



Griffith Institute of Language

Host Family & Student Accommodation Agreement

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1. Welcome

Dear Host Family,

We are delighted to have you as a host family for Griffith Institute of Language, the constituent Language Department of Griffith College.

We sincerely hope that your experience as a host family with us will be both enriching and rewarding for you and the students you host. As students come from a variety of different cultures and social backgrounds, host families have to be very understanding and accommodating in supporting their needs.

Please read this Host Family Handbook carefully and place it in a convenient place for quick reference.

2. General Information

- You are the student's first impression of Ireland – a safe, friendly, and welcoming home is essential.
- Students should be treated as part of the family.
- English must be the main language spoken at home.
- One student of a language should be hosted at any one time (unless friends/couples request otherwise).
- No more than 2 students may share a bedroom (individual rooms preferred).
- The booking is confirmed at least 2 weeks in advance of arrival.
- It may happen that a student's visa is not approved and the student may have to cancel.

3. Arrival, Stay, and Departure

3.1 Arrival Communication

- Griffith College will send both the student and the host family confirmation letters with:
 - ✓ flight details
 - ✓ contact details of both parties
 - ✓ address
 - ✓ any dietary needs
- Students must contact families before arrival to introduce themselves.
- Host families need to make sure they check their emails / phones for this communication and respond to the student.

3.2 Arrival and Move-In

- Prior to arrival in Ireland, students and hosts are required to contact each other directly to coordinate arrival dates and times.
- Students may arrive weekdays or weekends depending on flights.

- Hosts must ensure they are present and available at the accommodation upon the student's arrival unless another arrangement has been expressly agreed in advance.
- As arrivals are international, flight delays, late-night arrivals, or early-morning arrivals are to be expected. Both parties are required to act reasonably, flexibly, and considerately to ensure a successful move-in.
- You will be consulted if a student is arriving after 11pm or before 8am – if this doesn't suit then alternative arrangements can be put in place
- Upon arrival, students are strongly required to document the condition of the accommodation, including furniture, fixtures, and shared areas, by taking photographs or videos.
- This documentation serves as evidence in the event of disputes regarding damages, loss, or breakages arising during or after the stay.

3.3 Duration of Stay and Move-Out

- The exact start and end dates of the accommodation are bindingly defined in the signed Hosting Contract.
- Students are obliged to pay for the entire agreed hosting period, irrespective of:
 - ✓ Actual presence in the accommodation, or
 - ✓ Early departure or absence.
- Any deviation from the agreed dates or terms must be explicitly and individually agreed [recommended in writing] between student and host. The College is not involved unless there is an exceptional circumstance.
- As students are legally adults, no curfew or mandatory presence rules apply.
- Hosts must guarantee that the student has access to the accommodation at all times, day and night.
- Accommodation provided by Hosts does not constitute hotel accommodation, both parties are required to:
 - ✓ Respect household routines, and
 - ✓ Act reasonably and cooperatively.
- Any planned absence of more than two (2) consecutive days must be reported to the host in advance.
- Students are not permitted to bring visitors or overnight guests to the property by default. Any exception requires prior explicit agreement by the host.
- On the agreed move-out date, the student must vacate the accommodation and return it clean, tidy, and in the same reasonable condition as upon move-in, allowing for normal wear and tear.

3.4 Keys and Property Access

- Hosts are not obliged to provide a physical key to students.
- In most cases, hosts will either:
 - ✓ Provide a key, or
 - ✓ Establish another suitable access arrangement e.g. key in a lockbox.

- All keys issued to students must be returned in full upon move-out.
- In the event of a lost or stolen key, the student must:
 - ✓ Inform the host immediately and cooperate fully with any necessary security or replacement measures.
 - ✓ Any costs arising from lost or damaged keys may be charged to the student.

4. Meals

4.1 Meal Plans

Students are entitled to Half Board Family Accommodation, which includes:

- Monday to Friday:
 - Breakfast and dinner
- Saturday and Sunday:
 - Breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- If a student does not require a meal, they must inform the host in advance, either:
 - ✓ In person, or
 - ✓ By phone or text message.
- Mealtimes must be mutually agreed between student and host.
- Both parties are required to respect agreed mealtimes and individual schedules.

4.2 Dietary Requirements

- Meals must be fresh, varied and well-cooked food with a **minimum** reliance on convenience foods, frozen or pre-cooked meals.
- Breakfast can be light e.g. cereal / toast, fruit, yoghurt, tea / coffee / juice, and ‘self-service’, but someone from the family should be up and present.
- Generally, the evening meal should consist of a main course and a dessert, which need only be fruit, cheese, yoghurt, confectionary or similar.
- Any dietary requirements provided to the College for medical or health reasons will be forwarded to the host where supplied.
- Notwithstanding this, students are expected to personally discuss dietary needs directly with the host as a matter of courtesy and clarity.

