



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

INFORMATION FOR HOSTS, EASTBOURNE 2019 (updated January 2019)

1. INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 About Elac

The founders of Elac have been organizing and teaching English Language Courses for over 25 years. We offer language courses in nine centres around the UK, some in residential and some in homestay accommodation. The 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 Being an Elac Host

We hope your hosting experience will be rewarding and enjoyable. The most successful placements 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, Pauline Lorence on **07811 122709**.

1.3 Correspondence and Communication

Our Homestay Coordinator, Zoë Harris will be in touch in advance to give you information about your student. This will include the student/s names, any allergies or medical conditions we have been notified of, as well as their age and nationality

2. ARRIVALS

Once we have the information confirmed, we will inform you of the time and date of your student's arrival. You will be given the time and place to collect and drop off your student/s.

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 student/s.

Please collect your student/s **in person** as this always gives the best impression and helps them to feel welcome. If you cannot meet them in person, please let the Homestay Coordinator know in advance who the person meeting your student/s will be. If for some reason the students' arrival is early or delayed, the Homestay Coordinator will keep you up-to-date, usually by text. If you have to send a taxi to collect them, please ensure that you pay for this. On arrival you will be given a welcome letter and a programme along with a letter and programme for your student/s. Occasionally it is necessary to change the students' programme whilst they are here and if this happens the students will either be given a note for you or an Elac staff member will call or text you. A duty mobile number will be issued in the welcome letter for you to use if you have any concerns or queries about your student/s during their stay.

3. THE FIRST DAY: INSTRUCTIONS TO GIVE THE STUDENT

Some students are 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.

Please bring your student/s to the course centre on the first morning, either in person or provide a taxi and show them how to get home from the nearest bus stop to you. All students will have an induction meeting on their first school morning and Elac staff will issue them with a bus pass if they are going to be using public transport. They will also be given a map to help them with their journey home. **Please ensure you exchange mobile phone numbers with your student/s.**

Please explain to them the journey to school and any risks involved in travelling, bearing in mind that crossing roads etc. in the UK will probably be different to their own country. Please use the Elac Journey risk Assessment document to cover all points – a copy is enclosed. Students will be asked to confirm the journey and safety issues have been explained to them.

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 host 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 to ensure that they know what you are telling them. It sometimes helps to write down what you want them to know. Some hosts find it useful to use Google Translate to communicate with students. Students are expecting to practise their English so please encourage them whenever possible – please ask Pauline or Zoë for a list of icebreakers and topics if you would like any ideas.

4. ACCOMMODATION

Students should have a comfortable bed (not a futon or inflatable mattress) with a good supply of blankets/duvet, drawer and wardrobe space, and somewhere to study (either in their room or elsewhere). If the bed is a bunk bed, please make sure there is a safe ladder to reach the top bunk, and make sure it is suitable for teenagers.

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. Occasionally you may need to reassure students that toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet rather than put in the waste bin. It is also important to protect mattresses with a waterproof cover. Please change towels and bed linen once a week and show them where they can charge their mobile phones, plug in hairdryers/hair straighteners, etc. A heat-proof protector for the top of drawers/tables is also a good idea.

Please provide a wifi code so that students can access the internet from their mobile phones. If you don't have wifi, students can access this from the course centre.

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

- **No more than two students should be accommodated in the same bedroom (unless previously agreed with Elac).**
- **No more than four students should be accommodated in one house (Elac will remove students without compensation if this is found to be the case).**
- **Students under 16 should not be accommodated with over 18s (unless specified and agreed in writing).**
- **Any adult lodgers in your house must have a current Enhanced DBS certificate to work with children**
- **Genders of students should not be mixed (unless specified and agreed in writing in advance).**

Hosts will be asked to sign an agreement regarding the above.

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

4.1 Nationalities

One of the conditions of being a host for Elac is that there must never be more than one student speaking 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. If the above is not adhered to, Elac reserve the right to remove the students immediately and only pay you for the nights the student/s were accommodated.

4.2 Student Ages

Elac students staying with hosts 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 host is available.
- Students of 12 will only be accepted where a suitable host is available and if they are paired with another student of the same nationality from their group.

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 host.

5. MEALS and PETS

5.1 Meals with the Host

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 or later than everyone else, please stay with them whilst they eat.

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 it is always a good idea to check.

5.2 Breakfast

During the week you will probably find that a light breakfast of cereal and toast, butter and jam, juice /milk, 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 lunch will be served daily at the centres. Usually on Saturdays, there is a full day excursion, for which your student will require a packed lunch please. A suggested packed lunch would consist of 2 large bread rolls/French stick/ baguette/2 rounds of sandwiches, a packet of crisps, piece of fruit, cake/cereal bar or biscuit, fruit drink or bottle of water.

5.4 Pets

Students and leaders from some cultures are not used to 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. Please keep your pets out of the students' bedrooms – student feedback often mentions pet hair on beds.

6. COURSE PROGRAMME

You will be supplied with a course programme and updated regularly should any times or activities change.

6.1 Weekends

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

"Day with the Host" Sundays are often 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 think they will enjoy, e.g. a visit to the beach or a nearby place of interest.

You may also find that your student is going on an extra Sunday excursion organised by their group leader. In this situation you should be informed of the details, meeting and return times etc. 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 (see the 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 7.00pm and 8.00pm so please ensure students have enough time to eat then return to the centre. Students are told that they should be home by **10.30pm**.

