

## **TERMS OF APPOINTMENT Resident Assistants**

### **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Residential Life aims to foster inclusive communities, create social and educational opportunities, and provide safe and well-maintained residences. This is achieved in partnership with a team of Resident Assistants (RAs). These are student leaders with live-in positions at the various residences, and are appointed after a rigorous selection process. As a Resident Assistant, you play a pivotal role to strengthen the support network for students residing in the residences, to look after their welfare and to enrich their residential experience. This will be done in partnership with Resident Fellows (RF) and Residential Life (RL).

The following is a representative but not exhaustive description of responsibilities.

#### **1. Community Development**

- a) Assist in the development of community living –
  - i. Working with RFs and Cluster Leaders (for RAs in PGPR) to introduce new residents to residential living and support services at PGPR, upon their arrival and during their transition to campus life
  - ii. Promote a socially and culturally enriching experience in the community together with the Cluster Leaders.
  - iii. Promote a sense of belonging by encouraging residents to participate in and contribute to their community.
  - iv. Planning and execution of activities throughout the semester with the Cluster Leaders that promote social interaction, relationship building and a strong floor and block identity.
- b) Work with other Resident Assistants and Cluster Leaders in the block and residence, to create a memorable residential experience for residents through organizing social activities, sports, community service, wellness and personal effectiveness programmes.
- c) Assist in promoting an environment conducive for harmonious living and studying –
  - i. Establish and enforce communal standards for behaviour in the residence such as quiet hours, use of common spaces and holding each other accountable for these standards.
  - ii. To encourage residents to practice positive living habits.
  - iii. Assist in maintaining a safe and secure residential environment within the residence.
- d) Regularly assess the needs of residents by engaging them individually or in groups.
- e) Serve as a positive role model.

## **2. Policy Enforcement**

Assist to enforce University housing guidelines and refer misconduct to the appropriate authority

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- a) Explain housing guidelines and policies to residents during meetings.
- b) Report to RF immediately on any inappropriate resident behaviour. Assist the RF in documenting the incident accurately, and to submit the incident reports to RF within 24 hours of any such incident.

## **3. Peer Counselling**

Provide peer support to the residents –

- a) Initiate conversations with residents who appear to be experiencing problems and offer assistance.
- b) Encourage residents to resolve conflicts amicably as mature adults with each other. Mediate between residents when they are unable to resolve conflicts without assistance. If the RA is unable to mediate an acceptable resolution, the Resident Assistant will have to refer the matter to their RFs.

## **4. Crisis Intervention:**

- a) Respond immediately and appropriately to crisis situations, but in no instance provide any response that would escalate a situation into one which could endanger the RA or resident. Crisis protocol guidelines must be adhered to.
- b) Report all emergencies and serious situations to the RF, RL and Housing Services (HS) and Campus Emergency and Security (CES) where applicable.

## **5. Trainings**

Attend ALL trainings required and deemed necessary by RL –

- a) RAs are expected to attend the following compulsory trainings, programmes and courses during their appointment as RA:
  - i. RA Induction by RL;
  - ii. Pastoral Care and Crisis Management by the University Counselling Services (UCS);
  - iii. Suicide Awareness and Prevention Workshop by OSA Student Wellness;
  - iv. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid by the Campus Emergency and Security (CES)
  - v. Work Retreats for all RAs by RL;

- vi. Briefings and participation for all major programmes and events such as Welcome and Orientation Programmes for residents;
  - vii. OSA1006: Guidelines on Freshmen Orientation Programme and the Situational Judgment Training and Reflections.
  - viii. All reappointment trainings.
- b) The above trainings are non-exhaustive. RL may propose additional trainings where applicable and required as part of RA's training and development.

## **6. Information Resource**

Provide residents with information and referrals –

- a) Be aware of the hardware problems in the residences and work with HS to resolve these problems.
- b) Be familiar with University and community resources. Refer residents, when appropriate, to respective campus and community agencies.
- c) Provide emergency contact numbers to the residents (e.g. Duty RA roster, Campus Security, ambulance, police etc).
- d) Refer any media requests for comments to RL.

