

ASC INTERNATIONAL HOMESTAY PLACEMENT POLICY

This Policy and Procedure is in compliance with National Code Standard 5

This document outlines the policy and procedures for placing students in any ASC International Homestay. This policy covers students in both a standard and Parent Nominated (PN) homestay. PN homestays are nominated by the student's parents or legal guardians and bypass the procedure for selection and matching of students to host families.

Accreditation processes are required to ensure the PN host family is suitable for the student. Irrelevant of the type of homestay, all processes and procedures for accreditation and monitoring of homestay placements, where ASC International has issued a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter, are the same.

PROCEDURES

1. Homestay host recruitment and screening

All homestays, including Parent Nominated (PN) homestays, must undertake the following process prior, to being fully accredited and receiving an ASC International student:

1. Potential hosts must complete the Host Application Form or PN Homestay Application Form.
2. Potential host must read and sign the ASC International Host Agreement.
3. Potential host must send through all appropriate clearances (inspections must not be booked until they are received)
4. Once all documentation is received, an interview and inspection are arranged with the Homestay Coordinator.
5. At interview / inspection:
 - a. the interview checklist is completed on the host and the home.
 - b. the host is provided with appropriate training.
 - c. the host is provided with the ASC International Homestay Handbook.
 - d. Any outstanding clearances or documentation must be collected

Note: PN inspections are only to be carried on upon receipt of a signed Letter of Offer from the student and their acceptance payment.

2. Host Application

An application must be completed by the homestay hosts and evaluated as per the below before a placement can be confirmed and a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) letter can be issued for visa application purposes.

All hosts accepting under 18 students must have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) and a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC). It is not sufficient for this to be in the application stage. All members of the host's household, who are over the age of eighteen, must provide a valid WWCC and NCCHC.

3. Evaluating an application

When evaluating the Homestay Application, the following should be considered for U18 students:

- Must not be placed in a homestay with the opposite sex, where possible, especially when there is a large age gap.
- Ideally, students only placed in a homestay where there is at least one host of the same gender.
- Students should be placed as close to the education provider as possible, but within 60 minutes by public transport at a maximum.
- Unless ASC International has provided written approval for travel with parents, students are not permitted to travel to and from the airport unless booked with an approved ASC International assigned transport company.
- The number of students placed with one homestay host should be limited. If there are multiple students present in one household, they will not gain full exposure to Australian culture and language. ASCI will approve, as a maximum, two long term placements and one short term (less than three months) placement within the one homestay.

Note: Hosts should obtain their own advice with regards any taxation implications for more than two students in their home.

4. Home Inspection

Accommodation must be inspected prior to a student being placed according to the appropriate check list below. A host should be advised if they have failed to supply any part of the requirements and re-checked when requirements are complete.

Hosts must offer:

- Good quality accommodation in a stable environment
- Clean and tidy home with fire alarms installed
- Private bedroom with access internally and part of the family home
- Access to the home if security system installed
- Lockable doors to bedroom, bathroom and toilet
- A good quality bed and bedding
- Study desk with comfortable chair and lighting
- Wardrobe free of family belongings
- Drawer space (can be incorporated within the wardrobe)
- Heater or fan (depending on climate/season)
- Bathroom and toilet facilities close to the bedroom
- Laundry facilities
- Access to telephone
- Access to internet
- No intimidating pets

Hosts must display:

- Positive, honest, flexible, open-minded attitude towards the homestay situation

- Willingness to communicate with the student
- Positive, tolerant attitude towards other cultures
- Interest and good motivational skills (e.g., do they sound excited at the prospect of Hosting?)
- Knowledge of specific needs of international students (e.g., prior experience and/or a willingness to train).
- Ability to facilitate students' needs (e.g., emotional, behavioral, cultural).
- Ability to manage conflict.
- Ability to introduce appropriate boundaries depending on students' age and maturity.
- Stability and strength (e.g., financial, social, emotional etc.)
- Willingness of other members residing in the home to accept the student.
- Ability to speak English in a clear and concise manner.

Warning Signs:

- excessive focus on financial gain as motivation for hosting.
- mannerisms which may be interpreted by staff as threatening or have potential to make students feel uncomfortable.
- houses designed to be boarding houses (i.e. – accommodate more than three students).
- the presence of many other homestay students.
- apparent lack of cultural sensitivity or flexibility (e.g., unwillingness to provide Asian students with rice meals or permit students to practice religious rituals at home etc.)
- household arrangements not conducive to adequate privacy for student (e.g., shared sleeping arrangements)
- Unstable environment that differs from the host profile or information provided by the host.

Whilst ASC International must avoid discrimination, if a potential host, regardless of race, does not meet the selection criteria, set by ASC International, then ASC International has the right to decline accreditation for that host. For example: homestay students expect to stay with an English-speaking family to improve their English language capabilities. If a high level of English is an established criterion for placing students and a household does not meet the criterion, the household can be refused as a host. If the supervisor chooses to reject potential hosts, based on this criterion (or any other), the code of conduct and program policies should clearly reflect this position to protect the supervisor and the ASC International community legally.

It is at ASC International's discretion whether the host should be informed of the reasons they are being rejected. For example, if requirements are currently lacking that may be met in the future, ASC International may wish to alert the host of what is needed; however, if a host is completely unsuitable (e.g., hosting as primary income, prior exclusion from network) the supervisor may choose to simply inform the prospective host of their unsuitability without elaboration. If the host chooses to challenge this, they may be informed of the Grievance Management Policy and lodge a written request to appeal the decision. Please note that as part of the grievance proceedings applicants do have a legal right to view information collected regarding them: as such host files should be objective and not overly explicit in listing reasons for host unsuitability.

