



**StudyGroup**

EDUCATION SPECIALISTS WORLDWIDE

# Homestay Guidelines

FOR STUDENTS

[www.studygroup.com](http://www.studygroup.com)



## Welcome

Each year thousands of students complete language or academic programmes with Study Group Australia and New Zealand. For many of you, your homestay experience is your first impression of Australia/New Zealand. Our aim is to make sure that this experience is a positive one.

We value our students and our homestays very highly and believe that your accommodation is just as important as your academic course. We try to match you with the right homestay host so that you can enjoy each other's company and also have the chance to learn about similarities and differences in culture and lifestyle.

Each campus has dedicated staff who will help you with any concerns you have. The person responsible for homestay accommodation in your location is your local **Homestay Coordinator**.

We are here to help you have a positive experience while you are studying with us in Australia/New Zealand.



## The first 48 hours

The first 48 hours are very important and will have a lasting impression. Here are some ideas that may reduce 'culture shock' and help you to feel comfortable as soon as possible:

- > talk to your hosts, show an interest, spend time getting to know them
- > use a phone card to phone home, as your family and friends will be anxiously waiting to hear from you
- > bring a small gift for your host. It is a nice thing to do and can be a topic of conversation if it is something that is from your home country.

## Accommodation

Your hosts will provide you with:

- > a standard sized bed, bedside table and lamp
- > adequate wardrobe and drawer space, a table or desk, and a chair for private study
- > sheets, towels and pillow cases. (These should be changed every week).

You may supply your own linen if you wish, however you are not expected to.

Your bedroom will be secure enough for you to leave your valuables there.

You are responsible for keeping your bedroom clean and tidy. It should remain in the same condition as when you moved in.

Your host is responsible for:

- > providing you with the necessary equipment to clean your room (vacuum cleaner, duster etc).
- > keeping your room adequately heated and cooled. Hosts understand the needs of overseas students, who may not be acclimatised to our weather and may require more heating or cooling than usual. Please ask for a fan or heater if you need one.

Please note: For safety reasons smoking is not allowed indoors.

We try to make sure that students of the same nationality are not together in the same homestay. This is not always possible, though.



## **Bathroom, toilet, laundry**

You will have sufficient hot water for a bath or shower once a day. Australia and New Zealand are very dry countries, so try not to use too much water. Bathroom habits vary from household to household as well as country to country. Your hosts will explain the house rules about bathing and washing. They will also explain the normal arrangements for the disposal of sanitary towels/tampons and the fact that toilet paper should be flushed away. You should leave the bathroom and toilet as clean as when you entered.

Your laundry may be included with the host's own laundry on a weekly basis, or you may like to do your own laundry. You can talk to your hosts and decide on the most suitable arrangement. If you prefer to do your own laundry, please let your hosts know so they can show you how to use the facilities.

## **Telephone and Internet**

All our registered homestays are required to have a land line telephone and are asked to assist students in making a reverse charge call to their family within four hours of arrival (time zone permitting) or to use pre-paid phone cards, which can be bought at the campus.

In many countries local calls are free and students may not be aware that this is not the case in Australia. In New Zealand local calls are only free from a land line. To ensure that there are no misunderstandings about the use of telephones, students should not use these facilities without permission. Study Group advises students that they should only receive calls after 7am weekdays, 9am weekends and before 10pm – except by prior arrangement.

Most hosts have internet facilities, however it is reasonable for you to be requested to pay for what you use. You may also like to consider mobile broadband, there are many good plans to suit your needs.



## Meals

We want our students to stay healthy and eat properly – government health guidelines suggest that a well-balanced diet should include at least one item from each of the following food groups every day:

- > bread, rice, pasta or cereals
- > milk, cheese, yoghurt, butter or margarine
- > fresh fruit and vegetables
- > meat, fish, eggs, lentils or nuts and beans

Your hosts will give you:

- > a nutritious breakfast every day - you might need to organise/cook this yourself.
- > a healthy, cooked, evening meal including meat, poultry or fish (individual arrangements are made for students with special dietary requirements).
- > In some circumstances lunch may be provided.

Special food needs will be confirmed on placement.

Your hosts are not required to provide foreign food; however they will be sensitive to your needs, conscience and religious beliefs. For example, in the month of Ramadan, Muslims must not eat between sunrise and sunset and special arrangements should be made at this time. **Please tell your hosts if you have any problems with the food they give you, or if you require a special diet.**

We recommend that you try to have a conversation with your hosts when you eat your evening meal. If you do this every day, your English will improve more quickly.

Attendance at the College is compulsory for all students. Your host will make sure breakfast is available early enough so that you are not late for class. Australian and New Zealand meal times are usually earlier than in other countries and you are expected to attend meals on time or telephone if you are going to be late.



