



## The University of Edinburgh - Residence Life Team

### Role Description for Resident Assistant in University Accommodation

#### (Postgraduate 2024-25)

Residence Life's aim is to create a residential community that welcomes and supports all students living in our accommodation, and our Resident Assistants (RAs) play a vital role in achieving this. We employ over 200 students as Resident Assistants, working across 9 catered houses at Pollock Halls of Residence and over 40 self-catered sites throughout the city of Edinburgh. We are looking to recruit enthusiastic students who are interested in building a strong sense of community in our accommodation.

#### Dimensions of the role

RAs provide advice and support for students living in our accommodation. Working with the Central Residence Life Team, they play a key role in helping our residents' transition to University and adjust to independent living in Edinburgh.

Each RA will be a designated contact for approximately 55-70 students, and the expectation is that they will form positive and mutually respectful relationships with them.

RAs will encourage responsible and orderly behaviour in our accommodation, and foster a tolerant, inclusive and socially responsible environment in which our residents can thrive.

RAs will organise a range of activities at their accommodation site to support residents' social, wellbeing and academic progress, and will contribute to the organisation of larger multi-site events, committees and working groups.

O'Shea Residence only: RAs will have a key role in communicating with residents how to manage the shared kitchen space in the residence hall.

RAs will be required to complete mandatory online training prior to compulsory attendance at- all in-person training before they can commence the role. Contractual dates for the role for Postgraduate RAs begin on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2024, and will end on the Postgraduate end date of 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2025. RAs must be able to attend mandatory training and arrival duties from the 30<sup>th</sup> August – 15<sup>th</sup> September 2024 inclusive and during the January arrivals period (typically the first full week of January). Failure to attend all of these dates, means you are ineligible for the role. RAs will be provided with accommodation for the full duration of contractual dates.

- During training 30<sup>th</sup> August – 6<sup>th</sup> September we will house you free of charge

*Private Provider Residences only:* RAs will have more responsibility in social programming, such as increased expectations of event planning in place of other property-related matters managed by local Providers, e.g. lock-outs.

#### Leave

It is our understanding that as a postgraduate student you might be required to be absent from your post due to academic or personal requirements. Details of allowance are 32 days annual leave (inclusive of 4 public holidays 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> January). All requests for leave must be approved by your line manager; approval will be subject to there being sufficient cover on site during your absence. Requests should be submitted to your line manager at least one week in advance and will be treated on a first-come first-serve basis. In case of an emergency, you should



notify your line manager as far in advance as possible. Additionally, when absent from your site, you are responsible for ensuring that duty days are covered and that resident requests are redirected appropriately.

### **Remuneration**

In return for the duties you provide, as outlined in this contract, you will receive free accommodation during RA training, 30th August - 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and a 75% reduction of the rent for a standard room allocated to you at your assigned property from the start of the lease. You will receive this reduction while you actively remain in the RA role.

### **Main responsibilities**

The primary mission of all RAs is to assist and support our residents. They do this by; building community, planning events, responding to emergencies, administrative responsibilities and tasks relating to the running of their accommodation site. The exact duties vary according to the requirements of individual accommodation sites, but some examples are set out below.

#### Academic

- By example and influence, encourage responsible study habits and class attendance among residents.
- Host academic initiatives and events at your site

#### Administrative

- Be familiar with relevant guidelines and policies e.g. the RA policies, procedures including escalation and reporting protocol, the residence guide, terms of the accommodation lease, university policies, and the Code of Student Conduct.
- Attend and contribute to staff meetings and training sessions.
- Complete and return all departmental paperwork in a timely manner e.g. incident reports, monthly reports, performance review documentation, event proposals and event reports

#### Communication

- Maintain regular contact with, and communicate support and enthusiasm for fellow RAs, Residence Life and Accommodation, Catering and Events.
- Communication from your line manager should be answered within 24 hours

#### Community Building

- Maintain regular contact with residents by being present and visible in your accommodation e.g. during office hours, one-to-one chats, rounds of the buildings and by hosting and attending events and activities being organised.
- Role model and maintain a good standard of behaviour in the accommodation and the university complying with all guidelines.
- Participate in RA committees and Focus Groups

#### Health & Safety and Emergency Response

- When on site be mindful of the health and safety of residents, follow and promote appropriate safety guidelines (e.g. fire safety, Safe Working guidelines and security measures) and respond appropriately to emergencies escalating accordingly.

