

Younger Students and Homestay Policy and Procedure

1. Rationale

This Oxford English Language Centre (Oxford) policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the National Code 2018 Standard 5, where students under the age of 18 are not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative; Oxford must ensure the arrangement made to protect the personal safety and social well-being of those students are appropriate. This policy also addresses the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Oxford takes its duty of care responsibilities very seriously and therefore needs to ensure that the proposed arrangements for the accommodation, support and welfare of those students under 18 years of age are safe and suitable.

2. Scope

This policy applies to any Oxford international students who are aged under 18 years where Oxford has taken on the responsibility under the Migration Regulations for approving the accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements and students have opted to be placed in approved homestay organized by Oxford.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Oxford is committed to providing appropriate accommodation and support services to students to enable and provide them with every opportunity to adjust to study and life in Australia, to achieve their learning goals and to achieve satisfactory progress towards meeting the learning outcomes of the course.
- 3.2 The International Student Coordinator has responsibility for deciding whether or not Oxford will take CAAW responsibility for the student. The International Student Coordinator has been delegated this role by the PEO and the Executive Management team (EMT).
- 3.3 Oxford will agree to take CAAW responsibility for a younger student on the condition that:
 - Option 1: Students' parents give permission for students to physically reside with a homestay organised by Oxford; or
 - Option 2: Students to physically reside with a carer nominated by the parents and approved by Oxford.
- 3.4 Oxford confirms that appropriate accommodation and welfare arrangements are in place by completing a declaration called the Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW), which is to be submitted by the student as part of the visa application (students cannot complete a visa application without this letter); and advise in writing of the approval using the pro forma letter available through PRISMS.
- 3.5 By default, the nominated date for which Oxford accepts responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements is for the period of the Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) plus 7 days before and after the CoE date.

- 3.1 When Ozford issues a CAAW letter to enable student enrolment, Ozford ensures that the Homestay hosts are child safe screened and meet the homestay selection suitability check requirements.
- 3.2 Students who are under 18 years of age are not allowed to move out of a homestay arrangement without consent from Ozford. Ozford reserves the right to cancel a student's enrolment and will update PRISMS if students move out without consent.
- 3.3 Ozford will take all practical steps to ensure appropriate accommodation and welfare is maintained at all times, regardless of the overseas student's study circumstances.
- 3.4 Ozford will ensure that overseas student accommodation or welfare arrangements continue to be suitable for child connected work by:
 - Confirming all persons over the age of 18 residing at the homestay have a verified Working with Children Clearance (WWCC).
 - Checking the suitability of homestay arrangement at least every six months that the overseas student accommodation is appropriate to the student's age and physical needs.
 - Providing the homestay host with appropriate information regarding their responsibilities including child safe obligations at least annually.
- 3.5 Ozford provides younger overseas students age and culturally appropriate safety information as part of the orientation process, including what to do and who to contact in an emergency, and how to report any incident or allegation of sexual, physical or other abuse.
- 3.6 All students who are under 18 years of age must appoint an independent welfare support person.
- 3.7 Students are required to notify Ozford within 7 days if there are any changes to:
 - The students current address, mobile number or email address
 - Emergency contact details
 - Parent/legal guardian (or any adult responsible for the student's welfare) contact details

4. Procedure

Option 1: Homestay Host Arrangements

Sourcing, Checking and Verifying Suitability of Homestay Agents

- 4.1 Ozford will source suitable Homestay agents that satisfy the following criteria:
 - The organisation will have appropriate experience and knowledge of the accommodation needs of international students and the requirements of the ESOS Act, National Code of Practice 2018 and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
 - The organisation will have capacity to source suitable homestay hosts as and when required.
 - The organisation will have available suitable homestay hosts that may be used as emergency accommodation if an international student needs to be moved at short notice.
 - The organisation will have capacity to respond quickly to a critical incident including an appropriate critical incident policy and procedures including immediate notification to Ozford of the incident.

- The organisation will be child safe screened including that all staff that may potentially interact with younger students will be subject to the following:
 - working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - the person's history of work involving children; and
 - references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children
- All staff will receive training in Oxford's child safe policies and practices and in their reporting obligations.

4.2 The homestay agent must supply homestay hosts that meet the Oxford's requirements as set out in this Policy and Procedure.