## Sharing home life

Study Group students should live as full members of the home. You will be sharing the same meals and living rooms as the host(s), and they will try to make you feel comfortable. Your hosts will treat you as a member of their own household and explain their house rules, Australian customs and habits to you.

Try to show interest in your hosts and speak to them in English as often as you can.

Always tell your host where you are going and when you will be back. If you are late or your plans change, you should telephone and explain. If you are over 18, more flexibility will be given to you. You are expected to adapt to living in an Australian / New Zealand home and not treat your host as if you were staying in a hotel.

There should be someone at home at all reasonable times when you are expected to return. If there is no one home, you should have a key or another way that you can enter the house.

We recommend that the hosts give a house key to all students over 18 and – at your host's discretion – all students over 16. It is always a good idea to ask for your host's mobile telephone number because you might need to contact them. You should also give your mobile telephone number to your hosts.

## Students Under 18

If you are under 18, you are expected to return to your homestay at the end of your day. For many students, this will be your first time away from home as well as your first experience in a foreign country. Many things will be very different and a bit worrying. Your hosts will understand this and will make a special effort to make you feel welcome in their home. Students under the age of 18 must have special permission from the College or Caregiver if they wish



to take a holiday or spend a weekend away from the homestay. You must also tell your host if you are going to spend days away from home.

### **Requirements of your homestay host**

All homestays must follow government rules and requirements for hosting students. One of the requirements is that they must have a Criminal Record/ Working-with-Children check. (All members of the household who are aged 18 or over are checked.)

### **Accident or illness**

If you are sick or have an accident, your hosts will contact a doctor (theirs or yours) or the nearest Accident and Emergency department, as appropriate. If you are under 18 and have a Caregiver, this person will also be contacted as soon as possible.

It is expected that students pay their own medical expenses. Hosts are not required to pay these expenses and will not be reimbursed by the College for doing so. (Please note: only Student Visa Holders have compulsory medical insurance). International students are required to purchase Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) as a condition of their visa. If you have recently arrived you may not have collected your OSHC card, but will be covered. You should take your OSHC card with you when seeking medical services. You can claim your refund online at: [www.oshcworldcare.com.au](http://www.oshcworldcare.com.au) and you will receive back approximately 80% of the fee paid.

If you are going to be absent because you are sick or have had an accident, you must tell the Administration staff at your College by 9.00am on each day you are away from College. Please remember that you must have a doctor's certificate if you are absent from the College.



## **Arrivals**

Your host will be at home to greet you on the day you arrive.

On arrival, you will either be brought to your host from the airport by Study Group, a private contractor or you will make your own way. Study Group will inform your host of the approximate time of arrival. If your friend or relatives are at the airport, they should take you straight to your homestay as your host will be waiting for you. If you have not arrived or haven't contacted your host within three hours of your expected arrival, the college will be contacted.

## **Getting to the College**

On the first day of your course, a member of the household should come with you to the College – either in their own vehicle or by public transport – or show you precisely how to get to the College in time for your first class (Monday to Friday). Your hosts will also help you with using public transport for the rest of your stay. Please let your host know if you need further help. It is very important that you do not ride on public transport without a valid ticket. If you do so you may incur a very high fine.

## **Authority**

Hosts do not accept any other 'authority' (e.g. student, agent, friend etc.) without first checking with the College.

## **Emergencies**

In case of emergency, please phone your host or Caregiver or your Homestay Coordinator. Also, all campuses have a 24-hour emergency number that you can ring.

## **Insurance**

It is advisable that you have some form of insurance that will cover you and your belongings while you are in Australia. If you haven't already arranged this before travelling, please talk to the homestay co-ordinator at your campus who will be able to advise you.



## Interpreter Service

Worldcare also provide a 24 hour, seven day a week interpreter service for Homestay hosts and students with Worldcare OSHC. Just call 1800 814 781.

## Student time keeping

There are recommended homecoming times for all students under 18:

Age	16+ years	Under 16
Sunday - Thursday	9.00pm	7.30pm
Friday - Saturday	10.30pm	9.00pm

Times may vary when students are attending an activity at the school.

## Grievance procedures

If you have a problem with your host, it can often be because of a small misunderstanding (language or cultural). Study Group encourages you to sit down with your hosts and try to work out a solution to these minor problems. If you still feel there is a problem, please contact your campus Homestay Coordinator, who will speak with both you and your host and try to provide a suitable solution. If you are still not happy, you can talk to the Campus Director.

## Student Holidays

If you wish to take holidays of one week or more away from your home, you should tell your hosts and also the College. You will have to pay a room-holding fee to the College. You do not have to pay full board.

## Extending your stay

If you wish to extend your time in homestay this must be done with the Homestay Coordinator at the College. Under no circumstances are you to make private arrangements with your host.



