

POSITION TITLE:	ELI Peer Leader
DEPARTMENT:	Student Experience and Housing
REPORTS TO:	Assistant Director, Student Experience & Housing
EFFECTIVE DATE:	August 28 – December 24, 2023

GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Are you an outgoing senior Waterloo student who loves to help others and has an interest to build their intercultural skills? A job as an ELI Peer Leader may be the right fit for you!

Renison Student Experience and Housing is recruiting five (5) senior Waterloo students to serve as an English Language Institute (ELI) Peer Leader from late August to late December 2023. These student staff will work approximately 8-10 hours per week both in person and virtually.

In Fall and Winter terms, the Renison English Language Institute (Renison ELI) offers the BASE program, the EFAS program, and the GEAR program:

- The [Bridge to Academic Success in English \(BASE\) program](#) is Waterloo's English language foundation program that helps students improve their skills in reading, writing, and speaking English before they begin their degree at the University of Waterloo in any of the six Faculties.
- The [General English at Renison \(GEAR\) program](#) is a 4-week English language program designed to enhance students' knowledge and sharpen their English skills, with classes in reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, innovation enrichment and cultural studies. The GEAR program is expected to be offered once or twice during the Fall term.
- The [English for Academic Success \(EFAS\)](#) program. This program is designed to sharpen students' English skills and prepare for university life. Each year, we welcome approximately 40 students into our 12-week academic English program that will include students interested in pursuing undergraduate or graduate education in Canada, students who wish to come to Canada for a study abroad experience, as well as students who just wish to improve their English.

As an ELI Peer Leader we need you to:

- Exhibit strong peer mentorship skills: you must have an eagerness to want to mentor and support new international students coming to Canada.
- Be outgoing: you won't be expected to lead cheers, but we need you to feel comfortable facilitating both in-person and virtual events. During this, you will demonstrate a warm, welcoming attitude for every student. You will need to feel comfortable communicating with students via text messaging groups to invite them to participate in events or engage in small talk conversations.
- Know international students: you must have a desire and passion for helping new international students and English Language Learners, and have a working knowledge of the needs of this group of students.
- Be a positive role model: we need you to possess the skills needed to be a successful student, both personally and academically. You must exhibit awareness and knowledge of strategies for academic and personal success

as a student.

- Have strong knowledge of the university campus: this position is ideal for senior undergraduate students with a strong knowledge of campus services and resources, student leadership experience, and a good understanding of the first-year international student experience.
- Be legally able to work in Canada: you must have a Social Insurance Number to fulfill the position.
- Have access to a strong Internet connection and a data plan: the successful candidate must have access to a strong Internet connection and a data plan, with access to a computer/microphone/camera to host virtual events. You will also need a phone to access apps such as WhatsApp, WeChat, KakaoTalk, and LINE to communicate via text messaging groups with students.

Preference will be given to students with international or cross-cultural experience, and/or additional language competencies. This position is ideal for senior undergraduate students with a strong knowledge of campus services and resources, student leadership experience, and a good understanding of the first-year international student experience.

This position is accountable to the Assistant Director, Student Experience & Housing but receives operational guidance from the Student Experience Specialist and works alongside a Student Advisor, Student Experience Coordinator, and Programs Assistants.

NATURE & SCOPE

The position of ELI Peer Leader requires the ability to provide guidance and support to our students related to their academic, cultural, social, and interpersonal transition into the University of Waterloo.

- Interpersonal Contacts: this position requires the incumbent to work collaboratively with a team of other Peer Leaders, Student Experience Coordinator, Student Advisor, and the Interim Assistant Director, Student Experience & Housing. The successful candidate must possess excellent interpersonal and mentorship skills to carefully understand, assess, and recommend supports and resources to support students in their personal and academic success.
- Decision-Making Authority: this position possesses decision-making authority based on established policy and procedure; complex and non-routine issues involve consultation with appropriate personnel. Required to investigate issues and provide explanation or suggestions as able.
- Level of Responsibility: this role has defined duties and responsibilities and receives direct supervision. The Peer Leader will be responsible for coordinating social and educational event programming with students in our language programs, and conducting regular one-on-one meetings with our students. Additionally, some guidance and support are provided to students regarding their academic, cultural, social, and interpersonal transition into the University of Waterloo. There are no direct reports. Job challenges include a thorough understanding of cross-cultural awareness and an understanding of available resources to provide support to ensure student success.
- Physical and Sensory Demands: working in an office environment with most of the time standing or sitting with some computer use. Some physical work as may be required when preparing for workshops or special events.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

Connect with Students

- Encourage an inclusive and welcoming environment by being a positive, supportive individual for students to approach with questions or concerns.
- Be accessible to students to assist in meeting their social and academic needs. This includes helping with questions related to life at the University of Waterloo, life in Canada, their language program, and provide appropriate campus referrals when needed.
- Interact in person with students on a weekly basis (including one-on-one meetings, check-in meetings, events, workshops, etc.).
- Build prosocial relationships with students to identify issues/challenges they may be facing.

