

POSITION TITLE:	Summer Programs Peer Leader
DEPARTMENT:	Student Experience and Housing
REPORTS TO:	Assistant Director, Student Experience and Housing
EFFECTIVE DATE:	May 25 – September 2, 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 a Summer Programs Peer Leader may be the right fit for you!

Renison Student Experience and Housing is recruiting two (2) senior Waterloo students to serve as a Short-term Programs Peer Leader from late May to the beginning of September 2023. These student staff will work approximately 20-25 hours per week both in person and virtually. Hours will vary depending on times when students are not in class, including mornings, afternoons, evenings, and weekends. These positions are ideal for students who are on a study break or are enrolled in only one or two courses part-time.

Throughout June, July, and August, the Renison English Language Institute (Renison ELI) offers the [English for Success \(EFS\)](#) and Robotics – Summer English Immersion Program (RoboSEIP). These are short-term summer programs for students wanting to improve their presentation and communication skills in an English immersion environment. The programs include students between the ages of 14-17 as well as cohorts that are 18+. The students are encouraged to practice their English outside of the classroom by living in residence and by taking part in programmed recreational activities on and away from campus. Every day of the week there is a social event for the students to have fun, practice English, and experience life in Canada.

As a Summer Programs 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 these activities, you will demonstrate a warm, welcoming attitude for every student. You will need to feel comfortable to communicate 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 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 accountable to the Assistant Director, Student Experience and Housing but receives operational guidance from members of the Student Experience and Housing team, including a Student Experience Coordinator, Student Experience Specialist, Student Advisor, and Programs Assistants.

NATURE & SCOPE

The position of Summer Programs Peer Leader requires the ability to provide guidance and support to our students related to their cultural adjustment to Canadian life, while also helping them have a positive and memorable experience during their studies.

- Interpersonal Contacts: this position requires the incumbent to work collaboratively with a team of other Peer Leaders, Student Experience Coordinator, Student Experience Specialist, Student Advisor, and the Assistant Director, Student Experience and 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 event programming with students in our language programs, including bus trips to destinations around Southwestern Ontario. 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. The Peer Leaders will be providing guidance and support for minors between the ages of 14-18.
- 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 events and workshops, etc.).
- Build prosocial relationships with students to identify issues/challenges they may be facing.

Social/Cultural Student Development Programming

- Support the coordination and delivery of social programming to support students in their transition to Waterloo, and work with the Student Experience Coordinator to determine appropriate event programming that matches students' needs and interests.
- Attend bus trips and serve as a chaperone for off-campus social events (e.g. Uptown Waterloo, Canada's Wonderland, Niagara Falls, etc.).
- Provide support in the coordination and leadership of a volunteer program, called Peer Helpers, consisting of English speakers who attend classes and join in occasional events to help students practice their English and experience life in Canada.

Documentation, Administration, and Communication

- Work with the Student Experience Coordinator to document relevant programming approaches, logistics, event/program attendance, and outcomes.
- Utilize social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, WeChat, WhatsApp, LINE, KakaoTalk) on a daily basis 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.
- Attend any events and team meetings scheduled by the Student Experience Coordinator.

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, LINE, 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.
- Knowledgeable about the first-year international student experience; awareness of the needs of first-year international students and English Language Learners.
- 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.
- Must have passed a vulnerable sector check with the police. Certificates older than 6 months before the start of the contract will not be accepted.
- Must hold a valid Standard First Aid and CPR AED Certificate.
- 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, a Summer Programs Peer Leader will be compensated \$16.00 per hour, in addition to vacation pay, by Renison University College, and will work approximately 20-25 hours per week. For any off-campus 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, in addition to meal per diems during trips.

POLICIES OF RENISON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Summer Programs 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 Coordinator 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. Some shifts may be as little as one (1) hour, or you may be expected to host a bus trip event that could last as long as 12 hours in duration.

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.