



HOMESTAY HANDBOOK

HELLO & WELCOME

We are delighted that you have chosen to live in Homestay accommodation while you study at Bath Academy.

Staying in homestay accommodation will give you a unique experience of English culture. Homestays will welcome you into their home and lifestyle and in return Bath Academy students will embrace and adapt to their way of life.

We hope you find your stay rewarding and that life in Bath is enjoyable.

This handbook has been designed as a reference guide to give you the information you need to settle into living with a Homestay Provider.

The information in this handbook is relevant throughout your stay, so please read it, keep it and refer to it as a helping hand.

This handbook is not meant to replace student/staff relations, but to allow us to continue to assist and support you, both academically and pastorally. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask Natalia Knott, the Bath Academy Accommodation Officer.

In an emergency, please call 07715123299 or 01225 423327

Updated June 2015

GENERAL

1. Staying with a Homestay Provider will enable you to learn about English culture and way of life, but it is also intended to help you practise your English language skills. The Homestay Provider experience should be enjoyable for all, and Bath Academy encourages the homestay families to also learn about your culture and customs.
2. Although you are paying to stay with your Homestay Provider you should not treat them as a hotel. Living in someone else's house is really just a matter of consideration and tolerance. Try to be clean and tidy, offer to help where possible and enjoy being part of the home.
3. Most homestays are non-smoking households. If you are a smoker, please respect this and only smoke outside. Also, ask the Homestay Provider how you should dispose of the cigarette butts; don't just leave them on the ground. If you are staying in a smoking household there are usually rooms designated for smoking. You should never smoke in your bedroom as it is a serious fire hazard.
4. All students have a duty of care towards others staying in the Homestay, and towards the property of the house. Show them respect and politeness as you would expect them to show you in your home. Remember to ask permission to borrow or use something and never take anything from your host's home without asking first. This includes food and snacks: do not help yourself without asking, unless you have agreed with your host that this is okay.
5. It is reasonable to expect a front door key to allow you to come and go independently. However, most hosts will expect you to be home at a reasonable hour. This is mostly due to them being concerned about your safety and well-being. Please bear in mind that if you are out late, they will be worrying about you so it is considerate to let them know when to expect you back. Make sure you exchange mobile numbers with your Homestay Provider. If you miss a bus or train etc. you MUST remember to let them know. Please remember that it is not a good idea to walk home alone at night, so if you miss your bus, take a taxi from an official taxi rank, or by calling Abbey Taxis on 01225 444444 or V-Cars on 01225 464646. It is also advisable for students who live within walking distance of the city centre to take taxis at night time. Your safety is more important than saving a few pounds!
6. Your bedroom is your private space. This means that your host should not enter your room unannounced or go through your things. Please also remember that although you are living as a member of the household, there will be times when your Homestay Provider would like some privacy. Therefore, do not expect to spend every evening with your host, and please also respect their privacy, particularly if they have guests visiting.
7. If for any reason you move house, it is your responsibility to tell:
 - The police
 - Your bank
 - Your phone company (although Bath Academy strongly advises against contract phones)
 - Anybody and any institution with your address (including Bath Academy!)
8. If you are unhappy or unsure about something, please discuss it with your Homestay Provider. Most "problems" are actually due to students and hosts misunderstanding each

other and are easily solved by discussion. Homestay Providers are generally anxious to please and will do their best to make sure you are happy and feel part of the home. Please see Natalia Knott the Accommodation Officer if any problems arise, as staff are here to help you.

9. Students staying in homestays outside the summer months please refer to our separate handbook 'Autumn/Winter student guide'.

Natalia is available for students to discuss any concerns they have with regard to themselves or their Homestay Provider. Please do not hesitate to contact Natalia with regards to life with the Homestay Provider (meals, welfare etc.) Please make sure you have the emergency contact number which is 07715123299

ROOMS

1. Rooms should be well furnished with a bed, storage space and space to study (unless this is provided elsewhere in the house).
2. It is your responsibility to keep your bedroom tidy. Your Homestay Provider will clean the room and change your bedding once a week but this can only be done if you've kept your room tidy enough (it is impossible to vacuum with clothes all over the floor!). When you leave your room please make sure that any electrical equipment like heaters, TVs and computers are switched off and remember to close windows. These things are important for safety reasons so please observe them.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

1. The UK electrical system is 240 volts.
2. Please ask your Homestay Provider about plugs and adapters before using ANY electrical equipment (stereo, computers, hair dryers, etc.) in your room or anywhere else in the house.
3. All electrical equipment in this country must pass the British Safety Standards.

