Welcome to the Homestay Program!

The Homestay Program at The University of Winnipeg is a valuable and rewarding cross-cultural experience for both hosts and students. It was created to provide a housing option for our students along with residence and off-campus housing. Our Host families are critical components in the deliverance of this program. We want to ensure that both students and host families have a positive experience.

This handbook was designed to give you all the information, advice, and policies you need to make your time in the Homestay Program a rewarding and positive experience. Please read through each section carefully and with consideration. We hope this information will be helpful in your Homestay experience. The best way to start the program is by simply talking with your student.

As Homestay Coordinator, I am happy to support you. If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact me by phone/email to schedule a call or an appointment.

Thank-you!

Homestay Coordinator
Email: homestay@uwinnipeg.ca
Office Phone Number: 204-982-6631
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Important Information

The University of Winnipeg establishes the Homestay guidelines for both student and host, and facilitates the matching process of the two parties. We do our best to support and encourage a harmonious relationship between the host and student. In the event that the match is not compatible, The University will take appropriate action to relocate the student. Since the matching process is done before the student and host family are able to meet, and is based on information received from students, we cannot guarantee the student will stay for the full term. Because of this, we strongly advise that the homestay payment should not be considered as household income. The homestay fee is meant to help you offset expenses and should not be considered a source of revenue for you.

Please note that our Homestay Program does not fall under the Residential Tenancy Act. There are no damage deposits involved, and we cannot guarantee that the student will give you advance notice of their leaving. The University of Winnipeg reserves the right to relocate the student without notice and without reason. In the event that the student/Host Family match is not compatible for any reason, or if the University learns that there have been problems in the home, including inappropriate behaviour exhibited by a family member or a student, the student will be removed from the home.

In the event that a student causes damage to the Host Family’s home or property, the Host Family agrees to release the University of Winnipeg of any liability.

The University of Winnipeg Homestay Program may place up to two students per household when the conditions are appropriate; if that is the case, students will be from different countries, so they are encouraged to practice English at home and will also be the same gender. You must inform the Homestay Coordinator if you plan to have an international student from another institution living in your home and indicate where the student (s) is/are from and whether they are male or female.

Insurance

University of Winnipeg strongly advises that each homestay family contact their insurance company to confirm that they are properly insured for any accidental loss or damage caused by hosting an international student. University of Winnipeg cannot be held liable or responsible for any such loss or damage.

You should check with your insurance company as to whether or not you need to purchase an extension on your house insurance policy for liability to cover additional occupants residing with you. That way, you are covered if anything happens to the student while he/she is staying with you (for example, if the student slips on a wet floor in your home and is injured as a result).

If you have pets, we recommend you check with a pet insurance company to see if there is anything you can do to make sure your pets are covered. It is your responsibility to go over any specific instructions regarding your pets with your students at the time they move into your home.
**Tax Slip**

Please note the University of Winnipeg does not issue tax slips to homestay families, the reason being is that host families are considered independent vendors, not employees of the university. Therefore, tracking payments is the host family’s responsibility.

**Application Process**

**Step 1** - Make sure your home is 40 minutes or less away from the University of Winnipeg. This includes walking time and it must be a direct bus route (no transfers).

**Step 2** - If you meet the distance requirement, you would then need to fill out the Homestay Application.

**Step 3** – You need to submit a **Criminal Record Check** (which includes a Vulnerable Sector Check) for all the adults (anyone over 18 years old) living in your house as well as a **Child Abuse Registry Check** (if you would like to host minor students). After you have all these documents ready, you can e-mail them to homestay@uwinnipeg.ca

**Step 4** - If you meet the criteria to be eligible to become a homestay family and have submitted all your documents, a home visit will be scheduled. Please note that home visits are scheduled on an as-needed basis, which means we will process your application and you will then be wait listed and contacted for a home visit at a later time.

**Step 5** – You will need to attend an Orientation session.

Please note that registering as a host family does not guarantee that a student will be placed with you every time you request one. Placement depends on the demand for host families and whether your family is a suitable match for a student. We do our best to accommodate requests, but our ability to place a student in your home depends on the number of students who require homestay and what their individual needs are.

