**Guidelines for Completing the Consent & Assent Templates**

The following templates have been designed to help you construct and organize your consent documents. Some sections are optional and may not apply to your research; these sections should be deleted if they do not apply.

Instructions are given in square brackets. Please remove these instructions once you have completed the section. The template also contains suggested wording outside of the square brackets. You can modify this wording if you desire. Please ensure that your consent/assent form is carefully edited and includes page numbers on all pages.

References are provided throughout the templates to the relevant articles in the Tri-Council Policy Statement. These are also in square brackets. See www.pre.ethics.gc.ca for a specific discussion of each article. Please remove these references before submitting your consent form.

Please remove all instructional text before submitting for CBREC approval. Instructors may leave some instructional sections if they can only be completed by the student conducting the activity.

**1. Consent Form Template and Confirmation of Agreement Form**

**Ryerson University**

**[INSERT LOGO IF POSSIBLE]**

**Consent Agreement**

You are being invited to participate in a research activity. Please read this consent form so that you understand what your participation will involve. Before you consent to participate, please ask any questions to be sure you understand what your participation will involve. *[See* ***TCPS 2 Article 3.2(a).****]*

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH ACTIVITY *[If the research activity involves using different consent forms for different populations, identify the population group as the subtitle of the research activity.]*

INVESTIGATORS This research activity is being conducted as part of an academic course by *[insert the name of student]* under the supervision of *[insert the name of course instructor]* from *[insert department affiliation]* at Ryerson University.

*[As per,* ***Article 3.2(e) of the TCPS 2****, if there is a presence of any real or perceived* ***conflicts of interest*** *on the part of the researchers or institutions, this shall be clearly stated.]*

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact *[insert course instructor’s name, Ryerson email address, and Ryerson phone number. Please do not include personal cell phone or home numbers].*

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH ACTIVITY *[See TCPS 2 Article 3.2(b). Please state* ***what*** *the research activity is designed to assess, explore, or establish in lay terms, avoiding technical terms or jargon. The language used should be at a* ***grade 6-8 comprehension level****. State the* ***number of participants*** *being recruited and the* ***eligibility and ineligibility*** *criteria used to identify prospective participants].*

WHAT YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DO **[OR]** WHAT PARTICIPATION MEANS If you volunteer to participate in this research activity, you will be asked to do the following things:

*[Describe the* ***procedures chronologically*** *using simple language. You can use short paragraphs or bullet points. Medical and scientific terms should be defined and explained. Indicate the* ***location*** *where the research will be conducted and the* ***expected duration*** *of participation. Please be specific regarding the amount of time participation will require. If participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire or interview, describe the types of questions that they will be asked to answer. We strongly recommend that you include one or two* ***sample questions****. Provide clear information about any* ***demographic data*** *that will be collected.]*

POTENTIAL BENEFITS *[See* ***TCPS 2 Article 3.2(c)****. Describe potential benefits participants may expect to receive from the research activity (if any). Please ensure you do not overstate the benefits. If you cannot guarantee benefits to the participant, please include the following statement.]* I cannot guarantee, however, that you will receive any benefits from participating in this research activity.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS TO YOU AS A PARTICIPANT *[If potential risks are low, you may simply state that and then detail the possible risks. Provide a* ***brief description of any risks or discomforts*** *the participant might encounter as a result of participation. A description of provisions you have made to* ***address these risks or discomforts*** *is required. For example, because of the personal nature of the questions asked, a participant may reflect on unpleasant memories while responding to a questionnaire or interview. Subjects should be informed of the potential for discomfort and told that if they begin to feel uncomfortable, they may skip answering a question or stop participation, either temporarily or permanently. If the research activity is likely to cause participants discomfort or distress, please ensure you offer a list of free online and/or (geographically specific supports like an online support group, etc.) to mitigate the risk. See* ***TCPS 2 Article 3.2(c)****.]*

YOUR IDENTITY WILL BE [CONFIDENTIAL OR ANONYMOUS]

***[Confidentiality*** *- means that the information shared and all data collected will be kept secret and not shared. Although you may meet with research participants or you may have data that could be used to identify participants, this information will be kept confidential. No identifying information will be included in the dissemination of the results.]*