Monitoring of the Homestay Agent

- 4.3 Oxford will review the agreement with the homestay agent. The quality of the service will be measured on:
- The number of Homestay hosts rejected by Oxford prior to acceptance
 - The retention of students in their homestay
 - Feedback from Oxford students, student welfare providers and their families.
 - Any critical issues that arise in respect to the homestay arrangements and the suitability of the supplier's response to these issues.
- 4.4 Oxford will terminate the agreement with the homestay agent at any time by giving 30 days' written notice to the homestay agent if the Homestay agent does not supply a quality service that complies with this Policy and Procedure.
- 4.5 If the agreement is terminated by Oxford or the Homestay agent, the existing Homestay arrangements will remain in place for the planned duration providing the Homestay host continues to meet their commitments and the student and their family are satisfied with the arrangement.

Homestay Host Requirements

- 4.1 Homestay hosts must:
- be over the age of 21
 - be an Australian or hold a suitable visa to live in Australia permanently;
 - live at the premises at all times the student is in residence until the student turns 18 years of age
 - agree to accept the responsibility to act as the carer until student turns 18 years of age
 - meet child safe screening requirements including:
 - Obtain, verify (using the Working with Children Victoria check tool) and record a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC) for all persons over 18 years of age.
 - Obtain and record personal identification of the homestay host
 - Obtain and record at least two references to confirm suitability for child connected work.
 - Provide a welcoming household and culturally safe environment
 - Supply an individual room (unless a shared room is requested) with bed, bedding, wardrobe, desk, desk lamp, and a place for books

- Supply three meals per day including a prepared dinner each night. It is expected that meals are taken with the student as a family unit) and access to fresh and adequate food for the student to independently make breakfast and lunch
- Provide space in the kitchen for the student to store their snack and drinks
- Provide electricity, gas and water except internet and phone calls (which may be supplied by arrangement)
- Provide effective heating and cooling in the room
- The use of laundry facilities including washing machine, laundry detergent, iron and space for students to dry their clothes
- Provide a key to the host's premises
- Provide a smoke free environment
- Provide support to make sure the student is confident using public transport so that they can easily get to and from school. Accompany the student to their place of study and travelling with them by public transport at least once, assist them in buying MYKI tickets and opening bank accounts.
- Respect the Privacy of the student
- Provide care and support in the event of illness.
- Ensure all household members over the age of 18 have a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC) at all times.

4.2 All Homestay hosts will be carefully inspected and selected, by the Homestay Agency contracted by Ozford and by Ozford. Ozford conducts independent random checks and visits with Homestay hosts before and during student placements.

4.3 The Homestay Agent must:

- Check location of host (needs to be close to public transport)
- Conduct an interview to ascertain if likely to be suitable host and satisfy child safety requirements. This includes the ability to adequately respond to examples of situations that can arise whilst caring for a student
- Visit host families to inspect the premises to confirm suitability as part of the selection process and at least once per semester that a student is placed with the homestay host. Inspection of the home and the student's room must check for:
 - Cleanliness in the home/bathroom, etc.
 - Appropriate room including a bed and bedding, desk, lighting-Lamp/window etc, suitable chair and wardrobe
- Screen the homestay host family for suitability for child connected work including:
 - Obtain, verify (using the Working with Children Victoria check tool) and record a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC) for all persons over 18 years of age as part of the selection process and on an ongoing basis as part of each site visit.
 - Obtain and record personal identification of the homestay hosts;
 - Obtain and record at least two references to confirm suitability for child connected work.
- Carefully evaluate responses and look for qualities that make good Homestay hosts: understanding, kindness, flexibility and generosity.
- Provide Ozford with a Homestay profile of the family, including evidence of screening.
- Provide an induction into the Ozford child safe policies and procedures.
- Have evidence that at least annually, appropriate guidance and training is supplied to the Homestay hosts including child safe training.

4.4 Details to be collected by Homestay Agent for each homestay host:

- Information about the homestay
 - Name, date of birth, all contact numbers and occupation for all members of the household
 - Hobbies/activities
 - No smoking policy
 - The number of rooms, details of each: bathroom (private/shared.), laundry facilities, phone, internet, cable TV, pool, piano, pets (are they allowed inside).
 - Students that the host may be currently hosting details – Nationality, age, gender and College they are attending.
 - Location – Map reference, Met zone, travel time to school. Distance to train, tram and bus.
 - Student preferences – male/female/over 18 only?
 - Host interests/history/holidays/past experiences/clubs/churches etc.
- Suitability for child connected work records including
 - A current WWCC for every adult residing or frequently visiting the premises which has been verified using the Working with Children Victoria check status website (<https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj>).
 - A current Victorian Police Report
 - Proof of identity for every adult residing or frequently visiting the premises;
 - The homestay host's history of work involving children; and
 - At least two references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
- Homestay agents should have a declaration for hosts to agree to and sign (see attached sample declaration).
- Records of homestay experience including:
 - Name of previous students
 - Dates of previous students stays
 - Inspection records
 - Records of any issues with Homestay students and how they were resolved

