

Hosting Students from Overseas

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1. KEY INFORMATION

This handbook is designed to be a guide on what you can expect when hosting overseas students and what is expected of you as a host family. As a UKGuardianship (UKG) host family, you are providing a very important service to our clients. As well as representing UKG, you will play a large part in ensuring the students have an enjoyable time in the UK, in a safe and supportive environment.

You will be visited by a UKG staff member, who will be looking for warm, comfortable, safe and hygienic conditions conducive to study and relaxation. We rely on your continued support to enable us to deliver (and continue delivering) a high level of service - you are an essential partner and we very much appreciate your input. The role of a host family and relationship with students can be a delicate one on both sides with a responsibility on both parties to understand and respect some cultural differences.

UKG is AEGIS accredited (the Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) and we have a duty to follow their guidelines in order to maintain the highest standards of care for students. We expect our host families to also follow AEGIS guidelines, as presented in this handbook.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding anything mentioned below, please get in touch with us.

• ABOUT UKG

Founded in 2002, UKG offers unique and bespoke tailored services in all aspects of student guardianship and independent education. Our main aim is ensuring all students have a safe and enjoyable time in the UK, while reaching their full academic potential.

Address: 2 Rusper Close, London, HA7 4QD, United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 20 8432 0861 (Monday to Friday: 09:30 – 17:30)
Emergency Telephone: +44 7834 465 463 (out of office hours)
Email: service@ukguardianship.com

2. INTRODUCTION TO HOSTING STUDENTS FROM OVERSEAS

UKG have a number of host families with whom we place our students when schools are closed for half terms and exeat weekends. We will match you as closely as possible to the student in terms of the student's requirements and interests. We try, where possible, to place students in the same host family for all their stays in order to provide consistency, but changes can occur.

Your visitor will normally be attending a private boarding school in the UK. During half terms and exeat weekends, the boarding houses close giving staff and students a break, and the students are required to have alternative accommodation arrangements. Parents often choose host family accommodation because it offers safety, a 'home away from home' in a family atmosphere, where students can practice their English, learn about another culture, and be treated as one of the family.

When your student first arrives at your home it is therefore important to be welcoming and understanding, as staying in an unfamiliar environment can be an anxious time for a young person whose family lives in another country. Although students will sometimes spend time in their room working or playing, access to your living areas to watch TV, chat with your family or relax is invaluable.

• LANGUAGE

Most students are here in the UK to study for exams, such as GCSEs and A-Levels, in English, and their spoken English language is excellent. However, this is not always the case, and patience and understanding is required if students have a low level of English.

• CULTURE

Going to a new country and being part of a new culture can be confusing and difficult for some students. They will be used to certain British customs which they have experienced at school; however, it may be their first time living in a British home so please be patient and explain various customs if necessary.

The English love their pets, but this is not often shared by people from China and the Far East. Sometimes the students have had very little contact with any dogs or cats and consider them unhygienic and frightening. Please be sensitive to this, particularly when the student first arrives.

• DAY STUDENTS

Although most students live in boarding schools, on occasion we may ask you to host a day student. These are students who attend school in the UK but do not board at the school. The student will go to school every day and return to your house every evening. The same level of care is expected from the host family for long-term day school students as short-term boarding students.

3. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A HOST FAMILY

• STUDENT'S GUARDIAN

During the times that you are hosting, your responsibilities are to protect, care for and provide food and lodging for your student on a day-to-day basis. The overall guardianship responsibility remains with UKG, whom you should contact whenever a situation arises in which you are uncertain as to the appropriate action to take. Untoward occurrences, such as hospitalisation, unexplained student absences or other situations affecting student safety, should be reported to UKG immediately.

• SCHOOL CONTACT

You will not normally be expected to instigate contact with a student's school or to attend school occasions, which is a role undertaken by UKG. If there was a need for the host to contact or visit the school, it would be at the instigation of UKG and with the agreement of the host.

• HOST FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

UKG requires the following documents from host families before we can place any students with you:

- 2 photo IDs
- 2 references (one personal, one professional from people who have known you for over 2 years)
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate
- Child Protection certificate (we will send you a link to a free online course)
- Gas safe certificate
- Insurance certificate(s)

We will also need to check that you have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

We will visit you each year to ensure high standards are maintained. If there are any changes to the house, student facilities or household make up, it is your responsibility to let us know as soon as possible.

4. WHAT A STUDENT CAN EXPECT FROM YOU

• BEDROOM

Each student should have his or her own room or share with someone of a similar age and of the same sex. If students are sharing a room, please introduce them, remind them to be respectful of each other and their belongings and ensure that they understand that they can approach you with any issues.