The need for Homestays depends on the number of new students arriving for any new term at the University of Winnipeg.

- New terms begin in January, May, and September of each year.
- Students usually arrive 1-2 days before the start of their program/ term and leave 1-2 days after their program ends.

Other factors we consider in our placements:

- Proximity to the University of Winnipeg within walking distance or bus (up to 40 minutes, including walking to bus stops)
• Any dietary practices/ restrictions by either the Homestay host and/or student
• Student allergies and/or preference to be in a home with or without pets
• Willingness to host male or female students.
• Homestay host or student requests on smoking/non-smoking.

To Keep Your File Up-to-Date

• Inform the program if you change residences. If you do change residences, your documents will need to be updated and a home visit of your home will need to be scheduled in order for you to be eligible to host students again.
• Inform the program of any changes in family profile (i.e. serious illness, divorce, adding a pet or adult children returning to/leaving home, change in the location of student room etc.)
• Update your criminal record checks every four years from the date of application.
• Read homestay correspondence and handbook materials thoroughly. Follow all policies and guidelines as they pertain to the Homestay Program.
• Inform the Homestay Program staff if you host a student from another program or privately.
Receiving a Student in the Homestay Program

The following list outlines what to do before and after your student arrives in your home.

- Two months before the start of each term (Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer), the Homestay Coordinator will send out a survey to gather important information. **Please answer the survey’s questions and most importantly, your availability for the following term.** The sooner we get your availability; the sooner we can begin placements.

- As you wait for your student’s arrival, it’s a good idea to communicate with them. Many host families and students send pictures to one another; this helps host families recognize their students when they meet.

- Check your student’s arrival time and be sure to arrive at the airport/train station/bus depot with ample time to pick up your student. Monitor arrival times on the date of their arrival to stay informed on any delays or changes to the student’s flight. In the case of airport arrivals, be sure to check if the student is arriving on a domestic or an international flight.

- We expect you to be available for airport pick-ups and drop-offs between 6:00AM and 22:00PM. **If you are not able to accommodate pick-ups or drop-offs outside of these hours, please let the Homestay Coordinator know as soon as possible so different arrangements can be made.**

- If you forget to pick up a student at the airport and fail to inform the Homestay Office, any costs incurred to address the situation will be deducted in full from the payment you will receive e.g., hotel and/or transportation arrangements made for the student.

- Bring a sign with you with your student’s name printed clearly on it so that he/she can find you easily.

- Take the time to get to know your student so that he/she feels at home with you. It is natural for students to feel shy and nervous at first. They need to know that they are welcome in your home, and that all family members accept them.

- Once the student has had a chance to relax, give him/her an orientation to your home and your neighborhood.

- Make sure you exchange contact information and decide what the best method of communication will be e.g., Whatsapp, WeChat, texting, etc. This should be something you must do on their first day here to ensure you can reach each other in case of an emergency.

- Make sure that your student feels confident about taking the bus to and from the university. Point out significant landmarks to help the student remember where to get off the bus.

- Make sure the student has your contact information (name, address and phone numbers).
• Check the date and time that your student starts classes, and where he/she goes on the first day.

• Regularly check your e-mail to ensure you do not miss any communications from the Homestay Office. Both urgent and non-urgent information will be shared with hosts via e-mails so it is important that you check your e-mail at least once a day.

Receiving a Collegiate Student in the Homestay Program

Students who are minors (under age 18) have special requirements. The custodian of the student is the Collegiate, NOT the Homestay Program. The following are some guidelines for homestay families to follow when they host collegiate students:

• Homestay families cannot leave minors alone in their home, overnight. If needed, they can ask another caregiver to be with the student; with the approval of the Homestay Coordinator.

• There is a 10:30 pm curfew from Sunday to Thursday and 12:00 am curfew on Fridays and Saturdays. Host families have the right to set house curfew times provided they are not later than the recommended times above.

• Older teenagers can go out without adult supervision, but they should get permission from the host family and provide contact details.

• Minors are not permitted to smoke tobacco or cannabis or drink alcohol. Failure to comply might result in being asked to leave the Homestay Program.

