

## SCHEDULE 3

### **University of Liverpool FACILITIES, RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT AND GUIDANCE NOTES FOR RESIDENTIAL ADVISERS**

Living as a Residential Adviser carries with it both privileges and responsibilities. It is a difficult role and one that requires both a professional approach to the functions and duties of the role as set out in the statement of terms and conditions, and a mature and sensible approach to the situations and issues that might arise.

This document addresses:

1. The standards of conduct which are expected of you
2. Guidance on issues which are associated with the role of Residential Adviser

It is also advisable to note that the Residential Adviser code of Conduct is in conjunction with your core position of either student or staff member.

If you are a Student Residential Adviser, please ensure you have read and understood the Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline that can be found here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/documents/Policy,on,Student,Conduct,and,Discipline.pdf>

If you are a Staff Residential Adviser, please ensure you have read and understood the Dignity at Work and Study Policy that can be found here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/humanresources/2014/myhr/policiesandprocedures/Dignity,at,Work,and,Study,Policy.pdf>

#### **1. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

High standards of behaviour are expected at all times both on and off site, while on duty and also while off duty, and also when supporting the delivery of or attending social events organised for student residents. For example, Formal Dinners, Hall Student Committee events, or events organised by the RA team.

##### **a) Behaviour while on duty/on call**

Being on duty at night is a vital part of your role and it can be difficult at times. The Residential Adviser provides the first response to student incidents; you may be called upon to ensure that the hall is quiet, to deal with students who are in distress, or to help to get professional assistance for a student who has been taken ill. Every situation is different but you must always:

- Respond promptly to any request for help.
- Treat students with respect: they are much more likely to do what you ask if you speak to them politely. A clearly-spoken request is much more likely to defuse a difficult encounter with a student than a shouted command.

- Conduct yourself in a professional manner. If a student is rude to you, resist the temptation to retaliate. Remember that you are in a position of authority and that no student will respect a Residential Adviser who shouts or uses offensive language.
- Resist any temptation to overstep your authority. Bullying and harassment of students is unacceptable.
- Respect students' confidentiality. Whether on or off-duty, you should never discuss students, unless disclosing information to your Warden or other relevant support services.
- Ensure that you are in control of yourself. Emergencies are few and far between, but they do occur. While you are on duty it is vital that you are in full control—do not drink while you are on duty.
- Maintain boundaries and professionalism in day to day life including your online presence. Ensure opinions shared on Social Media are in line with the Social Media Guide issued to University of Liverpool staff: <https://news.liverpool.ac.uk/2019/11/12/new-staff-social-media-guides/>

## **b) Behaviour while off duty**

Most halls will require a minimum number of Residential Advisers to be resident on any one night, so that they may be called upon for assistance in an emergency or in a difficult situation. You should always:

- Remember that if you have had too much to drink you may be incapable of helping your colleagues.
- Remember that students will recognise you and will notice inappropriate behaviour. Unprofessional behaviour, whether on or off the site, could seriously undermine the discipline of the hall and/or University.
- Remember that you are part of a team. Adopt a professional attitude towards your colleagues and support them whenever necessary. Criticising Residential or other colleagues behind their backs is unprofessional and will have a detrimental effect on team spirit.
- This is a dual role that sits alongside your core post as either a Student or Staff member. Bear in mind that any disciplinary action in your core position can impact on your role as an RA and Vice-Versa.
- Staff RAs can refer to the Disciplinary Procedure for their substantive post: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/humanresources/2014/myhr/policiesandprocedures/Disciplinary,Procedure.pdf>
- Student RAs can refer to the Conduct and Discipline pages: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/policies-procedures/conduct-discipline/>

## **c) Alcohol and Drugs**

You should not drink alcohol while on duty.

You must remember that if you do drink alcohol you should do this sensibly.

You must adhere to the University's regulations on the use of illegal substances and never introduce them to the site.

Please refer to the University of Liverpool Drug and Alcohol Policy for more information.

Staff: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/humanresources/2014/myhr/policiesandprocedures/Alcohol,Drugs,policy,v3.pdf>

Students: <https://student.liverpool.ac.uk/forms-policies-and-procedures/>

#### **d) University Equal Opportunity and Harassment Policies**

You are expected to adhere to University policies and to respect all students, staff and visitors regardless of age, class, religion, disability, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, marital status or sexual orientation. You are expected to help create a culture which protects the dignity of all. The University regards all forms of harassment and bullying as most serious matters.

