

AHN

**Australian Homestay
Network**

Study Tours Handbook

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDY TOUR
GROUPS**

2025

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Introduction

The Australian Homestay Network (AHN) has been successfully placing students in safe, reliable and supportive homestays since 2008. Our mission is to facilitate successful personal cultural exchanges between homestay host families and their international student guests, whether they are studying in Australia full time or visiting as part of a study tour.

AHN recognises that tour organisers have many responsibilities when sourcing suitable accommodation for international study tour groups. We have streamlined the process through our world-class procedures and proprietary Homestay Management System (HMS).

AHN has developed a reputation as an industry leader, placing over 90,000 students from 185 countries in homestays across Australia. You can count on us to arrange safe, comfortable and welcoming homestay accommodation for your tour group. Our Program Manager can also tailor full tour programs including education, experiences and activities upon request. Contact info@homestaynetwork.org for more information.



Students are in good hands with AHN

AHN has received acknowledgement and commendation for 'appropriate' standards from industry bodies, including the Council of International Students of Australia (CISA), and in two Australian Government inquiries



The quality of our standards, services and support have also been independently endorsed by the [National English Language Teaching Accreditation Scheme \(NEAS\)](#).

AHN is proud to be the first homestay service provider to be recognised under this new industry-recognised framework.

The AHN Difference

We are dedicated to providing appropriate standards of care for international students and provide the following services to our study tour partners:

1. **Appropriate compulsory insurance cover** ensuring cover for both hosts and students, including:

Student legal liability (which include damages)	\$20M
Host liability insurance for student personal injury and property damage	\$20M
Student's contents insurance covering students' personal effects within the host's home	\$10,000

2. **Local representatives in all operating regions** to ensure that there is local support to assist with any requirements and/or issues face to face as appropriate.
3. **Compulsory background checks, training and house inspections** for approved host families to ensure hosts have the appropriate clearances and meet the required standards of homestay accommodation.
4. **Comprehensive policy documentation** outlining expectations and responsibilities of student, host family and homestay provider. This includes a confirmed Host Agreement signed by all host families outlining appropriate policies and the host obligations.
5. **Professional 24/7 emergency support** and critical incident strategy where professional staff are fully trained to triage the call and follow documented protocols. The intention is to minimise trauma and distress to students and hosts and damage to property and to ensure the relevant stakeholders are informed and involved in the management of critical incidents.
6. **Accountable host payments** ensuring that there is ongoing transparency, management and accountability for all payments to the homestay host.
7. **Agent partnerships** including an AHN system login so you can view and monitor student applications. You may also be eligible to receive commission for long-term student homestays (NOTE: commission is not offered for study tour placements as we aim to provide the best value and most competitive pricing for the client).

Procedures and Expectations

Booking Process

AHN is dedicated to facilitating a fulfilling cultural exchange for your group. Arranging homestays and planning a successful tour takes time, which is why it's important we work with our clients to meet the goals set out in the timeline below.

1 Submit your booking request – minimum 8 weeks prior to your travel dates

Contact AHN to request a study tour quote. We'll require some basic information to provide an accurate quote:

- Institution / location
- Dates of stay / number of nights in homestay
- Number of guests
- Guest ages (range is fine)
- Placement type (shared or private room required)
- Special requirements (such as maximum guests permitted per household)
- Meal requirements
- Transport requirements (APU and/or daily transport)
- Contact details for tour organiser (name, email, phone)
- Individual student details can be provided now or by Step 4 at the latest

2 Receive a quote – 7- 8 weeks prior to your travel dates

We'll send you a quote containing a breakdown of all fees associated with your tour (homestay fees, transport fees, etc).

3 Confirm tour and approve quote – at least 6 weeks prior to arrival

Contact AHN to confirm your tour is going ahead and that you agree to the quote. We will then issue an invoice for the full amount of the tour, which must be paid in full at least **4 weeks prior to arrival** in order for the placement process to commence. Payment of your invoice constitutes your acceptance and compliance with our [Policies](#), processes and expectations outlined in this document.

4 Pay invoice, submit student profiles and finalise itinerary – minimum 4 weeks prior to arrival

Once you have paid your invoice we will start the matching process. If not already provided we will need the following information for each student at a minimum so that we can create their profiles:

- Name
- DOB
- Gender
- Preferences if applicable (e.g. living with pets, food allergies, etc.)

You will also need to send us final details of your itinerary and schedule.

5 Match students / hosts – 4 weeks prior to arrival

We'll match students with hosts based on the profiles you've provided. You'll need to submit final information such as flight details etc.

6 Confirmed host profiles are released – 2 weeks prior to arrival

We'll release our placement reports containing host profiles and placement information.

7 Welcome to Australia

If you have requested a meet and greet, we will meet you upon arrival at a pre-confirmed location to introduce your students to their host families.