Host Agreement

If approved as a homestay host, a Host Agreement is to be signed.

5. Student Application

The following policy should be followed when placing students with homestay hosts. All students complete a homestay application form, which becomes their 'Homestay Profile'. The student's profile should be checked against potential hosts for suitability before confirming a placement. Students must not be placed with a host simply because it is convenient, The student's profile should be checked against available hosts for issues including the following:

- gender, age and personal preferences
- size of the family, how many children and their ages
- pets, dogs or cats, or both
- smoking or non-smoking
- transport time to institution
- length of stay
- hobbies
- special needs

If 'special needs' has been highlighted every care and precaution should be taken and confirmation sought from the Host that they can meet the student's requirements. Students will have preferences, which may or may not be accommodated at the time of matching. Students may be counselled to change their preferences if a suitable host cannot be found.

6. Placement Report

Once a placement has been confirmed a detailed placement report will be sent to the student and the host.

7. Under 18 Students

Pre-arrival Information:

Education providers must first sign a CAAW before a student can submit an application for a student visa. A Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is issued at the same time. The student must be issued with the address of their host, or a confirmation from ASC International that a homestay placement will be confirmed before arrival, prior to the issue of these documents. Where a student has applied for homestay and been informed of their host's address, issuing of the CAAW confirms that ASC International will take welfare responsibility for the student.

The CAAW must start from the date of commencement of the student's COE and end seven days after the end of the student's course. As students may not be permitted to travel to Australia before their welfare arrangements are in place, the CAAW should provide appropriate time, usually seven days prior to the commencement of the student's course, to allow them to arrive into Australia and settle into their accommodation. The student must abide by these dates and negotiate with their education provider for an extension of the CAAW if they plan to arrive more than one week prior to the start date.

Homestay Hosts **are not legal guardians** for their student and do not have any guardianship responsibilities over a student. Hosts have no right to sign any legal documents, such as a visa application, on the student's behalf. On expiry of a student visa, if the student remains in Australia and

does not make an application for a further visa, the visa will cease, and they may be located and removed from Australia by the Department of Home Affairs (DoHA).

Placement information:

In addition to the ASC International Student Homestay Agreement, the following applies to under 18 students:

- Where possible, students must not be placed in a homestay with other students of the opposite gender, especially when there is a large age gap.
- Ideally, students only placed in a homestay where there is at least one host of the same gender.
- Students should be placed as close to their education provider as possible, but within 60 minutes by public transport at a maximum.
- Unless the education provider has given written approval for travel with parents, Students are not permitted to travel to and from the airport unless booked with an ASC International assigned transport company.
- Students are to abide by curfews as set by ASC International. These are:

Sunday to Thursday

- ✓ Junior High School (Years 7 to 10) - no later than 6pm*
- ✓ Senior High School (Years 11 to 12) - no later than 9pm*

Friday/Saturday and School Holidays

- ✓ Junior High School (Years 7 to 10) - no later than 9:00pm*
- ✓ Senior High School (Years 11 to 12) - no later than 11:00pm*

* Unless for a school-approved extracurricular activity.

- Any breach of curfew is to be reported by the hosts to ASC International.
- Students must receive written approval by submitting a "Request to Vary Welfare" form to ASC International if they intend on spending any time away from their homestay.

Regular meetings will occur with each student via ASC International's Student Services team. These will occur both at school and at the homestay.

The student must have emergency access twenty-four hours/seven days a week or contact with the ASC International Student Services Team.

8. Study Tour Students

Study tour students arrive in groups, are enrolled in groups and generally stay together with the group for all activities. Some study tour students attend English courses, and some have holiday activities combined with their English course. Each education provider will be different.

The quotation agreed with each individual partner will dictate the method used for placing study tour Students i.e., host family/travel requirements, and the financial arrangement about the homestay fee. The group representative will provide ASCI with manual application forms and profiles for each student and ASCI takes responsibility for managing these placements.

Study Tour students can often have a lower level of English, depending on where they are from and will generally be placed with Hosts who have been proven to have a high duty of care and the attitude and ability to communicate easily with Students with a low level of English.

Students will be placed no more than 60 minutes by public transport travel to their campus.

9. Post-Arrival

Regular counselling is to be offered to the student whilst in homestay in conjunction with ASC International's welfare policies.

Students under 18 must seek assistance from ASC international if they are concerned about their homestay arrangement in any way or if they would like to request to change homestay hosts. ASC International will assess the request, and if a transfer is approved by ASC International for the new Host, transportation will be arranged.

The student may be required to pay for a professional pick-up service. In the case of a student changing homestays, additional fees may be charged, and the applicable policies and procedures must be followed. The education provider and DoHA must be informed of the new address.

Please refer to ASC International's policies here www.ascschools.edu.au for further information on requesting any changes to welfare and accommodation arrangements. The student will have **emergency** access for twenty-four hours/seven days a week for contact with ASC International.

All applicable state and federal laws must be obeyed regarding travel – such as wanting to drive a car, motorbike or bicycle (licensed appropriately, seatbelts, helmets etc.)

10. Monitoring Placements

The objective of monitoring placements ensures that continued performance is identified and measured against the criterion in place. Support can be offered where the need is identified to better protect both the host and the student. Monitoring should take place once in each six-month period via face-to-face inspections and meetings or via telephone follow-up to ensure the placement is progressing as per expectations.

Authority: Director of International Programs
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