Social/Cultural Student Development Programming

- Support in the coordination and delivery of social programming to support students in their transition to Waterloo, and work with Student Experience Specialist to determine appropriate event programming that match students' needs and interests.
- Research events and student development opportunities hosted by other campus services that may be suitable for students to attend and assist in encouraging students' attendance at these initiatives. Promote these events through social media and other methods to students.
- Provide additional support in the coordination of volunteer programs, called ELI Reps, who meet weekly or bi-weekly to develop their communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills by working to organize an on-campus event for the Waterloo community.
- Plan opportunities for students to engage socially with other students in their respective faculty, if appropriate.

Advising Support

- Meet one-on-one with students as needed to assist in the development of personal and academic skills, including social integration, note taking, textbook reading, problem solving, academic integrity, and procrastination.
- Offer solutions during one-on-one sessions with students to best meet their unique needs.
- Make referrals to the Interim Student Experience Specialist, Student Advisor, or other campus services as needed for complex student issues.
- Facilitate programming to support students in their academic success while studying in the program.
- Actively recruit students for one-on-one advising meetings.

Documentation, Administration, and Communication

- Work with the Student Experience Specialist to document relevant programming approaches, logistics, event/program attendance, outcomes, and record case notes following student appointments.
- Utilize social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, WeChat, WhatsApp, LINE, KakaoTalk) almost daily to interact with students and promote specific events several times each week; interact regularly with students via social media groups, including during unscheduled off-hours.
- Respond to all communications from students and your supervisor within one business day. Please note you may have to reply earlier for issues that need immediate attention.
- Seek out students who have missed information meetings or for whom there is a specific concern.
- Attend any events and team meetings scheduled by the Student Experience Specialist.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Registered Waterloo student in good academic standing with a minimum average (in both semester and cumulative) of 65% (preference will be given to students in their 2A term or higher). Peer Leaders must maintain [good academic standing](#) as per their faculty definition, as well as abide [by academic integrity policies](#). Failure to adhere to these conditions may lead to remedial action, up to and including dismissal.
- Must have access to a strong Internet connection and a data plan, with access to a computer/microphone/camera to host virtual events. Must also have a smartphone to access apps such as WhatsApp, WeChat, KakaoTalk to communicate via text messaging groups with students.
- Experienced student leader with a strong knowledge of the University of Waterloo campus, Faculties, services, and resources. Previous experience in a student coaching role considered an asset.
- Knowledgeable about the first-year international student experience; awareness of the needs of first-year international students and English Language Learners.
- Awareness and knowledge of strategies that encourage personal and academic success.
- Experienced in event management and execution.
- Excellent problem-solving skills and good judgment; ability to think on your feet and navigate difficult discussions or situations with diplomacy and tact.
- Experience participating in international or cross-cultural living and learning opportunities; ability to approach cross-cultural communication and inter-group dynamics with sensitivity and respect.
- Creative and adaptable under pressure.
- Strong customer-service orientation.

BENEFITS

In exchange for accepting the position, an ELI Peer Leader will be compensated \$15.50 per hour, in addition to vacation pay, by Renison University College, and will work approximately 8-10 hours per week. For any off-campus bus trip or excursion that exceeds six hours in length, a flat rate of \$100 will be paid to all student staff who participate in the trip. Bus transportation and ticket charges (ex. Canada's Wonderland ticket) will be paid by Renison, including meal per diems.

POLICIES OF RENISON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The ELI Peer Leaders are to always act as role models for all students. Any violation of Renison University College rules, negligence in informing the Student Experience Specialist of violations of policy, negligence in abiding by the terms of this agreement, or conduct unbecoming of a Peer Leader, is considered dereliction of a Peer Leader's duties. Dereliction of duties may result in termination of the appointment and forfeit of income and allowances.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Travel: None

Working Hours: Inconsistent working hours; shifts may be scheduled for a minimum of 1 hour in between class schedule, to all-day events on weekends. A monthly schedule will be set in advance. Hours will vary depending on times when students are not in class, including mornings, afternoons, evenings, or weekends.

Risks – physical and psychological:

Psychological risks:

- This role involves exposure to stress and interactions with students who are upset or unstable due to being under time and/or financial pressures, or who are dealing with culture shock, irregular and/or high volumes, multiple and/or tight deadlines beyond one's control.