Thank you for hosting international students enrolled in the University of Victoria Homestay Program. Please find below detailed information about our programs, host registration procedures, matching procedures, and the host family’s responsibilities.

Program Types

English Programs

a) Long-Term International Programs
- 12-weeks in length, starting in January, April and September. A shorter program, generally 9-10 weeks, is also offered in July.
- Open to individual students from any country.
- Students study English in either a morning class (8:30am – 12:45pm) or an afternoon class (1pm – 5:15pm) depending on their class level. They can also attend drop-in tutorials, or study privately in the Computer-Assisted Language Lab on campus.

b) Short-Term International Programs
- 3 – 6 weeks in length, starting at various times throughout the year
- Open to individual students from any country.
- Students study English from 8:30am – 12:30pm, and participate in various socio-cultural activities every afternoon.

c) Short-Term Group Programs
- 1 – 6 weeks in length, starting at various times throughout the year.
- Custom designed for a specific group from a college, university, or company.
- Students study English from 8:30am – 12:30pm, and participate in various socio-cultural activities every afternoon.

Undergraduate, Graduate & Diploma Programs
- Home placement is available to any international student or visiting faculty/researcher studying or working full-time at the University of Victoria whose native language is not English.
- Course contents and lengths vary.
- Students’ English proficiency levels are normally quite high for credit or diploma programs.

Host Registration Procedure
- Once you have been made active and hosted with the University of Victoria Homestay Program once, you will automatically go on our active host list.
- Once you are on our active host list, you will receive our newsletter, The Host Times, three or four times per year, which will outline the upcoming program dates and host registration deadlines.
- Each time you receive the newsletter, please email the Homestay Program Assistant (uvcshp@uvic.ca) by the deadline indicated at the bottom of the list of programs to register for the programs in which you are interested in hosting.
Please indicate to the Homestay Program Assistant whether you are interested in hosting one, two or three students and whether your prefer males, females or have no gender preference. We do not mix genders in placements. If your home can accommodate three students, and you are already hosting a student, you can register for a second and third student of the same gender and different language group. UVic Homestay will only place two students of the same nationality during peak times (February, March, August and September).

Hosts who register before the deadline will go on our availability list. Host who register after the deadline will be considered if the matching process is not complete.

Matching Procedure

After the host registration deadline for each session, we will begin matching for the upcoming programs. Normally, we match students with host families approximately 2-4 weeks before the programs begin. For our summer and September programs, we begin to match earlier due to the increased number of students in these peak periods.

Preference will be given to hosts who live closest to the University of Victoria, who have received excellent evaluations, and who meet the student’s specific criteria (ie. pets, children, hobbies etc).

As we try to make the best matches possible between the student’s criteria and the host’s lifestyle, we cannot guarantee that every host family will be matched with a student each term. We do not guarantee placements.

If you are not matched with a student, you will automatically be placed on an emergency list in case of any last minute changes or late applications.

If we do have a suitable student to match with your family, we will call or email you with the specific student details (ie. age, nationality, gender, allergies, food dislikes, hobbies, personal characteristics). At this point, you can accept or reject the placement.

If you accept the placement, we will send you a package of information with the placement contract and emergency card. The placement contract will contain a link to further information on the program and other details. Please ensure that you make yourself familiar with the information on the student, placement dates, program information and payment details. Information on the website will outline what you need to do before the student arrives, as well as your responsibilities as a host family for the duration of the program.

Pre-Arrival Correspondence

When you receive your student’s contact information, please send an email and photo introducing your family, home and neighbourhood to your student. We encourage you to send the email as soon as possible to begin forging a relationship with your student – this will make the adjustment process go much more smoothly for both of you. We also recommend not sending a photo with the first email as it will likely end up in the student’s junk mail folder.

Your student will also send a personal introduction letter to your family.

For Long-Term Programs and Short-Term International Programs, students are required to send their arrival details directly to you with their personal introduction letter. You will be required to meet your student individually. As such, we recommend that you hold up a sign with your student’s name so that they can easily recognize you.

For Short-Term Group Programs, our office will send you the group’s arrival information. Our staff will be at the arrival location to facilitate the group’s travel and ensure you meet your student.

Student Orientation

Upon your student’s arrival to your home, please orient your student to your family’s lifestyle, home, and neighbourhood:

Give your student a key to your house so that they can come and go as necessary.
Fill out the Emergency Card that will be sent in your host package and give it to your student. Ensure that your student has this card with them when they leave the home for the first time and that they carry this card with them for the duration of the program.

Show your student how to use all facilities/appliances in the home (ie. TV, washer, dryer, dishwasher, vacuum, shower, toilet).

Provide your student with the Wi-Fi password to access internet and discuss usage.

Outline your normal family routines including work schedules, activity schedules, shower schedules, times that you can spend together. Take the time to plan some activities together with your student for the next few weeks.

