Homestay should be a positive and rewarding experience. This booklet is designed to help you adjust to life with your homestay family as quickly as possible so that the cultural exchange is a happy one. Please use it as a guide and seek further assistance from staff if you wish to have any points clarified.

All families have undergone an orientation process, homes have been inspected and your family will have support from staff if they experience any difficulties hosting students. Families apply to the institution to take part in the program to experience a cross cultural exchange. To learn from you about your country and to teach their children to understand people from all over the world.

Although homestay may require you to confront fundamental differences between cultures and a different way of living, the benefits certainly outweigh any problems you may encounter – if you let it! Most visitors to Australia never experience life in an Australian household and do not have the opportunity to make a lasting friendship. Sometimes they return to visit again or the homestay family visits the student's country and family.

INTERNATIONAL HOMESTAY STUDENTS

CODE OF ETHICS

Students need to be made aware of the accepted code of behaviour within the Homestay

Code of Ethics

- Students need to be made aware of the accepted code of behaviour within the Homestay.
- Students need to be encouraged to communicate in an honest and respectful way thus developing positive relationships with providers which are based on mutual trust and communication. Disguising a problem to ‘save face’ may not, in fact, be dealing the best way with the problem.
- Students should be advised on acceptable levels of hospitality and not take advantage of the generosity offered by families.
- Students should be encouraged to develop positive relationships with families which are based on mutual trust and communication.
- Students should be enabled to take responsibility for their own practices and needs

Good Conduct Guidelines

The student will be expected to:

- Be financially independent; pay the homestay and placement fee to the institution and later the agreed weekly/fortnightly amount in advance to the Homestay family. He/she must meet all personal expenses for travel, entertainment, telephone calls, medical expenses and other personal, incidental costs
- Respect and adhere to guidelines/rules for living in the household as given by the homestay family which may include conditions such as no smoking, no alcohol, spend no longer than 4 minutes in the shower and leaving bathroom tidy.
- Offer to help with minor household chores such as occasional washing up and keeping their bedroom clean and tidy.
- Be considerate and keep noise to minimum after 8:30pm.
- Ask the family before inviting friends over
- Ask their own parents or guardian to contact the homestay family and give permission for any late nights or overnight stays.
- Advise the homestay family about social activities and when they will be home for meals.
- Pay for any damage to family property (if the student is 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 be prepared to participate in reasonable family activities.
• Respect and be aware that cultural differences and beliefs of the Homestay provider may differ from their own.
• Communicate with the homestay provider on a day to day basis. Student should be open about their needs/wants. For example, need to make a phone call late in the night (after 10pm).
• Advise the homestay coordinator immediately of any concerns of their health or welfare which may arise in the homestay environment.
• Adhere to the guidelines set down in the “Homestay Information Booklet”, web or fact flyers/sheets, orientation for students and other advice given about the homestay program.
• Be aware and abide by the laws of Australia, for example, wear bicycle helmets, respect legal age of drinking, etc.
• It is important to note that students are not obligated to inform their host family about personal health issues but should show a duty of care to all individuals residing in the household. Host families must respect individual's privacy and confidentiality.
• Take relevant precautions to protect one's self and other individuals residing in the homestay environment. Notification of Communicable Disease-Policy for Infection Disease control

“...In accordance with State legislation, staff and students of the University do not have to disclose notifiable diseases they may have to the University, but they are required to disclose to the appropriate State Health Department. Griffith students and staff have an obligation to care for the safety of others (including but not limited to fellow students and staff members of the University, patients and members of the public with whom they are in contact through the course of their University activities) under both common law and the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995. This duty of care includes a duty to minimise the risk of spreading or contracting infectious diseases."

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY!
• Communication is the most important ability to develop. Communication skills will allow any uncertainties you may have to be openly discussed and your fears dealt with. Your family will not mind how many questions you ask or how often you speak to them. Try to remember that they will want to make your stay with them a happy one but may not realise you are unhappy about something unless you tell them. Smile and explain politely if there is something you do not understand. They will be more than happy to assist you to adapt to your new lifestyle. Communicate with the homestay provider on a day to day basis. Offer to help with minor household chores such as occasional washing up and keeping their bedroom clean and tidy. Student should be open about their needs/wants. For example, need to make a phone call late in the night (after 10pm)

HOMESTAY MAKES IT EASY!
Homestay provides a safe, protected environment from the moment you arrive without the worry of finding somewhere to live, having electricity and telephone connected and having to do the shopping. The homestay family can help with familiarising yourself to your new surroundings and the journey to your institution.
You will be given your own room, a study desk and desk light, a comfortable bed and two meals with a packed lunch every day.
The homestay house will be within travelling distance of your institution (although this may mean two bus rides or bus and train).

