



Guide to hosting international students

Boost your income by welcoming international students into your home



BECOME A HOST FOR STUDENTS FROM YOUR LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTRE

Do you have a spare bedroom? You could boost your income by opening up your home to international students.

There are English language centres all over the UK, in major cities, tourist destinations and many other towns and villages.

Students come to the UK from all over the world to learn English. They often choose homestay accommodation, so that they can get to know local people and practise their English.

In this guide we'll explain what is expected from homestay hosts, how much you could earn, and how you'll be supported by your local language school.

Hosting students is a unique opportunity to meet people from other cultures. You could welcome a university student from Thailand staying with you one month, and a lawyer from Mexico the next.

You're in control: you can choose when you want students to stay with you and what age range you are comfortable with.

All hosts are different – single people, families with children, younger or older people, anyone who lives near an English language centre can welcome students.

Most students looking for a host are young adults or under 18s. They usually make short visits to study English for between two weeks and a few months.

»» PROVIDE A HOME FROM HOME

»» BOOST YOUR INCOME

»» 24/7 SUPPORT



Homestay hosts provide a warm welcome and a home away from home.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE HOMESTAY HOST?

PROVIDING A WARM WELCOME

As a host, you'll provide a home to a student while they're visiting the UK. When they arrive, you'll share information about the local area and help them plan travel to their school.

Depending on the age of the student and how many activities they have included in their programme, you may be asked to share evening meals with the student and spend time with them at the weekend.

Some adult students will be very independent, but they will still value having a friendly host as part of their experience in the UK.

MATCHING HOSTS AND STUDENTS

Your local school will give you a questionnaire or interview to help them match you with students that suit your lifestyle and home.

They are likely to ask about your household, your working hours, if you have pets, if you smoke etc.

They'll find suitable students who are likely to fit in well with your preferences and routine.

SHARING MEALS WITH YOUR GUEST

Your local language school will offer different homestay packages to their students.

Some students will want a bed and breakfast package, others will want some evening meals (eg. three a week), some will want full-board. In some cases students will just want access to the kitchen to prepare their own food.

HOSTING UNDER 18S

If you'd like to host students under 18 years old, the language centre will assess your suitability and a DBS check will be required.

SUPPORT FROM YOUR SCHOOL, 24/7

The accommodation staff at your student's school will give you all the information and advice you need to have a successfully hosting experience

All British Council accredited centres will provide you with 24/7 support and a number you can call in an emergency.

TRANSPORT

You'll be expected to help students understand how to use public transport to get to their school, local town centre etc.

ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS

Accommodation staff from the language school will visit your home to make sure it's a suitable place for students to stay.

Basic requirements:

- › a single or twin bedroom with space to study
- › a warm and comfortable shared living space that the student can use
- › access to a kitchen and washing machine
- › Bed linen and towels

HOW MUCH CAN YOU EARN FROM HOSTING STUDENTS?

Your weekly income as a host ranges from £100 to £250 per student, depending on where you live and the services you are asked to provide e.g. meals, private bathroom.

If you have the space, you can host up to four students at a time, in single or twin bedrooms.

Your potential earnings per student will depend on your proximity to a language school and the quality of the accommodation you can provide.

FULL BOARD/HALF BOARD

Some schools offer students a full-board homestay option which comes with a premium and means you would provide breakfast and dinner at home, and a packed lunch for the student to take to school.

The standard package usually requires you to provide breakfast food for the student, and to cook and eat with them on most evenings of their stay.

Self-catering and bed & breakfast packages are also possible if you don't have time to cook for your guests.

HOSTING MORE THAN ONE STUDENT

You may be able to host up to four students at a time, with the possibility of two students sharing a twin bedroom.

HOSTING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

You'll be able to earn more if you are flexible about how long students can stay with you, as this will increase the number of weeks in the year that you can host.

TAX-FREE ALLOWANCE

The Rent a Room Scheme lets you earn up to a threshold of £7,500 per year tax-free from letting out furnished accommodation in your home. The tax exemption is automatic so you do not need to do anything.

If you earn more than this from letting your spare room you must complete a tax return.

› [Visit GOV.UK for more information on the Rent a Room Scheme](#)

HOW TO FIND A LOCAL LANGUAGE SCHOOL

You can [use the English UK directory](#) to find a language school near you.

By working with a British Council accredited centre you can be sure that the school adheres to high standards and will provide you with 24/7 support.



Earn up to £7,500 per year tax-free by hosting international students

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW LONG WILL EACH STUDENT STAY FOR?

The average adult student stays for between two and four weeks, while teenagers usually stay for two weeks or less.

Students who are studying English to pass an exam or before starting a university course may stay for an academic year or longer.

DO I NEED TO HOST ALL YEAR?

You can choose when to open your home to students. The more availability you can offer, the higher your income will be.

The minimum stay per student is usually two weeks.

DOES THE BEDROOM NEED TO BE ENSUITE?

Your spare bedroom(s) don't need to be ensuite and most students are told they will have access to a shared bathroom only. But many schools do have demand for ensuite rooms and will pay a premium if you have one.

CAN I JUST OFFER BED AND BREAKFAST?

Yes, you can offer just bed and breakfast - some adult students may in fact prefer this arrangement. You may need to give them access to your kitchen to prepare their own evening meals, although this is unlikely to be every day.

Juniors usually need half or full board (ie packed lunch).

WHAT TYPE OF FOOD DO I NEED TO PROVIDE?

The school will let you know if the student has any special requirements or food they don't eat. Otherwise, you can provide them with whatever you normally eat.

WHAT DOES THE STUDENT DO OVER THE WEEKEND WHEN NOT AT SCHOOL?

Juniors (under 18s) will normally have a package of excursions and other activities on at least one day of the weekend.

Adult students often like to spend some of the weekend with other students.

You may like to organise some weekend activities with your student(s). It isn't usually expected by always appreciated.

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I HAVE PETS, DOES THAT MATTER?

No. Your chosen school(s) will ask their students key questions to ensure the homestay is a good fit. This will include asking students if they are comfortable around pets.

WHAT IF IT'S NOT A GOOD FIT?

If things are not working out, you or your student can speak to the language school (or the homestay agency) who can move the students or provide an alternative solution.

English UK is the national association of accredited English language teaching centres in the United Kingdom.



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