4.5 On completion of each inspection, the Homestay agent will provide a copy of the Homestay Profile Report to Ozford.

Placing Students in Homestay Accommodation

- 4.6 Under 18 students who require Homestay are required to complete a Homestay application form to specify their needs and preferences. Any special needs and preferences are to be recorded on the form.
- 4.7 Before placing an under 18 students in homestay, Ozford will review the homestay application form and liaise with the Homestay agent to organise a homestay family that is deemed suitable for the age and needs of the student. Upon request, the homestay host profile may be reviewed by the student and family.
- 4.8 On the day of arrival, the Homestay Agent must contact the Homestay host to confirm that the student has arrived and notify Ozford.
- 4.9 The Homestay Agent should be in regular contact with the Homestay host to ensure that the student has settled and there are no issues for both the student and the Homestay host.

- 4.10 The Homestay Agent should ensure that any issues arising from the placement are dealt with immediately to reduce any distress or discomfort to all parties.
- 4.11 Ozford will conduct screening and monitoring through independent checks prior to placement to verify the suitability of the homestay.
- 4.12 If the Homestay host is found unsuitable, the Homestay agent will be asked to provide another homestay host.

Option 2: Carer Arrangements

- 4.13 Families can apply to nominate a relative/family friend for the student to be a homestay host. Ozford calls such person's carers.
- 4.14 Where Ozford has CAAW responsibility for a student, Ozford must approve the arrangement and the process for screening and monitoring the carer is the same as for a homestay host.
- 4.15 Carers must:
- be over the age of 21
 - be an Australian or hold a suitable visa to live in Australia permanently;
 - live at the premises at all times the student is in residence until the student turns 18 years of age
 - agree to accept the responsibility to act as the carer until student turns 18 years of age
 - meet child safe screening requirements including:
 - Obtain, verify (using the Working with Children Victoria check tool) and record a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC) for all persons over 18 years of age.
 - Obtain and record personal identification of the homestay host
 - Obtain and record at least two references to confirm suitability for child connected work.
 - Supply suitable accommodation including:
 - Provide a welcoming household and culturally safe environment
 - Live close to public transport
 - Supply an individual room for each student with bed, bedding, wardrobe, desk, desk lamp, and a place for books
 - Provide effective heating and cooling in the room used by the student
 - Supply three meals per day, including a prepared dinner each night (it is expected that meals are taken with the student as a family unit) and access to fresh and adequate food for the student to independently make breakfast and lunch
 - Provide space in the kitchen for the student to store their snacks and drinks
 - Provide electricity, gas and water except internet and phone calls (which may be supplied by arrangement)
 - The use of laundry facilities including washing machine, laundry detergent, iron and space for students to dry their clothes
 - Provide a key to the host's premises
 - Provide a smoke free environment
 - Provide support to make sure the student is confident using public transport so that they can easily get to and from school. Accompany the student to their place of study and travelling with them by public transport at least once, assist them in buying MYKI tickets and opening bank accounts.
 - Respect the Privacy of the student

- Provide care and support in the event of illness.
- agree to maintain contact with Ozford on a regular basis and liaise with Ozford as required:
 - to ensure that the student understands and abides the Ozford Policies and procedures
 - to ensure that the student meets attendance and course progress visa obligations.
 - if the student is not able to attend class or does not return home overnight
- agree for Ozford to inspect the carer's home to ensure that Ozford is satisfied with the arrangement and to monitor the arrangement
- agree to inform Ozford within 2 working days if any of his/her contact details change.
- Ensure all household members and regular visitors over the age of 18 have a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC).

4.16 Carers will be screened by the Student Services team to ascertain the suitability of the arrangement before a CAAW can be issued. The Student Services team will:

