

ROOMMATE AGREEMENT GUIDE

At Renison University College, one of our top priorities is maintaining a culture of honesty and respect. This is especially important in residence, as all residents deserve a comfortable living space. The purpose of the roommate agreement is to help you better understand yourself and the people you are living with. Discussing your expectations for living in a shared space ensures that you and your roommates create a shared understanding of etiquette and practices you can reasonably expect from each other. It will also help you communicate and resolve conflicts if they arise.

To start the conversation, you are encouraged to discuss the following topics:

- Where are you from?
- What program are you in? What year are you in?
- What do you like to do with your friends?
- What are your hobbies and interests?
- What first comes to mind when you think about living at Renison Residence?
- What are you hoping to get out of your residence experience (social, personal, academic)?
- What do you think will be the biggest adjustment to living in residence?
- What else should we know about each other?

This guide has been developed to ensure roommates understand each other's preferences and serves as a mutual agreement of expectations and guidelines. As you move through the roommate agreement, consider the variations of your expectations on weekdays versus weekends, during high or low workloads, exam season, and personal stress levels. Your discussions and decisions should remain private between yourselves and your Don. Maintaining privacy and confidentiality in your living space is important!

ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

1. Personal Belongings/Space:

- What items may or may not be shared?
- Where are your items going to be stored?
- Will there be common areas to store items? (e.g. clothing, shoes, computer, food, refrigerator, etc.)
- What will be your guidelines for locking the door?
- What are the limitations for propping the door open? (e.g. times when the door can be open, does someone need to be in the room, who is allowed in)

Please write down your mutual agreement:

2. Sleep Habits:

- What is a reasonable time for the room to be quiet at night and in the morning on weekdays and on weekends?
- What is the agreement on having the lights and computers on while the other is sleeping?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

3. Cleanliness:

- How do you prefer to keep the room clean and organized?
- How will cleaning be divided and how often? (e.g. trash/recycling, floors, dusting, sanitizing surfaces, *sink and washrooms if in Link rooms*, etc.)

Please write down your mutual agreement:

Guests: *(Please see the Renison's Residence Contract and Community Standards for further guidelines on guests.)*

- Are guests allowed? Can guests stay the night? Is there a specific time guests must leave?
- Can guests sit on your bed?
- Are there any belongings guests can or cannot use that is yours?
- Is there a difference between guests and significant others?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

4. Study Habits:

- Do you prefer to study in the room or elsewhere on campus?
- Does the room have to be silent when studying? Can there be music on?
- How late can you study for with the lights on?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

5. Noise: *(Please see the Renison's Residence Contract and Community Standards for further guidelines on noise.)*

- What is your definition of noise? What is loud and what isn't?
- Are there specific times that noise should be minimized so you can study, sleep, etc.?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

6. Communication and Conflict Resolution:

- How will you generally communicate? (text message, phone call, etc.)
- How often are you going to check-in with each other?
- How would you prefer to handle conflicts or disagreements? (e.g. in-person conversation, leave a note, text message, etc.)
- Do you have any concerns or expectations about communication?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

7. Health and Safety:

- Are there any allergies, sensitivities, or intolerances you would like to share? If yes, how can your roommate support you best?

Please write down your mutual agreement:

8. Other Important Items:

By signing below, we acknowledge that the guidelines above were mutually created and are agreed upon.

We understand that should an issue arise, we may re-enter into a cooperative discussion about any of the issues mentioned above or others that may arise. If the issue is not resolved after re-entering into a cooperative discussion, we will ask our Residence Don for further assistance as a mediator.

Date: _____ **Floor:** _____ **Room Number:** _____

Roommate 1 Name: _____ **Roommate 2 Name:** _____

Signature: _____ **Signature:** _____

This Roommate Agreement is to be returned to your Don and will be made available to either party should access be needed to it.

Roommate Mediations

In situations where conflicts arise between roommates, having a neutral third party to facilitate discussions can be extremely beneficial. Your Residence Dons are equipped with the necessary skills and experience to assist roommates in finding resolutions to their conflicts. If you find yourselves struggling to resolve a conflict with your roommate, it is advisable to reach out to your Don to arrange a mediation session.

We firmly believe in the effectiveness of roommate mediations, to the extent that first-year students are required to undergo mediation before being eligible for room transfers. We strongly encourage all students facing roommate conflicts to engage in this process.

Here's how mediations typically unfold:

1. Initiate contact with your Don via email or in person to outline the situation and request advice. Your Don may be able to first offer some helpful pieces of advice about how to approach the situation so you could try to proactively deal with the situation yourself first.
2. If you prefer or after attempts to mediate the problem yourself, your Don can also coordinate with you and your roommate to schedule a convenient time for a mediation. It's important to allocate sufficient time for each person to express their perspectives and collaborate on finding a resolution.
3. While you may be the one initiating the mediation, remember that your Don is committed to the well-being of all residents. They will ensure that each individual can voice their concerns and work towards a mutually beneficial outcome.

Your Don will refer to your roommate contract during the mediation process. If any updates have been made to the contract since move-in, providing your Don with an updated copy beforehand can be helpful.

It's essential to acknowledge that while Dons are skilled mediators, some conflicts may require multiple mediation sessions before a resolution is reached. In certain cases, despite sincere efforts during mediation, a room transfer may be deemed the most suitable solution by Renison's Housing Manager.

Room Re-Allocations

Requests for room changes will not be considered after the Student Experience and Housing team at Renison University College has finalized room assignments. If, after one month of living in residence, you wish to discuss a room change, please contact your Residence Don.

Room changes are made only under exceptional circumstances, and Renison University College is not obligated to fulfill any room change requests. If you encounter challenges with a roommate, you are expected to refer to your roommate agreement and engage in discussions with your roommate(s). Mediation and genuine attempts to resolve any issues are required. Please note that Renison University College is not responsible for granting room changes, and all requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Transferring rooms within the Renison University College Residence Contract 2024-2025 may incur additional charges, including a \$500 administrative processing fee. Any additional charges will be applied to your Quest account by the Student Experience and Housing Team. Failure to complete the room change process may result in further charges. Additionally, room and bed space swaps with other residents without written permission from the Student Experience and Housing team are prohibited.

Helpful Reminders

For most residents, living with a roommate and sharing a room or facilities together is a complete new experience. It can be a big adjustment, so compassion and empathy are always very important to be a good roommate.

We also recognize that Renison is a very intercultural community. All residents are expected to complete Renison's online Intercultural Training on the University of Waterloo LEARN website.

How to enroll in Renison's Online Intercultural Training

2. Visit the LEARN website at learn.uwaterloo.ca
3. Log in with your WatIAM credentials (your Quest account information)
4. Click the "Self Registration" link in the toolbar menu.
5. Search "Renison Intercultural Training" in the list of course options and click the link.
6. Click the "Register" button on the next page. Click the "Submit" button on the next page. Click the "Finish" button on the next page.
7. Click "Go to course offering Renison Intercultural Training".
8. Click the "Access the Renison Intercultural Training" button on the homepage and begin the training!