If they have not turned up by their curfew time you must ring the Elac duty mobile number to report their lateness. 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 with 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 with 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 ring the Elac duty mobile number immediately. A decision will be made as to whether they need to see a doctor or 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. If it is possible, we may arrange with you for the student to stay at home with regular visits or calls from the Group Leader or an Elac staff member. **We don't expect you to take time off work so please contact us as soon as possible if your student is unwell so we can make these arrangements.** You will be kept informed of any arrangements made. Equally, if as a host, you or any member of your household become ill or have an ongoing health problem that could affect hosting students, you must notify the Homestay Coordinator.

7.2 Safety

Basic safety procedures should be explained to students, such as how to use electrical appliances. You should have working smoke alarms fitted throughout the house and also a gas appliances certificate from a Gas Safe-registered company. It is also a good idea to have a CO detector in your home.

We expect you to conduct a fire risk assessment so that you and the student/s know the best way to evacuate the building if there is an emergency. You will also be asked to explain to your student/s how to get to and from the bus stop, or centre, safely.

If you are using a car to transport the student/s, you must ensure it is roadworthy and has a current MOT, you have the correct driving licence and the car is insured for you to drive it. Please explain to your student/s how to put on their seat belts.

If you are transporting students under the age of 12, or less than 135 cm tall, you will need to provide a suitable car or booster seat.

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.

7.3 Emergencies

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

7.4 Child Protection

Elac require hosts to be DBS checked and if you are going to host for us we will carry out the check for you. We can accept a DBS certificate that you hold from another organization provided it is less than 3 years old and it has been done for you to work with children in your home. Whilst we are waiting for your first DBS to come through we can accept two suitable references so that a student can be placed with you.

Elac also need to take up 2 suitable references before students are placed with hosts for the first time. All hosts are required to sign a Homestay Agreement which confirms that all members of the household have read our Safeguarding Policy.

Some students may report or experience abuse whilst on an Elac course. Abuse comes in different forms: bullying, racism, physical, sexual or emotional to name a few. If you have any concerns about your student's welfare, please contact the Duty Officer, Homestay Coordinator or Elac's designated welfare officer, Elaine Wickens, Tel. 01225 443261. All concerns will be treated confidentially and seriously.

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

If you would like to know more, there is a free safeguarding online training resource, which can be accessed on <https://accreditation-uk.english.britishcouncil.org>. There is a specific course aimed at homestay hosts. You will need to register for an account to enroll and take any of the courses. It takes about 45 minutes and you will receive a certificate.

7.5 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 has drunk alcohol please remind them of the English laws regarding alcohol (they will already have been informed about this by our staff) and inform the Duty Officer immediately. We will then take appropriate action. All of our students will have signed a code of conduct and are also told not to smoke inside their host's house. They will have been told about the law regarding smoking in public places. Regarding drugs, please notify us if you suspect your student is in possession of, or is using any illegal 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 student 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 student/s if they are getting a lot of your attention. It's a good idea to involve your children in decision-making about hosting. If you are hosting an adult, you can request to see their "Certificate of Good Conduct", which is the equivalent of the UK DBS. This is something we require for teaching purposes.

8. DEPARTURES

You will be notified when and where your student/s 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 after their departure.

9. PAYMENTS

9.1 Payment

The payment for 2019 is £110 per week per student which includes bed, breakfast and evening meal, full board at weekends. 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 journey rather than per student. 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 Duty Officer, Homestay Coordinator or Homestay Manager 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 due to no wrongdoing on your behalf, we will try to place another student with you.

9.3 If a Student has to be moved due to a breach of the Homestay Agreement or a Safeguarding issue involving the Host.

If a host breaches the Homestay Agreement or a student has to be moved you will be paid for the days you hosted. Any overpayment will be recouped from future hosting payments or hosts must repay the overpayment.

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 Duty Officer or Homestay Coordinator immediately.

10.2 Religion

Students' religious 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 their stay with you please contact the Duty Officer or Homestay Coordinator. We will take steps to contact your student's parents or group leader. Please do not lend your student money as Elac cannot accept responsibility for the repayment of such loans. Also, please encourage your student to leave money with their Group Leader rather than in their rooms.

10.4 Keys

It is your decision whether or not you give your student a house key. However, please be aware that if you do not give a key, you must make sure you are at home whenever the students return from their various activities. If you will be out all day, please try to ensure that your student has all they need for the day's activities, e.g. sports clothes and shoes, money for snacks and lunch, etc., and that they know they 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 their dirty laundry should be left.

10.5 Use of Telephone/Internet/Wifi

If your student does not 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 students to communicate with their parents. Please remind them to ask you first though. It is good practice to use a parental filter to prevent the student accessing inappropriate sites if they are using your computer/laptop.

10.6 Insurance

It is your responsibility to ensure that your insurance company is aware that you are hosting 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.

10.7 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 student cancellations, we will always endeavour to replace bookings as quickly as possible if a cancellation should occur.

We appreciate that sometimes at short notice, hosts have to cancel a student. If you have to cancel for any reason, please notify the Homestay Coordinator 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

<https://www.englishuk.com/uploads/assets/.../The law and the host 2014 WEB.pdf>

- Information from English UK regarding hosting and the law