

Residence Life House Don

2026-2027

Job Description

York University Residence Life is committed to providing an educational experience to all students living in residence. York University residents will engage in transformative experiences that foster empathy, compassion, belonging, and a commitment to the enrichment of their communities and one another.

House Dons (Dons) are full-time students registered in a full course load in good academic standing who have maintained a minimum 5.0 cumulative and sessional grade point average. Priority will be given to qualified applicants with practical leadership experience. Under the supervision of the Residence Life Coordinator (RLC), each Don is responsible for a community of approximately 45 students that live in residence. As well, Dons are responsible for carrying out their role throughout the building when on and off duty. Dons are expected to participate fully in residence activities and to act as role models for students. As a positive role model and leader, the Don will contribute to residents' well-being by assisting them in dealing effectively with academic, social, personal, and interpersonal concerns while taking on additional building-wide responsibilities and leadership opportunities.

Dons cannot have other employment or extra-curricular activities that interfere on a regular basis with fulfilling the responsibilities of the job (15 Hours/week). It is expected that Dons will be available and accessible to students on a daily basis, except during approved absences and academic commitments. Dons hold a position of authority in the residences and it is expected that they will set a positive example by ensuring their conduct is in keeping with residence policies and that they act in a manner appropriate for a role model. Through their work in Residence Life, Dons advance the Division of Students' strategic priorities.

The Don role provides an on-campus job opportunity for eligible York University undergraduate students. Dons receive opportunities to work in a support role while developing valuable, relevant skills and work experience for the workplace. The role offers a learning and development opportunity for experiential on-the-job training, guidance, and mentorship. Under the guidance of professional staff members (Residence Life Coordinators), Dons will provide support to students living in residence.

This position requires a service-focused individual who treats members of the community with respect, values their time, strives for their personal best, and collaborates to improve service experiences for all.

Job Duration

- Typically begins with a March/April orientation, followed by summer online training, August training, and continues through the academic year residence occupancy period.
- If equally applied, the job requires a commitment of approximately 15 hours per week. That said, hours worked may fluctuate by the week.

Competencies

Through this role, a Residence Life House Don will have opportunities to develop and enhance specific skills in the following competencies:

1. Communication
2. Relationship-Building
3. Personal Success
4. Social Responsibility
5. Knowledge Acquisition and Application
6. Problem-Solving
7. Collaboration
8. Customer Service

Organizational Status

This position reports directly to a Residence Life Coordinator and works in cooperation with Housing & Conference Services and campus partners.

Work Performed – Basic Duties and Responsibilities

Administrative

- Lives in the assigned residence building;
- Assists with move-in/out and room/suite inspection procedures;
- Submits required reports (e.g., duty logs) and community updates according to established timelines;
- Follows up in an efficient and timely manner to requests from residents, campus partners (Housing, Security, OSCR, etc.), and members of the Residence Life Management Team (RLMT);
- In consultation with the RLC, develop a budget and manage the finances for any programs they are responsible for coordinating;
- Coordinates the logistics, including request forms, booking facilities, equipment, and resources required for various programs assigned to them for implementation;
- Understands their responsibilities as an employee under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and fosters a culture of health, safety, and well-being in residence;

- Reports all incidents to the RLC, via the online reporting system within established timelines;
- Attends all scheduled Residence Life Staff meetings and scheduled meetings with Residence Life Management.

Behaviour & Community Management

- Takes a proactive approach to building a community based on mutual respect, consideration, and open-mindedness. Responds to community and/or behavioural concerns using a collaborative approach based on learning and restorative principles;
- Assist in the development and maintenance of policies, procedures, and programs for residence living;
- Reads and is familiar with the Residence Community Standards, Residence Handbook, Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Residence Emergency Procedures, and any other material distributed by the RLMT and Housing that pertains to residence and Residence Life;
- Acts as a positive role model by committing to and maintaining a level of conduct that is an example of responsible behaviour, academic leadership, acceptance of diversity, and dedication to the betterment of the Residence and University communities;
- Works collaboratively with campus partners (Housing, OSCR, Security, etc.) to help enforce the Undergraduate Residence Occupancy Agreement and assist with the communication, dissemination of information, and educating of residents with respect to important health, safety, and other policies and procedures of the University;
- Manages the conduct of residents and guests in accordance with the “Role of the Don” as detailed in the Residence Community Standards, Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and the Residence Handbook;
- Supports the RLC in follow-up for student conduct, including warning conversations and low-level determinations on minor residence incidents in accordance with the Residence Community Standards, Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and the Residence Handbook;
- Maintains a strong presence and a high level of visibility and accountability to the students within their assigned area, recognizing the importance of being available during evenings and weekends;
- Participate in conduct hearings when necessary.

