G/H/RA Selection FAQ

Q: Is prior experience as a Resident Assistant or similar positions considered for applicants?
A: Prior experience and background of an individual are always considered in the process. Prior experience as a Resident Assistant, peer counselor, a member of the Neighborhood Hall Council, or other type of student support role is NOT required but may be beneficial for a serious G/H/RA applicant at Boston University. If this applies to you, be sure to mention these types of experiences in the cover letter and resume portion of your application.

Q: What is the general schedule of a Resident Assistant's work week?
A: During the academic year, a Resident Assistant is a peer leader in/on a small hall or floor community. As a community leader, G/H/RAs must always be ready to respond to situations and conditions within the residence neighborhood. While it is difficult to quantify the number of hours spent responding to student interests, issues, and concerns in residence, this accounts for approximately 20 hours each week. In some cases, these responsibilities may take less time and at other times it may be more. This position places an emphasis on flexibility as responding to situations as they arise is a major component of the G/H/RA position.

Other portions of the G/H/RA week are more quantifiable. Over the course of the academic year, G/H/RAs will be assigned various on-call shifts. During these shifts, G/H/RAs are expected to be in their particular residence hall or neighborhood from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. (the following morning) on weekdays, or from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (the following morning) on weekends and University holidays. G/H/RAs must be available for the entire 24- or 16-hour duration of their on-call shifts, in order to respond to situations as they arise. Some G/H/RAs will be assigned on-call shifts during holidays, spring and fall recesses, and winter intersession.

Each Wednesday of the academic year from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. is reserved for mandatory G/H/RA training and administrative meetings. Additionally, each RA is required to submit a Weekly Report that provides an overview of their week, including resident engagement, any resident conflicts or concerns, and potential maintenance issues. G/H/RAs are expected to maintain a consistent presence and actively engage within their assigned communities.

Finally, G/H/RAs are required to assist with several move-in and move-out processes throughout the year, which may extend beyond the normal business hours to include non-business hours and weekends. Other commitments are not allowed during this time.

Q: Can a Resident Assistant take a leave of absence from the position?
A: New or 1st time G/H/RAs are expected to serve for the entire academic year from the date of hire. Should life circumstances require the staff member to take a LOA from the position or from the university, the candidate file will be retained. If a position becomes available upon the return of the staff member, Residence Life will consider placing that staff member in an open position depending on the nature and logistics of the position. Residence Life cannot guarantee positions for G/H/RAs wishing to take a leave of absence from the position or University.

Q: Am I able to serve in the G/H/RA position if I have a Wednesday night course or cannot attend August training?
A: Unfortunately, no. Due to the size and scope of the Residence Life program, Resident Assistants are required to attend staff meetings and training exercises during the timelines outlined in the selection process. Information covered in Wednesday night staff meetings and August training is imperative to the success of G/H/RAs, the Residence Life program, and the student residential experience. Candidates are encouraged to speak with their academic programs about required classes and orientation exercises, as some academic programs have requirements that would preclude candidates from serving in the G/H/RA position. If a candidate is selected for the position and has a conflict that does not allow them to attend Wednesday night staff meetings or August training, the candidate may be asked to resign their position.

Q: Can a Resident Assistant work in a part-time job?
A: Residence Life requires that G/H/RAs prioritize their G/H/RA position as their primary non-academic commitment. Those who accept employment as a G/H/RA will not be eligible to perform paid or stipend services in another on-campus role (such as working at FitRec). International students are also strongly advised to consult with the International Students & Scholars Office (located at 888 Commonwealth Avenue) to discuss any potential impacts of the G/H/RA role on their student status.

Those who intend to engage in off-campus employment should speak with their supervisor about time and responsibility management before accepting this additional role. Holding an additional part-time job may impact a G/H/RA's effectiveness both academically and in their role. While off-campus part-time employment is permitted, it is generally not encouraged. G/H/RAs who wish to maintain an additional job must first seek approval from their Residence Hall Director or Area Director.

Q: Can a Resident Assistant have a roommate?
A: G/H/RAs are not permitted to have roommates. G/H/RAs receive single rooms or apartments and are expected to utilize this room not only as a living space but also as a space for resolution of conflicts as they concern residents. The G/H/RA, therefore, must be afforded a degree of privacy that cannot be maintained in the presence of a roommate.

