

Frequently Asked Questions

Graduate Student Specific Questions

- I am a current or incoming graduate student. Can I apply to be a Resident Assistant, Graduate Resident, or both?
 - Graduate students can apply for both roles. They can also apply to only one of the roles, if they so choose. There are typically more vacancies for the Resident Assistant role than for the Graduate Resident role.
- If I am an incoming Duke graduate student and have not received admission, can I apply for a role?
 - Yes, you can apply for any role even if you have not yet received admission into a Duke graduate program. If you are selected for the role, your selection will be conditional upon your acceptance into a Duke graduate program.
- I am a married Duke graduate student, can my spouse live on campus or can I apply for a position?
 - Married Duke graduate students are allowed to apply for both the Resident Assistant and Graduate Assistant roles. We have 26 Graduate Resident positions.
 - Students in the Graduate Resident role can be partnered, engaged, or married, regardless of campus.
 - For the Resident Assistant role, if married, you would only be eligible for positions on Central Campus (apartment style community), which makes up about 7% of our Resident Assistant team (12 out of 168 positions). If selected, the candidate will be given a position on Central Campus.
- I have no prior experience being in a residential leadership role (i.e. Resident Assistant or Graduate Resident). Can I still apply for the Graduate Resident role?
 - We encourage any interested applicants to apply despite lack of experience with residential leadership. We like for applicants to have some experience; however, there are many other transferable skills that will help the individual excel in the Graduate Resident role.

Undergraduate Student Specific Questions

- I am an undergraduate student. Can I apply to be a Graduate Resident?
 - Undergraduate students are not eligible for the Graduate Resident role. Only current or incoming Duke graduate students are eligible.

General Questions

- Can I have a pet as a Resident Assistant or Graduate Resident?
 - No pets are allowed for Resident Assistants. Pets are allowed for Graduate Residents only.
- References:
 - At this time, we ask that applicants/candidates contact their reference, obtain a letter, and upload it to the Symplicity portal by the application deadline. We do not contact the reference directly for a letter.
- I am a rising sophomore; can I be an RA on West or Central Campus?
 - Yes, you are eligible to be an RA on West or Central Campus. However, most sophomores who are selected for the RA role will be an RA on East Campus.
- Summer Resident Assistant
 - The Summer Resident Assistant application is typically available in the spring semester and open to any interested current RA. Summer Resident Assistants are expected to be enrolled in coursework at Duke and/or be working at an internship within the Durham area. Holding duty hours and fulfilling program responsibilities are expected of the summer Resident Assistant.
- What are my chances of being selected to be an RA?
 - It is difficult to answer this question because each year is different. The past eight years, HDRL has received over 250+ new applications to be an RA per year. In most years, we have to fill approximately 70 to 75 vacancies. Therefore, for every 3 candidates that apply, one will be selected to the RA role. We also identify a select number of candidates who are offered alternate spots. If individuals have specific questions about the alternate process, they can contact our Residence Life selections team at rlselections@duke.edu.
- Are there differences in the role between campuses?
 - Overall, there are no differences in the role between campuses. Each residential community is unique; therefore, your experience may be slightly different while the expectations are not different.

Time Related Questions

- Are Resident Assistants and Graduate Residents expected to arrive early before the semester begins and stay past the start of breaks?
 - Resident Assistants and Graduate Residents are expected to arrive early prior to the start of the academic year for formal training and to assist in the preparation of residence hall opening. During breaks, they may be asked to remain on campus to help close the residence halls and return early to help re-open the residence halls. At the end of the academic year, both roles are asked to remain on campus to assist with the closing of the residence halls. A date is usually determined by campus.

- Do we have to ask for a weekend off in either role?
 - Each Resident Assistant and Graduate Resident is allotted 8 pre-approved days per semester where they can be off and away from campus.
- What does “duty” look like?
 - Varies from campus to campus and area to area. Generally Resident Assistants will be asked to conduct 2-3 rounds per night and note any significant observations and incidents. During this time, Resident Assistants may encounter alleged policy violations and be expected to confront them. Students will serve as 1st responders to student issues between the hours of 5:00pm – 8:00am. Resident Assistants will also be expected to keep a detailed log of their observations and interactions to submit to their home Residence Coordinator and Graduate Resident.
- I work about 10 hours for another department, can I still be a Resident Assistant?
 - Yes. We estimate that a Resident Assistant will spend about 15 hours per week in the role. There are some weeks where the role may take more time and other weeks where it may take less. Employment in other departments must be pre-approved by your Residence Coordinator, so that they are aware and can make sure that you are able to handle your academic commitments and your RA commitments in an adequate fashion.
- Is training mandatory?
 - Yes. Our preference is to have all Resident Assistants and Graduate Residents attend training. HDRL does allow for RAs and GRs to apply for exceptions to be absent from training. Each situation is handled on a case-by-case basis and is decided on by a committee of RC's. In general, academic course related conflicts are approved. Non-academic course conflicts are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Benefits Questions