UKG must be made aware of all students' sleeping arrangements in your house, so please confirm these to us in advance, particularly if there are students from alternative organisations.

AEGIS guidelines suggest a maximum total of three students in a host family at any one time. so if we are not aware of any others you have booked in, please inform us when overall numbers will be greater than three.

The students need to have:

1. A comfortable bed.
2. Clean, warm bedding and a bath towel (for longer-term students these should be changed weekly).
3. Storage area to put their belongings.
4. A table/desk and chair with good lighting for working, ideally in their bedroom.

• BATHROOM

Most students are used to taking daily showers. Discuss suitable times for them to use the bathroom, and make sure your student knows how to use the shower (e.g. keeping the shower curtain inside!), toilet facilities, and where to put any rubbish. Also, if appropriate, make sure you explain the arrangements for disposing of sanitary items.

You may wish to suggest a maximum time for a shower – e.g., 10 minutes, as at home they are often used to unlimited hot water. Ask them to leave the bathroom clean and tidy. Please inform the student of any guidelines you may have to ensure privacy for the student and members of your family.

• MEALS

Talk to your student about meals, as food is probably the **BIGGEST** area of comment by students! Food in schools; nowadays, is of a good standard, plentiful, varied and nutritionally balanced. That said, although they may not express it, good home-cooked food is hugely appreciated!

Host families will have been informed of any food allergies and in some cases, of dislikes. This means hosts can pre-plan food menus, which in turn allows some purchasing of food in advance. We suggest that you also speak to the student on their arrival about mealtimes and the types of food that they particularly like. Students generally require full board accommodation, and as a guide will expect the following:

- **Breakfast** - At school, a cooked breakfast will be available daily, so the offer by a host of an egg and/or bacon (perhaps a bacon sandwich) and or baked beans is usually appreciated. As an alternative, offer some combination of fruit, yogurt, cereal, toast and muffins. Teenage students are often ready for a lie-in in the mornings and therefore a late breakfast is common.
- **Lunch** - At school, lunch is the main meal of the day. That said, for most UK households, lunch is a lighter meal. A compromise between these two is for a lunch such as jacket potato with cheese, pizza with salad,

BLT, pasta with sauce, hotdogs or soup and bread. When a sandwich is offered, it should have plenty of fillings with perhaps salad and crisps on the side.

Fruit, cake or something sweet should also be available for dessert.

• **Dinner** - Dinner should ideally be taken with the family, and consist of at least two courses, e.g. a main course of chicken, fish or red meat with vegetables and a dessert. Popular main courses would include roast chicken with potatoes and vegetables, pork in a jar of Chinese-style sauce with rice or pasta, stir-fried vegetables with noodles and prawns, lasagne with salad and garlic bread, fish fillets with chips and peas, bangers and mash with vegetables or a BBQ. Dessert might be a fruit pie or crumble, fresh fruit salad and ice cream, choc-ices, cake or jam doughnuts with custard. If you are lucky, the student may even offer to cook a meal for your family one day!

• **Snacks** - Students should not expect to help themselves and 'snack' in between meals, but encourage them to ask. If hungry (teenagers are often growing fast!), something like biscuit or cake or some fruit should be available. A hot drink and a biscuit before going to bed would be appreciated, especially if the dinner is early.

Sometimes, the student's table manners cause a little concern. Remember, for some of them, they have only just become accustomed to using a knife and fork (they may have only used chopsticks before). Please respect this difficulty and we would also ask you to appreciate that slurping food, talking with mouth full etc. is broadly common and acceptable in China, but at the same time try to offer some sensitive guidance if you feel it is necessary. The Student Handbook explains some typical British customs and manners including not leaving the table until everyone has finished and helping to carry the plates to the kitchen at the end of the meal.

Please remember to discuss meal times with the student on arrival so they know what time they need to be home/available. Students are told to give at least 1 day's notice if they wish to miss a meal and eat elsewhere.

• INTERNET ACCESS

Students now expect access to an internet connection, preferably wireless. All schools provide this but do limit use and monitor it carefully. The internet should only be used for academic work and also to stay in touch with their family and friends during the holiday period.

Unrestricted Access - There is increasing concern about the dangers to young people of free and unrestricted access to the Internet without appropriate controls. We would advise hosts to limit access in the best interests of the student. For example, wireless Internet could be switched off overnight if necessary.

Students are told not to download or stream large files, such as films, games and music, as this can lead to problems with your normal access but it can be difficult to monitor this. Host families should feel free to switch off the internet if it is being used excessively or at unsociable hours.