• Weekend sleepovers at the homestay family’s home are allowed at the discretion of the host family. Sleepovers outside the assigned homestay home is allowed provided that the home where the sleepover will take place is also part of the UW Homestay Program.

• If a student has travel plans, they must inform their host family of the dates they will be away and should also give information as to where they are going and with whom. Travel anywhere must be approved by the Collegiate prior to travel.

Responsibilities of the Homestay Family

• Set clear and reasonable guidelines to your student. Sometimes it helps if you write out a short list of rules that the student can keep. Keep in mind that each student will have different communication styles and in most cases there will be a language barrier preventing the students to fluently communicate their concerns. Be patient and mindful that what they say might come off as rude but it is highly likely that will be due to their lack of vocabulary.
- Respect the rights, privacy, and culture of the student including religious and political beliefs.

- You are required to supply food for 3 meals: breakfast, lunch and prepare a daily dinner. Make sure you ask your student how much they normally eat, what food they like and dislike and what time they normally eat so you can have a better idea of the amount and type of food you will need to have at home.

- Each student should have his/her own private bedroom with a comfortable bed, desk/table to work at, and good lighting. The room should be clean and comfortable, with adequate heating in winter.

- Acquaint your student with the bus route to and from school so that he/she feels comfortable using public transportation.

- Orient the student to Winnipeg, to the neighborhood, and to local services such as banks, post offices, convenience stores etc.

- Help students practice their English skills. If you speak other languages at home, use English when your student is present so they do not feel excluded from a conversation.

- Pick up and drop off students at the airport between the hours of 6:00AM and 22:00PM. If the students’ flight is delayed and arriving after 22:00PM, or they booked a flight outside of the hours between 6:00AM and 22:00PM, please let the Homestay Coordinator know whether you can go to the airport as soon as possible in order for different arrangements to be made.

- Provide the student with contact information to reach you, especially for cases of emergencies.

- Provide cleaning supplies for the student to keep their living space clean

- Give students full use of the household, including telephone, high speed internet, television, living areas, laundry facilities and cleaning supplies.

- For any reason other than a safety concern, please ask your student for his or her permission before entering their room in order to respect their privacy.

- Keep sensitive personal information confidential. The Homestay Coordinator should be contacted if you feel that a student is in physical or emotional danger.

- Inform the Homestay Coordinator whenever there have been changes in your household that directly affect students’ lives e.g., mice and insect infestations, household damages, etc.

- Invite your student to join in family activities and outings, and help him/her to adjust to our culture, lifestyle, and family life.

- It may also be helpful to understand your student’s expectations of Homestay; ask them what
they expect from you and communicate with and help them to understand your role as a Homestay parent. This will create a better understanding of the expectations and needs in your new relationship.

- Facilitate discussion with the student when one month of their stay is remaining with regards to whether or not they will remain in your home.

- Talk to your student one month before the end of the homestay period to confirm their departure date or if they are planning to extend their stay. If your student is staying in your home past the homestay period see Payment of Homestay Fees on page 15.

**Responsibilities of the Student**

Students in homestay are given an orientation in the first week of their program. These are the expectations that are conveyed to them:

- Communicate with your homestay family. If you don’t understand something, ask!

- Get to know the house rules by discussing them with your host family. If something isn’t clear, ask.

- Keep your room clean and tidy. Vacuum and empty your garbage at least once a week.

- Clean up after yourself in the bathroom. Clean the shower after you use it, remove all hair and wipe the sink. Do not leave wet towels on the floor.

- Help with meals by setting the table or helping to clear the table.

- You are responsible for making your own breakfast and lunch. Clean up after you have finished using the kitchen.

- Share contact information with your host family. Keep their contact information on you at all times. If you’re going to be late or if you won’t be home for dinner you must tell your host family by 3pm that day.

- When you go out, let your homestay know the following:
  
  o WHO: Who are you with?
  
  o WHAT: What will you be doing?
  
  o WHEN: When are you going? When will you be back?
  
  o WHERE: Where are you going?
• Pay for your own entertainment (movie tickets, park fees, etc) and snacks (such as popcorn, potato chips, chocolate) unless your host family wants to treat you.

