

# Monash Residential Services - The Role of a Resident Advisor (Respect.Now.Always)

## **Context**

The first four Mission Goals of Monash Residential Services (MRS) are to provide and develop an environment within each location on campus that:

- Provides care, support and enrichment for the residential community in academic, cultural, personal, social and recreational matters;
- Has regard for the individual and group needs of the residential population, bearing in mind the multi-cultural nature of each residential location and the wider Monash University community;
- Recognises and values diversity (e.g. nationalities, beliefs, abilities, talents, interests, etc);
- Creates opportunities for mutually beneficial interaction between the members of the residential community

<http://www.monash.edu/accommodation/contact/about-us>

Monash Residential Services gratefully acknowledges that there are current residents who demonstrate a strong commitment and willingness to undertake and be involved in a range of voluntary activities, programs and initiatives that contribute to the enhancement of community life in their Hall or Site and wider residential community.

As volunteers, Resident Advisors cannot be rostered 'on-call' – their contribution to their hall is entirely voluntary - and is essentially a community support, engagement and development role which demonstrates a strong commitment to actively participating in enriching and promoting community life within their Hall and wider residential community. As an acknowledgement of the contribution to residential communities made by Resident Advisors, an MRS Resident Advisor Scholarship may be offered to residents.

<http://www.monash.edu.au/students/scholarships/mrs-residential-advisor.html>

## **Eligibility for scholarship**

To be eligible applicants must:

- Be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or holder of a permanent resident visa or humanitarian visa, or
- Be an international student, and;
- Be a current full-time undergraduate, honours, or postgraduate student enrolled at a Monash campus in Australia (subject to special consideration from the Director, Monash Residential Services), and;
- Be a current resident with Monash Residential Services, and;
- Have been appointed a Resident Advisor with Monash Residential Services

## **Retention of Scholarship**

To retain a Resident Advisor scholarship, the holder must:

- Remain in residency with Monash Residential Services
- Maintain a full-time enrolment, variation to this is subject to special consideration from the Director, Monash Residential Services; written permission must be sought from the Director for a RA scholarship to be granted/retained should a RA move from a full-time to a part-time enrolment;
- Not be in breach of any current *Monash Residential Services – Conditions of Residency* (refer <http://www.monash.edu/accommodation/current-residents/regulations-and-policies/conditions-of-residency>);
- Maintain a minimum of a pass weighted average mark of 50% (Fifty percent);
- Maintain the support of the Residence's College Head as an appropriate, designated community leader in their Residence – as a result of ongoing conduct and contribution to their residential community and MRS more broadly.

## ***Expectations of a Resident Advisor***

Resident Advisors are expected to uphold and model exemplary behaviour and conduct and be an example to others as well as an ambassador for their Residence and Monash University. The conduct of Resident Advisors is expected to be at an exceptional level at all times within Residence as well as when the resident is (reasonably perceived as) representing or engaging in activities associated with their Residence or MRS.

Resident Advisors are expected to complete any requirements outlined in the application form for Resident Advisors, including, but not limited to:

- Completing accredited Mental Health First Aid Training
- Obtaining a Victorian *Working with Children Check (Volunteer)* card
- Completing Monash University Equal Opportunity (Students) online training
- Fulfilling any designated MRS Required Training Commitments – as outlined in the application and appointment process.

Resident Advisors contribute to the creation of a Residential Support Team within their Hall. The *Expectations* set out below are a means to achieving the above Mission Goals and are to be fulfilled in collaboration with, and support of, the whole of the Residential Support Team of each residential hall or MRS site. The central expectation is that RAs will be the model resident – actively promoting the values and expectations of MRS in their actions (both formal and informal). RAs are expected to inform their College Head of information which is important to the residential community and/or has the potential to impact the experience of residents or the reputation of MRS – RAs must disclose to their College Head or other appropriate person(s) at MRS, any personal conduct or situation(s) outside of MRS, within the University or wider community, which has the ability to influence the reputation of the RST and detrimentally impact MRS.

In addition to this training, holders of the RA (Respect.Now.Always) positions will be expected to demonstrate and develop:

- Understanding of and commitment to the principles of supporting diverse, inclusive and safe spaces at Monash University,
- Being a champion in making Monash a safe community for everyone,
- Capacity to listen carefully and sensitively to queries and concerns without exercising judgement,
- Actively promoting the Respect.Now.Always message when appropriate.