***[Anonymity*** *- means that at no time will the researcher or anyone associated with the research know the identity of participants. The term anonymous may be used in conjunction with surveys that are completed and submitted without any identifying information included.]*

*[Specify whether participation will be* ***confidential*** *or* ***anonymous****.]*

*[If confidentiality applies, describe the extent to which* ***confidentiality*** *of records identifying participants will be maintained and the measures adopted to maintain that confidentiality. State whether pseudonyms will be assigned and if/how participants can indicate their preference of whether or not their real name will be used in the paper/report.]*

*[Provide information on the* ***length of data retention*** *and the* ***security*** *of identified data. It is recommended to store data for one year and use Google Drive for secure storage as per CCS Guidelines. If information will be released to any other party (for example, course instructor or TA) for any reason, state the agency/person with whom the information may be shared, the nature of the information, and the purpose of the disclosure. If there is the potential that participants will disclose information that you would be required to report to legal authorities, this must be clearly stated (e.g., a duty to report child abuse, professional duties to report, etc.).]*

*[If participants are to be* ***audio- or video-recorded****, describe the participant’s right to review/edit the recordings or transcripts. Describe how the recording will be stored, who will have access to the raw and transcribed recordings, if the recordings will be used for educational purposes, and when they will be destroyed. If participants are to be audio- or video-recorded, the Confirmation of Agreement form should include a check box or extra signature line so that participants can clearly express their wish to be audio- or video-recorded.]*

INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION

*[The TCPS neither encourages nor discourages the use of incentives, and the expectation is that the majority of course-based research activities will not require such payments. If an incentive is not offered, state that the participant will not be paid to participate in this research activity.]*

You will not be paid for taking part in this research activity*. [OR, if there will be payment/compensation: You will receive a $5 gift card for your participation in the survey.* *Provide instructions on how the incentive will be forwarded to the participant.]*

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL *[Participants must be informed that their participation is entirely voluntary. They must be told that they do not have to answer every question or complete all aspects of the research. If your research involves an online survey or task, there should be an option for complete withdrawal whereby the data entered by the participant up to that point is NOT included in the analysis. If this is not possible, it must be clearly stated in the consent form. Can a participant’s data be removed from the research activity after the fact? If so, please provide* ***a final date to withdraw*** *from the research activity. Participants must be told they can stop participating at any time and that if they choose to stop they will still receive the full incentive (if prorated based on phases, participants are entitled to that prorated amount) and reimbursements. Participants must be told that withdrawal from the research activity will not influence future relations with the researchers, Ryerson, and any other institutions/partners. A sample text follows. Please note the text may not be applicable to all types of research (e.g., studies not involving questions). See* ***TCPS 2 Article 3.2(d)****.]*

Participation in this research activity is completely voluntary. You can choose whether to be in this research activity or not. If any question makes you uncomfortable, you can skip that question. You may stop participating at any time without being disadvantaged as a result. If you choose to stop participating, you may also choose to have your data excluded from this research activity. Your choice of whether to participate will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University [and/or other institutions/partners of the research] or the investigators [please include names] involved in the research.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH ACTIVITY If you have any questions about the research now, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact:

*[Insert name and contact for the student and the course instructor.]*

This research activity has been reviewed by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board or its delegated committee *[Insert CBREC protocol number]*. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research activity, please contact:

Research Ethics Board

c/o Office of the Vice President, Research, and Innovation

Ryerson University

350 Victoria Street

Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

416-979-5042

rebchair@ryerson.ca

*[OR, insert the contact information for the relevant course-based research ethics committee.]*

[INSERT TITLE OF PROJECT]

CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT

*[As per* ***Article 3.12 of the TCPS 2****, consent needs to be documented either in a signed consent form or in documentation by the researcher of another appropriate means of consent.]*

*[As per* ***Article 3.2 (k)****, research participants must be informed that by signing the consent form participants are not waiving any legal rights in the event of research-related harm.]*

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about this research activity. Your signature also indicates that you agree to participate in this research activity and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement. You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant Date

*[If participants are being audio- or video-recorded, there should be a separate consent statement about this and an additional signature line or check box inserted here.]*

I agree to be *[audio-/video-recorded]* for the purposes of this research activity. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant Date

**2. Consent Template for Online Survey**

*[NOTE: if the survey is short and you have concerns about the length of the consent preamble, you may include a short preamble and provide a link to a full information letter that participants can read at their discretion (using the template below).]*