• Purchase your own personal items such as, toothpaste, shampoo and deodorant.

NOTE: Students receive the Homestay Student Handbook when the Placement Confirmation email is sent to them before they arrive. You are encouraged to read this booklet with your student. Anything that is not covered by university policy can be included in your list of house rules e.g., specific instructions regarding pets, use of scented products, etc. Please make sure you go over these with your students as well.

**Important Issues to Discuss with Your Student**

Right from the beginning, it is important to discuss the following topics and possible issues with your student as they apply to your situation. If you are experiencing difficulties with any of these topics or issues, please call the Homestay Coordinator.

**Meals**

Keep in mind that the students are paying for their meals, so they should be provided with some options of food that they enjoy eating, as well as with an adequate quantity and variety.

Although families are not expected to change their diet to suit their students, they should also be sensitive to the challenges of students having to make drastic changes in their diet. To help, homestay families can make an effort to communicate, understand, and accommodate students’ likes and dislikes. Please take your student grocery shopping with you. Unless you offer, students are responsible for preparing their own breakfast and lunch, as long as the food is available for them. Please show your students the different options. Students can heat up their lunches in microwaves provided at the university.

Good communication is important. Some key points to discuss with your student upon arrival are:

• Which foods do they like and dislike
• What time do they usually eat and what time do you usually eat
• How much they usually eat

Your student may want to cook a dish for you if you provide the necessary ingredients. This could be a great cultural experience for both of you! Given that dinner is the only meal that you and your student can share, please make every effort to be home to prepare and eat the evening meal with your student. Take the time each evening or morning to discuss plans for the day so that your student knows what the arrangements are. If you cannot be home occasionally for dinner, food must be provided for your student to heat up.
Because students sometimes request, for one reason or another, to leave homestay earlier, you are advised to not stock up on food. The university cannot compensate you for any money spent on unused groceries.

**Bathroom Use**

This is important to discuss with your student soon after he/she arrives. Ask your student what time of day he/she normally uses the shower, and the length of time they consider appropriate for taking a shower. Let your student know that culturally, we recommend no more than 15 minutes. Students need to be told this because, in some countries, people spend considerable time taking a bath/shower or can take multiple showers in a day.

**Laundry**

Discuss whether you will do the laundry or the student will do his/her own. Either way, you are responsible for supplying the laundry detergent. If the student does his/her own laundry, be sure to clearly explain how to use the washer and dryer. If you live in an apartment, you are required to pay for the student’s laundry, as this is a service that all homestay students receive.

If the student wants to hand wash some of their clothes, make sure you show them where they can do so and where they can hang their clothes to dry.

**Telephone Use**

For long-distance calls, students should have a pre-paid phone card. These cards should be available at most convenience stores. Be sure to discuss guidelines about the amount of time that can be spent on the phone and the times when calls can be received.

If your student wants to have a phone plan, homestay families are not expected to cosign a contract with their student. Host families can help students find a phone plan.

**Computer and Wi-Fi**

Internet access must be provided by the Host Family. Host Families are not required to provide a computer for the student. Most students bring their own laptops, notebooks, smartphones and/or other devices that require a wireless connection. Students also have access to computers at school.

**Alarm Systems**

If you have an alarm system in your home, please take the time to show your student how to set and disarm the system. Be patient and explain how the system works carefully, as your student will probably be nervous about this at first. Ensure that the student understands home safety procedures.
Travel

Many host families will want to include the student in their own local travel and holiday plans. Please note that travel within Manitoba with the host family does not require parental permission.

- For students under 18 years old, the Homestay Coordinator must be informed with the full details of the trip (location, departure and return date, who you are going with, and contact information).
- For Collegiate students, the Collegiate must be informed with the full details of the trip.

If you are traveling without your student, the Homestay Coordinator must be informed prior to the trip.

The host family has 3 options:

- They will have someone, a family member or friend that they trust, stay with the student while they are away. This person must be approved by Homestay.
- If the trip is less than 3 days and the student is comfortable and understands they will be by themselves, it is OK to leave the student alone.
- The Homestay Coordinator can find a temporary homestay while the host family is away.