Students should not need to use your telephone landline, although some have pre-payment cards to ring home to their parents. They should always ask for your permission.

• LAUNDRY

Particularly over a half term, students will have some laundry. Please let your student know where they can put their laundry and the days that you use your machine.

5. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE STUDENT

• STUDENT GUIDELINES

Students have guidelines on staying in a host family, and although they are paying guests and don't have particular duties or chores, they are expected to be polite and courteous, and you should give them friendly guidance on this if required. It is likely that your student will have a lot of school work and possibly revision to do during the holiday period, so they may spend more time in their bedroom than you would expect.

Please also be aware of cultural and background differences; for example, most Chinese live in modern apartments in big cities, sometimes with maids; they normally prefer to play computer games rather than walk in the countryside!

• CURFEWS

If your student goes out, you should always know their plans, return times and exchange telephone numbers. Students are told to always contact their hosts if there is a change to plans.

UKG has guidelines on times that students need to be home by.

- **15 and under: Must be accompanied by an adult member of host family**
- **16 and 17: Must be home by 10pm at the latest**
- **18 and over: Must be home by 11pm at the latest**

• NOT ALLOWED!

Staying away overnight is forbidden unless specific permission has been given in advance by UKG, normally with the consent of the student's own parents.

Friends of students are not allowed to stay with you unless UKG has approved temporary guardianship in advance. This is for legal and insurance reasons.

Students are not allowed to smoke and students over the age of 18 may only drink alcohol with your express permission and under your supervision. If you have any other concerns please contact us immediately.

6. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM UKG

• COMMUNICATIONS

Arrangements regarding the student, school and transfer times will be confirmed to you in writing by email prior to arrival. We will visit your house each year and you can contact UKG at any time should you have any queries or concerns.

• SUPPORT

If you have any questions or concerns, you can ring office on 020 8432 0861 (office hours are 09:30 to 17:30) or send an email to service@ukguardianship.com.

In the case of emergencies, which should only be escalated when a situation arises that needs to be resolved prior to the next working day, please phone **07834 465 463**. This service is available 24 hours per day.

• PAYMENT

We have a standard rate per night, which will be clarified with you at the time of booking. Normally we are able to confirm in advance, and in writing, the amount you will be paid for the student's stay. UKG will also pay your mileage if you collect the student from school.

Should there be a cancellation, we will do our best to find another student but, if not, and we are unable to provide you enough notice (7 days) we will pay for the booking, for up to 7 nights.

UKG will pay all the service payments on behalf of the student. The host family will under no circumstances discuss with the student, or the student's parents, friends or classmates, the lodging fees set with UKG without prior consultation with UKG. If a host family violates the rule, UKG reserves the right not to arrange further bookings with the host family.

Work completed before the end of month should be settled with an invoice provided on or before the 5th of the following month and UKG will pay the service payment by bank transfer on the 10th. If the invoice is not correct or not received, UKG will make the payment the following month given an invoice is received. For an invoice template, please kindly check the last page of this handbook.

• LEGAL CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

Please note that due to the guardianship contractual arrangements between UKG and you the host family, as well as our contract with the students and their parents, ALL ARRANGEMENTS must be made and confirmed through the UKG Head Office. It is essential that you contact us if any of our students contact you directly for two reasons - if we do not know about the arrangement, then we simply cannot pay you; also, the responsibility of guardianship would fall to you and this is very different to being simply a host family where we support you.

• COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Informal Complaints

Many complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. You can speak to any member of staff about your complaint, no matter how small.

If you make an informal complaint:

1. It will be acknowledged immediately (if made in person or over the phone), or within 1 working day if made via email (please remember that the office is open Monday to Friday, 09:30 – 17:30).
2. We may ask you further questions, to repeat and clarify information and/or to provide evidence (photos, for example) to support your complaint.
3. We will tell you when and how you will get an outcome (result)– this will be within 2 working days.
4. We may give you an 'action plan' to tell you what will happen next.
5. You will be asked to confirm if you are happy with the solution.
6. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint

If you are still unhappy, you can make a formal complaint.

To make a formal complaint:

1. Please request a Complaint Form from us, complete the form and return it to us.
2. We will send you written confirmation that your complaint has been received within 3 working days.
3. We may invite you for a meeting so we can discuss the issue.
4. We will respond to you via email or in writing within 10 working days.
5. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint – Second Stage

If you are still unhappy, you can make a Second Stage formal complaint.

