



Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe
Gower College Swansea

Homestay guide for hosts

Would you like to become a host? All international students aged 16 – 18 will be placed with a homestay host for the duration of their studies which will provide them with the safe, caring environment they need.

What is the best thing about being a host?

Being a homestay host can provide you with the opportunity to learn about other cultures and to develop long standing relationships with students from around the world. Many of our hosts keep in touch with students they have hosted previously and have found the whole experience highly rewarding.

Why is it important for a student to stay with a homestay family?

Homestay provides our students with an excellent opportunity to improve their English and to learn about our customs and traditions whilst being immersed in our way of life. It is often the first time most of them have lived away from home and they learn how to become more independent, which will be a good grounding for life at university.

By welcoming the students into your home, you will be helping them settle in and overcome any potential homesickness they might be feeling. It is important to have your evening meals together when possible, this allows you to get to know each other better and is another opportunity for them to practise their English.

The College organises a social programme for the students which includes a familiarisation tour of the city when they first arrive and visits to various cities such as Cardiff, Oxford and Bath. The students have expressed their enjoyment when spending time with their hosts and the family in their spare time too.

What does homestay include?

Each student must have their own bedroom, with a wardrobe, storage space and a mirror. They should also have a study desk, chair and lamp and access to WIFI. They will need a house key for their own use, and you may need to show them any additional security measures you would want them to adhere to. They are informed to let their hosts know if they might be late for meals or getting home, it is important that you endorse this for your own

benefit and also to meet with College curfew rules of 22:00hrs on weekdays and 23:00hrs at weekends.

You will need to provide breakfast and an evening meal daily; it is recommended that you discuss their likes and dislikes when they arrive. The student will require some space in the kitchen for them to store their snacks.

Fresh bedding and towels must be provided every week and you will also have to take care of laundry. It is essential that you respect the student's privacy, however, you should be given access to clean their room weekly but inform the student in advance so they can tidy their room for you to be able to clean it.

How to become a host family?

You will first need to complete an application form and submit this to the International Office, the Accommodation Officer will organise a visit to carry out a risk assessment.

All homes must have an up to date [gas certificate](#). The Government has produced guidance for people letting out rooms, in relation to [fire regulations](#). Also, there are laws regarding [tax thresholds](#).

Exchange of information prior to arrival

We try to match hosts with students from their application form which we would send to you before they arrive. We also send the student your profile and once both parties have confirmed they are happy with the arrangements, we encourage you to make contact each other before the start of term.

If possible we would like you to collect the student when they arrive in Swansea unless their arranged transport brings them direct to homestay.

Holidays

Most students return home for Christmas, but this is not always the case. In the event of them staying here for that period and you are not able to accommodate them, we would need to know as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. If you are going away for the weekend or on holiday you will need to notify the International Office well in advance for us to make alternative arrangements.

Agreement forms

Once the student has settled in we will send you a Homestay Agreement Form stating the roles and responsibilities of the host, the student and the College which will be signed by all parties. It is important to use this form to cover house rules that will set the boundaries from day one. These may include use of the kitchen and food, laundry, sharing a bathroom, friends to visit / staying somewhere else.

Wellbeing and health

The student will be given a letter by the College for them to register with a doctor, we would like you to arrange an appointment with your doctor for them to register shortly after they

arrive. They will have paid for basic health care with their Visa Application. This will permit them to be seen without delay if and when they should become ill. If they feel too ill to come to College they must inform the International Office and report it via the College app or website.

For your information there is a Student Health Advisor at College and there are trained first aiders within the International Office, however if they do become ill in College they may be sent home.

Feedback and complaints

We welcome feedback to improve our service, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your experience of homestay accommodation during the year and you can provide informal feedback at any time to our Accommodation Officer.

Contact us

International Office: 01792 284007

Out of hours (urgent matters only): 0746369995