



**University Students' Council and *The University of Western Ontario***  
***Residence Head Soph:***  
**POSITION DESCRIPTION**



**EFFECTIVE:** November 2016

**SUPERSEDES:** November 2015

**AUTHORITY:** Orientation Planning Committee (OPC)

**RATIFIED BY:** Orientation Planning Committee (OPC)

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**1.00 POSITION TITLE: RESIDENCE HEAD SOPH**

**2.00 POSITION OVERVIEW:**

- (1) A Residence Head Soph is responsible for providing academic and social support through transitional programs with help from their Soph team, affiliated Residents' Council, and the Residence Life Management Team for first-year students living in residence during Orientation Week and throughout the academic year.

**3.00 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- (1) Select and oversee Residence Programming Assistants and members of their Residence's Soph Team in accordance with Orientation Operations Committee guidelines.
- (2) Adhere to any Orientation Operations Committee, Western, Housing, and USC policies and decisions that relate to their Soph team's activities.
- (3) Liaise with the Orientation Coordinator, Residence Orientation Coordinator, and Coordinator, Orientation Initiatives to incorporate their Soph Team's programming into Orientation Week.
- (4) Maintain consistent communication with their respective Residence Manager, the Residence Orientation Coordinator, and the Coordinator Orientation Initiatives throughout their term.
- (5) Act as the main link between their Soph Team and their respective Residents' Council and the Orientation Operations Committee.
- (6) Develop detailed programming proposals for all Orientation-related initiatives to be submitted to the Residence Orientation Coordinator and the Orientation Operations Committee for approval.
- (7) Facilitate the budget planning process in collaboration with the Office of Residence Education and Programs and/or their Residents' Council's Vice-President Finance (or equivalent) for all Orientation-related initiatives for review by the Orientation Operations Committee.



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- (8) Liaise with other Faculty, Residence, OC, and Affiliate Head Sophs to collaborate on various Orientation-related projects throughout their term.
- (9) Liaise with the Charity Orientation Coordinator to collaborate on projects related to the Orientation Program's charitable campaigns.
- (10) Work with the other residences and faculties, residents' councils, members of Western administration, and Orientation Operations Committee stakeholders to execute Soph Team recognition initiatives during Orientation Week and throughout the year.
- (11) Organize, design, and procure Soph Team and First Year Student merchandise in accordance with Orientation Operations Committee guidelines.
- (12) Attend any training sessions during their term as required by the Orientation Operations Committee and Residence Life Management Team.
- (13) Co-chair monthly All Soph meetings with their Faculty Head Soph partner and the Academic Leadership Programmer in their building.
- (14) Attend bi-monthly Residence Head Soph Roundtable meetings.
- (15) Address strategies to maintain student leader persistence and participation in the building at monthly "Cabinet Meetings" with their building's ALP, APC, Council President, and Residence Manager.
- (16) Review Residence Soph activity logs monthly.
- (17) Sign and adhere to an Orientation Volunteer contract, a Residence-specific Orientation contract, Guaranteed bed contract, and any other contracts as required by the Orientation Operations Committee and Housing.
- (18) Act as a member of their affiliated Residents' Council throughout the academic year, where required.

**4.00 QUALIFICATIONS:**

- (1) A Residence Head Soph must live in residence for the duration of the academic year.
- (2) A Residence Head Soph must be dutifully enrolled as an undergraduate student registered at Western University for the 2017/18 & 2018/19 academic year.
- (3) A Residence Head Soph must attain a 65% academic average in their course marks in the school year ending in April, 2018.



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- i. Summer and intersession courses do not count towards the calculation of this average.
- (4) A Residence Head Soph should value differences in gender, culture, sexual identity, religious beliefs, spirituality, among others, and demonstrate a willingness to create fair and accessible environments.
- (5) A Residence Head Soph will act as project manager for all Soph Team initiatives. Strong organizational skills are paramount.
- (6) The Residence Head Soph should have effective group facilitation and team building skills.
- (7) The nature of the role requires a Head Soph to be flexible and to be able to critically assess problems that may arise. Problem solving skills are very important to overall success in the role.
- (8) The Residence Head Soph should have some financial literacy skills and experience with creating budgets.