LAUNDRY

1. Bed linen should be laundered on a weekly basis. Please help your host by removing your bedding. You will need to check with your homestay which day bedding is laundered.
2. You can expect your Homestay Provider to do a reasonable amount of personal laundry for you. Please ask them which day they would like you to give them your clothes to wash.

SHOWERS AND BATHS

1. You should be able to have a shower or a bath daily. However, please remember that heating water is expensive so try to be as economical as possible.
2. Be considerate towards others staying in the house (do not use up all the hot water, and check whether other people are waiting to shower before you do).

3. English plumbing can be noisy in old houses so please shower at a reasonable time (not in the middle of the night). Also, toilets around the world all work differently. If you are unsure of how to use the toilet, please ask your host to explain it to you.
4. Always tidy & clean the bathroom and toilet after use, and leave it as you found it.

MEALS

1. Your Homestay Provider will tell you what time they expect you for meals. It is polite to let them know in advance if you will be eating out, or if you have made plans to come home late and would like them to keep a meal for you.
2. Breakfast in England is usually cold and normally consists of cereal and milk, toast with jam or spread, juice and tea or coffee. You should also be provided with a packed lunch - for example, two rounds of sandwiches, some fruit, crisps and biscuits. Dinner should be eaten with your homestay as this is a good time for you to talk about your day and catch up.
3. Please do not keep or eat food in your bedroom.
4. If you don't like certain foods, it is a good idea to discuss this with your Homestay Provider rather than waste food. However, if you are new to England, remember that food will probably be different from what you are used to: try to enjoy the differences. You should be prepared to eat your Homestay Provider's normal diet within reason, but if you are really missing familiar foods you may want to offer to cook some of your favourite foods to share with the Homestay Provider as a special treat.
5. Sunday lunch is traditionally a very important meal in England so please be extra considerate about meal times on Sunday. (Confusingly, some English people refer to this meal as "dinner" although it is normally eaten in the daytime).

NOISE

1. Be considerate and remember that walls are often thin and noise penetrates. Please respect the other members of the household by keeping quiet after bedtime (this is especially important if there are children in the house). Likewise, because walls can be thin, please make allowances for the normal noise of everyday life, bearing in mind homestay providers (as well as neighbours) will need to continue their working and living routine.
2. If you have friends visiting, make sure they leave quietly.

TELEPHONES & INTERNET

1. Telephone calls are very expensive and you are not allowed to use the telephone without permission. You must pay for ALL calls that you make. A good option is to buy international phone cards. They can be purchased at most newsagents and used by most landlines. Before buying one of these cards check the rates for calling your country and that there are no charges for connection.
2. Bath Academy advises against contract mobile phones and strongly recommends the use of top-up mobile phones.

3. Internet: Please respect your Homestay Provider as well as British law by not downloading anything illegal or inappropriate, even if you use your own laptop; in British law it is not the computer but the connection itself which carries the legal responsibility. If you have any doubts about what is inappropriate, or illegal, please consult your Homestay Provider or staff at Bath Academy.

GOING AWAY & VISITORS

1. If you wish to invite friends to the house it is polite to ask your Homestay Provider first. It is a good idea to introduce your friends to the Homestay Provider and to ask where they would like you to entertain your friends, and what time they should leave. Please remember that you are responsible for your friends while they are in your house and they should respect your Homestay Provider just as you do.
2. Inform your Homestay Provider as soon as you can about your holiday arrangements, like where and when you are going and when you will be back. Also remember to leave a contact number. If your plans change, you should inform your Homestay Provider as soon as possible.

DAMAGE

1. If you break or damage anything belonging to your Homestay Provider, please tell them as soon as possible. For example, coffee that is still wet can be washed out of a carpet, but once it dries the stain will be permanent.
2. Naturally you should treat your Homestay Provider's property with care and thoughtfulness. Ordinary "wear and tear" is expected and will not be charged to you but you may justifiably be expected to pay for anything that gets broken or spoiled and you should always offer to replace anything that is damaged by you, even if it is an accident.

VALUABLE POSSESSIONS

1. Do not leave large sums of money in your room.
2. Valuable possessions should be insured. You need to organize your own insurance. Do not expect your travel insurance to cover everything.

RENT

1. The minimum stay is one month unless you are on a shorter course.
2. If you move you must give your Homestay Provider 1 week's notice.

BATH ACADEMY AND LESSONS

All students are expected to attend all lessons on their timetables. If you are unwell, please notify Bath Academy and make a doctor's appointment if necessary.

ENJOY YOUR STAY!