**RYERSON UNIVERSITY**

***[INSERT LOGO IF POSSIBLE]***

**Consent to Participate in Research**

[TITLE OF THE RESEARCH ACTIVITY]

**INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I am a *[undergraduate/graduate student]* at Ryerson University working with my course instructor, Professor *[introduce faculty supervisor here]* in the School/Department of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I would like to invite you to take part in my research activity, which concerns *[in plain language briefly explain the purpose of the research activity].*

**WHAT YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO DO**

You are being asked to voluntarily complete this online survey. It involves questions about *[themes, types of questions]* and should take about [time] to complete. In order for all of your answers to be collected, you must go to the end of the survey and click the ‘submit survey’ button. This will demonstrate your full consent to participate.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS**

There is no direct benefit to you for taking part in this research activity *[or state direct benefits if they exist]*. My hope is that the research will *[describe benefits to society/scientific knowledge as applicable].*

**WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS TO YOU**

*[Describe any potential risks/discomforts from participation and what will be done to minimize and/or address these risks. If your survey is asking questions that could make someone uncomfortable (e.g., thoughts about mental health, experiences with violence, etc.) please ensure you offer a list of free online and/or (geographically specific supports like an online support group, etc.) to mitigate the risk. In addition, you should allow participants to skip a question if they feel uncomfortable. IT IS IMPORTANT TO SET UP YOUR SURVEY TO ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO SKIP QUESTIONS OR SELECT A ‘CHOOSE NOT TO ANSWER’ OPTION. In addition, research needs to be informed and voluntary with an option to stop participation. A participant could start a survey and realize halfway through that they no longer want their data collected. An online survey needs to account for this voluntary withdrawal. An example of such wording follows.]*

Some of the survey questions may make you uncomfortable or upset, or you may simply wish not to answer some questions. You are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer or to stop participating at any time by closing your browser*.* If you close your browser before getting to the end of the survey and do not confirm your consent to participate at the end of the survey by clicking the ‘submit survey’ button, your information collected up to that point will not be used.

*[Option for surveys that might cause someone to become upset.]* A list of online, free support groups is listed here in case you feel you need support during or after the survey is completed. You could also contact the researcher/s if you would like us to find support for you. Please note that if you do this your identity will be disclosed to the researcher. Please print this page or write down the contact information in case you want to access this information once you complete the survey.

**YOUR IDENTITY WILL BE** *[****ANONYMOUS OR CONFIDENTIAL****]*

*[Most online surveys are anonymous, meaning you will not be able to determine who actually participated because you will not be collecting data in the survey that could potentially identify an individual, such as tracking Internet Protocol (IP) addresses. If you are asking for participants’ names in order to provide some type of incentive (e.g., a lottery ticket, payments to participants via PayPal, or mailing gift cards), this would technically not be an anonymous survey unless you collect the names via a separate submission process not linked to the original survey responses. Sample wording for an anonymous survey is provided. Please change the wording if your survey is not anonymous.]*

The survey is anonymous and as such I will not be collecting information that will easily identify you, such as your name or other unique identifiers. Although your Internet Protocol (IP) address can be tracked through the survey platform, I, or any member of the research team, will not be collecting this information. Your IP address may be observed only to ensure that one individual is not completing the survey multiple times. *[If you are tracking IP addresses for other reasons, such as determining geographical responses, please make this clear in the consent process.]*

**HOW YOUR INFORMATION WILL BE PROTECTED AND STORED**

This survey uses *[insert name of survey platform, i.e., SurveyMonkeyTM, QualtricsTM, SkypeTM, etc.]*, which is an American (USA) company. *[Or for FluidSurveys use the following sentence:]* This survey uses FluidSurveys and the servers are located in Canada; however, personal information may be disclosed to FluidSurveys’ affiliates located in the USA. *[If you are using a different Canadian platform, please stipulate the issues related to the protection and storage of data.]*

Consequently, US authorities under the provisions of the USA Freedom Act (formerly known as the Patriot Act) may access the survey data. If you would rather participate through an email or paper-based survey, please contact the researchers. Please note email or paper-based surveys may allow your identity to be known to the researcher/s, but if you select this option your information will be kept confidential.

