

10 June
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Brock Research Activities During Stages of Pandemic and Recovery

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This updated guidance replaces earlier versions released throughout the pandemic and recovery.

This plan provides guidance for a broad range of research activities on- and off-campus at each of the [Brock Stages of Reopening/Recovery](#), which align with the province's three-step [Road Map to Reopen](#) and the corresponding regulations. See **Table 1** below for details regarding the Brock research activities that are expected to be authorized at each stage of the pandemic and recovery.

Consistent with the process implemented in June 2020, researchers seeking access to research facilities and sites on- or off-campus will apply through their Associate Dean Research as described [below](#).

Note: A streamlined process is available to access [Brock Archives & Special Collections](#) only.

Access Request Process

1. Researchers read and understand the guidance documents from Brock University Health, Safety, and Wellness:
 - a. [Reopening Shared Research Lab Spaces in COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions: General Guidance](#)
 - b. (if relevant) [Health, Safety, and Wellness Guidance for In-Person Research with Human Participants under COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions](#)
2. Researchers complete COVID-19 safety training on Sakai (for [employees](#) or [students](#) as relevant), as well as any applicable required department-specific training.
3. Faculty researchers submit the following documents to their Associate Dean Research to request authorization for research activities for themselves and any supervisees:
 - a. the [Research Facility Access and Prioritization Request Form](#)
 - b. the [Researcher COVID-19 Mitigation Strategy](#)
 - c. the [Research with Human Participants Risk Checklist](#) (if relevant)
 - d. any [associated Research Ethics Board applications or modification requests](#) (if relevant)
4. Student researchers will be directed to confirm that they are willing to undertake research in pandemic conditions.
5. If the Associate Dean determines that the proposed research activity is consistent with the pandemic conditions and endorses the request, it will be forwarded to the Academic Safety Committee and Health, Safety, and Wellness and (if relevant) the Research Ethics Board for detailed review of the identified risk-mitigation plans.
6. Faculty researchers will be notified by the Associate Dean Research when research activity has been authorized according to an accepted risk-mitigation plan.
7. If relevant, faculty researchers provide the approved access request documents and notification of authorization to relevant regulatory bodies, such as [Animal Care Services](#) (the Research Ethics Office is notified at step 3).
8. Researchers will be scheduled for access to on-campus spaces (if relevant) once they have confirmed with the Associate Dean Research that authorization and regulatory clearance are in place. See the [Coordinating Shared Access](#) section below.

Authorization for access to any research facility or site may be reversed based on University, government, or public health direction in the zone where the research is intended to occur. Attend to University communications to know when Brock moves between the identified [Stages for Pandemic Response and Recovery](#); consult local public health guidance if the research is intended to occur in another region. If at any point, the University or the research site moves toward a more restrictive stage for which **Table 1** no longer includes an activity that has been authorized at a later stage, then the activity must stop until further authorization is secured. Consult your Associate Dean Research if you are uncertain.

Researcher Responsibilities

- Researchers must complete the relevant online training modules (see Sakai for [employees](#) or [students](#)).
- Researchers must respect prioritization and scheduling decisions to accommodate collective needs.
- Researchers must sign in and out as they enter and leave the lab to confirm dates, times, and completion of sanitization routines. Follow the [Reopening Shared Research Lab Spaces in COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions: General Guidance](#) to reduce contact with shared surfaces.
- Researchers must observe public health guidance by maintaining, whenever possible, at least 2 metres from anyone other than household members. Until further notice, 18 m² per person is used as a guideline to support this physical distancing in research laboratories or other enclosed spaces. Amendments to this occupancy limit may be possible in Brock 4 or Brock 5 (see **Table 1** below).
- Researchers must limit the number of individuals in a shared research space to the maximum gathering size established by provincial and public health guidance.
- Researchers need to be prepared for a sudden closure based on University, government, or public health direction.
- Any situation that alters the health and safety of personnel or changes the circumstances around which authorization for access was granted must be reported in a timely manner to the Associate Dean Research.

Considerations for Student Researchers

The University is committed to supporting students to complete degree requirements in timely fashion. Students will be prioritized at each stage of the research expansion, subject to the following considerations:

- Students must *not* be compelled to conduct research on campus or in the field. Personal life circumstances will influence each student's readiness to undertake on-site research. They must feel free to voluntarily return to campus or field research activities. Processes are in place for students to confirm their willingness to undertake research in pandemic conditions.
- No student research activity can occur without adequate training and supervision. These needs vary depending upon student level and the specific research activities. Requests for authorization for student research must include strategies to ensure these training and supervision requirements are met despite the steps necessary to reduce risks due to the coronavirus.
- The flexibility and creativity demonstrated in regard to new methods of course delivery and modifications around assessment of degree-level expectations are needed to ensure

that student researchers are supported and can complete their research programs in a timely manner. At the same time, it is essential to respect that academic requirements remain in place and that academic integrity must be maintained.