Personally escort your student on the city bus both to and from the university and downtown to orient them to the bus system and your bus route.

Take your student to the grocery store, drug store, post office, bank, and closest shopping area to orient them to the neighbourhood and its amenities.

Take your student to the nearest bank to set up a bank account if they require one. Suggest to your student that they deposit any cash into a bank account or change it into traveler’s cheques.

Advise your student not to keep valuables (money, passport, laptops, cd players etc.) lying around in their room. Instruct them to keep any valuables locked in a safe place (luggage, safety deposit box, locked drawer etc.).

Check to see if your student has purchased medical insurance for their stay in Canada. If not, they can come to the English Language Centre Office located in the Continuing Studies Building to obtain details on UVic’s preferred provider. Students who are going to be staying in BC for 6 months or longer must register for the BC Medical Insurance Plan. BSMSP Application forms are available at the English Language Centre. On the first day of the program, our office will review this information with students; however, they are often overwhelmed by all of the information that they receive in the first week. Please double check to make sure that your student has medical insurance, and ask them to keep their policy in a known location (ie. suitcase pocket, desk drawer) so that you can help them to access the resources they need in case of an emergency.

**Fee Payment Schedule**

- The homestay fee is $850 CAD per program for Monthly English
- The homestay fee is $850 CAD per month for programs longer than a full month, and $28 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months

*Effective January 1, 2018:*

- The homestay fee is $950 CAD per program for Monthly English
- The homestay fee is $950 CAD per month for programs longer than a full month, and $32 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months
- The current rate of $850 CAD/month or $28 CAD/day will remain in effect for all students and homestay hosts until their first full payment in 2018.

We are often asked: “What do I do about the fees if a student arrives early/leaves later?” For the sake of consistency, we ask that everyone follow the same schedule for fee payments. That way, if there is a need for our office to support a discussion between hosts and students regarding fees, we can advise according to our program.

Here’s how we structure payments: Start the schedule with the first night the student stays in your home. Your student then pays you the monthly fee on the corresponding date of the following month. (For example, if your student arrived on September 12, your student will pay you the next month’s fees on
October 12). The $28 per night ($32 in 2018) is then calculated for the final fee payment if the last month is longer or shorter than a calendar month.

Payment schedules can be confusing, but if you remember some simple facts, you and your student will have a stress-free fee payment experience!

**Short-Term Program Homestay Fees**

- the Homestay fee is $850 CAD per month for short term programs, even if the dates listed in the Placement Contract are less than a calendar month
- the student pays this fee directly to the host, unless U Vic Homestay has made alternate arrangements for the specific student
- the student pays Homestay fees on the day they arrive

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are:

April 9 (arrival) to May 6 (departure), 2017:

- April 9 – May 5, inclusive $850 CAD

If a short-term student requests to extend their stay outside of their homestay placement dates, they are responsible for paying their host $28 CAD per night for each additional night. Additional nights in 2018 are calculated at $32 CAD/night.

Example:

- April 9 – May 6, inclusive $878 CAD ($850 + $28) (Student departs May 7)

January 7 (arrival) to February 3 (departure), 2018:

- January 7 – February 2, inclusive $950 CAD

If a student is registered in consecutive short-term programs, or a long term program (such as an ELPI program that runs for 12 weeks), then students pay hosts according to the Long-Term Program Fee schedule below.

**Long-Term Program Homestay Fees**

- the Homestay fee is $850 CAD per month for programs longer than a full month, and $28 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months
- Effective January 1, 2018, the Homestay fee is $950 CAD per month for programs longer than a full month, and $32 CAD per night for extra nights or partial months. The current rate of $850 CAD/month or $28 CAD/day will remain in effect for all students and homestay hosts until their first full payment in 2018.
- the student pays this fee directly to the host, unless U Vic Homestay has made alternate arrangements for the specific student
- the student pays Homestay fees on the day they arrive and then on the corresponding day of each following month for the duration of their stay

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are Sept. 9 (arrival) – Dec. 8 (departure):

- Sept. 9 – Oct. 8, inclusive $850 CAD
- Oct. 9 – Nov. 8, inclusive $850 CAD
- Nov. 9 – Dec. 7, inclusive $812 CAD (29 nights at $28 per night)
The current rate of $850 CAD/month or $28 CAD/day will remain in effect for all students and homestay hosts until their first full payment in 2018.