Dignity at Work and Study Policy:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/hr/diversityandequality/policiesandactionplans/BullyingPolicy.pdf>

#### **e) Absences from the Hall**

Any absence from the hall during term-time must be by prior arrangement with the Warden and this includes absences at weekends and/or occasional nights away. Should you need or wish to be absent from hall during term-time, you must request permission, in writing, from the Warden before making any arrangements. Permission is at their discretion and will not be given if, as a result of your absence, duty night cover would be inadequate.

#### **f) Employment**

You must consult with the Warden if you plan to take any other part-time employment whether paid or voluntary, in addition to your role as a Residential Adviser.

#### **g) Attendance at Annual Residential Adviser Training Conference**

##### **Residential Adviser Conference 2020: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

You are required to attend the annual Residential Adviser's conference normally held in September. Requests to be excused attendance must be made in writing through the Halls Life Team to the University's Head of Accommodation. You should copy the Warden into your request. Requests to be excused attendance will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

The Residential Adviser Conference is an opportunity to attend key sessions to enable you to succeed in the role. Interactive and engaging, you will find the conference will equip you with the key skills to take on the role of first response, as well as learn how you can positively impact on student wellbeing through your role in supporting the delivery of a social programme targeted at engagement, prevention and early intervention. This is an opportunity for team building, and for experienced senior individuals to share experiences with new members of the team.

Sessions and Training include: Mental Health First Aid Lite, First Aid, Confidentiality and Communication, Community Building, and Student Support Services 101. There are also guest speakers who will offer keynote speeches on various relevant topics.

#### **h) Residential Adviser Line Management and duties**

The role of Residential Advisers are divided into two main areas – Pastoral Care and Halls Community.

**The Warden** is your line manager. They are in place to take the lead on Pastoral Care and student disciplinary issues. You should seek guidance from them in all aspects of this part of the role.

The **Halls Student Experience Manager** is in place to take the lead on Halls Community building, social media, marketing and events. You should seek guidance from them in all aspects of this part of the role.

## **2. GUIDANCE ON ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROLE OF RESIDENTIAL ADVISER**

### **a) Student Disciplinary Issues**

Ideally, your work will concentrate on the positive aspects of developing the student community and offering guidance and assistance to individuals. If these arrangements work properly and the group of students under your charge gets on well together, then they will appreciate the responsibilities of living in a community sufficiently for internally generated self-discipline to be sufficient to deal with any behavioural problems that might occur.

However, this is the ideal situation and it is often necessary for there to be some intervention from outside the group when problems do occur, such as excessive noise or other lack of consideration for friends and neighbours. You have a key role in this process and a friendly word of advice, or even a swift but fair rebuke, will, more often than not, deal effectively with the situation.

Occasionally, more serious situations will arise which cannot be dealt with informally by you alone. In such cases, it is essential that the Warden is involved as soon as possible so that they can either offer advice on how to proceed or deal with the matter themselves. If necessary, the formal disciplinary procedures that exist both within the Residences and the University itself may need to be invoked and it is important to note that the powers of summary jurisdiction under these procedures are vested in the Warden and the University's Head of Accommodation. In this context, Residential Advisers have no formal powers but you may be called upon to assist the Warden in investigating complaints or allegations prior to any hearing of the case against a student or group of students.

Any interactions with students should be formally recorded through our online incident management programme. You will be given full training on how to use this system, as well as how to write consistent and quality reports. The reports are shared with the Hall Warden, RA Team (unless confidential), Hall Management, Head of Accommodation, Accommodation Manager and Student Services. This ensures quick action and follow up.

### **b) Boundaries and Relationships**

Often described as being a support system, a Residential Adviser must indeed be friendly and approachable but they must also be clear that there are boundaries that will need to be set to such friendships. The necessity for such boundaries arises because Residential Advisers must ensure that they retain sufficient distance and impartiality to carry out their role, which is one that has elements of authority and discipline as well as social support and pastoral care. It could also be argued that the student residents themselves will benefit if you give them both space and independence to develop in their own way and at their own pace.

Setting the boundaries may not always be easy, especially if you are also a student, and your Warden and Senior Residential Adviser may need to offer advice and guidance from time to time. Whilst hard

and fast rules are not appropriate, the following general questions might be helpful in setting some guidelines:

- could the relationship adversely affect your ability to carry out your role?
- might other students see you as being biased in favour of one particular student or group of students?
- might you have a conflict of interest when dealing with complaints or discipline?
- is there any danger that there could be allegations that you are abusing your position of authority?
- what might happen if there was a breakdown in the friendship/relationship?

These questions relate to issues about relationships in general. More specifically, they will become even more important in the context of a possible sexual relationship. It is the University's considered view that any such relationship between a Residential Adviser and a student resident is likely to make it impossible for the Residential Adviser to carry out his or her role effectively and you must notify your Warden to ensure full transparency of any such relationship. This may mean that you continue your duties by transferring to another hall within University Accommodation.