## **7. Administrative Duties**

- a) All RAs will have to be back in the residence prior to the start of early check-in period for each semester to support returning residents and preparation of residential programmes.
- b) A phone shall be provided to each RA during the term of appointment to perform any necessary duties. The RA is expected to exercise discretion when using the phone. The RA will have to bear the additional cost if the cost of usage exceeds \$5.00 per month.
- c) To assist with the following throughout the semester :
  - i. Fire Safety Training, Fire Drills, Tabletop Exercises, Fire Evacuations, and all related activities;
  - ii. Resident Visits;
  - iii. Crisis Management cases;
  - iv. Incidents involving communal standards
  - v. Cluster Leader training (for RAs in PGPR).
- d) Meet with the RF(s) at least once a month to update and discuss issues/problems, and plan activities or when notified.

- e) To organise residence-level and community-level activities as assigned by the RF for each semester.
- f) To coordinate fridge and kitchen cabinet cleanup with the Management Office, based on an agreed schedule.
- g) Meet with RL staff at least once a semester.
- h) Vacation duties at residences will include:
  - i. Review and update SOPs for activities.
  - ii. Plan for next semester's activities, including major events.
- i) To assist in University events and duties as assigned (e.g. NUS Open Day; Community Sports Carnival).
- j) Undertake other RL-related duties as assigned by the RFs or RL.

## **8. Duty Coverage at the Residence**

The RA position is a live-in position. All RAs are required to stay in the residence and participate fully in all operational activities.

### **a) RAs on Rostered Duty**

- i. RAs perform duties on a rotational basis within their residence team. An overall roster is drawn up, agreed on and approved by RFs before the start of semester.
- ii. RAs on rostered duty must remain contactable by telephone, from 7pm to 7am.
- iii. When on duty, RAs should –
  - Walk the block ('doing rounds') and engage the residents
  - At the same time, assess the maintenance issues in the residence.
  - Duty RAs must inform the RF immediately about any emergency and respond to the emergency within 5 minutes.

### **b) RAs on Standby**

- i. RAs who are not on rostered duty are deemed to be on standby, as residents may call their level/block RAs anytime for assistance.
- ii. RAs on standby are still required to return to the residence by the time quiet hours commence, i.e. by 11pm.
- iii. RAs on standby should still remain contactable by phone, SMS and email.  
Response time required as follows :
  - Reply to phone and/or SMS/text – within 30 minutes
  - Recall to residences – within 1 hour
  - Reply to emails – within 24hrs

## **TERMS OF APPOINTMENT AND RE-APPOINTMENT**

RAs are appointed by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). They report directly to their respective RF(s) and RL.

1. The RA position is a 6 to 12-month student leadership opportunity, subject to satisfactory performance review by the RF and staff of RL. The first six months are to be viewed as a probation period, during which the appointment may be terminated if performance is not satisfactory. Performance review will take place every semester.
2. RAs are expected to stay through the last day of his/her appointment. The RA needs to give his/her RF(s) at least one month's notice period if he/she intends to discontinue his/her service as a RA. If the notice period is lesser than one month in advance, the RA will have to pay hostel fees for the period that will lapse, or has already lapsed within the one-month notice period. The RA is not allowed to use any un-utilised leave to offset the notice period.
3. RAs who have attended all required trainings and are found to have discharged their duties in an exemplary fashion may be offered further one-year renewal of their appointments. Re-appointments may be offered depending on RL's needs, the RA's performance, the RA's latest academic results AND recommendations from the RFs.
4. RAs who are not renewed for another term of appointment or would be stepping down before the end of their appointment periods are expected to take all necessary steps to secure their own accommodation after they relinquished their role.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF RAs**

RAs are role models, active community-builders and peer mentors for the other students in their residence. RAs are expected to:

1. Demonstrate exemplary conduct and execute their duties and responsibilities in a mature, rational, consistent and fair manner.
2. Discharge their duties and responsibilities fully and up to the end of the term of appointment.
3. Adhere to the guidelines as stipulated in the Housing Agreement, Demerit Point Structure and RA Terms of Appointment.
4. Display a high level of honesty, integrity and trustworthiness at all times.
5. Work closely with RL, RF and HS to maintain high standards of residential life in the residence.
6. Attend ALL RL training programmes/workshops, residence activities, and meetings convened by OSA/RFs.