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are Sept. 6, 2017 (arrival) – Feb. 28, 2018 (departure):

- Sept 6th – Oct 5, inclusive $850 CAD
- Oct 6th – Nov 5, inclusive $850 CAD
- Nov 6th – Dec 5, inclusive $850 CAD
- Dec 6th – Jan 5, inclusive $850 CAD
- Jan 6th – Feb 5, inclusive $950 CAD
- Feb 6th – Feb 27, inclusive $704 CAD (22 nights at $32/night)

An example of a payment schedule for a student whose homestay placement dates are Sept. 30, 2017 (arrival) – April 30, 2018 (departure):

- Sept 30th – Oct 29, inclusive $850 CAD
- Oct 30th – Nov 29, inclusive $850 CAD
- Nov 30th – Dec 29, inclusive $850 CAD
- Dec 30th – Jan 29, inclusive $850 CAD
- Jan 30th – Feb 29, inclusive $950 CAD
- Feb 30th – Mar 29, inclusive $950 CAD
- Mar 30th – April 29, inclusive $950 CAD

Late Arrivals
Students planning to arrive in the Homestay home after the homestay placement dates listed must contact the host with their request via email, with at least one week’s notice.

Early Arrivals
Students needing to arrive earlier than the homestay placement dates:

- Students should ask their homestay family if they can be accommodated earlier than the homestay placement date listed. If the hosts are able to welcome the student early, the student is responsible for paying $28 CAD/night ($32 CAD/night in 2018) for each additional night spent in the home.
- If the homestay family is not able to accommodate a request for an earlier arrival date, it is the student’s responsibility to arrange accommodation until the homestay placement date listed in the homestay contract.
- Once accommodations have been arranged for early arrivals, student must contact their homestay family to tell them where they are staying, so arrangements for pick up can be made.
- Students should aim to arrive on the weekends or weekday evenings, no later than 9 pm (and not during the weekday work hours) so that homestay families can make the necessary arrangements to pick up the student.

Two Week Notice
If students and/or hosts decide to terminate the hosting relationship during the scheduled term, a Two Week Notice Form must be completed by host and student. The form must be submitted to the UVic Homestay office. Students are required to pay hosts for not less than two weeks from the day the Two Week Notice Form is signed. Hosts terminating the placement shall reimburse the student an amount of the current month’s fees proportionate to the portion of the days remaining.

A Two Week Notice Form can be obtained by contacting the UVic Homestay office.
**Vacation Policy**

Students that are away for 5 or more consecutive nights pay a reduced rate. Student will give a completed Vacation Notice Form to Host at least one week prior to travel. If the Student is away from the home for:

- **1 – 4 consecutive nights**— Host and Student are not required to complete a Vacation Notice Form as the home placement fee will not be reduced.

- **5 or more consecutive nights**—Students can keep their belongings in their rooms and the Host will not use their rooms for any other purpose while they are away. During vacations of 5+ consecutive nights the homestay fee will be reduced to $14.00 per night (half the regular per night rate).

**Duration of Program**

Throughout the program, please check-in with your student to ensure that they are comfortable and adjusting well to Canadian culture and your home environment.

**Please take the time to sit down with your students to discuss the topics below.** We have included some sample questions that you can ask your students.

**Temperature**

- We know you come from a different climate, and we want to ensure that you are warm. Do you find the temperature of your room and the home comfortable?
- Do you need extra blankets or a space heater for your room?
- Make sure your students know how to adjust the heat in their rooms if they have individual heat controls.

**Food**

- What are your favourite Canadian foods?
- Are there any Canadian foods that you do not like?
- Are there any foods that you miss from your own country?
- Is there enough food in the home for you to prepare your breakfast and snacks?
- Are there any other kinds of foods that you would like for your lunches?
- Are there any special food items that you would like our family to purchase?
- Would you like to come grocery shopping with us?
- Do you have a favourite Canadian meal that you would like to have for our last family dinner together?

**Activities**

- What have you enjoyed most about living in Victoria?
- What types of activities would you like to do together before you return to your home country?
- Please ensure that you continue to regularly invite your students to join in your family’s daily activities even if they did not accept your offers earlier in the program. This will give your students the option of partaking in your family life as they get to know you better.
- Many students may seem quite independent. Students often tell our staff that they go out with friends because they still feel unsure about how to get involved with their host family or because they feel like they do not have enough time to spend with their family.
Conversation
- Do you feel comfortable talking with each member of our family?
- Do you feel shy (talking to any of us)?
- Do you feel like you have enough opportunities for conversation with our family?

Children
- Are you comfortable communicating with each of our children?
- Are the children going in your room without your permission?
- Do you feel like the children are treating you with respect?
- Please tell us if you are having any difficulties with the children.
- Please reassure the students that the children will not get in trouble, but that you will tell the children that they must listen to the students.

General
- Is there anything our family can do to make you feel more comfortable?

Please ensure that you ask your students specific questions about their likes, dislikes, and needs as many students will be shy about telling you what they require to feel relaxed and at ease in your home.

We look forward to placing students in your home. If you have any further questions, please don’t hesitate to contact our office.

UVic Homestay Team
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