A LITTLE ABOUT AUSTRALIANS
It is against the Australian law to discriminate. When applying for homestay, you will be required to complete an Application Form. This form will ask for details of your requirements. Please note that Australia welcomes people from all nations and homestay programs reflect this. Under Australian law, all citizens are equal. This means that men and
women are equal and it does not matter what country a person comes from, they will be treated as an equal and you should treat them as equal. Consequently, you may find that you are placed in homestay with Australians who have not been born in Australia. English may be their second language too! However, they will be fluent in English even if they have an accent and the husband and wife may come from different countries. Your homestay family may consist of a single woman who may, or may not, have children. This is part of our culture – the culture of a country you are coming to live in!

Your homestay family may also have animals; most families do. Sometimes dogs and cats live inside the house with the family, sometimes outside. Australian families love their pets. Feel free to request a homestay family without pets if you wish, but remember that in doing this, you may be depriving yourself of staying with a kind and loving family. Remember that most families have pets!

In the majority of Australian families, both the husband and wife go out to work. Wives do not necessarily stay home and become servants to their families. You will be required to assist generally, just as their own children do, in light tasks such as setting the table, washing up the dishes and keeping your own room clean and tidy. You will be expected to do your own laundry unless your host family offers to do this for you. If you do not know how to do this, then they will teach you.

When living in a private home, remember that a courteous and considerate attitude is always appreciated. Each member of the family is treated equally and with respect. It is important to smile and say “please” when you ask for something and “thank you” when you receive it.

SOME EXPECTATIONS YOUR HOMESTAY FAMILY MAY HAVE:

• COURTESY
  Your host family will expect to know where you are at all times. If you are not returning home for your evening meal, you must let your family know before they have cooked your dinner. A telephone call at lunch time is all that is needed. If your host family are at work, then ask them how you may leave a message. If you are staying out with your friends, again, please let your host family know – this may be done by telephone.
  • Please also ask your host family first before inviting friends to your family’s home. Remember, always be friendly, polite and courteous to your host family; they have opened up their home to you.
  • Be considerate and keep noise to minimum after 8:30pm
  Although informal, Australians do not like to be late for appointments, so if you have been invited to visit or meet a family friend, it is most important to be on time.

• MANNERS
  Each culture will have different ways of eating. If you are feeling uncomfortable about Australian table manners please ask your family for assistance. In Australia, it is not acceptable to spit and is against the law to do so in public. If you need to spit, please leave the room and use the toilet. It is considered polite to blow your nose into a handkerchief or tissue but it is not polite to sniff

• DAMAGES
  Pay for any damage to family property (if the student is responsible for the Damage) Please be honest and advise your host family if an accident has occurred

• SMOKING
  Most homestay families will only allow smoking outside their home. If you smoke, please ask your host family if you may smoke and where you may smoke in their home. By law, smoking is not allowed in buses, public buildings and in buildings at the institution.

• USING THE BATHROOM
  It is most important to communicate with your host family regarding the use of the bathroom. Australians usually shower although most houses have a bathtub. We stress here that you will not be able to fill the bath or use as much water as you might like. Perhaps one-third
full will be the most hot water you may use. Check with your host family first. Most homes have a hot water system from which hot water is run directly into the bath. There may not be gas systems such as you may have in your home country. If you fill the bath with hot water, there will be no hot water for anyone else to bath or shower with. As you host parents how long you may use the bathroom. Usually ten minutes would be acceptable, but check to be certain. You should not occupy the bathroom for more than fifteen minutes or others will be kept waiting, and shower no longer than 4 minutes. It is usual to sit on the toilet seat in Australia and leave the toilet clean and tidy as you find it. Always remember to flush the toilet after you have used it. Leave it as you would wish to find it.

- **USING THE TELEPHONE**
  Please ask your host family before you use the telephone so that you can arrange to pay for your telephone calls. You should also do the same before arranging reverse charge calls. The easiest way to make an international call is to use a telephone card. Please ensure that you settle your telephone account with your host family before you move out. There is information regarding the use of the telephone in the White Pages Telephone Directory. Make sure that you do not use the telephone to make calls or receive calls during the late evening (after 9pm) or during the night. This is not appropriate or acceptable in Australia. Keep telephone calls to a minimum so as not to make the telephone unavailable to other family members.

