



## **Residential Services Residence Life Assistant Role Description 2023/24 session**

### **Details about Residential Services**

Residential Services maintains the University's guarantee to provide all first year undergraduates and all new international students with a place in University owned/managed accommodation. Currently over 8,500 beds are offered. Around 5,300 students live at 12 University owned and operated residence sites and a further 3,500 students live in large properties that the University contracts from other student accommodation providers.

Having access to good quality accommodation contributes much to the student experience. As students are building their independence, it can provide an essential foundation for the challenging learning process that they will experience. It affords an opportunity to meet new people, often in an international environment, and to engage in cross-cultural enrichment and exchange of ideas in a way that is, perhaps, unique to higher education. It is thought that few students will reach their maximum academic potential in poor quality housing. Vital, also, are affordability and access to a place where students can live with friends in a social environment.

### **Residence Life at Leeds**

Having access to a good quality accommodation infrastructure is just one part of a student's residential experience. Residence Life at the University of Leeds is a team within Residential Services whose aim is to ensure the student experience in halls is the best it can be. Residence Life has two strands: the first pastoral care and support, and the second the social experience. Residence Life Assistants form a vital part of the Residence Life team's pastoral care and support provision to the approximately 8,500 students living in accommodation allocated by the University of Leeds. Residence Life work in partnership with Leeds University Union in delivering the Hall Exec programme of events and activities throughout the academic year, which Residence Life Assistants are encouraged to get involved with as a part of building an active and pleasant community within residences.

### **Eligibility**

Residence Life Assistants must have had at least 6 months' experience of living in halls-type accommodation and be a registered full-time internal student of the University of Leeds for the duration of their appointment as a Residence Life Assistant. There are no minimum or maximum age criteria. However, applicants will need to demonstrate that they have sufficient maturity to take on the responsibilities of the role, and sufficient understanding of younger people to be able to build a rapport with students.

Residence Life Assistants must agree to live in their allocated University accommodation, and enter into the University's standard form tenancy agreement for that accommodation. The room allocated will be a single-occupancy room.

Residence Life Assistants must endeavour to undertake duties on dates and at times when they are rota'd to work. During "on duty" and "on call" periods, Residence Life Assistants must keep their duty mobile phone switched on, stay sober and fit to work, and respond to any call-outs or incidents. The Residence Life Assistant is expected to remain on site or close to the residence site (able to return and deal with an incident within 10 minutes) at all times whilst "on call". Our residences accommodate some students under the age of 18. Due to this we require Residence Life Assistants to consent to the University checking their criminal record through the Disclosure and Barring Service. This may also include checks with international agencies if the Residence Life Assistant has lived outside the UK (excluding holidays abroad) for more than six months at any one time. The appointment will be conditional upon satisfactory clearance.

It is estimated that Residence Life Assistants might undertake an average of 13 'working' hours per week (averaged over the term of their appointment) whilst "on duty" and "on call" (see the Terms and Conditions for the Appointment of Residence Life Assistant (2022/23 session) for further information). Residence Life Assistants must be flexible about the timing of the work. Residence Life Assistants are generally busiest at the beginning of the academic year, due to the intake of new students, and especially busy during the intake period.

Appointments will normally be for a full residence year. At Undergraduate residences from approximately September to July and, at Postgraduate residences, approximately September to September the following year (this may vary depending on site and check your appointment letter for specific dates). Appointments may be made mid-year to replace any departures. The precise start and end dates will be specified in the terms and conditions and the offer letter Residence Life Assistants receive relating to their appointment.

All Residence Life Assistants must attend core training which will take place from **Monday 4 September 2023 to Friday 8 September 2023**. Failure to undertake such training, or any other role related training deemed necessary by the University, will provide a reason for the University to withdraw or revoke its offer and the free accommodation it provides to students who work as Residence Life Assistants.

