The University of Edinburgh
Accommodation, Catering and Events
Role Description for Resident Assistant in University Accommodation
(Undergraduate 2020-21)

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 Wardens and a team of Residence Life Coordinators, they play a key role in helping our residents adjust to independent living in Edinburgh.

Each RA will be a designated contact for approximately 40 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 and academic progress, and will contribute to the organisation of larger multi-site events.

Contractual dates for the role for undergraduate RAs commence on the 4th September 2020, and will end on the undergraduate student lease end date (23rd May 2021 for Pollock Halls and 28th May for other sites). RAs must be able to attend mandatory training and duties from the 4th – 20th September inclusive and during the January arrivals period (typically the first full week of January). RAs will be provided with accommodation for the full duration of contractual dates.

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.
Administrative

- Be familiar with relevant guidelines and policies e.g. the RA handbook, the guide for new students, 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. 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.

Community building

- Maintain regular contact with residents by being present and visible in your accommodation e.g. during office hours, one-to-one chats and by attending events and activities being organised.
- Role model and maintain a good standard of behaviour in the accommodation and the university.

Emergency Response

- When on site be mindful of the health and safety of residents and respond to emergencies.
- 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 other RAs, a programme of events for residents in your accommodation which meet the requirements 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
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**Expectations** | **Competencies** |
Delivering Excellence | • **Communication** - in person, in writing and using digital media |
| | • **Planning & Organisation** - events, reports, office duties. Plans own time effectively. |
| | • **Problem Solving & Decision Making** - responds to changing circumstances, uses initiative and draws on training or previous experience. |
Working Positively | • **Teamwork** – works in a supportive manner with colleagues to deliver a positive student experience in the accommodation. |
| | • **Continuous Learning** – engages positively with training opportunities, contributes experience, and seeks feedback and advice from others. |
Supporting Others | • **Community Development & Relationship Building** - builds relationships with students, organises diverse events to help students connect, and contributes to best practice in the service. |
| | • **Role Modelling & Leadership** – demonstrates a positive and proactive approach, encourages academic excellence, and has an awareness of and commitment to diversity. |
| | • **Crisis Intervention** – responds calmly to crises, contacts appropriate support and de-escalates situations within the boundaries of their role. |

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.
- Have good disciplinary standing within Accommodation, Catering and Events and the University.
- Have lived in shared university accommodation at university level, 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.