- **MOBILE PHONE**
  Many students arrive in Australia with a mobile phone. To upgrade to Australian connection you can purchase a pre paid starter kit. If you do not have a mobile phone perhaps you may consider purchasing one so that you can contact your friends and family. Make sure you provide your homestay family with your phone number so that they can contact you.

- **USING THE INTERNET**
  Please ask your family about a convenient time to use the internet. Not all homestay families will offer this service. You can expect to pay an additional amount for the internet usage and your family may provide you with an account detailing the information. You can also use the internet facilities on campus or at one of the many internet café outlets located in the major shopping centres close to your homestay accommodation.

- **SLEEPING WITH THE LIGHTS ON**
  It is usual to sleep with the lights off in Australia. It is considered a waste of energy resources to leave lights burning all night. Ask your host family’s permission to use the television or sound equipment and how to use it correctly

- **USING A HEATER**
  In winter, your host family may give you a heater. Turn it off overnight and sleep under the doona or blankets on the bed. It is dangerous to leave a heater on all night. If you enjoy candles, make sure you extinguish them before you go to sleep but ask your family for permission before you light the candles for safety reasons.

- **RECYCLING IS A POPULAR TREND IN AUSTRALIA**
  You may notice that your host family has two garbage bins. Ask your family to let you know the correct usage of these bins. Ladies, please note that all sanitary products should be disposed of by wrapping and placing in the correct bin. Keep products out of sight of family members and dispose of immediately in the appropriate outside garbage bin. Disposable bags are available from chemist shops or ask your host family for advice.

- **HEALTH**
  Students should adopt good personal hygiene practices while staying in the homestay. Students are obligated to care for the safety of other individuals that they may come into contact with during their University activities including living in a homestay environment. "In accordance with State Legislation both students and staff have a duty of care to disclose notifiable diseases and this duty of care includes a duty to minimise the risk of spreading or contracting infectious diseases. Please read the fact sheet attached

- **SECURITY**

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It is not usual for bedroom doors to have locks. If you close your door, it will be a sign to your host family that you do not wish to be disturbed. If you are returning home before your host family returns, then they will give you a front door key so you can get in. If they do not do this, then ask for one politely. If you do not want the host children to enter your room please advise your family and make it clear that they may only enter when invited by yourself. Make sure if you travel at night time that you have contact details for your family in case you get lost or miss your bus otherwise your family will worry. Keep all valuables, money, passport and airline tickets in a safe place.

- **BRINGING YOUR FAMILY**
  If you plan to travel with other family members, it is your responsibility to organise hotel accommodation for them in advance. It is not appropriate to expect your host family to accommodate members of your family. Most host families will welcome a visit from your family members but it is not possible that they stay with you in the home stay home.

- **HOMESTAY FEES**
  Home stay fees are payable directly to your home stay family, (four weeks in advance) and should be paid as soon as possible after arrival. Home stay fees are not refundable for this four week period. Home stay fees are not negotiable. In Australia, bargaining to reduce a price is not an acceptable practice and will cause severe embarrassment to your host family. Should you wish to leave your host family after the four week period, it is necessary to give your host family adequate notice of at least one week. Student must be financially independent;
  
  Students meet all personal expenses for travel, entertainment, Telephone calls, medical expenses and other personal toiletry items or incidental costs

- **INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS**
  Asking personal questions can sometimes cause embarrassment. In Australia, it is considered impolite to ask a person’s age or religion. It is also impolite to ask how much money someone earns. To tell someone they are fat or ugly is considered extremely rude. Australians respect each other and recognise friends and relations as equals.

- **STUDENTS WHO ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 18**
  If you are under 18 years of age you must stay with a registered Griffith Home stay family. Because you will need to report regularly to see the Student Adviser, you will also need to stay with your family until you are 18; you are not permitted to stay out overnight without permission from the University. These restrictions are compliant with the ESOS Act and National Code for International students. Families who wish to host students who are under 18 years of age must have been issued with suitability (blue card).

- **MEALS**
  The home stay payment that you will pay to your host family covers three meals a day, and snacks, seven days a week. Please discuss likes and dislikes with your family as food preferences are very important. The Australian diet is quite different to many other cultures and many students suffer stomach upsets, which can be avoided through effective communication. Students arriving from cooler climates should be made aware of the necessity to drink water so as not to dehydrate.

- **YOUR HOMESTAY ROOM**
  Your room should be equipped with a desk and chair, and a desk lamp. A comfortable bed with an appropriate mattress The room will be part of the general family living area, and easily accessible to bathroom facilities. Isolated rooms underneath houses with no internal access to bathroom facilities are not used on the Griffith Home stay Program.