7. RAs are also peers to the residents and are expected to assist and guide the residents in a tactful and amicable manner.

### **ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR AND DATA SECURITY**

1. RAs should abide by the NUS Code of Student Conduct as reflected on <http://www.nus.edu.sg/osa/resources/code-of-student-conduct>
2. RAs should also be familiar and abide by the NUS PDPA Guidelines for students as shared in <https://nus.edu.sg/registrar/docs/info/administrative-policies-procedures/nus-student-data-protection-policy-regn.pdf>
3. All information accessed during the RA's term of appointment should not, at any time during or after the termination of appointment, be used or disclosed to any third party.
4. Such information includes personal data and information of students, as well as all forms of electronic storage and communications available on campus.

### **BENEFITS**

A single room (without attached bathroom and without air-conditioning) is provided for the duration of the RA appointment. All hostels are undergoing upgrading with provisions for more air-conditioned rooms. Should an RA be allocated to an air-con room, the RA will have to bear the cost of air-con usage.

### **APPLICATION OF LEAVE**

All leave applications are to be managed and approved by the RFs. RAs should discuss with the RFs before they proceed with the planning of their leave.

### **PERSONAL LEAVE**

1. Newly appointed RAs will have to accumulate their personal leave in their first semester of appointment (approximately 1.5 days for each month of service), before they can start to utilize their leave.
2. For one-year appointment, RAs may take up to 20 days of personal leave during the RA's term of appointment. For half-year appointment, RAs may take up to 10 days of personal leave in the vacation period during the RA's term of appointment.
3. All personal leave applications must be approved in writing by RF(s) at least 2 weeks before the commencement of the leave period. The RA has to ensure that in his/her leave of absence, his/her duties will be discharged by the other RAs and that there are sufficient numbers of RAs available in the residence.
4. Personal leave of up to one year's eligibility, if not utilized, can be carried forward to following year of the RA appointment. In the case where the Singapore government institutes Stay-Home-

Notices (SHN) for returning travellers, RAs may use the leave brought forward by a year to offset the period of the SHN. The SHN must be covered by personal leave, in line with overarching NUS guidelines. This clause will be reviewed on a semester-basis.

5. For RAs who have stepped down previously due to overseas exchange, internship or graduation from undergraduate programme, and are subsequently appointed as RAs again in a new semester, they will be regarded as newly appointed RAs. They will have to accumulate their personal leave in their first semester of this new appointment before they can start to utilize their leave (see point 1 above).

## **OFFICIAL LEAVE**

6. In addition to personal leave, RAs may take up to 25 days of official leave per academic year for summer programme/ overseas internship, conference / competition and CCA camps. All official leave requests (letter or email) should be submitted to RF and RL at least one month before the start of leave period.

Should travelling overseas be required, travelling time should be included within the duration of official leave. Do note that you will need to utilize your personal leave to serve SHN after your return from overseas travel (refer to point 4 above).

### **a) Summer Programme/ Overseas internship**

- i. RAs should have served for one year or more before the start of leave period.
- ii. RAs will be granted a maximum of 25 days of leave under this category. The leave period is inclusive of travelling time. In the event that the programme is longer than 25 days, RAs should apply for personal leave.
- iii. RAs are only allowed to apply for leave under this category once per academic year.

### **b) Conference / Competition / Fieldwork**

- i. RAs will be granted a maximum of 7 days of leave under this category. The leave period is inclusive of travelling time. In the event that the conference/competition/fieldwork is longer than 7 days, RA should apply for personal leave.
- ii. RAs are allowed to apply for conference/competition/fieldwork leave up to a maximum of two times per academic year.
- iii. Conference/competition/fieldwork leave should only be utilized for those organized/supported by NUS departments/faculties. RAs who wish to attend other conferences/competitions/fieldwork would have to utilize their personal leave.