To make a second stage formal complaint:

1. Please write and post a letter directly to the Office Manager or the Managing Director.
2. Please write as much detail as possible. Include names and dates if applicable and how you want your complaint to be resolved.
3. We will write or email you within 10 working days to confirm we have received it. If you do not receive an email or letter within 10 working days, please call us to confirm we have received your complaint.
4. We may invite you to a formal meeting to discuss your case further.
5. You will receive the outcome to your complaint within 30 working days.
6. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint - Third Stage

If you are still unhappy or feel you have been treated unfairly, you can ask for help from AEGIS.

You can write to them here:

The Wheelhouse, Bond's Mill Estate, Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3RF

Website: www.aegisuk.net

You should write details about how you have already tried to resolve your complaint with UKG and include any supporting documents, including the written outcome of your complaint.

7. OTHER INFORMATION

• HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is your responsibility to make sure all electrical appliances are safe, particularly in the student's room. We recommend PAT testing appliances annually.

Smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide Detectors must be fitted in the house.

You should have a valid Gas Safety Certificate and send UKG a copy each time you have a new one done (annually).

Explain to the students basic fire escape routes, access to the outside doors, and the location of any necessary keys.

Please also ensure that they know to dial 999 for Police, Fire or Ambulance should any such emergency arise whilst they are staying with you.

• CONTACT DETAILS

Mobile Phone Numbers: Swap numbers with all students you are hosting, so they are known to all parties, as well as your landline and any other useful contact numbers. As host, you should at all times know where your visitor is and be able to contact him/her if required.

Update Host Details: Please note that it is also your responsibility to update UKG of any changes in your contact details or host profile, and to notify us of any changes in the household residents, such as family members, lodgers or long stay guests arriving or leaving.

• STUDENT ILLNESS

In case of student illness or accident, take the same precautions as you would with your own child. If in doubt, your first course of action should be to contact your family doctor in the usual way. The student will have been registered with the NHS by the school. If the illness more serious and/or you need to take the student to hospital, you should immediately contact the UKG office or ring the UKG emergency number: 07834 465 463. We will liaise with the parents and school on the most appropriate course of action.

• HOUSEHOLD AND CAR INSURANCE

UKG has professional liability and indemnity insurance, but host families must have household contents insurance. Standard policies include cover for accidental damage by visitors and third party liability insurance. Please inform your insurer that you will have a student visitor in your home.

Standard car insurance policies cover the holder for a minimum of third party claims whilst the car is being used for domestic, social and pleasure purposes, but not for business. If in doubt, you should consult your insurer. Please also note that we regard it as your duty to ensure the use of car seat belts when you are transferring students in your car.

• BEHAVIOUR AND ABUSE

We do not accept any abusive behaviour by staff, students, host family members or visitors (this includes unkind words, messages and actions, verbal, mental and physical abuse, taking or damaging someone else's things, violence or anger towards another person, talking to/about people in an unkind way, teasing, harassment, bullying).

Students are all given a handbook containing clear guidelines on conduct and behaviour. If you have any concerns about a student's behaviour, please inform UKG.

• MISSING STUDENT

Unexplained student absences or other situations affecting student safety should be reported to UKG immediately. Specifically, should a student we have booked in with you not arrive within 2 hours of when you are expecting them, it is your duty to advise us of this matter and we will take all necessary actions to locate the student.

8. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The safety and welfare of children, or Child Protection, means protecting children from physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. UKG is committed to the protection of all children in its care. Our aim is to ensure at all times a caring and secure environment in which students feel safe, respected and valued. We have a policy of trust, openness and clear communication between students, school and UKG staff and our host families, so that the student's welfare is the top priority.

If you have any concerns, the Child Protection Officer is Ms Wendy Hou, who can be contacted at the UKG office on 020 8432 0861.

As a host family, you will be expected to protect the students that you host and you will be required to have a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (formerly CRB disclosure) for each member of the household aged 16 or over who will be present whilst students are staying with you.

Safeguarding Policy

UKG has a legal duty of care toward young people who use our services. We have a policy and procedure in place to help protect our students from harm and for reference in case something goes wrong. All staff members are responsible for students' safeguarding.

The following staff to students ratios apply during activities organised by UKG:

1:6 (under 8s) / 1:10–15 (8–10s) / 1:15–20 (11+)

UKG would exceed these ratios if the safety and welfare of the students required it. There should be enough supervisors to deal with an emergency.

If you would like to speak to someone or report a safeguarding issue, please contact one of the officers in the school and/or UKG's Office Manager.