Q: Are there housing accommodations for married G/H/RAs and/or G/H/RAs with children?
A: Yes; married G/H/RAs and/or G/H/RAs who have children are assigned to residences that can accommodate their housing needs. Housing options for married G/H/RAs are extremely limited, and it is suggested that married applicants consult Residence Life as soon as possible to learn more about the availability of these spaces.

Q: What support systems are available for G/H/RAs in crises and incident situations?
A: Residence Life maintains communications and assistance networks with a variety of university departments and offices such as Student Health Services, University Police, Housing, Facilities Management & Operations, and school and college academic support services. These and other university offices and departments are continuously available as part of a student support network for the staff of Residence Life.

G/H/RAs have immediate "back-up" support from senior staff in Residence Life who are also on-call and trained to respond to an assortment of incidents and crises. Senior staff members are also knowledgeable of the methods in contacting support service and assistance from other University offices and departments at any time of the day. Additionally, G/H/RAs are given the appropriate training to be referral agents and to accurately respond to common incidents and crises.

Q: How are G/H/RAs assigned? Does an applicant have a choice of their living arrangement?
A: Employees in Residence Life are required to live on-campus in BU housing. Because the units in the University's G/H/RA housing stock are limited in number and unique in configuration, during the selection process, Residence Life may ask specific questions about a candidate's needs concerning unit size and configuration (i.e. adequate in size for a spouse or children, approved accommodations). Placement decisions are determined based on the needs of each neighborhood, with the understanding that maintaining a living environment conducive to student learning and development is both an exciting and challenging task. Each year, Residence Life reviews staffing assignments and patterns, making appropriate adjustments for the following year.

Among applicants who meet hiring criteria and demonstrate the capability to perform the RA role, placements are made through a structured process that ensures fairness and consistency across all candidates. This process balances departmental needs with opportunities for qualified candidates to serve in a variety of residential communities. With that said, candidates will be able and are encouraged to discuss concerns and questions about potential placements during the selection process.

Q: What will the interview process be like?
A: You can expect to engage in activities individually and in small groups of other Resident Assistant candidates revolving

around responsibilities required to be a successful Resident Assistant. You will also meet individually with the Residence Life staff facilitating your interview. Your interview will be considered along with careful review of your written application.

Q: Will I only be offered *one* position as a Resident Assistant?
A: Yes; the selection of G/H/RAs is completed departmentally by Residence Life. This means that G/H/RAs are selected and assigned based on the needs of the Residence Life program. Only one position and placement assignment will be made. If you decline the placement offered, it is with the understanding that you decline the position.

Q: Do I need to submit a letter of recommendation with my application?
A: No; recommendations are not required for the G/H/RA application.

Q: Can I participate in the RA selection process if I am studying abroad in the spring 2026 semester?
A: Yes. Interviews will be conducted remotely via Zoom, regardless of a candidate's geographic location. This includes candidates who are studying abroad. All times and dates communicated to candidates will be for the local time in Boston, Massachusetts.

Q: Is it possible to receive an extension on the submission deadline date for applications?
A: No; late application submissions will not be accepted. Residence Life is mindful of equitable application practices and recognizes that allowing late submission of application materials is unfair to candidates who have submitted these materials on time. Applicants with difficulties gathering materials should contact Residence Life prior to the appropriate application deadline date. ***Due to the high volume of applications received, Residence Life will initially review the first 375 completed applications submitted. We encourage you to submit your application as early as possible, but no later than the posted deadline.***

Q: Is an applicant's financial assistance affected by accepting a Resident Assistant position?
A: If you receive need-based financial assistance, federal regulations require that residence staff compensation be included as part of your financial assistance package. This compensation will first replace self-help, need-based loans, and/or work-study awards. If you have any questions about the impact of a Resident Assistantship on your financial assistance package, you should contact Financial Assistance directly.

Q: Should G/H/RA applicants go through the Housing selection process?
A: If you want to live on campus regardless of the outcome of your candidacy, you should go through the Housing Selection Process to secure a room on campus. You will need to pay the housing deposit in order to sign up for housing. If you become a Resident Assistant, the housing deposit will show up as a credit to your student account in July.

Q: Is there a specific type of student that Residence Life is looking for to serve in the G/H/RA position?
A: No; our student body is diverse, and we look for a variety of different students to support our student body. The best advice we can provide you is to be yourself while going through the G/H/RA selection process.

