



Please keep this document to hand so you can refer to it regularly.

INFORMATION FOR HOMESTAY PROVIDERS, EASTBOURNE 2017 (updated January 2017)

1. INTRODUCTION

This document should give you all the information you need about hosting. Please don't hesitate to contact Elac if you have any further queries.

1.1 About Elac

The founders of Elac have been organizing and teaching English Language Courses for 25 years. We offer language courses in eight centres around the UK, some in residential and some in homestay accommodation. Our three main aims for our students are:

- To quickly improve their English language skills.
- To learn about British life and culture.
- To make new friends from many different countries.

Staying with a host is a great way for a student to meet these aims, as they settle into a household.

1.2 Becoming an Elac Homestay Provider

We hope the stay will be mutually rewarding and enjoyable! The most successful visits are often those where the student and host have developed a relationship based on trust and mutual understanding of expectations. The following information should help to clarify any questions you may have about hosting an international student. If you have any further queries, please contact our Homestay Manager, on **07811 122709**. An emergency number will also be issued to you when the students arrive.

1.3 Correspondence and Communication

The Homestay Coordinator will be in touch in advance to give you information about your student. This may include if the student has any allergies or medical conditions, as well as date of birth and nationality. Sometimes, it is not always possible to give a student's name: this will be communicated nearer the time. You will receive a programme in the welcome letter. If this changes, you will be informed if necessary, either by a letter home or by text. Your student may tell you verbally but this should always be backed up with something in writing.

2. ARRIVALS

Once we have the information confirmed, we will inform you of the time and date of your student's arrival, and whether they are travelling in a group, individually, or privately. You will be given the time and place to collect and drop off students.

We try to ensure that the arrival is at a convenient time, e.g. after work if on a week day. For arrivals later than 11pm, we can assist you if you are unable to collect the students.

You will be expected to collect the student **in person**, and travel back with them to your home, either in a car, taxi, or walking if you live close by. If you cannot meet the student in person, please let the Homestay Coordinator know in advance who the person will be. If for some reason the coach is delayed, the Homestay Coordinator will keep you up-to-date, usually by text.

3. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Many students are very nervous at the beginning of their stay. They may feel homesick and shy about using English. For many it will be their first time in England and often the first time away from their parents. Please do your best to make them relax and feel welcome and they will soon settle in.

Students will be handed a Welcome Letter on arrival, together with a programme, map and sometimes a bus pass if necessary, as well as the location of the course and an emergency contact card. They will also be given a journey risk assessment to complete with you. Please sign it and the student will bring it in the following day. **Please ensure you exchange mobile phone numbers with your students.**

Please bring your student(s) to the course centre on the first morning, either in person or provide a taxi. Please ensure they know how to get home at the end of the day. Elac staff will also be on hand to ensure they get the correct transport.

3.1 Expectations

The students have chosen a "home away from home" experience, and will be expecting to be welcomed as such. They will have been reminded to treat their homestay provider and home with respect. It is always a good idea at the beginning of a visit to introduce all members of the household and explain your domestic arrangements, such as meal times, and any ground rules for the homestay, such as when to have a shower/bath. Most problems arise due to a lack of understanding and cultural differences rather than deliberate bad manners. Sometimes, writing them out is a useful way to share this information. Some students may not be used to making their own beds and tidying their clothes. Establish the ground rules for cleaning and ensure these are understood fully.

Please inform us if you are not going to be at home overnight. We need to ensure that a responsible, appropriate adult is present, and that the student is aware of the situation.

3.2 Communication

Be patient and friendly, allowing your student time and space to gain confidence. They may not always understand you, so try and ensure that they know what you are telling them. It sometimes helps to write down what you want them to know (or use Google Translate)!

4. ACCOMMODATION

Visitors should have a comfortable bed with a good supply of blankets/duvet, drawer and wardrobe space, and somewhere to study (either in their room or elsewhere).

Their room should be clean with adequate lighting and heating. Be prepared for each student to bath or shower once a day and make sure they know how to use all the facilities. If appropriate, make sure you explain the arrangements for disposing of sanitary towels or tampons. It is also advisable to protect mattresses with a waterproof cover. Please change towels and bed linen once a week.

Most students will ask for a wifi code so they can access the internet from their mobile phones. If you don't have wifi, students can access this from the course.