Useful telephone numbers: **NSPCC 0808800500** **Child-line 08001111**

UKG's Ways of Safeguarding

- Student Handbook and Child Protection Policy are given upon arrival.
- Parents have to send a consent / registration form where rules and contact details are provided.
- Under 16s are kept separate from older students in different homestay accommodation.
- UKG works with a transfer provider who only uses licensed and DBS-checked drivers.
- Regular contact with students.
- UKG only places under 18 students with families where the main host will be DBS-checked.
- UKG ensures that under 18s return by curfew times by educating the students, parents and host families. If a student does not return home by the specified time, the host must call the student and if necessary, inform UKG via the emergency number.
- On occasion, under 18 year olds may be placed in residences, but only when in groups and after ensuring they comply with our safeguarding policy (a responsible and DBS-checked adult must always be present, especially overnight). When staying in residential accommodation the ratio of residential adults to student will be at least 1-20 for students aged 12-17 and 1-15 for students under 12.
- Following safer recruitment practices and ensuring all roles involving responsibility for or those with substantial access to under 18s will have suitability checks, for example with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These roles include teaching, administration, social activities and management staff.
- UKG ensures that management and all staff are trained to a minimum safeguarding level 1 and that students are aware of safeguarding arrangement.

Code of Conduct – what UKG staff must do

DOs:

- Actions: behave appropriately (actions, dress code, language), work in an open environment, be alert for signs of abuse, maintain a safe, professional distance in all relationships with students, treat young and vulnerable people with dignity and fairly, actively prevent learners from accessing any form of inappropriate material, educate students on E-Safety.
- Accommodation: inform students in advance if you wish to clean or inspect their bedrooms. If sharing the same accommodation with under 18s, prepare a bathroom rota in order to ensure they have their own privacy.

DON'Ts:

- Actions: don't leave young persons alone if they are under your supervision, socialise with young or vulnerable learners on occasions when it does not constitute part of your normal duties (on or offline), use any visual, audio-visual or written material that exposes young people to harm (be it physical, emotional or sexual), give young or vulnerable people prescription drugs or medication (without their parent's consent), drink alcohol, smoke or use drugs when working with under 18s (nor make jokes with reference to them).

Safeguarding Procedure – Child Protection

Information which shows an adult may have:

- behaved in a way that has/may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child in such a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if working closely or regularly with a child

Types of abuse: grooming, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, controlling, coercive and threatening behaviours.

If you have a concern about any of the above, please contact one of the officers at school or UKG's Office Manager.

It is not for staff to decide if the allegations are true or not. Their role is only to listen, report to the authority as accurately as possible and allow the official procedure to then take over.

9. HOSTING TIPS

Firstly, DON'T WORRY if the students want to spend some time 'chilling out', lying in or playing computer games. School life can be very busy, and some relaxation time is often what is needed.

Please treat your student, as you would wish your own children to be treated if they were staying with a host family, and hosting will be a rewarding experience.

Most students are interested in the host family they are staying with and like to chat about experiences in their own country and here. But they are away from home and in unfamiliar surroundings, and time can pass slowly. It is good to involve them in helping you around the house, perhaps asking them to set the table, fill the water jug, calling other students or family members to the table, make tea or coffee for everyone and hand round the biscuits, etc.

Try them on a few of the following family activities:

- Cinema or theatre visit
- Visit to town centre, supermarket or local shopping centre – many students love shopping!
- Physical Exercise: swimming, tennis, football, basketball, bicycle ride
- Arts and crafts: - painting, drawing, music - many students play a musical instrument, knitting, making Christmas decorations or cards, sewing napkins
- Cooking - Looking up recipes, get them involved in a menu for dinner!
- Helping around the house and garden, assisting in washing the car, hanging out washing, sweeping leaves, or posting letters in the nearby post-box
- Seasonal Events - Pumpkins for Halloween, Guy and bonfire for November 5th
- Nature - Making nesting boxes for birds out of odd pieces of wood, planting seeds
- Games - Monopoly, Scrabble and games to help improve the student's English vocabulary - e.g. how many items can you name in the kitchen, garden, bathroom, etc.

If you have any concerns either before or during your student's homestay, please do not hesitate to contact us.

And finally...

Thank you for agreeing to host our students. We aim to make it a positive experience for both hosts and students. Your feedback is always welcome.

Appendix

Please find below an invoice sample

Your Name
Your address

INVOICE

INVOICE NO.
DATE:

TO:

Student's name
c/o Academic Powerhouse
2 Rusper Close
Stanmore
Middx. HA7 4QD

DESCRIPTION	Nights	RATE	AMOUNT
TOTAL			

Please remit the fee to the following bank account for my service to **Student's name**

Bank:
Account Name:
Sort Code:
Account Number:

Thank you.