- Benefits Clarification:
 - Resident Assistants and Graduate Residents receive a stipend that is divided into four payments throughout the year. Additionally, they receive free on campus housing and a meal allotment. Note: These financial benefits do affect financial aid packages. Special Note: The meal allotment is not to be misconstrued as a meal plan. Its purpose is to provide RA's with food points so they can dine with residents in our many eateries. RA's typically have to add food points towards the end of the semester to their meal plans.
- Financial Implication of Role Benefits:
 - The financial benefits of the Resident Assistant and Graduate Resident roles affect one's financial aid package. HDRL is required to provide financial details for both roles to the Office of Financial Aid. All situations are different and unique, thus it is hard to provide a consistent answer. We encourage you to contact the Office of Financial Aid at Duke with your questions. They have provided some examples and information on their website at <http://financialaid.duke.edu/other-sources-aid>.

- If I get selected to be a Resident Assistant or Graduate Resident, do I need to have a meal plan?
 - It is up to the individual to decide. HDRL provides a meal allotment for each role. There are some who will solely use what we provide for their meal plan. Others use the meal allocation that we provide and an additional meal plan. It is the individual's choice.

Eligibility Questions

- I currently do not have a 2.5 GPA. Am I eligible to be an RA?
 - No. In order to be eligible to be selected, a candidate must have a 2.5 cumulative GPA. If a candidate applies and does not have a 2.5 GPA, they will not be invited to enter the interview process. HDRL reviews the GPA of all candidates prior to the interview process after applications have been submitted.
- I am currently on disciplinary probation. Am I eligible to be an RA?
 - No. If a student is on disciplinary probation, they are not eligible to be an RA. HDRL conducts a student conduct check on each candidate prior to the interview process.

Returning Resident Assistant Questions

- I am a returning Resident Assistant and would like to switch campuses for the next academic year (i.e. East to West, East to Central, West to Central, Central to West). Can I switch campuses?
 - If you intend to return as a Resident Assistant, you may seek a campus switch for the next academic year. On the intent to return, you must indicate that you would like to switch campuses. Our team will host a campus switch interview with you. Please note – if you enter the campus switch process and are offered a position, you are obligated to accept the position offered. You cannot return to your current position or seek another location. Note: Your current home Residence Coordinator makes the final decision if they want you to switch campuses.
- I am a returning Resident Assistant, how do I reapply for the next academic year?
 - In the fall semester, our team will open the intent to return link for returning Resident Assistants. At this time, you may complete the intent to return. Check our website or contact your Residence Coordinator for information regarding this “intent to return”.
- If I was not accepted to a role, can I reapply at a later date?
 - Yes. If you were not accepted to a role at this time, you can definitely reapply at a later time. We have many opportunities for reapplication – rolling list of applicants, spring vacancies, and summer vacancies.

Application & Placement Related Questions

- I am completing my application and would like clarification on what is expected from the essay response questions.
 - The essay response questions are intended for the applicant to provide more information about their experience, skills, personality, work ethic, and more. Please write the essay responses in paragraph form. The applicant should use their judgment on length – enough to cover the topic.
- I am having some technical difficulties with Symplicity and/or the application. Where can I get assistance?
 - Please contact our team at rlselections@duke.edu if you have any questions about Symplicity, the application, or any other selections-related topic.
- How does the placement process work?
 - Once the interview process is complete, the Residence Life Team makes decisions regarding who will be the best individual for the role. While we do take candidates preference into consideration, we ultimately select team members with the best interest of the department, area, and student. Preference does not equal placement. If a candidate is selected, but they are not happy with the campus or area location, they are not able to switch into a different area. One offer, one placement.

Study Abroad Questions

- I have been invited to interview for the Resident Assistant role, but I am currently studying abroad. How can I interview for the role?
 - If you are currently studying abroad, have applied to a role, and have been invited to interview, we conduct phone or video interviews. Please contact us at rlselections@duke.edu and we can arrange an alternative time and method.
- If I am studying abroad in the fall semester and would like to be a Resident Assistant for the spring semester. How do I apply?
 - In the fall semester, we have a separate application for spring vacancies. You will need to complete this separate application to be considered for any vacancies.
- I am a Resident Assistant and am planning to study abroad in the Fall semester; however, I have not applied to the program and/or been accepted to the program. Can I still apply for the Resident Assistant role?
 - Yes, we welcome any interested individual who would like to serve in the Resident Assistant role. If you are planning to study abroad and/or have applied to a study abroad program, you can apply for the Resident Assistant role. We ask that you inform us ASAP by email at rlselections@duke.edu at any point in the process if you are accepted to a study abroad program and will not be seeking a Resident Assistant role.