There is a clear and defined policy on personal relationships relevant to both staff and student Residential Advisers:

[https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/humanresources/2014/myhr/policiesandprocedures/Personal\\_Relationships\\_policy\\_v1.6\\_220819.pdf](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/humanresources/2014/myhr/policiesandprocedures/Personal_Relationships_policy_v1.6_220819.pdf)

### **c) Couples Accommodation**

Residential Advisers live in the Halls of Residences in and amongst the students. There are a number of options available ranging from single non-ensuite bedrooms with a shared kitchen and bathroom through to a 1 bedroom apartment. With 7 Halls and over 4,400 rooms, there is an option to suit most people.

We have some availability for Residential Advisers to bring partners with them into the accommodation in our Studio Apartments and 1 Bedroom Apartments. These are limited and available on a first come, first served basis.

The partner of the Residential Adviser will be required to sign a copy of the Student License and agree to the University Code of Conduct.

Unfortunately, we do not have accommodation suitable for families with children, or for pets.

### **d) Health and Confidentiality Issues**

You are expected to be vigilant and responsive in cases of illness amongst students. Procedures may vary between the halls but all Residential Adviser should act quickly, especially where serious illness such as meningitis is suspected.

Please report any concerns you may have about students, whose behaviour may suggest that they are experiencing mental health problems, to the Hall Warden, following the Guidelines on Supporting Students with Mental Health Problems which are available on the Student Support webpages and in leaflets available from the Counselling Service and the Warden. In crisis or emergency situations it may

be necessary to call the emergency services whose staff have the expertise and authority to take appropriate action.

Try to avoid being forced into a situation where a student confides information to you and asks you not to divulge what they have told you. It is advisable to explain to the student that, if they do confide in you in this way, you will have to share the information with senior colleagues.

#### **e) Dealing with Parents**

When first-year students come to the University it is probably the first time that they have left home for any significant period and this can be a very traumatic time for both them and their parents. Whilst the student has the excitement of a new venture to look forward to, the emotional consequences for the parents may be more about feelings of loss and anxiety than about celebration and freedom. These factors, coupled with the increasing need for parents to support their children financially, mean that they may well feel the need to intervene in the relationship between the student and the University, even if their child is over 18. In the majority of cases, this intervention is benign and can be a source of both reassurance and practical assistance.

Nevertheless, we are sometimes faced with a more negative approach from parents, which often involves complaints and threats, and these can be very difficult to handle, especially if we are to protect the interests and confidentiality of the students themselves. Whilst you will undoubtedly meet parents from time to time, especially when new students arrive and at the beginning and end of each term, it is advisable that any other approaches from parents are directed to the Warden, who is best placed to deal with such potentially sensitive matters.

Further training will be provided as part of the Residential Adviser Conference surrounding Safeguarding and Confidentiality.

#### **f) Students with a Disability and/or Support Needs**

The equality act (2010) requires the University to make reasonable adjustments to accommodation for any students with either a registered disability or specific support needs.

It is important that students who have a disability or require other support needs are given opportunities to disclose these in order that appropriate academic and non academic support arrangements can be put in place. Please refer any students in halls who may discuss these issues with you to talk to their personal/academic tutor or Head of Department and also to make contact with the Disability Support Team (DST) who can work with the student to create a personalised support plan.

More information can be found on Disability Support from the University Website: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/disability/>

#### **g) Supporting the delivery of the social programme for Halls**

The Halls Life team develop a programme of events, activities and communications across the year for residents to support them during their time in our accommodation. This programme is designed to help

students engage with and settle into life in Halls, and plays a key role in supporting the welfare of our students through this engagement along with messages around prevention and early intervention.

As a Residential Adviser you will be expected to support the delivery of this events programme. This will involve assisting with event promotion, providing staffing for activities organised by the Halls Life Team, as well as working with your wider RA team with support from Halls Life staff to develop your own events for students in your Hall. Training is provided at the Residential Adviser Conference regarding this aspect of your role, which will also introduce you to the Halls Life team. They will communicate with you regularly throughout the year about your duties here, and you should maintain a responsive relationship with them.

Students reside in and arrive into our accommodation year round meaning activities will be taking place across the calendar year. You should therefore also expect to be asked to support activities outside of core term times.

**I have read through the Code of Conduct and Guidance Notes and I understand my role as a Residential Adviser and what is expected of me. I have also read the supporting policies and procedures that are highlighted as part of this Code of Conduct and ensure I will comply with them:**

..... Signed

..... Print Name

..... Date

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN A COPY OF THIS TO:

**Accommodation Office, Crown Place, 202 Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, L3 5UE**