- Conduct an interview to ascertain if likely to be suitable host and satisfy child safety requirements. This includes the ability to adequately respond to examples of situations that can arise whilst caring for a student.
- Visit the carer to inspect the premises to confirm suitability as part of the initial selection process. Inspection of the home and the student's room must check for:
 - Location of host (needs to be close to public transport)
 - Cleanliness in the home/bathroom, etc.
 - Appropriate room including a bed and bedding, desk, lighting-Lamp/window etc, suitable chair and wardrobe
- Confirm that the homestay host:
 - is over the age of 21 years;
 - is an Australian or hold a suitable visa to live in Australia permanently;
 - will live at the premises at all times the student is in residence until the student turns 18 years of age
 - agrees to accept the responsibility to act as the homestay host until student turns 18 years of age
- Screen the carer and their family for suitability for child connected work including:
 - Obtain, verify (using the Working with Children Victoria check tool) and record a current Working with Children Check clearance (WWCC) for all persons over 18 years of age.
 - Obtain and record personal identification and visa status of the carer.
 - Obtain and record at least two references to confirm suitability for child connected work.
- Carefully evaluate responses and look for qualities that make good carers: understanding, kindness, flexibility and generosity.
- Provide an induction into the Ozford College child safe policies and procedures.
- Confirm that at least annually, the carer agrees to complete child safe training.

4.17 On the day of arrival, the carer must inform Ozford and organise a time for the student to visit Ozford.

Student Orientation and Safety Information

4.6 All students attend an orientation on commencement of their studies as set out in the Student Support and Services Policy and Procedure.

Homestay and Carer Monitoring

- 4.18 The Student will be informed as part of Orientation that they can approach the Student Services staff at any time if they encounter any issue with the homestay or carer arrangement.
- 4.19 Once a student has moved into a homestay or carer arrangement (usually in the first 4 weeks), the Student Services team will conduct an interview with the student to obtain feedback of the homestay or carer arrangement. Students will be interviewed during week 4, 6, 12, 24 and more if required.
- 4.20 Feedback will be sought from students and families about the quality of the homestay and carer arrangements. Students will be encouraged to provide feedback to Student Services team any time during their stay.
- 4.21 The Student Services team will use the feedback from students, families, Ozford staff and any welfare support providers to ascertain if the homestay host or carer is a suitable and appropriate option for student.
- 4.22 Ozford will conduct site visits to confirm suitability of Homestay and Carer arrangements.
- 4.23 Ozford will monitor the suitability of the homestay and carer accommodation until the student turns 18 years of age or when the CAAW period ceases.

Missing student

- 4.24 Where a student is missing from their accommodation and cannot be contacted, Ozford will enact the Critical incident Policy and Procedure.
- 4.25 If the incident involves a student going missing, Ozford will:
- make all reasonable efforts to locate the student.
 - if the student cannot be located, immediately:
 - notify Victoria Police.
 - the student's parents or legal guardians.
 - if the student is an overseas student, Ozford will notify the Commonwealth via PRISMS as soon as practicable.
 - if the incident results in the student not being able to continue to reside at their current homestay, immediately support the student to transfer to an alternative homestay host (or emergency homestay if necessary) so as to not allow any gap in the student's welfare arrangements. Ozford will notify the student's parents/legal guardians of the change.
 - if the Ozford is no longer able to approve the welfare arrangements of a student, as the student will not reside at approved homestay or carer accommodation, make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the student's parents or legal guardians are notified immediately.
 - advise Immigration via PRISMs:
 - as soon as practicable if the student will be cared for by a parent or nominated relative approved by Immigration and a Confirmation of Appropriate Accommodation and Welfare (CAAW) is no longer required
 - within 24 hours if Ozford is no longer able to approve the student's welfare arrangements

Unsuitable homestay arrangements

- 4.26 Where Ozford finds a homestay arrangement that is not suitable, an alternative arrangement will be immediately made that is safe and appropriate for the student.
- 4.27 Alternative arrangements will be made immediately if the Homestay host or carer is unable to provide suitable and appropriate care for students. If the homestay is found unsuitable for the student, the homestay agent will be asked to provide another homestay host. If a carer is found unsuitable, the student will be placed in a suitable homestay arrangement sourced by a homestay agent.
- 4.28 If an under 18-year-old student is found to be not living in approved homestay accommodation, the Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure will be followed. The following actions may be taken:
- the student will be asked to immediately move into a homestay arrangement approved by Ozford. If this involves a move from a parent arranged to a College arranged homestay, the homestay placement fees will apply.
 - if the student refuses to move to the approved homestay arrangement, a letter of intention to report for non-approval of welfare and living arrangement (see below) will be sent to the student and the parents will be informed. The student will be requested to meet with the Student Services team.
 - In the meeting, the student will be reminded of their visa obligations and the student will be requested to make a payment of the homestay placement fee to enable Ozford to organise a homestay for the student.
 - if the student still refuses to live in suitable accommodation and/or payment is not received within 1 week, Ozford will commence the cancellation process as set out in the Refusal, Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Student Enrolment Policy and Procedure.