### The Role

Residence Life Assistants work as part of the Residence Life team in Residential Services. Within each residence, Residence Life Assistants work alongside Residence Life Warden(s), site residence managers, residence staff, and their fellow Residence Life Assistant team members, all of whom are responsible for the smooth and efficient running of the residence. Each residence's team plays an important role in delivering 'a best Leeds student experience'. The principal role of the Residence Life Assistant will usually involve assisting the Residence Life Warden(s) with the maintenance of discipline, student welfare, and the development of the community aspects of Residence Life through activities and social events. Whilst pastoral care and community building are important aspects of the role, and Residence Life Assistants are encouraged to actively participate in community life at their hall, it is likely that issues of student discipline (noise, etc.) will be the main activities.

The Residence Life Assistant role can be demanding and challenging at times and it is important that you are on-time for shifts and able to undertake your share of these. It is important for all Residence Life Assistants to be able to balance the demands of the role alongside their academic course and the requirements of this. You should consider if you have the time alongside your academic course to be able to fully commit to the requirements/duties of the role without this impacting your academic studies before applying.

Listed below are some of the responsibilities but it is stressed that the list is not exhaustive and there may be additional site-specific responsibilities:

- Helping to meet and greet students, their parents/guardians and handing out room keys, during the intake period (dates tbc).
- Participating in a rota to provide a responsible student presence on site each evening and every weekend during term time until the end of the Residence Life Assistant appointment at the allocated residence. Usually this will not necessitate Residence Life Assistants being scheduled more than two days per week and each day comprises a period "on duty" and a period "on call". **Residence Life Assistants may need to be scheduled up to 3 days per week to provide cover, for example in case of sickness, absences or if a Residence Life Assistant has left their role.**

Responsibilities when on the rota include, amongst others:

- Visiting residents and being present in the residence office (or other designated areas) at required times (when "on duty") to provide advice, support and guidance to residents and to distribute post.
- Being available to respond to any situation that requires it, answering the duty mobile phone and liaising with the Warden(s), residence staff and University Security/Emergency Services as appropriate.
- Admitting locked-out residents or new arrivals to their rooms (when feasible).
- Undertaking a 'walk round' of the residence at 10:30pm (or other time during the 'on-duty' period as advised by the Residence Life Warden(s)), and performing locking-up duties if directed to do so.
- Taking responsibility for a designated group of students, for whom the Residence Life Assistant will provide an initial point of contact for academic, personal or disciplinary problems.

- Assisting in the maintenance of discipline by requesting those engaged in disruptive behaviour to stop (but without doing so at any risk to their personal safety).
- Advising the Residence Life Warden(s) and Residence Life Manager of any observed breaches of the General University Disciplinary Regulations or University Residences Disciplinary Regulations, including the University's policies on the misuse of illegal drugs by reporting any suspicion of drugs-related activity to the Residence Life Warden(s) or to University security or residence staff as appropriate.
- Mentoring and supporting the residence Life Social Committee team and meeting with them on a regular basis
- Assisting in the carrying out of a fire drill each term, in co-operation with the residence manager and Residence Life Warden(s), when required to do so. Residence Life Assistants are expected, as responsible members of the student/residence community, to report to the Residence Life Warden or Residence Manager any obvious defects or deficiencies in the fire-fighting equipment, or other concerns about health and safety, in the residence.
- Attending meetings with the Residence Life Warden(s) and other Residence Life Assistants once every two weeks.
- Participating and assisting at University Open Days, Accommodation Viewing Days or other events.
- On a timetabled basis, undertaking some limited responsibilities during the University's Christmas closure period on 27, 28, 29 and 30 December 2023. These dates will vary from year to year and may require up to 2 days each per Residence Life Assistants in future years.
- Any other Residence Life Assistant duties as required by the Residence Life Warden(s), the Residence Life Coordinator, the Residence Life Manager, the Assistant Director of Residence Life and Accommodation or the Head of Residential Services. **This may include assisting Residence Life Assistants at other sites and/or transferring residence at the request of Residential Services.**