Q: I am interested in the Graduate Housing Assistant position. What makes this position different from the GRA and RA positions?
A: For more information about the Graduate Housing position, please review the Graduate Housing Assistant Selection Guide or contact reslife@bu.edu.

Boston University does not discriminate and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, natural or protective hairstyle, religion, sex or gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, shared ancestry and ethnic characteristics, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, because of marital, parental, military service, or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, in accordance with federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

Boston University Residence Life is committed to developing and maintaining living environments across campus that are welcoming to and respectful of all members of the community.

Financial Assistance for Resident Assistants
The Impact on Eligibility for Need-Based Financial Aid

Federal regulations and Boston University policy require that all student resources, including compensation for services of any type, be taken into consideration when calculating a student's eligibility for need-based financial aid. As a result, a student's Resident Assistant compensation must be incorporated into a need-based financial aid package. **If a student's award includes federal or BU need-based aid, the combination of all need-based aid, merit awards and Resident Assistant compensation cannot exceed the student's calculated financial aid eligibility.**

A financial aid package may consist of three types of aid: scholarship/grant, loans, and student employment. Loans must be repaid, and student employment aid must be earned, but neither is the case with scholarship/grant aid. Need-based scholarship/grant aid includes but is not limited to Boston University scholarship/grant, Charles River Housing Grant, Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), and State Scholarship/ Grant.

When an adjustment to a need-based financial aid package is required because of including Resident Assistant compensation in the package, the loan and employment portion of the award is reduced first. Loan and employment aid are reduced before a scholarship/grant. Federal Work-Study and need-based student loans (such as the Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan and the Federal Perkins Loan) are either reduced or cancelled before scholarships or grants are affected. Since the Unsubsidized Stafford Loan is not a need-based loan program, it can exceed a student's calculated financial eligibility. Scholarship/grant aid is reduced only if necessary to avoid aid more than calculated financial eligibility. Assistance from all sources (need, merit or credit-based) cannot exceed a student's total Cost of Attendance.

BU Residence Life notifies BU Financial Assistance of students selected as Resident Assistants. In some cases, the notification is received after a financial aid award has already been made. **If a student who is selected as a Resident Assistant receives a Financial Aid Award Notification, which does not include the Resident Assistant compensation, the student should immediately notify his/her Assistant Director at BU Financial Assistance.** The Assistant Director will adjust the financial aid package to include the Resident Assistant compensation.

Please contact BU Financial Assistance should you have questions about your aid and the Resident Assistant position by calling 617-353-2965 or emailing finaid@bu.edu.

Information for International Students Applying to Be G/H/RAs

The International Student & Scholars Office (ISSO) recognizes the value and benefit of being selected as a Resident Assistant. We want Boston University international students (students in a non-immigrant status) to be able to take advantage of this unique opportunity. There are, however, important considerations and strict immigration-related rules that apply. The information below will help you understand these rules.

Federal regulations limit the number of hours international students in F and J non-immigrant visa classifications may work on campus. The information below is only a brief overview to help you to maintain lawful immigration status. Please consult with ISSO regarding the effects of Resident Assistant appointments and on-campus employment eligibility. You will also find complete information about on-campus employment on the ISSO website at www.bu.edu/isso.

Important Considerations, Rules, and Procedures:

Question	Answer
If I become a Resident Assistant, can I have a second **on-campus** job?	**No**, because a Resident Assistant position is equivalent to working 20 hours per week. On-campus employment may not exceed 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring semesters.
I am a graduate student with a Fellowship/Assistantship; can I also be a Resident Assistant?	**No**, because most Fellowship/Assistantships are considered on-campus employment, and you cannot hold two positions if you are a Resident Assistant.
Must I contact ISSO after I am selected to be a Resident Assistant?	International Students are strongly encouraged to contact ISSO to discuss any possible implications of serving as a Resident Assistant.
If I am already authorized to work **off-campus**, can I also be a Resident Assistant?	**Yes**. (Keep in mind that you must request prior employment authorization through the ISSO if you qualify for off-campus employment.)
Am I permitted to pursue work in addition to my G/H/RA position during the summer break, winter intersession, and spring recess?	**Yes**, because full-time (more than 20 hours per week) on-campus employment is permitted during "annual school breaks" which include summer vacation between semesters of study, and when classes are not in session during winter intersession and spring recess.

For more information, please contact the ISSO
www.bu.edu/isso.
Telephone: 617-353-3565
Facsimile: 617-358-1170
888 Commonwealth Ave, Second Floor