AHN Host Selection and Screening Process

AHN hosts are carefully selected to ensure that students are placed in environments that are not only safe and comfortable but also warm and welcoming. We provide hosts with tailored information about study tours to ensure they are aware of the different expectations and procedures for tour groups. By working with AHN to arrange homestay accommodation for your tour, you can rest assured you are partnering with an organisation dedicated to providing appropriate standards of care for international students.

- Hosts go through a rigorous certification process that includes comprehensive training, background checks (as per State and Territory requirements), an in-home interview and a house inspection.
- Insurance for both students and hosts (see homestaynetwork.org/ahn-insurance).
- We offer 24/7 professionally staffed emergency support to handle emergency situations with time stamped reports. All call centre staff are trained in critical incident management and protocols can be customised
- We manage all homestay payments, minimising potential conflicts and avoidable incidents.
- All hosts sign a contract that outlines AHN standards at the start of the registration process and commits hosts to upholding those standards.

Student Placement Process

The quotation agreed with each individual tour organiser will dictate the method used for placing study tour students e.g. private or shared rooms, maximum guests per homestay, travel requirements etc. **Private rooms** accommodate a single student with access to shared household facilities (bathroom, laundry, kitchen, etc.). **Shared rooms** accommodate two or more students in individual beds with access to shared household facilities (bathroom, laundry, kitchen, etc.).

We understand study tour students can often have a lower level of English, depending where they are from. Consequently, we will place students 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.

Please be mindful that our homestay hosts come from all over the world – just like the students who come to study in Australia – and our host pool is made up of many different kinds of people with different backgrounds. As there is no “typical” host family, we cannot

guarantee all students will be placed with hosts who fit a specific demographic (e.g. Caucasian family with two children). Each placement will allow for the student and host family to learn from each other, increasing their cultural awareness.

We always aim to place students in homestays no more than 60 minutes from the main campus/special interest/tour point. Hosts will provide transport where possible or live close to public transport so students may travel together on the train or bus.

Student Orientation

Providing your tour group with information about Australia prior to your arrival will ensure their journey is safe, enjoyable and educational. It's important you lay the foundations for a positive tour experience by making them aware of local customs, behavioural expectations and safety advice. You may like to share the AHN Student Orientation video with your group so they know what to expect when they come to Australia. The video is online and can be viewed at the following links:

English (ahnhomestay.co/guest-orientation-video-1)

Airport Transfers

If airport transfers have been booked through AHN, groups must move promptly to the designated pick-up point after clearing customs. This is especially important if homestay hosts are picking their guests up from the airport. In this case, the entire group needs to be outside customs with their luggage by the confirmed collection time (we allow approximately 2 hours from the notified arrival time). Extra charges may be payable if hosts are required to wait for a study tour to clear customs.

Contact with AHN Hosts

We have established relationships with our hosts. You must not use the host information we provide you with to solicit homestay services directly from the host, or discuss payment of the homestay services they provide through AHN.

Expectations for Students in Homestay

Our comprehensive policy documentation helps ensure a successful homestay experience for everyone involved. It is a requirement of AHN homestay that all guests abide by the AHN Guest Agreement and Student Guide to the House Rules. Please refer to the [AHN Policies](#) section. These documents must be provided to your tour group. Their final placement into an AHN homestay signifies acceptance of the conditions outlined in the aforementioned documents. You should also read and understand the information outlined in the AHN Policies.

We have also created a Study Tours - Student Expectations document which should be provided to your guests prior to arrival.

ENGLISH: ahnhomestay.co/student-expectations-study-tours-EN

CHINESE: ahnhomestay.co/student-expectations-study-tours-CH

JAPANESE: ahnhomestay.co/student-expectations-study-tours-JP

Contact with AHN

We require the name, email address and phone number of the person organising the tour to ensure we have a reliable contact throughout the booking process. You will also need to confirm the name, email address and phone number of the person who will be supervising the tour upon arrival in Australia (if applicable).

AHN Policies

The Australian Homestay Network has developed policies to ensure everyone involved in our programs has a safe and rewarding experience. You can view our policies at <https://au.homestaynetwork.org/policies/>. As our policies are updated from time to time, we recommend you bookmark this URL so you have easy access to the most current information.

Student Guide to the House Rules



STUDENT GUIDE TO THE HOUSE RULES

Including Under 18 and Study Tour Guidelines

Welcome to Australia! We hope you enjoy your stay. Below are guidelines, which will help to create a happy home for everyone.

Telephone numbers

AHN 24 hour = 1300 MYSTAY (1300 697829)

Police/Fire/Ambulance Emergency: 000

Host Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Contacting you in Australia:

- Between you and your family: Please use your mobile phone or purchase a pre-paid phone card.
- Between you and AHN/your host: You need to advise your email address as soon as you arrive and your mobile as soon as you have set it up.