Cancelling/Ending Welfare Arrangement

- 4.29 The Refusal, Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Student Enrolment Policy and Procedure sets out the College cancellation processes.
- 4.30 If Ozford suspends or cancels the enrolment of a student, Ozford must continue to check the suitability of the homestay or carer arrangements for that student until:
- The student is accepted by another registered provider and that registered provider takes over responsibility for approving the student's accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements,
 - The student leaves Australia,
 - Other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations, OR
 - Ozford reports that it can no longer approve of the accommodation arrangements for the student within 5 working days.

Welfare support providers

- 4.31 Students who are under 18 years of age must appoint an independent welfare support provider who is:
- A professional welfare support provider; or
 - A person nominated by the student's family (who is not the carer or homestay host)
- 4.32 The welfare support provider must:
- Contacting the parents and student prior to their arrival, to provide advice and tips for travelling to Australia and confirm visiting arrangements.

- Visit the student at their accommodation after arrival in Australia and independently check that the accommodation is clean and safe.
- Explain visa regulations, important safety and security information direct to the student.
 - Assist the student to open a bank account and purchase a local telephone SIM card (if required).
 - Help the student purchase a local transport card and explaining how to use local public transport (train, bus, tram, taxi etc).
 - Explain to the student how their overseas health insurance (OSHC) works and provide advice on how to obtain or register their health insurance card.
- Regularly meet with the homestay host (if the student is staying in home stay) or carer and help explain homestay rules direct to student.
- Have regular meetings with the student online and in person, visit Oxford a minimum of every 14 days and talk with academic staff to ensure student is satisfactorily progressing with their studies.
- Provide regular feedback to parents
 - Attend parent teacher interviews and report results to parents
 - Assist with translation of academic reports and send a copy to the parents
- Check students' holiday plans, assist with booking air tickets if needed and report to Oxford about holiday arrangements
- Assist students arrange medical appointments
- Assist students apply for a change of approved accommodation if needed. Oxford must approve any change of accommodation.
- Support Oxford in providing emergency assistance for critical incidents.

4.33 Oxford will screen the nominated welfare support provider to confirm that the person satisfies the following criteria:

- be over the age of 21
- be an Australian or hold a suitable visa to live in Australia permanently;
- agree to accept the responsibility to act as the carer until student turns 18 years of age
- The organisation or person will have appropriate experience and knowledge of the support needs of international students and the requirements of the ESOS Act, National Code of Practice 2018 and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- If an organisation, the welfare support provider will have capacity to source suitable welfare support persons as and when required.
- The welfare support provider will have capacity to respond quickly to a critical incident including an appropriate critical incident policy and procedures including immediate notification to Oxford of the incident.
- The welfare support provider will be child safe screened and all staff that may potentially interact with younger students will be subject to the following:
 - working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - the person's history of work involving children; and
 - references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children
- All welfare support providers will receive training in Oxford's child safe policies and practices and in their reporting obligations on appointment and annually.

5. Feedback

Feedback or comments on this policy and procedure is welcomed by the Executive Management Team.

Oxford Checklist



Homestay/Carer Assessment

This form is to be completed when Homestays.

Date: _____ Staff

Oxford staff conduct independent inspection of

Member:

Host Name:		Ph. No:	
Address:			
Occupation:		Days and Hours of Work	
Adult residing #1	WWCC number -	Verified as current? Y/N	
Adult residing #2	WWCC number -	Verified as current? Y/N	
Adult residing #3	WWCC number -	Verified as current? Y/N	
Adult residing #4	WWCC number -	Verified as current? Y/N	
Individual Room	Y/N	Comment on House Condition and Living Arrangement Cleanliness, facilities, food provision, meal areas, safety Child abuse risk/concern:	
Bed & bedding	Y/N		
Wardrobe	Y/N		
Desk	Y/N		
Laundry facility	Y/N		
Smoke free	Y/N		
Child safe environment (child abuse risk?)	Y/N		
Any children residing here that will turn 18 years of age during next 6 months?	Y/N	If yes, arrange for them to apply for a WWCC and verify that it has been done.	

Host Interview/Training:

1. Student arrival and transition support
2. Host responsibilities in student care and addressing student special needs (if any)
3. Provide and explain Younger Student and Homestay Policy and Procedure, Child Safety Policy and Procedure, Child Safe Risk management Policy and Procedure, Responding and Responding to allegations of suspected Child Abuse Policy and Procedure and Records management Policy and Procedure
4. Obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse

Comments from Interview/Training:

Decision Record:

Homestay arrangement appropriate for student age and needs	Yes/No Comment:
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Homestay suitable for Child connected Work	Yes/No Comment:
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