NOTE: Homestay families might have plans outside of the house and come home late, a good idea would be to communicate with your student. Host families should let the student know if they plan to come home late. You will need to have a prepared dinner for the student to reheat at home. Please note homestay families cannot leave minor students alone overnight.

Keys

Be sure to provide your student with a key to your house. This is very important, as your student may have to come home during the day if he/she is not feeling well at school. Remind students to always lock the door when leaving and returning home. Explain to them that this is a safety practice that most people follow.

Curfews

Host families have the right to set house curfew times. We recommend a 10:30 pm curfew from Sunday to Thursday and 12:00 am curfew on Fridays and Saturdays. Students should make previous arrangements with you if they are attending an event that ends after curfew. We ask that they always inform the host family about where they are and when they will be home.

Please be clear and communicate with your student about your expectations. It might be helpful to let students know that any worry or concern comes from a place of care for them and their safety.
For students over 18 years old

Although there is no set curfew for them, we ask adult students to be mindful if/when they come home late. We ask them to be considerate; come into the house quietly and remember to lock the door.

Alcohol, Cannabis and Illicit Drugs

The legal age for drinking and purchasing alcohol and tobacco is 18 years of age and for cannabis it is 19 years of age in Manitoba.

International students must adhere to all applicable local, provincial and federal laws in Canada as well as the laws in their home country and/or the country where they reside. Although cannabis is legal in Canada, there might be strict laws in students’ home countries regarding the use of cannabis which will apply to them when you return to their home country. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of these laws and respect them at all times.

Drinking underage, excessive drinking, the use of illicit drugs and/or the use of false identification are strictly prohibited and might result in being asked to leave the Homestay Program.

As part of the UW Homestay Program, you are asked to disclose whether you smoke tobacco and/or cannabis as this will become another factor we look into when matching students and confirming placements. Given that cannabis is still illegal in most countries where our students come from, we ask that you do not encourage them to use cannabis as they could face criminal charges when they return home, depending on the laws of their home country.

Health Coverage & Health Problems

All students have GuardMe Health Insurance through the University of Winnipeg as a condition of registration. The GuardMe Insurance is an emergency health care plan. Please review the GuardMe website: https://www.guard.me/ or call 1-877-873-8447 for further information.

If your student is sick, you can take him/her to a walk-in clinic or the hospital if needed. Coverage begins at their arrival, even if they have not yet received their GuardMe card. The student is covered anywhere in Canada up to the level of Manitoba fees. Most clinics will charge the student and then student will need to request for their reimbursement. Please let us know if your student has any medical problems while he/she is staying with you.
Safety Guidelines

When Problems Arise

In life, conflicts are inevitable since we are all different. It is normal and common to have conflicts in your life. It is important, however, to be open about the conflict; especially if it is serious and persists. The key to avoiding conflicts and ending them is communication. You must talk about the conflict. This is hard when a conflict occurs with the host family, because a student might feel like a guest in your house and may lack the English skills to express themselves. You should try, however, to resolve the conflict within the family. If you can’t, talk to the Homestay Coordinator immediately!

Often, you will find conflicts result from misunderstandings. Students may feel the family does not spend enough time with them. They may find they do not eat rice very often or they want more vegetables.

We encourage students to communicate to their host families when conflicts occur and when they do speak to the Homestay Coordinator, they are reassured that host families will not get upset if we address a specific issue or concern with them. The expectation that hosts will have a negative reaction is usually one of the main reasons why students avoid speaking to their hosts directly. Please try to remind them you are open to receiving feedback and will be objective when addressing their concerns.

We tell them that the host family wants them to be happy. That it is also a labor of love, something host families take on to help others and interact with different cultures. We let them know that host families are open-minded, good-spirited people. Please try to help students if they approach you with problems and encourage students to communicate openly with you.

If you have any concerns about your student, please contact The Homestay Coordinator at 204-982-6631 or by email. We can discuss the problem and see if a solution can be worked out. Most of the time, issues can be resolved. We find that a lot of problems stem from miscommunication and/or misunderstanding of the English language. If either you or the student is having serious problems that cannot be resolved, we will arrange a new placement for the student.