To meet British Council criteria, the following should be adhered to:

- **No more than two students should be accommodated in the same bedroom.**
- **No more than four students should be accommodated in one house (Elac will remove students if this is found to be the case, without compensation).**
- **Students under 16 should not be accommodated with over 18s (unless specified and agreed in writing).**
- **There should be no adult lodgers in the house, unless they have a current enhanced DBS (ie able to work with children).**
- **Genders of students should not be mixed (unless specified and agreed in writing).**
- **Homestay providers will be asked to sign an Agreement regarding the above.**

Please note you are required to inform us if any additional adults are in the house during this time. Also, any other changes, such as pets etc., should be notified to Elac so that we can update the information we send to the students.

4.1 Nationalities

One of the conditions of being a homestay provider for Elac students is that there must never be more than one speaker of the same language staying in your home at the same time, unless we make special arrangements with you to the contrary. This is essential in order for them to maximise the opportunity to practise their English, both with you and any other students you may have staying with you. This is a

contractual obligation we make to our students in our promotional material and therefore we must emphasise the importance of such arrangements.

4.2 Student Ages

Elac students staying in host families are usually 14 – 18 years old. We do however, make some allowances for younger students, in the following circumstances:

- Some students of 13 will be accepted where they are part of an older group and if a suitable homestay provider is available.
- Students of 12 will only be accepted where a suitable homestay provider is available and if they are paired with another student of the same nationality.
- We appreciate that younger students often do not have the maturity or independence to be placed on their own in homestay and this places a higher level of responsibility on the homestay provider.

5. MEALS and PETS

5.1 Meals with the Homestay Provider

Meals are an ideal opportunity to sit down, converse with your student and make them feel welcome. We appreciate it is not always possible for everyone to eat together, but if your student has to eat earlier than everyone else, please also remain with them.

Please ensure that your student always has enough to eat and that meals are healthy and balanced. Appetites vary considerably with young people, but providing extra bread with meals, or an extra portion of potatoes, rice or pasta, may help. It is also useful to ask the students on their arrival if they have any particular likes/dislikes. You should be notified of any allergies in advance, but its always a good idea to check.

5.2 Breakfast

During the week you will probably find that a light breakfast of cereal and toast, juice and tea/coffee is enough for your student. However, many students are very eager to sample a traditional English cooked breakfast and would greatly appreciate the chance to have one or two during their stay.

5.3 Lunches

A hot or cold meal will be served daily at the centres. Usually on Saturday, there is a full day excursion, for which your student will require a packed lunch. A suggested meal would consist of 2 large bread rolls/French stick/ baguette/2 rounds of sandwiches, a packet of crisps, piece of fruit, cake or biscuit, fruit drink or bottle of water.

5.4 Pets

Students and leaders from some cultures are not used to pets or animals living in houses. They may see this as unhygienic, or see dogs as guard dogs, therefore something to be afraid of. Students will inform us if they have pet allergies, but some may just require a little time to get used to a pet. If possible on

arrival, please keep your dog in a separate room, and introduce it gradually to the student until they are comfortable.

6. COURSE PROGRAMME

You will be supplied with a course programme at the start of the course, and updated regularly should any times and activities change.

6.1 Weekends

Please be aware that our fees include full board at weekends. Every Saturday during your student's course will be a full day excursion. Please give your student assistance in getting to the departure point in good time for the excursions and be prepared for your student to arrive late for the evening meal after the London trip.

"Day with the Host" Sundays are free days for your student and we would therefore ask you to include them in your normal activities as this is a further opportunity for them to experience English life. You may also wish to organize something specifically for them that you know they will enjoy, e.g. Visit the beach, go swimming, or visit a nearby place of interest.

You may also find that the student is going on an extra Sunday excursion. In this situation you should be informed of the details of times of return, etc., and a packed lunch will normally be required. Students may also wish to spend time with their friends, in which case their group leader would need to be informed. If you are in any doubt as to what your student should be doing, please call the Elac duty mobile for clarification (please see curfew information below).

6.2 Curfews in the Evenings and Weekends

Elac Evenings: During the Summer Courses, Elac runs 2 or 3 evening activities a week. These usually commence between 7.00 and 8.00 pm so please ensure students have enough time to eat then return to the centre. Students are told that they should return by **10.45pm**.

If they have not turned up by these times, you must contact the Elac duty mobile. Once they return, please call the duty mobile again to inform Elac so this can be followed up the next day with the student.

The only exception to this rule is if the student is taking part in an excursion or activity with Elac or a group leader which finishes later; in this case you will be informed by Elac in advance.

