

Homestays Students

Dear all,

Living with a homestay can be a uniquely rewarding and truly invigorating experience. As a homestay student you will be living as a guest in your host family's home. You will need to be flexible in adjusting to living with a family who already have their own routines. Naturally, you will be free to enjoy London in your own way, but we ask that you respect the routines and rules of the home. We also ask families to respect your needs and your privacy. While having the opportunity for interaction with your family, you will also be expected to be independent. Your homestay is what you make of it and you should not expect a hotel like experience while you are here. Be realistic with your situation and you will get the most out of it.

While the requirements of each host family are the same (providing you with a warm and comfortable home, your own (or shared with another student) bedroom, breakfast Monday – Friday, use of the laundry facilities once per week and access to the kitchen), every family is different in their composition and in their relationship with their students. Most of our homestay families have been hosting students for several years, and are experienced hosts. How much interaction you have with your family is very much down to yourself.

This sheet is provided just to give you a little insight to what to expect with living with a homestay. Comprehensive individual information will be provided once you have arrived in London.

Location

Virtually all of our homestays are located in north London, in highly regarded and sought after neighbourhoods such as Muswell Hill, Finchley, Hampstead, Tufnell Park, and Crouch End. These localities are well equipped with fast transport links into central London, High Streets (our version of a Main Street) with shops and restaurants, and an abundance of green space and community facilities. Though houses in the UK are generally smaller than in the United States, they make up for it in character and cosiness. When you live with your homestay families, they will be there to help you get to know the area and orientate yourself.

Rooms

You will be provided with a room (usually shared with someone else from your respective programme), and each room is different for each homestay. You should be provided with a wardrobe and a study space. TVs and other facilities may be provided, at the discretion of the homestay families.

Meals

Breakfast is provided which should include at least a selection of tea, coffee, cereal and toast but of course the homestay family can provide more if they wish. Any dietary requirements will be catered for as well. As for dinner, it is up to the student to prepare it themselves, but they will have access to the kitchen of their homestays. Most families have a preferred time to do so and please remember to clean up after yourself and to be respectful of your homestay families.

Laundry

All homestay families will have laundry facilities for you to use. Some will allow you to do your laundry yourself while others would prefer to do it for you...it just depends on the family you are living with. Please remember that not all homes have dryers and that you may have to hang your washing on the line/on clothes dryers. You are entitled to do one load of laundry per week.

Bathrooms

You need to provide your own towels and toiletries and arrange a time with your homestay families to use the shower facilities. Please be mindful that hot water in Britain can be limited in homes and to be respectful of others you are living with.

Security

Please check with your homestay hosts about their security system. Often you will be the last one out in the morning and the last one back in at night. Always make sure that windows and doors are locked when you leave the house.

Other Information

Please remember that the telephone in your homestay is for incoming calls only. If friends and family are calling you from the United States please remind them of the time difference to ensure that they do not telephone at unsocial times. If you purchase a mobile phone, please give the number to your homestay family. Most homestay families also have mobile phones of their own – make sure you have their numbers, too.

If you wish to invite a friend to your homestay, please always check with your homestay host beforehand. Only friends from the AIFS programme should be invited to your homestay. No overnight guests are permitted.

As for internet, usually all families usually provide internet, to be discussed with each individual family. Again be respectful regarding internet usage. Please remember that computing facilities are provided at the AIFS Student Centre in Bloomsbury during office hours.

Being noisy at inappropriate hours will not be tolerated by the homestay families of AIFS. You will all be living in residential neighbourhoods so when you are here, please be respectful of your neighbours, especially when returning at night.

If you have problems adjusting to living with your host family, please talk to them and us about it...communication is key!

For any more information about homestay living please do not hesitate to email us at studentinfo@aifs.co.uk