- Report maintenance or other property related issues in a timely manner to the relevant teams.
- Recognise and work to the boundaries of the RA role. In the event of a crisis provide support and assistance to professional staff and students by supplementing direct interventions with a calm and reassuring presence.

#### Event planning

- Organise, independently and as part of a team of RAs, a programme of active, passive, virtual and in-person events for residents in your accommodation which meet the requirements of the [Wellness Wheel](#) and Programming framework established by Residence Life.

#### RA Duty

RAs undertake duty on a rotating basis with other members of their team. The frequency of duty varies according to local arrangements.

#### *When on duty:*

- The duty RA should remain at the accommodation site and be contactable on the RA phone from 6pm in the evening to 8am the following day.
- In addition to the above, at weekends between 8am and 6pm the duty RA should keep the RA mobile phone with them, and should remain within a 30-minute radius of their accommodation. If the phone rings, they must respond and if the situation requires it, they should be able to return to the site. The duty RA should then be back on site and remain there from 6pm in the evening until 8am the following day.
- RAs will host an office hour, typically from 6pm to 7pm, however the line manager will confirm local arrangements.

#### *At all times:*

- As this is a residential role, it is expected that RAs will sleep in their designated accommodation unless their line manager has granted permission to be absent.
- RAs should inform their line manager of any significant time commitments they have (over 10 hours per week e.g. a job or society commitment).

#### **Competencies required for the role**

Competencies are general descriptions of the abilities needed to perform well in the role of RA and to deliver the service to a high standard. As well as demonstrating the below competencies successful candidates will demonstrate the Accommodation, Catering and Events values. This means we expect our RAs to:



**Deliver Excellence**

**Work Positively**

**Support Others**

Expectations	Competencies
Delivering Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communication</b> - in person, in writing, virtually and using digital media</li> <li>• <b>Planning &amp; Organisation</b> - events, reports, office duties. Plans own time effectively.</li> <li>• <b>Problem Solving &amp; Decision Making</b> - responds to changing circumstances, uses initiative and draws on training or previous experience.</li> </ul>
Working Positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teamwork</b> – works in a supportive manner with colleagues to deliver a positive student experience in the accommodation.</li> <li>• <b>Continuous Learning</b> – engages positively with training opportunities, contributes experience, and seeks feedback and advice from others.</li> </ul>
Supporting Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Development &amp; Relationship Building</b> - builds relationships with students, organises diverse events to help students connect, and contributes to best practice in the service.</li> <li>• <b>Role Modelling &amp; Leadership</b> – demonstrates a positive and proactive approach, encourages academic excellence, promotion of guidance and expectations of residents and has an awareness of, and commitment to diversity.</li> <li>• <b>Crisis Intervention</b> – responds calmly to crises, contacts appropriate support, makes safe for now and de-escalates situations within the boundaries of their role. Submits incident reports in a timely manner.</li> <li>• <b>Mediation</b> – provides appropriate support and interventions to residents navigating academic, social, personal and communal living issues through education and facilitation of discussions, courageous conversations, mediations and programs.</li> </ul>

**Other requirements for the role**

Applicants should:

- Be a fully matriculated, full time student at The University of Edinburgh for the full academic year in which they are applying to be an RA.
- Have the necessary documentation to prove your right to work in the UK and ensure you do not break any working restrictions applicable e.g. exceed maximum working hours permitted by visas.

<https://www.edweb.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/immigration/working-in-the-uk/during-studies>



- Have and maintain good disciplinary and financial standing within Accommodation, Catering and Events and the University.
- If you do not complete all training or are removed from the RA role at any point your accommodation lease will become void. We would endeavour to help you to find accommodation elsewhere in our sites but this would be on a full price lease
- Have and maintain good academic standing and enrolment within the University
- Maintain eligibility to live in student accommodation
- Have lived in shared accommodation, preferably at the University of Edinburgh.

Please note that this role description is not exhaustive and further particulars will be provided should you progress in the recruitment process. This role description is accurate for current post holders, but duties may be subject to change in the new academic year.