Free Evenings: Students are expected to stay with their hosts. However, with parental consent and by agreement of Elac and the group leader, students may go out with other students. **You will be notified by Elac if this has been agreed and that your student is allowed out in the evening. On these evenings students are expected to be home by 10.00pm.**

Weekends: With parental consent and by agreement of Elac and the group leader, students may go out with other students, as long as you know where they are going and when they will return.

7. HEALTH AND WELFARE

7.1 Illness

If your student is unwell, please inform the Elac office immediately and then a decision will be taken as to whether they need to see a doctor/other medical specialist. An Elac member of staff and/or a group leader will accompany them to any appointment. If a student is unable to attend the course due to ill health, Elac will make alternative arrangements to ensure that the student is supervised in a suitable environment. You will be kept informed of any arrangements made.

7.2 Safety

Basic safety procedures should be explained to visitors, such as how to use electrical appliances. You should have smoke alarms fitted throughout the house, and also a gas appliances certificate from a Gas Safe-registered supplier. We also expect you to conduct a fire risk assessment so that you and the students know the best way to evacuate the building if there is an emergency.

You will also be asked to explain to your student how to get to and from the bus stop, or centre, safely, and then both sign a journey risk assessment.

If you are using your car to transport the students, you should ensure the car is roadworthy and has a current MOT. Please notify us if there is any reason you are unable to drive.

7.3 Privacy and Security

Please respect your students' privacy when they are in their bedrooms and the bathroom. Bathroom doors **must** have a lock on them. Students should be reminded to look after their belongings and give any large amounts of money to the group leader for safe keeping.

7.4 Emergencies

The students will have an emergency contact number on the Elac cards they are issued with, together with the emergency services number. They will also have been told about keeping safe on the roads and at night. If your student has something stolen and is the victim of any crime, please report it to the police immediately and contact the Elac duty mobile to inform them as well.

7.5 Child Protection

The main carer within the homestay must have a current (within three years) enhanced DBS (i.e. able to work with children). This can be from another organisation, but we would need to see a copy. We can organize and pay for DBS checks for homestay providers if necessary. This DBS check will also include records of any incidents related to that address. We also need to take up suitable references before a student can be placed with you. All homestay providers are also required to complete a declaration

form relating to the Children Act and their suitability to host students, including all other adults in their home, and that they have read our Safeguarding Policy.

Some students may report or experience abuse whilst on an Elac course, in different forms: bullying, racism, physical, sexual or emotional. If you have any concerns about your student's welfare, please contact the Homestay Coordinator or Elac's designated welfare officer, Elaine Wickens. All concerns will be treated confidentially and seriously.

All hosts are advised to complete basic awareness training on safeguarding, which can be done online, on www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/learning-improvement/nyscb-basic-awareness-elearning. You will be provided with a certificate at the end of the training: please take a copy and send it to Elac for our records.

Please also be aware of your responsibility to safeguard your student guests from any adult visitors to the home, e.g. ensuring their privacy is respected, or they are not talked to in an inappropriate way.

7.6 Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking

Drinking alcohol is strictly prohibited for all Elac students. All Elac activities serve soft drinks only. If you suspect that your student is drinking, please remind them of the English laws on alcohol (they will already have been informed about this by our staff) and inform the Homestay Coordinator immediately. We will then take appropriate action. All of our students have signed a code of conduct regarding this, and are told not to smoke at their homestay provider's house and have been told of the law banning smoking in a public place.

Regarding drugs, please notify us if you suspect your visitor is in possession of, or is using, drugs.

7.7 Weapons

It is illegal to carry an offensive weapon, e.g. a knife or imitation gun, in the UK. If you suspect your visitor is carrying a weapon, notify us immediately so that relevant procedures can be followed.

7.8 "Prevent" Obligations

Prevent is a government strategy to stop people becoming involved in violent extremism and/or supporting terrorism. Hosts need to be able to recognise vulnerable students; if you are concerned, please notify us immediately. Elaine Wickens is the Prevent lead, tel. 01225 443261, email: elaine@elac.co.uk.

7.9 Protecting your own children

Whilst hosting is a great way for your own children to meet and interact with overseas students, please be aware of the issues surrounding bringing a stranger into your home. Your children may become jealous of the visitor if they are getting a lot of attention. It's a good idea to involve your children in decision-making about hosting.

8. DEPARTURES

You will be notified when and where your student will be leaving from. Please ensure they have all their belongings with them when you drop them off, and they have returned any keys. **Please let us know if you cannot drop the students off in person and are sending them by taxi. This must be paid for by you, and not the student.** Many farewells can be emotional, and many students remain in touch with their English host.