## **Student Code of Conduct and Standards**

### **Ethical Standards**

Homestay students:

- > must be aware of the accepted Homestay Code of Behaviour.
- > should communicate in an honest and respectful way and form positive relationships with hosts. (Disguising a problem to 'save face' may not be the best way to deal with that problem.)
- > should be aware of acceptable levels of hospitality and not take advantage of the generosity offered by hosts.
- > must take responsibility for their own behaviour and needs.

### **Homestay Code of Behaviour**

Homestay students are expected to:

- > provide notice if leaving their homestay (as per Study Group refund policies)
- > be financially independent; this includes paying all fees in accordance with the homestay programs policy such as placement fees and homestay reimbursement fees. You must meet all personal expenses for travel, entertainment, telephone calls, medical expenses and other personal, incidental costs
- > respect and follow guidelines/rules for living in the household. This may include rules such as no smoking, no alcohol, time spent showering and other water usage, and leaving bathroom tidy after use
- > be considerate and not make too much noise
- > ask hosts before inviting friends over
- > if under 18, ask your own parents or Caregiver to contact your homestay host and give permission for any late nights or overnight stays
- > advise your homestay host about social activities and when you will be home for meals.



- > pay for any damage to household property (if responsible for the damage)
- > keep all valuables, money, passport and airline tickets in a safe place
- > attend an orientation with the Homestay Coordinator, where required
- > behave appropriately and participate in reasonable household activities
- > respect cultural differences and beliefs of the homestay host. These may differ from your own
- > communicate with your homestay host every day. You should be open about your needs/wants, e.g. if you are still hungry after meals or you don't like some foods or you want to make a late night phone call.
- > advise the Homestay Coordinator immediately if you have any health or welfare worries about your homestay
- > follow the guidelines in the "Homestay Information Booklet", orientation for homestay students and other advice given about the homestay program
- > follow the laws of Australia. For example, wear bicycle helmets, respect legal age of drinking, smoking etc.

Should students not comply with the Code of Behaviour Study Group reserves the right to remove the student from the homestay.

## **Remember**

If you have any problems, please contact your campus Homestay Coordinator without delay. They are there to help you.



## **Study Group Privacy Policy in relation to Homestay**

1. When you submit an enquiry or application to study with us, Study Group gathers and stores the information you provide. We are happy to give you a copy of this information, on request.
2. We collect information about our students for a variety of purposes. This may be to:
  - > advise our agents and students about the details of their host
  - > help us improve and personalise our services to you, our hosts and agents.
3. Only authorised employees, your host and subcontractors can have access to information you give us. We will not disclose information about you to any other parties without your consent. Exception: we may disclose or access your information if required to do so by law or any other government body.
4. We aim to keep your personal information secure. Study Group uses the highest standards of encryption for online transactions for sensitive data such as bank account details. Our secure server is authenticated. However, no data transmission over the Internet can be guaranteed totally secure. As a result, we cannot promise the security of any information that you send us, and you do so at your own risk.
5. We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time. If we make changes, we will post an announcement on our websites.



## Code of Practice

### Australia

Study Group Australia is bound by the Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007. Copies of the code are available from the Australian Government web site: [www.aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/default.htm](http://www.aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/default.htm)

### New Zealand

Taylor's College and Embassy CES has agreed to observe and be bound by the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students published by the Minister of Education. Copies of the Code are available from this Institution or from the NZ Ministry of Education web site: [www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/international)



## **A summary of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students**

The Code sets standards for educational providers to ensure that:

- > high professional standards are maintained
- > the recruitment of international students is undertaken in an ethical and responsible manner
- > information supplied to international students is comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date
- > students are provided with information prior to entering into any commitments
- > contractual dealings with international students are conducted in an ethical and responsible manner
- > the particular needs of international students are recognised
- > international students under the age of 18 are in safe accommodation
- > all providers have fair and equitable internal procedures for the resolution of international student grievances

Full details of what is covered can be found in the Code itself. The Code also establishes the International Education Appeal Authority and the Review Panel to receive and adjudicate on student complaints.

### **How can I contact the IEAA?**

You can write to the IEAA at:

The International Education Appeal Authority,

Private Bag 47-911, Ponsonby

Auckland, New Zealand

E: [info.ieaa@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:info.ieaa@minedu.govt.nz)

## Contact us

International Admissions Centre

Level 8, 97-99 Bathurst Street

Sydney NSW 2000, Australia

T: +61 2 8263 1888

F: +61 2 9267 0531

Provider: Study Group Pty Limited CRICOS Provider Codes: 01963G (WA), 01755D (QLD), 01682E (NSW)

Provider: Taylors Institute of Advanced Studies CRICOS Provider Codes: 01781B (NSW), 01160J (VIC)

Provider: Charles Sturt University CRICOS Provider Codes: 00005F (NSW), 02597E (QLD), 01947G (VIC)

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