To further protect your information, data stored by the researcher will be password protected and/or encrypted. Only the researcher/s named in this research activity will have access to the data collected. Any future publications will include collective information (i.e., aggregated data). Your individual responses (i.e., raw data) will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher. *[If information will be released to any other party (for example, course instructor or TA) for any reason, state the agency/person with whom the information may be shared, the nature of the information, and the purpose of the disclosure.]*

When the research is completed, the researcher/s will keep the data for one year after this research activity is over.

**INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATION**

*[The TCPS neither encourages nor discourages the use of incentives, and the expectation is that the majority of course-based research activities will not require such payments. If an incentive is not offered, state that the participant will not be paid to participate in this research activity.]*

You will not be paid for taking part in this research activity*. [OR, if there will be payment/compensation: You will receive a $5 gift card for your participation in the survey.* *Provide instructions on how the incentive will be forwarded to the participant.]*

**YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

*[If the survey is anonymous.]* Participation in research is completely voluntary and you can withdraw your consent at any point *up to* clicking the ‘submit survey’ button at the end of the survey. However, because the survey is anonymous, once you click the ‘submit survey’ button at the end of the survey, we will not be able to determine which survey answers belong to you, and so we cannot withdraw your information from this research activity once you click on the ‘submit survey’ button.

*[If the survey is confidential]* Participation in research is completely voluntary and you can withdraw your consent at any point *up until [insert* ***a final date to withdraw*** *from the research activity]* by *[insert information about how participants can withdraw]*. If you choose to withdraw, the data collected up to that point is NOT included in the analysis. *[If this is not possible, it must be clearly stated in the consent form.]*

*[Participants must be told they can stop participating at any time and that if they choose to stop they will still receive the full incentive (if prorated based on phases, participants are entitled to that prorated amount). Participants must be told that withdrawal from the research activity will not influence future relations with the researchers, Ryerson, and any other institutions/partners. A sample text follows. Please note the text may not be applicable to all types of research (e.g., studies not involving questions).* ***See TCPS 2 Article 3.2(d)****.]*

If any question makes you uncomfortable, you can skip that question. You may stop participating at any time without being disadvantaged as a result. Your choice of whether or not to participate will not influence your future relations with Ryerson University *[and/or other institutions/partners]* or the investigators *[please include names]* involved in the research.

Please note that by clicking the ‘submit survey’ button at the end of this research activity, you are providing your consent for participation. By consenting to participate you are not waiving any of your legal rights as a research participant.

**QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact the researcher/s.

*[Insert contact information for the student and the course instructor].*

This research activity has been reviewed by the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board or its delegated committee *[INSERT CBREC PROTOCOL NUMBER]*. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research activity, please contact:

Research Ethics Board

c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation

Ryerson University

350 Victoria Street

Toronto, ON M5B 2K3

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rebchair@ryerson.ca

*[OR, insert the contact information for the relevant course-based research ethics committee.]*

**START SURVEY** *[Add “start survey” button.]*

[SURVEY QUESTIONS]

*[At the end of the survey include a SUBMIT button or checkbox stating the following.]*

By clicking SUBMIT, I am consenting to participate in this research activity.

**3. Assent Agreement Guidelines**

**Assent Agreement (Guidelines)**

**Note to Investigators:** If children without the capacity to consent on their own will be included in this research activity, an assent agreement is necessary. A written assent agreement is used to inform the child of the research activity using age-appropriate language so he/she can determine whether or not to participate in the research. If the child is not yet able to read, alternative procedures may be used to present the information verbally to the child in order to obtain verbal assent.

Assent must usually be accompanied by parental consent but may be obtained without parental consent depending upon the nature of the research activity [minimal risk only, non-medical, non-therapeutic] and the age level of the child [older adolescents]. Any research involving therapeutic or medical or invasive testing or clinical trials with children as research subjects should not be undertaken without the informed written consent of the parent(s) or guardian(s).

The structure of an assent agreement includes:

1. A heading.

2. A title.

3. A description of the purpose, procedures, and other information contained in the related parental consent form, but in simpler language.

4. A description of what the child will be asked to do and how long he/she will be involved.

5. A description of how children might indicate that they no longer want to participate.

6. Age-appropriate level of language that can be understood by the targeted age group.