9. PAYMENTS

9.1 Payment

The payment for 2017 is £106 per week per student which includes bed, breakfast and evening meal, full board at weekends, and a packed lunch on the excursion day (usually Saturday). A £4.00 supplement will be paid for additional packed lunches (eg for an excursion during the week). There is also an increment of £25 per week for hosting students with certain special diets. For escorted groups, journeys are paid at £5.00 per return journey, ie. £2.50 one way. This is per car, rather than the number of students. Payment will be made to you by BACS approximately half way through your student's stay. However, in our peak times slight delays do occasionally occur and we would ask you to be patient if this happens. If your student stays for slightly more or less than a full week, you will be paid on a pro-rata daily basis.

Please let us know if your bank details change.

9.2 Problems with Students

If you experience a problem with a student, please contact the Homestay Coordinator as soon as possible so that it can be resolved - we have a procedure for dealing with complaints. We prefer to resolve a problem that may be caused by misunderstandings rather than move a student immediately. If in the unfortunate event there is need to move a student, we will try to place another student with you.

9.3 If a Student has to be moved

If a host breaches the Homestay Agreement, or a student has to be moved in an emergency, you will be paid for the days you hosted. Any overpayment will be recouped from future hosting payments, or refunded to Elac.

10. GENERAL INFORMATION

10.1 Attendance

A strict register of attendance is kept by Elac every day. If your student is absent for any reason and we have not been informed, please expect a telephone call to find out why. Conversely, if your student stays at home, or you suspect for any reason that he/she is not attending, kindly inform the Homestay Coordinator or Centre Manager immediately.

10.2 Religion

Visitor's beliefs should be respected and if your student wishes to practise their religion during the homestay, then please help them to do so. You may wish to contact Elac for guidance. We have a list of local places of worship.

10.3 Pocket Money

If your student appears to run out of pocket money during his stay with you, please contact the Homestay Coordinator. We will take steps to contact your student's parents or group leader. Please do not lend your student large amounts of money as Elac cannot accept responsibility for the repayment of such loans. Also, please encourage your student to leave money with their Group Leader.

10.4 Keys

It is your decision whether or not you wish to give your student a house key. However, please be aware that if you do not give a key, you should make sure you are always at home whenever the students return from their various activities. Also, if you will be out all day, please try to ensure that your student has all he needs for the day's activities, e.g. Sports clothes and shoes, money for snacks and lunch, etc., and that he knows he will not have access to the house during the day.

Laundry

Please offer to do your student's laundry for them on a regular basis (at least weekly) during their stay, and show them where the laundry should be left.

10.5 Use of Telephone/Internet/Wifi

If your student does not appear to have a mobile phone, please allow them a reverse charge call to their parents on the evening of their arrival, to let them know they are safe and well. From then on, if your student wishes to make any further calls, first check they have a special account number so that you will not be charged for the call. They may also need advice on where to buy phone cards. Please note that Elac is not responsible for any outstanding phone calls that the student may have built up – however we will seek to claim the amount on your behalf.

The internet is also a good way for the student to communicate with her/her parents. Remind the student to ask you first though! It is good practice to use a parental filter to prevent the student accessing inappropriate sites.

10.6 Insurance

It is your responsibility to ensure that your insurance companies are aware of the presence of students and that you have adequate insurance cover to compensate for:

- injury suffered by the student in your care
- damage to you or your possessions (accidental or otherwise)
- the loss of your house key
- Please also ensure that your car insurance is adequate and your car is road-worthy.

Elac cannot accept responsibility for any of these matters, but we can give our assurance that we will do everything possible to ensure redress on the part of the student should any unforeseen incident occur which is caused by this student.

One company that provides insurance cover for hosting students is “Quoteline Direct”. Alternatively search online for a suitable company.

10.8 Social Security Administration Act 1992

Please note that Elac is legally obliged, if required to do so, to disclose payments made to hosts.

Cancellations

Although Elac **cannot** accept any liability for cancellations, we will always endeavour to replace bookings as quickly as possible whenever a cancellation should occur.

We appreciate that sometimes at short notice, families have to cancel a student. If you have to cancel for any reason, please notify Elac AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

CONCLUSION

Many thanks for hosting Elac students. We hope you have an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Useful websites

www.elac.co.uk – Elac website

<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/learning-improvement/nyscb-basic-awareness-elearning> - Optional Online training.

http://www.englishuk.com/uploads/assets/members/publications/euk_briefs/The_law_and_the_host_2014_WEB.pdf

www.gov.uk/government/publications/do-you-have-paying-guests - General information on hosting.