Human Participant Research

Research involving human participants should be conducted at a distance where possible. Where in-person interaction is required, researchers are expected to use appropriate measures to reduce the risk of virus transmission, including physical distancing, non-medical facial coverings, and enhanced sanitation protocols. Where physical distancing is not possible, other suitable procedures such as the use of personal protective equipment and physical barriers such as plexiglass dividers are required. Minimize time together whenever possible, including completing remotely any tasks possible (e.g., reviewing consent materials, completing questionnaires, etc.). Consult [Health, Safety, and Wellness Guidance for In-Person Research with Human Participants under COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions](#) for recommendations and to assist with the completion of the [Researcher COVID-19 Mitigation Strategy](#) and the [Research with Human Participants Risk Checklist](#).

Research Ethics Board clearance must include assessment of the risks to participants based upon the risk-mitigation strategies implemented with respect to current pandemic conditions. Therefore, researchers must submit the approved access request documents along with any applications for clearance or requests for modification to the Research Ethics Board.

Every in-person research interaction with human participants on- or off-campus requires the University to document contact tracing information. Participants (and caregivers or support people, if required) must complete an [online COVID-19 risk acknowledgement form](#) prior to their first research study visit. This information must be reconfirmed at each research study visit when contact tracing information is gathered through an [online contact tracing form](#) from each research participant and (if applicable) caregiver or support person in attendance. Individuals may complete the online contact tracing form on their own device or on a researcher-supplied device that is sanitized between users. These online forms protect confidentiality for human participants and replace the need for participants, caregivers, or support people to provide contact information at the designated access screening points on campus.

Research in Brock Archives & Special Collections

The Archives & Special Collections are now scheduled to remain open with varying degrees of access across all stages of pandemic recovery. Risk-mitigation processes are in place to support health and safety for researchers, staff members, and (when possible) other users. **Table 1** provides details about the restrictions by stage. Consult the [Archives & Special Collections website](#) for details about available time slots and the appointment booking process. All bookings require at least 24-hour advance notice, including a list of the resources to be accessed during the visit.

Researchers seeking access to other open archives should follow the [access request process](#) identified above for other shared research spaces.

Coordinating Shared Access to Research Facilities and Sites

Many researchers work in shared laboratories or use shared equipment that necessitates consideration for rotational schedules to accommodate the collective needs. Each shared campus research space should designate an individual (e.g., lab coordinator, principal investigator) to establish and monitor usage schedules with due consideration for the identified principles, priorities, and risk-mitigation strategies. A minimum of a one-hour gap must be scheduled between individuals occupying research space to allow individuals to arrive and depart without crossing paths and to allow the air in the space to be exchanged through existing systems.

Table 1 identifies the human research activities that are typically authorized at each stage. Some higher intervention activities may be possible depending upon a broader assessment of other activities occurring at the time. Consideration of such requests is dependent upon risk mitigation not just within the individual research space(s), but also in nearby areas (e.g., adjacent rooms, hallways, spaces with shared ventilation). Coordinated scheduling may be required.

Campus access is normally scheduled 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday to Friday (except holidays). During later stages of pandemic recovery (Brock 3 and 4, see **Table 1** below), weekend access for researchers (not human participants in Brock 3) may be granted for research spaces with large numbers of shared users or in other extenuating circumstances. Consult with your Associate Dean Research to see if your situation may warrant weekend access. Please note that the extension to weekend hours does not include holidays.

Working From Campus Offices

The initial [June 2020 research expansion](#) included provisions for some researchers to secure access to work individually in their campus offices on research tasks. This process has now changed. Faculty members wishing to obtain access to their individual offices now require submission of the [Campus Access Request Form](#) to their Dean. Faculty, staff, or graduate students who just need to pick up or drop off something in their office (less than one hour per visit) can do so by checking in and out at a designated access point.

