

# INTERNAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

## Terms of Reference

### Overview:

Tabor requires that all research projects involving human subjects be considered and approved by an appropriately constituted Research Ethics Committee (REC) in accordance with the highest ethical standards set by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). Currently, the College uses an external Research Ethics Committee (EREC). Prior to research ethics proposals being sent to the external REC, these must first be reviewed and approved by the Internal Research Ethics Committee (IREC). The oversight of the IREC is the responsibility of the college's Academic Board (AB). The Academic Board manages this oversight through one of its subcommittees: the Scholarship Committee (SC).

### 1. Function of the Committee

The IREC is responsible for ensuring that:

- 1.1 All research projects at Tabor involving human subjects are reviewed against the NHMRC.
- 1.2 The highest ethical standards are maintained in research projects to protect the wellbeing of the subjects of research, the investigator and the College

### 2. Expectations / goals of the Committee

The IREC will:

- 2.1 Maintain a record of all proposed projects.
- 2.2 Evaluate proposed projects to determine whether they should be graded "low risk" as defined by Tabor's Research Policy.
- 2.3 Review and approve "low risk" proposals in line with the NHMRC Statement on Human Experimentation and Supplementary Notes as published from time to time. The IREC directly approves research projects and monitors their continuance only if it is satisfied that:
  - 2.3.1 The project as set out in the protocol is acceptable on ethical grounds.
  - 2.3.2 The project continues to conform to the approved protocol.
- 2.4 Conduct full review of high-risk proposals to ensure these are suitable for consideration by the external REC.
- 2.5 Ensure that higher risk applications are reviewed by the external REC and that the decisions of this committee are recorded and communicated to students.
- 2.6 Ensure that no member of the committee will adjudicate on projects in which he/she may be involved personally or have a conflict of interest.

### 3. Committee Membership

- 3.1. The IREC shall include at least one representative from each faculty and at least one external member who has experience on an equivalent research ethics committee (ideally, this person will be a Christian minister of religion, a lawyer, or a medical practitioner).
- 3.2. The IREC may appoint or seek the advice of other persons (i.e. persons in addition to those listed above as members).

### 4. Quorum of the Committee

- 4.1. The IREC will seek to reach a decision by consensus.
- 4.2. In the absence of consensus and in determining whether the project described in the protocol is ethically acceptable, the IREC will forward the project to the EREC.
- 4.3. The IREC may seek advice and assistance from experts to assist with consideration of a proposal

### 5. Frequency of Meetings

- 5.1. The IREC will meet as required to consider research proposals. The timing of meetings for the IREC will usually be determined by the timing of the meetings of the EREC.

### 6. Reporting Requirements and Relationship to Other Committees

- 6.1. As a subcommittee of the SC and ultimately responsible to the AB, the minutes are sent to the SC and through this committee to the AB. These minutes should contain sufficient detail for the AB to be aware of all matters of discussion, not just a record of decisions made.

### 7. Committee Support

- 7.1. The role of Minutes Secretary will normally be fulfilled by the Secretary of the Academic Board.
- 7.2. A Tabor member of the IREC will chair the committee.

### 8. Committee Management

- 8.1. Minutes will be kept and confirmed minutes will be forwarded to the SC and AB.
- 8.2. The Chair will proof read draft minutes and edit them for accuracy.
- 8.3. All recommendations and papers for broader discussion will be clearly written and presented in a timely manner, allowing sufficient time for consideration by other parties.

Approved: Academic Board  
13/12/2019