Payments for your stay:

- Homestay invoices are sent to you via email and can be viewed in the AHN system.
 - If you have forgotten your login details, please reset your password via this link: https://auth.homestaynetwork.org/forgot_password
- Payment Reference - Please use your GUEST ID as your payment reference so that AHN can match your payment to your invoice.

Health Issues

- Tell your host if you are feeling unwell. They'll advise you where the nearest medical centre is and assist you.
- You may have to pay to see the doctor, however your OSHC may cover some medical costs. Dental and optical are not covered under your health insurance. You will receive your health care card on orientation day at your school.
- **13SICK** is the number for medical assistance after 6:00pm at night and before 6:00am in the morning.
- Follow any public health directions in your local area, and check to see if there are any public health orders in place when travelling away from your homestay.
- Visit ahnhomestay.co/medical-help-aus for more info.

- If you are having a challenging time, it's OK to seek help and support. You can reach out to the below organisations for assistance.

All Ages

- **Beyond Blue** 1300 224 636
 - **Lifeline Australia** 13 11 14
- Lifeline also offers a free interpreting service. To access this service:

- 1) Call TIS National on 131 450 and ask to talk to Lifeline on 13 11 14 in the language required.
- 2) TIS National will call 13 11 14 on your behalf.

25 and Under

- **Headspace** 1800 650 890
- **Kids Helpline** 1800 55 1800

Privacy

When you are sharing a home, it is important to respect each other's private time and space.

- When in your room, toilet and bathroom remember to keep the door closed and if there is a lock please use it.
- Knock before you enter a room, especially any private use areas (bedrooms and bathrooms).

Shoes inside the house

- Ask your host if shoes can be worn in the house.
- Please do not wear high-heel shoes on polished floorboards.
- Try to avoid wearing shoes on the carpet.

House Key

Your host will provide you with your own house key when you arrive. If you lose the key you may be charged for the cost of a replacement key. The key is to be returned to your host before you move out. When leaving the house daily, please ensure that you:

- Turn off lights, fans, air conditioning, heating, laptops, etc. at the wall or power board switch in your room
- Lock the outside door and close any windows.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Your Room

- In Australia, we sleep in a bed, between the sheets, with blankets on top.
- Ask your host about changing bed sheets, pillow cases and towels. This will be done at least once every two weeks.

We ask you to please;

- Keep your room clean and tidy.
- Do not cook, or keep food in your room.
- Do not leave any wet clothing or towels in your room.
- Do not stick anything to the walls. If you wish to hang anything, see your host.
- Ask your homestay family if you need extra blankets if you are cold or a fan if you are hot.

Noise

- Your host won't mind you playing music or chatting with your friends via mobile or internet but please try to do this before 10:30pm at night.
- If you need to call your family after this time due to time zone differences, please check if this is ok with your host first.
- Always try to keep the noise level at a point where it doesn't upset other family members or their sleep regardless of the time.

Internet

- Ask your host how the internet works in their home.
- The internet is for study purposes. Please be mindful of internet usage when it comes to gaming and entertainment.

Toilet

- Never squat or stand on the toilet seat.
- Never flush anything down the toilet except for toilet paper.
- Don't use too much toilet paper as it may block or cause the toilet to overflow.
- Always wash your hands with soap after using the toilet.
- Please wipe down any spills on the toilet after you have finished.
- Please use the provided toilet brush to remove any marks left in the toilet bowl after you have finished.

Women/Girls

- All sanitary items such as tampons and pads should never be flushed down the toilet.
- At home, there will be a bin in the toilet or bathroom area or you may need to ask your host mother where to dispose of sanitary items.
- If you are still unsure, wrap the sanitary item in toilet paper and put in a plastic bag and then put it in the garbage bin outside.

Meals

Students have different meal options with their homestay. Your host or AHN can show you which meal option you have chosen (check your invoice or placement report). The information below should be used as a guide if your package includes meals.

Breakfast

- Let your host know what you want and you can help yourself e.g. cereal, toast, fruit, juice, tea or coffee.
- Australians normally have a cold breakfast.

Lunch

- This could include sandwiches, salads, fruit or muesli bars but may also be noodles or a hot meal.
- 'Leftovers' is food cooked the night before and put into containers in the fridge that you can then heat up again at your education provider.

Dinner

- Can be hot or cold.
- Discuss with your host what food you don't like so this can be considered when they make their family meal.
- Dinner is normally served early in the evening in Australia. Ask your host what time they usually eat.
- It is polite to let your hosts know by 4:00pm if you will not be home for dinner or will be late so that food is not wasted.