Residence Curriculum & Community Development

- Implements the Residence Curriculum as outlined by the Educational Plan (e.g. house meetings, learning conversations, educational and social programs) and directed by the Residence Life Management Team
- Supports the Community Engagement Don and the Community Engagement Committee in planning and implementing events;

- Initiates, organizes, promotes, and participates in Residence Life and University activities;
- Participates in the creation of a programming agenda/calendar with other members of the Residence Life team;
- Participates in the organization and implementation of University recruitment and marketing initiatives (e.g., Fall Campus Day and Spring Open House);
- Actively promotes student engagement and leadership opportunities in residence, the College, and the greater campus community;
- Assists with move-in and hosts orientation sessions at the beginning of each YUELI term, usually every 8 weeks (House Dons in YUELI communities only).

Training/Hiring

- Attends all training as specified throughout the job duration;
- Assists with the Residence Life staff selection and hiring processes;
- Participates in staff recruitment, including the Residence Life Staff recruitment processes.

Don on Duty & Emergency Management

- Participates in a duty rotation in which Don on Duty (DOD) shifts are to be shared with the other Dons on a rotating basis;
- While on duty, the Don must follow the DOD procedures including:
 - Document events during the shift, such as disturbances, and action taken (incident reports);
 - Document calls for assistance, type of assistance required, and action taken (duty reports);
 - Report all damages and maintenance problems (maintenance request form);
 - Take necessary remedial actions for urgent after-hours maintenance situations per standard operating procedures to mitigate health, safety, and security risks (e.g., emergency clean-ups);
 - Perform regular rounds of the buildings (at least 2-3 rounds/night) and respond to calls in a timely manner;
 - Always remain in the building while on duty unless directed otherwise by RLMT;
 - Responsible for the proper use and storage of confidential lists, duty cell phone, duty keys, and other equipment;
- Promotes building security and expectations for personal and community safety by developing a relationship with the Residence Services Assistants, Security Watch Officials, and Security Officials;
- Report student and building concerns to university officials in a timely manner

Building Operations

- Ensures students receive appropriate education and awareness regarding proper maintenance reporting procedures and protocols;
- Reports damages, vandalism, and persisting or escalating maintenance issues to the Housing Office and the RLC in accordance with standard operating procedures, particularly when there are health, safety, and/or security risks to the building and/or its occupants;
- Ensures that student cleaning and recycling responsibilities are being followed and appropriate cleaning standards are met, including common rooms, kitchens, and communal washrooms;
- Encourages students to take responsibility for the cleanliness and maintenance of the residence and grounds through the facilitation of community agreements, respect building, and pride;
- Liaises with the Security Watch Official while on duty, responds to building concerns, and communicates issues to the RLC;
- Maintains open and frequent communication with Housing staff and responds to requests from Assignment Coordinators and Operations Supervisors/Manager within a reasonable and expected timeframe;
- Communicates with students living in shared rooms and suites to maintain a clean and welcoming living environment for new arrivals especially where there have been longer term vacancies;
- Assists with and participate in move-in/out, holiday closure, and room/suite inspection procedures.

Team Development

- Works as a team player by focusing on consistency, communication, and support;
- Encourages idea-sharing, team development, and fostering a positive team environment
- Addresses and resolves conflicts in a positive manner and while handling group dynamics in a team environment;
- Participates in team socials and retreats;

Advising & Peer Helping

- Develops appropriate relationships with residents to ensure approachability and the creation of a cohesive community. Romantic/sexual relationships with residents are strongly discouraged and in some cases prohibited (e.g. students within the Floor/House);
- Maintains contact on an ongoing basis with each of the students assigned to the Don;
- Communicates with other Dons, the RLC, students, Housing, and the College on a regular basis;

- Acts as a resource person to residents for academic, personal, physical, or emotional difficulties they may be encountering and provides referrals to other campus/external partners (Security, SCLD, Human Rights, OSCR, etc.) as appropriate;
- In consultation with the RLC, mediates roommate conflicts.