Please contact the Emergency Phone ONLY if it is an emergency or an urgent reason. General inquiries can be addressed to the Homestay Coordinator by email or during business hours, Monday-Friday from 8:30AM – 16:30PM.

When Students Request to Leave Homestay

Students are expected to stay in homestay for the duration of their program. When students or Homestay request a move, they must give two weeks’ notice. However, in some cases, we may need to move the student before the end of their program.

Students are required to give two weeks’ notice before moving out or pay the equivalent of two
weeks’ homestay fee if no notice is given. Once again, this rule is waived if the homestay situation is deemed unsuitable. **The Homestay Coordinator reserves the right to move a student without advance notice if we decide a situation is unsafe or unsatisfactory for either party.** You must reimburse the Program for the balance of the homestay fees if an advance has been given within one week after the student moves out.

**NOTE**: There is a form that must be filled out and signed once the student gives you notice that he/she wishes to leave or change homestay. Please do not arrange to take in a student from another homestay family without discussing the issue with us first. There may be circumstances that you are not aware of, and it is very important for us to know if changes are being considered.

When host families and students join our program they agree to the policies of the program. It is unfair for host families or students to try to negotiate changes in living arrangements such as reduced fees, friends moving in, etc. If students and host families wish to remain in our program they must follow the rules of the program.

### Entertainment

Students are responsible for paying for their own entertainment. If students choose to go out for dinner with their friends, they pay for that meal. However, if your family goes out to eat with the student, you are responsible for paying for that meal because dinners are provided by the host family. If your student is invited to spend the day at the home of another host family, or is invited to go on an outing with that family, please consider returning the favor.

### Payment of Homestay Fees

In the ELP 14 week program, students pay for their first 107 days of homestay to the university. A cheque for 60 days payment is then issued and sent to host families at the end of the first month of homestay. The final cheque for the next 45 days is sent a month later. After 107 days your 14 week student pays you directly for the remainder of their stay at $25 per additional day or $750 per calendar month, depending on how long the student is extending their stay i.e., if a student starts paying you directly the 5th day of the month, any other recurring payment will be made on the 5th of each month. You should not be counting 30 days to determine when payments are due. If you have any questions, please contact the Homestay Office.

For the Collegiate and Undergraduate students, the UW will pay to the families for the first 90 days. Collegiate and undergraduate students will pay their host families directly after the first 90 days.

Homestay students will pay regular fees if they decide to travel and leave their luggage with the Homestay during their absence.

The payment for short term programs is variable. If you are involved in one of these programs you will be given more details by the Homestay Coordinator.
Money Issues

Please discourage your student from carrying large amounts of cash or leaving cash in his/her room. Students should have access to a bank account while they are studying here. **Under no circumstances should host families be lending money to or borrowing money from their student. Please do not sign any cell phone contracts or guarantees for apartments for your students.**

Property Damage

While every effort is made on our part to encourage students to take responsibility for damage to Homestay homes or property, the Host family agrees to release The University of Winnipeg of any liability.

We recommend doing a walkthrough of your home with your student when they arrive and again before they depart.

The University of Winnipeg can help mediate the communication between the host family and the student whenever there are any damages and requests for reimbursements. The host family must inform the Homestay Coordinator of any damages and provide a quote for the necessary repairs.

Things to Do with Your Student

Although host families are not required to act as tour guides, we do ask you to extend an invitation to your student(s) to join all family activities and to take the time to orient them to Winnipeg. Students certainly appreciate being included in activities and spending time with their homestay families. Here is a list of activities that students have mentioned they enjoy doing with their families:

- going grocery shopping or going to the mall
- going to the Forks or Assiniboine Park to see a special event
- watching a video and talking about it after
- reading a newspaper article and discussing it
- baking/cooking a dish from their country
- going to garage sales
- going to the park for a picnic
- having a barbecue
- having a few friends over for a special occasion, such as a birthday
- planting flowers/a garden
- going for a ride, walk or a drive
- watching your children/grandchildren play soccer/baseball/hockey
- trying a new sport for the first time
- going to the beach/the lake
- reading a story to your children/grandchildren
• looking at family photos with you
• visiting your friends/relatives with you
• being a part of Canadian celebrations (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, Canada Day)
• playing card games or board games

Culture Shock and its Effects on Students

There are certain stages of personal adjustment to a new culture. Therefore, it is important for you to be aware of the process that your student will go through during his/her stay with you.