**5.00 TIME COMMITMENT:**

- (1) A Residence Head Soph's term shall begin in November, 2017, upon selection for the position, and end on the last day of the 2018/19 academic year. A Head Soph must be mindful that they will remain a role model for many students beyond the term of their position.
- (2) During the first section of the term (*November – May*), a Residence Head Soph will be required to work approximately 10-15 hours a week. Hours are flexible to fit around classes and other commitments. More hours may be required at peak times, while fewer may be required at times like the examination period. Typical responsibilities include:
  - i. Reading and marking Soph applications
  - ii. Coordinating and conducting Soph interviews
  - iii. Attending additional Orientation training
  - iv. Organizing and preparing Soph Team details for Spring Rally
- (3) During the summer (*May – September*), a Head Soph will likely be working 15-20 hours per week. Most of this work will consist of coordinating the activities of their Soph team and maintaining contact with the Residence Manager, Residence



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Orientation Coordinator, Orientation Operations Committee, and Coordinator Orientation Initiatives. Typical responsibilities include:

- i. Coordinating Orientation Week events and team activities
  - ii. Coordinating the Soph Team Retreat weekend in May/June
  - iii. Initiating planning meetings with the Residence Manager and/or Residence Orientation Coordinator to provide regular program updates
  - iv. Leading regular and ongoing Leadership Team meetings, in person, or online, with PAs who may be long distance.
  - v. Discuss Soph floor placements with the Residence Manager.
- (4) Residence Head Sophs will be required to return to London for the Learning and Development Conference prior to the start of Orientation Week. They are also required to be present for the duration of Orientation Week.
- (5) Following Orientation Week, Head Sophs will be required to assist their Residents' Council with academic and social programming and to provide ongoing transitional support to the first year students in their residence.

#### **6.00 TRAINING/SUPPORT:**

- (1) Residence Head Sophs will be required to attend various mandatory Head Soph and Soph training sessions throughout their term as required by the Orientation Operations Committee and Housing. This typically includes:
- i. Several training sessions prior to the end of the academic year,
  - ii. Spring Soph Orientation in March,
  - iii. Leadership Team Retreat weekend in May
  - iv. Soph Retreat weekend in May/June
  - v. Housing's Learning & Development Conference in August,
  - vi. September Head Soph Training
  - vii. September Soph Training



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#### **7.00 LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- (1) Throughout their term, a Residence Head Soph will have the opportunity to strengthen various aspects of their leadership, critical thinking, project management, and communication skills.
- (2) The Residence Head Soph will learn how to develop effective program and event planning skills. Additionally, the Head Soph will strengthen their facilitation skills so as to enable peers' learning and personal development.
- (3) The Head Soph must demonstrate responsibility for their actions and learn how to interpret the effect their decisions and actions may have on others.

#### **8.00 COMMUNITY IMPACT:**

- (1) If successful, a Residence Head Soph will help execute an Orientation Week that facilitates a positive transition for all first year students to Western University and provides students with the academic support they may need to be successful during their undergraduate term.
- (2) Residence Head Sophs will also enhance the Western community by promoting a sense of involvement and belonging among the first year students in their residence.

#### **9.00 SUPERVISION:**

- (1) Residence Head Sophs report to their Residence Manager.
- (2) The Residence Orientation Coordinator and the Coordinator, Orientation Initiatives are indirect supervisors.
- (3) The Residence Head Soph is expected to take direction from their respective Residents' Council President, the Residence Life Management Team, the Assistant Director of Residence Engagement, the Orientation Operations Committee, and the Orientation Coordinator.