## **Person Specification Essentials**

- registered full-time internal student (postgraduate, or undergraduate) of the University of Leeds for the duration of your Residence Life Assistant contract
- at least 6 months' experience of living in halls type accommodation (not necessarily in the UK)
- willingness to participate in the community life of the residence
- good time management skills with the ability to balance academic work with the Residence Life Assistant role
- excellent communication skills
- excellent social skills
- ability to handle disciplinary or welfare issues responsibly following set process and protocols
- good problem solving skills
- ability to work well independently and as part of a team
- ability to use your own judgement and initiative to make decisions within defined parameters of responsibility
- able to be resident in allocated accommodation until the end of the appointment period (except for limited unavoidable absences)
- understanding of the needs of students resident in University accommodation

## **Desirables**

- previous position of responsibility with students or young people (aged 16 – 25)
- experience of organising social, sporting and cultural activities
- experience of leading a team

## **Terms and Conditions for the Appointment of Residence Life Assistant: 2022/23 session**

### **1 Being a Residence Life Assistant at the University of Leeds**

- 1.1 The role title is Residence Life Assistant at and for the University of Leeds.
- 1.2 Residence Life Assistants are members of the student body and the residence community who have agreed to take on additional responsibilities in those capacities. They are not employees of the University.
- 1.3 Residence Life Assistants are “voluntary workers” within the meaning of section 44 of the National Minimum Wage Act 1998.
- 1.4 Residence Life Assistants report to the Residence Life Warden(s) at the hall of residence where they live and are responsible to the Residence Life Manager.
- 1.5 Save as provided in these terms and conditions, Residence Life Assistants have no entitlement to benefits, payments or any other arrangements provided or operated by the University of Leeds whether for staff, contractors, officers, role or post holders or otherwise.

### **2 The appointment**

2.1 The appointment begins on 1 September 2023 and ends on your contract end date in June/July 2024 (dates tbc), except at St Marks and Blenheim Point, where it will run until September 2024 (dates tbc). Re-appointments are not automatic; no commitment is given that a further Residence Life Assistant appointment will be available and the terms and conditions of any further appointment may vary from these terms.

2.2 The appointment is conditional upon the receipt by the University of a satisfactory clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service. This may also include checks with international agencies if the Residence Life Assistant has lived outside the UK (excluding holidays abroad).

2.3 The University may terminate the Residence Life Assistant appointment immediately (and may temporarily suspend the Residence Life Assistant pending any investigation) and without any further obligation on its part if:

- the Residence Life Assistant ceases to be registered as a full-time internal student at The University of Leeds; or
- the Residence Life Assistant ceases residence at the allocated residence; or
- the Residence Life Assistant does not carry out their responsibilities to the University’s reasonable satisfaction; or
- the Residence Life Assistant’s conduct at any time causes the University serious concern about the Residence Life Assistant’s suitability for the role; or
- the Residence Life Assistant is considered by the University to have committed serious misconduct or negligence at any time; or
- It is considered by the University to be appropriate for another substantial reason.

2.4 Termination of the appointment, will either (at the University’s discretion) result in termination of the Residence Life Assistant’s tenancy agreement or in the Residence Life Assistant becoming liable to pay the full rent for their accommodation for the period after their appointment ends. If temporarily suspended, the Residence Life Assistant will be liable to pay full rent for their accommodation for the period of their suspension.

2.5 Either party may terminate the appointment early by giving at least three months’ written notice to the other. Notices given by the Residence Life Assistant must be delivered to the Residence Life Warden to whom they report.

### **3 Role and responsibilities**

3.1 The Residence Life Assistant’s appointment is conditional upon their satisfactory completion of a general induction training course and a further site specific induction training course. Residence Life Assistant’s with prior experience of the role (i.e. returning Residence Life Assistants) will be required to attend some of the sessions as determined by Residential Services. Most training will take place from **Monday 4 September 2023 to Friday 8 September 2023** and any other relevant training will be scheduled at later dates if required.