The Honeymoon Stage: This stage is characterized by excitement and anticipation. Students are fascinated by everything that is new, and they are excited about coming to study in Canada! A student at this stage will appear eager to please you. He/she may often nod or smile to indicate understanding even when there is no understanding! When misunderstandings increase as a result, “culture stress” occurs. This stress usually leads to the second stage of culture shock.

The Hostility Stage: Once the initial euphoria has worn off, reality sets in, and the student becomes quite weary of communicating in English (and often being misunderstood!) every day. Students feel anxious and upset because they don’t seem to be able to communicate well. Students often react to their frustration by blaming their external environment for their feelings.

At this point, we quite often see hostility as a result of their frustration, absenteeism from school, lack of motivation, and (at worst) complete withdrawal. You may see your student retreating to his/her bedroom or seeking out companions who conform to his/her expectations.

This is a difficult and painful stage, but with patience, support, and encouragement, it does pass. At this time, encourage your student to talk about how he/she is feeling, and to talk to others who have gone through the same experience and can relate to it. If you have hosted in the past, it might be helpful to bring up the experiences of past students. Normalize what the student is going through and validate that it is frustrating not feeling understood. Because culture shock is mainly stress, help your student to deal with it by suggesting more sleep, regular exercise, and relaxation time. Help your student to understand that this is a normal stage in the process of cultural adjustment.

The Adjustment Stage: In this stage, students begin to relax in new situations and are able to laugh at minor misunderstandings without becoming hostile. Now, students have probably made some friends and are finding it easier to manage their tasks in class, understand their instructors and classmates, and enjoy their experience. Continue encouraging and supporting your student as they grow and adapt.

The Acceptance Stage: This final stage occurs when students can honestly say that they feel “at home” in their newly acquired culture. They have learned to adapt and adjust their behavior so that they fit in with the people around them. Getting to this stage requires the ability and willingness to
watch and listen for the “rules of the game”, and to learn and practice new skills and attitudes. This does not imply that students must become “Canadianized”. Rather, they become aware of our standards and norms and feel that they now have a comfortable balance between the two cultures, for which they should be congratulated!


**Saying Good-Bye**

Students leave their host families under many different circumstances. These departures can be very emotional for you and your student.

Many students leave at the end of their program to return home. Often these students feel very sad about leaving, so it is important to stay active with the student until the end of his/her stay. Homestays are expected to provide a ride to the airport when students depart.

Sometimes students leave homestay because they are unhappy or you have requested that they leave. These departures should be handled with dignity and maturity. Despite the fact that this can be a difficult situation, there is no point in making everyone’s final days together unpleasant. You may call on the homestay coordinator to discuss the situation further.

Students may also leave in order to move into an apartment. This move should not be taken as a rejection of your family. For many students, this represents their first opportunity to live on their own, and it’s another step in growing up. Let the student know if you want to keep in touch.

Students who have left Winnipeg may continue to keep in touch via email and letters. As the months and years go by, there will likely be less contact, but don’t be surprised to hear from a student after a lapse of a few years! Your response to these efforts to keep in touch does much to continue your life-long friendship!

We hope that the information and suggestions contained in this handbook are useful for you. We thank you for opening your home to international students, and we wish you an enjoyable time with the students that you host. While your student is with you, we ask that you treat him/her in the same way that you would like to be treated if you were staying with a family in another country.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Homestay Coordinator during office hours at (204) 982-6631 or email homestay@uwinnipeg.ca
Notice of Leave/ Change of Homestay Form

Student’s Name: ____________________________________________

(Please print)

Host Family’s Name: ____________________________________________

(Please print)

Date: ____________________________________________

Date that student will leave homestay: _________________________

Student’s signature: ____________________________________________

Host family’s signature: ____________________________________________

Homestay Coordinator’s Signature: ____________________________________________

Office Notes: ____________________________________________

________________________________________

Return this form to The University of Winnipeg Homestay Program Coordinator