Table 1. Chart of Brock Research Activities Across the Stages of Pandemic and Recovery (10 June 2021)

	Lockdown Restrictive	Brock 1 Stringent	Brock 2 Intermediate	Brock 3 Protect and Prevent
General Description of Research That Can Be Authorized Subject to Risk-Mitigation Strategies	Time-sensitive research only, including some in-person human research and limited access to Brock Archives (prioritize student degree progression)	Time-sensitive research only, including some in-person human research and limited access to Brock Archives (prioritize student degree progression)	Time-sensitive research only, including some in-person human research and limited access to Brock Archives (prioritize student degree progression)	Increased research activity
Field Research	Field research in local sites can be authorized, subject to site permissions, location-specific regulations, and public health guidance	Field research in local sites can be authorized, subject to site permissions, location-specific regulations, and public health guidance	Field research in Canadian sites can be authorized, subject to site permissions, location-specific regulations, and public health guidance	Field research in Canadian sites can be authorized, subject to site permissions, location-specific regulations, and public health guidance
Animal Research	Moderate duration studies (typically up to 12 weeks) that could conclude early if required	Moderate duration studies (typically up to 12 weeks) that could conclude early if required	Moderate duration studies (typically up to 12 weeks) that could conclude early if required	Full range of animal-based studies
Human Research	<p>Research involving existing data sets that can be accessed off-campus subject to REB clearance (authorization not required)</p> <p>Online or telephone data collection subject to REB clearance (authorization not required)</p> <p>In-person research involving interaction, observation, or moderate intervention with human participants can be authorized, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies</p>	<p>In-person research involving interaction, observation, or moderate intervention with human participants can be authorized, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies</p>	<p>In-person research involving interaction, observation, or moderate intervention with human participants can be authorized, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies. Some higher intervention activities may be possible depending upon a broader assessment of other activities occurring at the same time.</p>	<p>In-person research involving human participants, including studies where aerosol generation or contact with respiratory droplets is anticipated can be authorized, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies.</p>

Research in Brock Archives & Special Collections	Access for faculty and graduate students, by appointment , Tuesdays and Thursdays. Capacity is limited to 1 researcher at a time.	Access for faculty and graduate students, by appointment , Tuesdays and Thursdays. Capacity is limited to 2 researchers at a time.	Access for the Brock community, by appointment , Tuesdays and Thursdays. Capacity is limited to 3 users at a time.	Extend access for the broader community, with appropriate risk-mitigation strategies in place.
Research Training and Supervision	Online or telephone training Continuation of on-site training by Brock personnel if required to sustain degree progress	Online or telephone training Continuation of on-site training by Brock personnel if required to sustain degree progress	On-site training by Brock personnel can be authorized subject to appropriate risk mitigation	On-site training by non-Brock personnel can be authorized subject to appropriate risk mitigation
Occupancy in shared University research spaces	Maximum occupancy calculated at a minimum of 18 m ² per person	Maximum occupancy calculated at a minimum of 18 m ² per person	Maximum occupancy calculated at a minimum of 18 m ² per person	Maximum occupancy calculated at a minimum of 18 m ² per person
Campus access times	Access scheduled 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F (except holidays), unless extenuating circumstances demand access at other times (researchers only, not human participants)	Access scheduled 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F (except holidays). Weekend access for researchers (not human participants) may be granted for research spaces with large numbers of shared users or specific research demands	Access is normally scheduled 8 a.m.-8 p.m. M-F (except holidays). Weekend access for researchers (not human participants) may be granted for research spaces with large numbers of shared users or specific research demands	Access as required for authorized research activities, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies, including custodial resources
Research Travel (using research funds only)	Authorized research with local travel only, subject to local public health guidance; no overnight stays	Authorized research with local travel only, subject to local public health guidance; no overnight stays	Authorized research with domestic travel only, subject to local public health guidance	Authorized research with domestic travel only, subject to local public health guidance

NOTES:

1. This chart identifies the research activities that can be authorized, subject to appropriate risk-mitigation strategies. For guidance, consult [Reopening Shared Research Lab Spaces in COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions: General Guidance](#) and (if relevant) [Health, Safety, and Wellness Guidance for In-Person Research with Human Participants under COVID-19 Pandemic Conditions](#).
2. The stages are cumulative, such that an activity that can be authorized at one stage can be authorized at subsequent stages.
3. Researchers are expected to create the conditions to reduce or cease activities on short notice in case COVID-19 conditions worsen.
4. Senior administration (PVP) will determine when International travel is appropriate, subject to federal direction, including [Global Affairs travel advisories](#). Authorization for international travel is not anticipated for the duration of the [Ontario Roadmap to Reopen](#).