3.2 Each residence operates a rota which will require Residence Life Assistant's to undertake periods "on duty" and "on call". Residence Life Wardens will typically require each Residence Life Assistant to be "on duty" and "on call" on at least one day in every four during the term of their appointment. Residence Life Assistant's may occasionally need to be scheduled up to 3 days a week to provide cover, for example in case of sickness, absences or if a Residence Life Assistant leaves.

3.3 A weekday night "on duty"/"on call" requirement (Monday - Friday) starts at 6:00pm when the Residence Life Assistant will be required to be present "on duty" in the residence office or other designated areas till 9:00pm and from 10:30pm to 11:30pm. From 9:00pm to 10:30pm and 11.30pm to 8.00am the following morning, the Residence Life Assistant will remain available and "on call". The period of 'on duty' times may vary at some residences but will be no more than that stated above.

3.4 A weekend "on duty"/"on call" requirement (Saturdays & Sundays) starts at 8:00am each day and ends at 8:00am the following morning. The Residence Life Assistant will be required to be present "on duty" in the residence office or other designated areas from 10:00am to 12.00 noon and 9:30pm to 11.30 pm and otherwise they will remain available but "on call". These 'on duty' times may vary at some residences but will be no more than that stated above.

3.5 The Residence Life Assistant should go about their normal activities, eat, study and sleep at their residence whilst "on call". Residence Life Assistants are only regarded as 'working' whilst they are (a) "on duty" as described above or (b) responding to a call-out or incident whilst they are "on call".

3.6 The University will make a mobile telephone available to Residence Life Assistants at times when they are "on duty" and "on call". Residence Life Assistants will be required to collect duty mobile phones from their site residence office or other designated location, take reasonable care of the phone whilst it is in their possession, return it to the residence office at the end of their on duty/on call period and not use it to make any personal calls.

3.7 Whilst "on duty" or "on call", the Residence Life Assistant must keep their duty mobile telephone switched on, stay sober and fit to respond to any call-outs or incidents. The Residence Life Assistant is expected to remain on site or close to the residence (able to return and deal with an incident within 10 minutes) at all times whilst "on call".

3.8 Adjustments may be made to the rotas from time to time to ensure that adequate Residence Life Assistant cover is available e.g. to cover another Residence Life Assistant's absence.

3.9 In addition to the rota, Residence Life Assistants will be required to help meet and greet students and their parents, and hand out room keys, during the intake period.

3.10 Residence Life Assistants may also be required to be "on duty" to assist at University Open Days and Accommodation Viewing Day without further reward.

3.11 It is estimated that Residence Life Assistants might undertake 13 'working' hours per week (as defined in clause 3.5 above) whilst "on duty" and "on call", averaged over the term of their appointment. The working hours will fluctuate from week to week. More time will be spent working at the start of the academic year than at the end.

3.12 Residence Life Assistants are expected to be responsible members of the student / residence community and as such, should be prepared to alert their Residence Life Warden and site staff to any problems or issues at their residence. This would normally simply involve reporting the matter to the appropriate person.

3.13 Residence Life Assistants should provide the University's Residential Services Residence Life team with an up to date contact telephone number, instant message or email address so that they can be easily contacted when necessary and outside of their duty hours.

3.14 The attached Residence Life Assistants' role description further outlines the responsibilities of the role.

3.15 Residence Life Assistants who might wish to organise and/or run activities for residents outside of their Residence Life Assistant role, should obtain written approval in advance from the Director of Residential Services (or their nominee). If a Residence Life Assistant organises or runs an activity or event for residents without obtaining prior approval, they will be doing so in their private capacity as a student and not as a Residence Life Assistant and they must inform participants of that fact. The University will accept no responsibility or liability for any such unauthorised activity or event.

3.16 Residence Life Assistant must keep confidential any information which the University or any member of the University discloses to them in confidence, or which by its nature is confidential. Residence Life Assistants will be given training about how to deal with situations where a student gives them information in confidence and required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

3.17 Any matters of discipline or grievance related specifically to the Residence Life Assistant role will normally be addressed by the Warden to whom the Residence Life Assistant reports. The Residence Life Manager, or their nominee, will support a Warden dealing with such matters and will at all times reserve an appropriate right to refer such matters into the University's student disciplinary process.