### **c) CCA camp**

- i. RAs will be granted a maximum of 3 days of leave for every CCA camp. In the event that the CCA camp is longer than 3 days, RA should apply for personal leave.
- ii. RAs are allowed to apply for CCA camp leave up to a maximum of two times per academic year.



7. While RL endeavours to facilitate the RA's timing of leave, it reserves the right not to approve leave during periods of intense work activity and those requiring special staffing assignments.
8. RAs shall report to their RF(s) within one day after returning from leave.

**Important: RAs who plan or intend to apply for overseas academic programme are to inform and discuss with their RF(s) and RL before finalizing their plan/application.**

9. Singaporean males who need to fulfill reservist obligations would be given unrecorded leave. Unrecorded leave does not count towards personal or official leave.

### **WEEKEND LEAVE (IN RELATION TO WEEKEND DUTY)**

10. Besides personal leave and official leave, RAs are also required to do weekend duties on a rotational basis. RAs who are not on rostered weekend duty, are considered to be on weekend leave.
11. RAs who are on weekend duty, are on duty all day on Saturdays and Sundays. Duty RAs should remain on campus and in the vicinity of the residence, ready to respond to emergencies within 5 minutes.
12. RAs who are on weekend leave can leave the residence starting from Saturday 0700hrs and return to the Residence by the following Monday, 0700hrs. Should RAs choose not to leave the residence, weekend leave may not be carried forward to other weekends to be accumulated.
13. Within each residence, at least one male RA and one female RA shall be on weekend duty. Larger residences may require more RAs due to residential needs. The exact number required is to be determined at discretion, by the RF(s) overseeing the residence's RA team.
14. The RA(s) who is not on weekend duty can opt to leave the residence with the exception of block-out weekends. The block-out weekends are determined prior to the start of the semester by RL, and these are usually scheduled dates/programmes deemed necessary by the university and RL.
15. RAs within the same residence shall discuss and confirm their rostered weekends off, before the semester starts, in consultation with and approved by their RF(s).
16. A copy of the weekend duty roster shall be submitted by the RFs to RL for records, at least a week before the semester starts.
17. In cases where a public or university-wide holiday coincides with a weekend duty, the weekend duty shall take precedence. When a public or university-wide holiday happens on the day after the weekend off, and the RA wishes to take an extended break, the RA will be required to take personal leave which is subject to the RF(s) approval.



18. Should there be new or last-minute changes to the weekends' duty roster, the RA who initiates the change shall ensure that RL, RFs and all residents are informed. Follow-up measures include, but are not limited to:
- To direct incoming phone calls to the RA who's taking over the duty; and
  - To put up a notice on his/her door that directs any visiting resident to the RA on duty.

### **MEDICAL LEAVE**

19. In the event if the RA is on medical leave, he/she does not need to apply for any leave but he/she will be required to stay on-campus (unless the RA is on hospitalization leave). If the RA on medical leave happens to be on duty that day, he/she will need to make alternative arrangements and ensure that another RA will take over his/her duty.

### **DISCIPLINARY MATTERS & TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT**

- OSA reserves the right to terminate the RA's term of appointment should any arising circumstances incapacitate the RA from fulfilling his/her duties and responsibilities for a reasonable length of time, or affect the standard of residential life.
- Insubordination, or failure to fulfill the terms of appointment as a RA will subject the RA to disciplinary action which may result in the following:
  - Immediate termination of the appointment,
  - Nullification of previous record as a RA, and
  - Paying charges for part or whole of the hostel fee for the period of appointment as RA.
- Should an RA be found to have violated any of the NUS policies and guidelines, the RA may be subjected to a disciplinary inquiry. If an RA is found to have committed any housing offences listed under the Demerit Point Structure, the RA will be subjected to double the number of points listed for each violation/offence under the Demerit Point Structure.
- The above list is non-exhaustive. OSA and the University reserve the right to mete out disciplinary action when deemed necessary.
- This appointment will lapse immediately in the event where an RA is no longer regarded as a full-time NUS student.

I have accepted the appointment as Resident Assistant under the terms and conditions as outlined in these terms of appointment which I have read and fully understand. I agree to abide by all these terms and conditions as well as all applicable University policies and procedures relevant to my appointment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_