Other duties (e.g., assistance with meal delivery for students in self-isolation) as assigned by the Residence Life Coordinator, Residence Life Manager, and/or Director, Residence Life (DRL).

Qualifications

Education and Experience

- Lives in a York University undergraduate residence
- Registered as a full-time student for the duration of the contract
- In good academic standing with a minimum cumulative and sessional grade point average of 5.0
- Incumbents must have completed a minimum of 18 credits over the previous F/W session and commit to remain enrolled in a minimum of 18 credits while in residence
- A good understanding of student issues and concerns
- Valid CPR C/Standard First Aid certificate is required (training will be offered for those without a current certificate)

Skills and Qualifications

- Demonstrated effectiveness in program development, promotion, and coordination
- Event and activity planning experience
- Proven organizational skills, effective written and oral communication skills
- Responsible and detail-oriented
- Ability to manage time effectively and to be self-directed
- Well-developed interpersonal skills and the ability to work well with others
- Strong interpersonal skills (mediation and conflict resolution)
- Ability to respond to emergencies in a calm and professional manner
- Good judgment
- Ability to work well both independently and as a member of a team
- Strong communication skills
- Ability to interact effectively with a diverse student community
- Willingness to work flexible hours
- Demonstrates, shares and lives our divisional values: Respect, Excellence, Innovation, Collaboration, Accountability, Care, and Inclusion

Professional and Personal Development

Orientation, Training, and On-going Professional Development

- Residence Life Staff have the unique opportunity to learn, practice, apply, and hone a wide range of skills that may enhance their personal, academic, and professional lives. Residence Life Staff are encouraged and powered to bring forward their lived experiences and academic knowledge to buttress the extensive training and development program offered by Residence Life. Tasked with supporting York University's residents' development, wellness, and safety, Residence Life Staff can expect to engage in practices and knowledge from the fields of education, social work, public administration, and public health. Given that Residence Life Staff positions are developmental opportunities, the Residence Life Management Team works closely with staff to develop professional development strategies to support post-residence life success.
- Residence Dons will receive training in the following areas*:
 - Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Tutorial; WHMIS Level 1; Residence specific topics; Health and Safety; AODA; Privacy and Confidentiality; Active Bystander training; Alcohol & Other Drugs; Bio-hazard; Budget Management; Community Development; Crisis Response; Diversity training; Technical programs such as eRezlife software; Emergency Response; Event planning; Facilitating meetings; Investigation and documentation; Mental Health; Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities; Safety and Security; Sexual Violence; Supporting International students; and time management.

*Training topics are subject to change.

Feedback, Ongoing Support, and Reflection

- Residence Life Coordinators will provide support and guidance to House Dons throughout the duration of their employment. During this period, the Residence Life Coordinator will work with the House Don to develop a plan that maximizes their strengths and supports them in their areas of development;
- Residence Life Staff are required to adhere to their relevant contracts and job descriptions, as well as, Residence Life, Housing Services, and institutional policies, protocols, and mandates in their capacity as a York student and employee. Failure to adhere to such conditions will result in follow-up by a member of the Residence Life Management Team and in accordance with the Residence Life Progressive Performance Management Process; The Residence Life Progressive Performance Management Process is a process which a Residence Life Coordinator and Don identify an area of development and create a plan to correct behaviour. Failure to meet the expectations outlined in the plan may result in punitive measures that include termination;

Networking and Mentorship Opportunities

- Opportunity to work alongside professional staff in Residence Life
- Opportunity to interact with students/residents with diverse backgrounds
- Opportunity to establish relationships with student services campus partners
- Opportunity to learn about the Residence Curriculum and build relationships with Residence staff
- Opportunity to learn about and participate in York activities and events
- Opportunity to serve as a role model to residents within residence

Contribution to York as a whole

- Opportunity to increase inclusion through education and active events focused on social justice topics
- Opportunity to strive for excellence in building a connected residence community