#### **4 Location**

4.1 Responsibilities will normally relate to and be undertaken at the residence where the Residence Life Assistant is resident. The University may occasionally require the Residence Life Assistant to undertake responsibilities which may include other residences, or other venues hosting an event where present/prospective students and their guests might participate in activity. Residence Life Assistants may also be required to move to another room within their residence if their allocated room is unavailable at any time or if necessary in order to meet their responsibilities.

#### **5 Summer Vacation**

5.1 Residence Life Assistants will need to notify the University by no later than 1 May each year whether they wish to be resident during the summer vacation after the end of their appointment as a Residence Life Assistant. Residence Life Assistants should note that the hall and room allocated may be different to the room occupied whilst a Residence Life Assistant and they will be charged rent at the normal applicable student rate during the summer vacation.

5.2 A small number of vacancies for summer Residence Life Assistant may be available and further information will be sent to you in the spring if this is a possibility.

#### **6 Reward and expenses**

6.1 Residence Life Assistants will enter into a residence contract for the room allocated to them by the Accommodation Office. They will receive free accommodation in that room subject to clause 2.4 above. They will however remain obliged to pay all non-accommodation related charges arising e.g. car parking, laundry charges and all meals.

6.2 The University will reimburse Residence Life Assistants for the cost of any telephone calls reasonably made in connection with Residence Life Assistants duties on the Residence Life Assistants own telephone whilst not on duty (and whilst on duty if the duty mobile telephone is not available). The University will reimburse reasonable travelling expenses if the journey has previously been authorised by the Residence Life Manager. Proof of expenditure should be submitted with any expenses claims.

6.3 The University will not contribute towards Residence Life Assistants' moving expenses.

#### **7 Christmas and Easter vacations/leave for other purposes**

7.1 Residence Life Assistants are given annual leave from their responsibilities over the majority of the Christmas and Easter vacation periods (and leave dates will be confirmed at the start of each academic term), but each Residence Life Assistant will normally be required to work one day (for 4 hours) over the University's Christmas closure period, namely on 27, 28, 29 and 30 December 2023. The number of days Residence Life Assistants are required to work each year will vary and may be up to 2 days each per Residence Life Assistant in future years. Residence Life Assistants are expected to be available for duties on bank holidays or University closure days which fall within the undergraduate term and there is no additional reward or leave entitlement for such bank holidays or University closure days. These dates are 1 May, 29 May, and 30 May 2024. For Residence Life Assistants at St Marks and Blenheim Point Residences, this also includes 28 August and 29 August 2024. If you are on the rota for one of these days, the "on duty"/"on call" requirement is the same as a weekend, i.e. starting at 8am and ending at 8am the following morning.

7.2 All annual leave should be taken during the Christmas and Easter vacations. Leave for study/research purposes or exceptional circumstances must be authorised by the Residence Life Manager and where feasible, at least three weeks in advance. In such cases the Residence Life Assistant may be required by the Residence Life Warden to "make up" the missed working hours, usually by adjustment to the rota. Leave may not be taken during intake periods.

7.3 There will be no payment in lieu of any unused leave entitlement. Leave entitlement may not be carried forward from one appointment year to the next.

## **8 Sickness**

8.1 Residence Life Assistants must notify their Residence Life Warden immediately if they are unable to meet their responsibilities because they are unwell or unfit, and must keep such warden informed of continuing absence and the reason for it.

8.2 For short periods of absence (two or three days), Residence Life Wardens will usually require Residence Life Assistants to try to make arrangements to swap duties with other Residence Life Assistants. In situations when this might not be possible or in situations when a period of absence might or does last longer than several days, Residence Life Assistants should inform their Residence Life Warden, who will then seek to organise necessary cover.

8.3 Residence Life Assistants do not qualify for statutory sick pay (SSP). There is no entitlement to sick pay.