Department of Psychology IRB Review Guidelines

This document outlines the internal IRB process for the Department of Psychology. Before an IRB proposal is sent to the IRB it must first be reviewed by the department chair. This process applies to all research projects in the Department seeking IRB approval.

Faculty should submit the RIT Form A and all supporting documentation to the chair. IRB packets for student projects should be sent to the chair by the faculty mentor, with both the student and faculty signatures. The chair will aim to review the materials within two weeks. Be sure to review the information in the table below when completing the IRB packet.

The department chair should be added to the Qualtrics survey as collaborator so that checks can be made to ensure Qualtrics set up is consistent with what is stated in the IRB proposal. Chair access should be removed before the start of data collection.

Once the chair reviews and signs off on the IRB form, the form will be sent back to the submitting faculty member who can then proceed to submit the form to the IRB office, hsro@rit.edu. CC the chair on the submission email.

The SONA coordinator will be tasked with alerting the relevant faculty member and chair if they notice any IRB concerns while managing the SONA system.

Faculty are responsible for following the approved procedures and ensuring that any IRB violations are reported and corrected as soon as discovered. Faculty mentors are responsible for overseeing their mentees' research.

Useful links:

Main IRB website: https://www.rit.edu/hsro/

IRB Checklist: https://www.rit.edu/hsro/checklist

Informed Consent examples: https://www.rit.edu/hsro/examples-and-tools

IRB Forms: https://www.rit.edu/hsro/how-submit

SONA and Qualtrics Guides: https://people.rit.edu/amsgss/index.html

This table highlights specific areas of the IRB Form, Qualtrics, and SONA as they pertain to the IRB review process. See the SONA link above for more information on specific SONA requirements.

IRB Packet (Form A and associated materials)		
Cover Page Completed	Appropriate signatures are included	For student IRB forms, forms should be submitted with faculty signatures already on the form. By signing, you as faculty are signifying that you have read the materials, reviewed Qualtrics and SONA set up, the materials have been revised to minimize writing errors, the written responses are clear, and you approve of the submission on ethical and professional grounds. (Note that the faculty signatory on Form A is responsible, even if full or partial supervision has been delegated to someone else.) If it is clear that you have not done this despite signing off, this will delay the current submission and potentially future submissions by you and your students as failing to do these things is disrespectful of the reviewers' time. Note, course instructor grading (e.g. in Senior Capstone) is not a substitute for faculty mentor oversight of materials. If a student persistently fails to follow IRB rules (or makes more severe errors, even once) despite faculty instruction, it is the faculty member's responsibility to halt research until the situation can be resolved.
	Relevant check boxes are checked	

Population Sample (item 4)	Sample size	Base sample size on power analysis when appropriate (for example pilot studies do not necessarily need a power analysis). Account for attrition.
	Recruitment	Describe all recruitment procedures. All recruitment materials need to be included in IRB packet for review and approved for form and venue before use. Include summary to be posted in SONA. Advertising may not be changed without IRB approval. Advertising/recruitment may not be conducted in venues that have not been approved by the IRB.
	Incentives	Be sure that the compensation is clearly documented in the form and consent form and the two documents match. If using SONA credits, the policy is 1 credit for each 15 minutes of participation. In-person studies get one extra credit. State a maximum amount of credit a study is worth. Any denial of credit for participants who reach the end of the study must be done according to a planned and approved system. Credit may not be denied post-hoc to a completer for reasons that have not be preregistered. Studies are permitted to use a pre-set criterion of a minimum number of failed attention check questions to deny credit. This process should be automated to detect repeated failed attention checks and deny credit rather than automatically assign credit and retract it later. This does not need special approval, though it should be noted on Form A.
Vulnerable Populations (item 5)	Student participants	Most studies being proposed are utilizing students. Be sure to check the correct box and complete the questions in this section.

Data Collection Process (item 6)	Anonymous/Confidential	In-person studies are not anonymous. If selecting anonymous for online studies you have to show that you are not collecting any identifiable data (names, IP addresses, addresses, student ID #s, etc). In almost all cases, the data should be kept confidential. Even if your study is not anonymous, you should de-identify data as soon as possible. You must indicate when de-identification will take place and how rigorous you intend to be. You must indicate the steps you will take to destroy identifying data. For example, if you simply delete a spreadsheet column on your downloaded file, the data is still in Qualtrics. If a study is anonymous set up SONA to hide names of participants and set up SONA to link with Qualtrics to give credit automatically. If the data is confidential rather than anonymous, the consent form must clearly disclose that identifiable information is being collected, will be accessible to the researcher, and is linked to all participant responses. This is true even if the researcher does not intend to access identifiable information or link it to responses. On Form A you should disclose the reason for collecting identifiable data, how it will be used, how long it will be kept, and how it will be deleted when no longer needed.
	Participant time	All studies must be tested for duration before submitting the IRB form to the Chair. This means having a RA take the survey like they are an actual participant or piloting your procedures. This is to make sure that the IRB form information is accurate, and that the compensation level is appropriate. When emailing your IRB

		materials for chair review, make sure your email explicitly addresses how you tested the survey.
	Procedures (6f)	All survey materials should be submitted. If using Qualtrics, submit PDF copy of your survey, including consent form. This will allow for checking the actual participant facing materials. Be sure to provide some detail here. If your study is only a survey study, a few sentences may suffice, but simply stating, “see materials” is not enough.
Risks (item 8)		Ensure lists of risks are appropriate relative to the actual procedure being proposed.
Consent (item 9)		List everyone who will be obtaining consent in your study. Indicate their training. Describe any deception you plan to use with justification. Be sure consent forms are written at a manageable reading level.
Overall		Be sure all items are turned in for review, (abstract, surveys, certificates, etc.) For survey items in Qualtrics, give the chair access to the survey in Qualtrics for review. Remove the chair from the access before data collection starts. The exception to review of Qualtrics is for cases where IRB approval must be obtained for grant funding (e.g. just in time requests). In this case, electronic copies of all surveys and consent forms may be submitted to the chair.
Qualtrics		
	Consent form	Make sure it matches what was approved by the IRB. When testing online surveys, be sure the consent form branching works correctly.
	Test Automatic credit function	Declining consent must not lead to credit.

		If there are multiple branches through the study, every one of them must be tested through to completion.
	Turn off IP collection	IP address collection is permitted if your study is not anonymous and you explicitly state in both Form A and in the consent that IP addresses are being collected. Turning off IP collection must be done manually; Qualtrics collects IP addresses by default. Sona prevents multiple responses from the same participant. If you are advertising outside of RIT and are concerned about the same participant responding multiple times, create two parallel surveys. The survey for RIT will not collect IP addresses; the survey outside of RIT can.
	Forced Responses	Force response is acceptable as long as neither Form A nor the consent says that participants may skip questions. Force response is required for the consent question. Force response is often a good idea to prevent students from getting credit without answering any questions, so it should typically be used unless Form A / the consent says otherwise. If force response cannot be used, request response is typically acceptable unless the IRB says otherwise.
SONA		
	Study Descriptions	Study descriptions should have enough information to give a general idea of what the study is about and match what is approved by the IRB.
		See the SONA requirements and guidelines when setting up a study in SONA.
IRB Amendments		

		Any changes to your study need to be approved by the IRB. CC the department chair on any amendment emails to keep the chair informed of study changes.