RAs (Respect.Now.Always) will register and complete (or have previously completed) the Monash University:

- Queer 101
- 'Respect at Monash' Moodle module
- Other trainings and programs as deemed appropriate to the position and role

## ***Respect.Now.Always Program Overview***

The particular focus of the Resident Advisors holding Respect.Now.Always positions is to develop and deliver educational programs and initiatives for the MRS community. The MRS Mission Goals highlight a commitment to providing a culture of respect, safety and support.

The MRS 'central' positions (rather than within individual residences) of RA (Respect.Now.Always) provide an MRS wide focus and assist 'residential RAs' in the coordination of Respectful Community programs within individual residences, as well as across MRS.

The Resident Advisors (Respect.Now.Always) are expected to achieve outcomes in the following areas:

- Provide leadership and innovative programs in the broad areas of gender based violence,
- Advocate within MRS in relation to the experience of women in MRS.
- Educate the MRS community about services within Monash which are in place to support the rights of women, under represented groups, disability liaison services and the promotion and benefit of discrimination and harassment free environments.
- To participate in the development of strategies and policies which improve the experience of all members of the MRS community in relation to developing respectful communities.

## ***Respect.Now.Always Programs***

- To establish, chair and coordinate the MRS-wide resident *Respect.Now.Always Committee* – where programs and initiatives are developed and planned.
- At least one holder of the RA (*Respect.Now.Always*) position will be female.
- Act as a point of contact for all members of the MRS community relating to issues of discrimination and harassment.
- To plan and assist with the coordination of the MRS *Respect.Now.Always Dinner, Semester 1 and 2 Suppers*.

## ***Respect.Now.Always Roles Outline***

All tasks as outlined below will be undertaken with support from the Manager, Residential Support, Engagement & Development and Residents' *Respect.Now.Always* Committee.

- Meet with the Manager, Residential Support, Engagement and Development in November to develop a yearly action plan - which will include, but is not limited to, the *Respect.Now.Always* Programs outlined previously.
- Complete the training detailed above.
- Attend the Residents' Committee meetings and be involved in relevant sub-committees (including chairing the *Respect.Now.Always* committee).
- Communicate effectively with all the *Respect.Now.Always* representatives at Clayton and other Residential sites.
- Broadly advertise achievements and events through posters and the MRS social media.

The Resident Advisor (*Respect.Now.Always*) will be provided with operating guidelines by the Manager Residential Programs to assist them with tailoring their contribution to the specific needs of their residential community, and will be offered a full range of training relevant for their role.

Resident Advisors (*Respect.Now.Always*) are not employees of MRS or the University and should ensure that they do not represent to students, staff or others that they are employees of MRS or the University. A resident's voluntary contribution to their Hall and wider residential community as a Resident Advisor does not carry any commitment by MRS or the University, for future employment opportunities.

## ***Other items of consideration***

- Monash Residential Services reserves the right at any time to advise residents they no longer require their voluntary contribution to the community as a Resident Advisor.
- All residents living at a Monash Residential Services site, whether they are residents or residents who have offered to be volunteer Resident Advisors:
  - are bound by the terms of their individual Residency Agreements;
  - accept and acknowledge that they will abide by MRS Accommodation Fee Regulations, the Conditions of Residency and other regulations as are specified on the MRS web page.
  - must pay all requisite fees at the times specified;
  - ***accept all other such regulations as are specified in Resident Advisor online induction and to abide by the disciplinary authority of the College Head, MRS Site Managers or other appropriate persons.***

## ***Rewards***

In addition to the possibility of a MRS Resident Advisor Scholarship, the position of a Resident Advisor (*Respect.Now.Always*) provides the opportunity to:

- Be part of a community and to lead, foster and nurture that community.
- Assist new residents' transition to on-campus life through sharing your own experiences.
- Develop leadership skills through attendance at MRS training workshops.
- Undertake certified training courses.
- Help make MRS a more exciting, inclusive, safe and enjoyable place to live.
- Gain new perspectives on a diverse range of issues through working in a team and with residents from diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Know you can 'make a difference'.