher.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in the research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction:
Very briefly give the background to the study and explain its significance in terms that are comprehensible and meaningful to people in the study population.

Purpose of study:
Briefly describe the objectives or purposes of the study. One sentence will normally suffice.

What you will do in this study:
Summarize the activities in which participants will be expected to engage.

Length of time:
Explain clearly but briefly the time commitment required for participation.

Possible risks:
Explain any potential risks of being in the study – physical, emotional, social, or financial. If there is potential risk that a participant would be emotionally disturbed, the investigator must describe the procedure for immediately addressing the situation.

Possible Benefits:
It is not known whether this study will benefit you.

List any benefits that might accrue directly to the participant, indirectly to the participant through his or her membership in the study population, or to others. [Remuneration for participation is not a benefit.]

Confidentiality:
Include a statement advising participants how privacy will be maintained and their identities will be kept confidential.

Reporting of Results:
Provide information on how the data collected will be used (e.g., a thesis, journal articles, conference presentation, report to an agency) and how the data will be reported (e.g., using direct quotations and/or personally identifying information, versus reporting only in an aggregated or summarized form).

Storage of Data:

Describe with whom, for how long, how the data will be stored, and that when the data is no longer required the data will be appropriately destroyed. If the data are anonymous, this statement may be omitted.

Questions:
You are welcome to ask questions at any time during your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact:

Researcher's name and contact information.

The proposal for this research has been approved by the Faculty of Business Administration Ethics Committee at Memorial University. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson, Dr. Jeff Parsons at jefferyp@mun.ca or by telephone at 737-8183.

Consent:
Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research
- You have been able to ask questions about this study
- You are satisfied with the answers to all of your questions
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing

- You understand that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

If you sign this form, you do not give up your legal rights, and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form for your records.

Your Signature:

I have read and understood the description provided; I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project, understanding that I may withdraw my consent at any time. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____

Signature of participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____ _____

Signature of investigator Date

Telephone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Suggestions for Wording in Specific Situations

When participants are solicited from a classroom:

"Your instructor will not know until after the grades have been submitted who has decided to participate and who has not, so that your decision to participate or withdraw cannot have any impact on your standing in the class or on your final grade."

Confidentiality when data are aggregated:

"Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will not be possible to identify individuals. Moreover, the consent forms will be stored separately from the (*materials used*), so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses. Please do not put your name or other identifying information on the (*materials used*)."

Confidentiality when quotations will be used:

"The data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences; however, your identity will be kept confidential. Although we will report direct quotations from the interview, you will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information (*list relevant possibilities such as the name of the institution, the participant's position, etc.*) will be removed from our report."

Limits to confidentiality in focus group research:

"The researcher will undertake to safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion, but cannot guarantee that other members of the group will do so. Please respect the confidentiality of the other members of the group by not disclosing the contents of this discussion outside the group, and be aware that others may not respect your confidentiality."

Confidentiality when there is a chance that a participant might be identified on the basis of what he or she has said:

"Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a small group of people, all of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said."

When participants can review a transcript of their interview:

"After your interview, and before the data are included in the final report, you will be able to review the transcript of your interview, and to add, change, or delete information from the transcripts as you see fit."

Oral consent:

"I read and explained this consent form to the participant before receiving the participant's consent, and the participant had knowledge of its contents and appeared to understand it." (*Include name of participant, date, and signature of researcher. If possible and practical, include signature of participant*.)