- **LAUNDRY**
  Students are responsible for their own laundry unless the home stay host offers to wash your clothes. This can be negotiated with the family. Ask your host how to operate the washing machine and when would be a convenient time to wash your clothes.

- **INTERNET**
• The majority of Homestay household’s will provide internet facilities. Students can expect to pay between $7.00 - $10.00 per week to use the Internet. This can be negotiated between the student and the family. Student must arrange a suitable time with the host to access the internet.

• Students should not access Inappropriate Internet sites these may include but are not limited to:
  o sites that are illegal or hold illegal content;
  o sites that are pornographic or contain inappropriate sexual material;
  o sites that advocate hate or violence
  o sites that offer games or software that are unrelated to academic programs.
  o Download movies or films from the private internet address

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP
• In Australia freedom of worship is a basic human right. As a multicultural society most religions are represented in the Australian community. If you wish to attend your chosen place of worship ask your family to assist with directions. Sometimes your host family may invite you to worship with them. If you do not wish to partake in their chosen religious worship then you may decline politely their invitation. Respect and be aware that cultural differences and beliefs of the home stay

• PETS
In Australia many households have a family pet. This maybe a dog, cat, bird or guinea pig. Some students will be afraid of the family pet as in many Asian countries dogs and cats are seen as taboo. Please make sure you talk to your family about your fears or ensure that when apply you indicate that you do not wish to live with pets.

• TRANSPORT
Students are responsible for their own transport. However, on arrival, your homestay host will assist with transport information to the University and back to your homestay accommodation. Families should live within a 20 minute journey from campus by public transport. The University has a free inter-campus bus service between Mt Gravatt and Nathan campuses. It is useful to point out landmarks near the location of your bus stop, for example a particular building, park or billboard so that you can identify where they are, or an alternative bus number in case services are rescheduled or cancelled without prior notice. You will be supplied with a card which clearly states your address and telephone number. In case you get lost or miss your bus then you can catch a taxi and show the driver the address details on your home stay card provided by the family.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT AUSTRALIA
• ALCOHOL
The legal age for drinking alcohol in Australia is eighteen years. There are heavy fines for people who drive while under the influence of alcohol. You must have blood alcohol content less than 0.05%, which is equal to approximately one glass of beer. All drivers may be stopped and tested by police at random to see if they have been drinking.

In Australian hotels and bars, you should expect to pay for each drink as you buy it. The Australian custom of “shouting” means that if someone buys you a drink, you are expected to “shout” them back by buying them a drink. If you are of age and wish to bring alcohol into your host family’s home, please ask their permission first. If alcohol is offered, then you may choose if you wish to drink it or not. Abide by Australian rules and regulations

• DRUGS
The use of drugs and drug trafficking is illegal in Australia and carries heavy penalties.

• DRIVING A CAR
In Australia you must possess I driver’s license before you can drive a car. For more information about licences visit be aware and abide by the laws of Australia, for example, wear bicycle helmets,
If you are unhappy
You may seek assistance if you feel that you need help in settling in to your host family’s home. Moving home stays is not encouraged and is not an automatic process. It is at the discretion of the institution and cannot be decided by your agent. It is in your own interest to try and make appropriate changes by understanding your host family’s household. Remember that communication is the key!
We hope you will enjoy your home stay experience. If you have any questions about home stay, please ask to meet the staff at your institution. This can be done by making an appointment through the Reception area of your school.

If any difficulties develop, no matter how large or small, please telephone the Homestay Coordinator for assistance on 07 3735 7919. All comments or complaints are treated with confidentiality and recorded. Any repetition of the same issue in a homestay will result in further investigation.

**Important Contacts**
Homestay Coordinator
Griffith Accommodation
Campus Life
Griffith University
Brisbane Q 4111
Telephone: 07 3735 7919
Email: homestay@griffith.edu.au
Facsimile: 07 3735 7888
Mobile: 0419 720 826 – emergency use only

**Emergency Contacts**
Police 000
Ambulance 000
Security on Campus 3735 7777

**Transport & Taxi**
Translink 131230


**Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)**

**Hospitals**
Royal Brisbane Hospital 3253 8111
Logan Hospital 3299 8899
QEI Hospital 3275 6111

**Health Services**
Griffith University Nathan Campus 3735 3734
Griffith University Nathan Campus International Office 3735 7200
Griffith University Nathan Campus GELI 3735 7089
Griffith University Nathan Campus Multi Faith Centre 3735 7052
Translating & Interpreting 131450

**World care Assist - 24 hours** 1800 814 781

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