When you use the kitchen please make sure that you leave the kitchen clean and tidy. **Under 18s are not allowed to cook on their own and must ask permission before using the kitchen. Hosts may not allow younger students to cook or use appliances in the kitchen without supervision.**

Water Usage – Water Restrictions

- Please help us save water by keeping shower times to 10 minutes or less and turning off the water whilst you brush your teeth.
- Please do not waste water. Ask your host family about ways to save water.
- Water is expensive in Australia. While water restrictions aren't currently in place, conserving water is encouraged.

Bathroom

- Please only bathe in the bath or shower cubicle so water does not splash onto the bathroom floor.
- When using the bathroom, close the door. There may be a privacy lock on the door, please use it.
- There is usually a bath mat on the floor. Stand on that when you get out of the shower so you do not slip over.
- Hang your towel up to dry after you use it. Check with your host family where you should hang your wet towel.
- Have a toiletry bag with your own shampoo, soap, tissues, etc.
- Leave any wet items in the bathroom or hang out to dry – please do not leave them in your room.
- If you make a mess, please clean it up.
- Please complete all shower activities by 10:00pm. If you need to shower later for some reason, please chat to your host.

Personal Hygiene

- Australia can have very warm weather. Students should maintain good personal hygiene by putting on deodorant each morning before dressing.

Lights, Fans, Cooling and Heating

- Please make sure you turn off all lights when you go to sleep (ask your host for a small wall light if needed).
- Not all homes will have air conditioning and/or heaters. If they are available, they should be used moderately and switched off when you are going out.
- If you have access to an air conditioner, only use it when it is necessary and keep it at 24 degrees to conserve energy.
- You can ask your host for a fan to cool down or extra blankets if you are cold. During colder seasons, wear clothing that will keep you warm as heating can be expensive and your hosts might not have the heating on all of the time.

Laundry

Ask your host family about washing your clothes. Your host family may want you to:

- Do your own washing – your host will instruct you on how the machine operates and how much detergent to use. Full loads only please, 1-2 times per week. Once the washing is done, hang it on the clothesline to dry. Do not keep wet clothes in your bedroom.
- Some host may ask you to put your laundry items in a basket provided and your host will wash them for you.
- Ask your host if you would prefer to hang your underwear to dry in a private place.
- Your host will advise you what day you need to change the sheets on your bed and when to change your towels.

Cleaning

Cleaning is part of family life and you may be asked to help out.

- Help with tidying up after meals, including washing or drying dishes.
- Keep your own room clean and tidy and make your bed.
- Keep your bathroom clean and tidy – do not leave wet towels and clothes on the floor.
- If you make a mess anywhere in the home, please clean it up. If you are unsure what to use, chat to your host and they will help.

Broken or damaged something in the house?

- Don't worry, accidents can happen sometimes.
- Please let your host know if something has been broken or damaged.
- AHN students and hosts have some insurance coverage. Give AHN a call or email if you have any questions.

Smoking and Alcohol (not permitted for students under the age of 18 years old)

Do not smoke in the house –

- If you are over 18 and your host allows smoking at the house, you can only smoke outside and use the container provided for the butts.
- You cannot smoke inside the host's home. Please ask if you have any problems or questions.

Be sensible with alcohol –

- If you are over 18 and your host allows alcohol at the house, be sure to drink responsibly and behave in a respectful manner.
- Remember that excessive drinking can have a negative impact on your studies and your personal life.

Friends

- If you wish to have friends visit you at your homestay, please ask your host for permission and confirm what time they should leave before you invite them over.
- You need to ask each time you would like to invite a guest to your homestay,
- It may not be permitted to have friends visit or sleep overnight.

Going Out

- If you are under 18, you must advise your host where you are going and when you will be home prior to going out at night. You need to be home by the curfew set by your welfare provider and/or host.
- Students under 18 years of age are not permitted to stay away from the homestay overnight without written permission from their welfare provider.
- If you go out with friends at night or on weekends you must find your own way home either by public transport or taxi. Travel with friends especially at night!
- If you are going to be home past your curfew, you must immediately contact your host to let them know when and how you will be getting home.

Public Transport

- Download the local transport app on your phone and computer to work out the best and quickest route to travel.
- Ask your host and education provider about a transport card as this is cheaper than buying a paper ticket when using public transport. You must carry your valid student ID card to receive a concession or you may be fined a fee by the Transport department inspector.

Follow AHN Policies

- All homestay participants – Guests and Hosts – must abide by AHN policies throughout a placement.
- Public policies can be found at <https://au.homestaynetwork.org/policies>.

Intending to leave homestay?

You are required to give AHN and your host family two weeks' notice in writing. Send AHN a message through the system or email your local office if you wish to give notice.

You are not permitted to enter into a private arrangement with your host.

AHN Contact Details

If you require any additional information, please contact us on info@homestaynetwork.org.

Our normal office hours are 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. If you have an emergency outside of these hours please contact our 24/7 contact centre on 1300 MYSTAY (1300 697829).