4.3 Kitchen Use (Half Board Accommodation)

Notwithstanding that Half Board accommodation is included, the host may restrict regular or extensive use of the kitchen and cooking equipment (including large-scale cooking or the use of multiple pots and appliances). However, the host must guarantee at all times that the student:

- has reliable access to food,

- is permitted to store personal food items in the refrigerator, and
- is allowed to prepare simple, quick meals, such as sandwich, ready meals, snacks, or reheated food subject to the host family's household rules and agreed arrangements.
- Such basic food preparation must be possible regardless of time of day, including early mornings, late evenings, or outside standard mealtimes, to accommodate the student's study or work schedule.
- Any broader use of the kitchen beyond this minimum standard (e.g. full cooking, use of all appliances) may be individually agreed but is not mandatory.

5. Accommodation Standards, Private Space, Safety and House Rules

5.1 Accommodation and Room Standards (Minimum Requirements)

The room must meet basic living standards and include as a minimum:

- ✓ A standard bed with mattress
 - ✓ Clean linen/towels
 - ✓ Adequate storage for clothing
 - ✓ A desk or suitable study surface with chair and a lamp (alternatively access to another room where the student can study undisturbed)
 - ✓ Sufficient lighting
 - ✓ Heating
 - ✓ A window and appropriate ventilation
- Bedrooms must be cleaned weekly (either by the host or agreed with the student).
 - The room must not be reassigned, shared, or repurposed without the student's explicit consent.

5.2 Privacy and Room Access

- The student's room is regarded as private living space.
- Hosts must not enter the student's room without:
 - ✓ Prior notice, and
 - ✓ The student's consent, except in the case of genuine emergencies (e.g. fire, water damage, safety risks).
- Any violation of this clause constitutes a serious breach of trust and contract.

5.3 Use of Common Areas

- Students are entitled to reasonable use of shared areas, including:
 - ✓ Bathroom(s),

- ✓ Kitchen (where applicable),
- ✓ Common living areas
- Remember that the student is a long way from home and needs to feel at home; small things like inviting them to watch television can make all the difference.
- Students should not be restricted from being at home during the day.
- The extent of use of shared areas must be clearly discussed and agreed at the beginning of the stay.
- Any restrictions must be reasonable, proportionate, and must not infringe on the student's basic daily needs.

5.4 Noise, Rest and Respectful Living

- Both parties must respect reasonable quiet hours, particularly during night-time.
- Noise levels must be kept to a level that allows rest, study, and normal daily activities.

5.5 Utilities and Basic Services

The payment includes access to essential utilities, in particular:

- Electricity
- Water
- Heating
- Internet
- Utilities must not be withheld, limited, or used as a means of pressure in any dispute.

5.6 Safety and Legal Compliance

- Hosts must ensure that the accommodation complies with basic safety standards, including:
 - ✓ Functioning locks,
 - ✓ Safe electrical installations,
 - ✓ Clear access routes.
- Students must comply with:
 - ✓ Local laws and regulations,
 - ✓ Reasonable house rules communicated by the Host.

Any illegal activity by either party constitutes grounds for immediate termination.

5.7 Insurance and Personal Belongings

- Students are responsible for insuring their own personal belongings.
- Hosts are not liable for loss, theft, or damage to student property unless caused by gross negligence or intent.
- The college assumes no responsibility or liability in this regard.
- Clearly communicated house rules are binding, provided they:

- ✓ Are reasonable,
- ✓ Do not contradict these T&Cs,
- ✓ Do not undercut defined minimum standards.
- ✓ Any house rule that contradicts these terms is invalid and unenforceable.

5.8 Showers and Hot Water (Minimum Standard)

- Students are entitled to take one shower per day.
- Shower times and hot water usage should be arranged with reasonable flexibility and consideration for other household members.
- Hosts should make efforts to accommodate students' academic work, exams or study schedule
- While mutual agreements, consideration for other residents, and scheduling arrangements are encouraged, no agreement may reduce the above minimum standard.

5.9 Laundry

- Each student is entitled to wash a minimum of one full washing machine load per week on average.
- ✓ Heavy or excess laundry can be sent to a laundrette (student's expense).
- ✓ Hosts are not required to iron clothes.
- Whether the Student is permitted to:
 - ✓ Operate the washing machine independently, or
 - ✓ Requires assistance from the host shall be subject to individual agreement
- Students may:
 - ✓ Use their own detergent, provided it is suitable for the machine, and
 - ✓ Any restriction that effectively prevents weekly access to laundry constitutes a breach of minimum standards.

5.10 Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs

- Smoking, alcohol, and drugs are strictly prohibited without exception on the host's premises, including:
 - ✓ Inside the house,
 - ✓ The garden,
 - ✓ Any part of the property.
- Illegal drugs are strictly forbidden under all circumstances.
Any violation may result in immediate termination of the accommodation.
- Alcohol is strictly prohibited by default.
Students are not permitted to bring, possess, or consume alcohol on the premises.
- Hosts may only permit deviations from these rules by:
 - ✓ Explicit individual agreement, and
 - ✓ Clear documented proof of such permission.
 - ✓ In the absence of written proof, the general prohibition applies.

5.11 Internet Access (Minimum Standard)

- Unrestricted internet access is a mandatory minimum standard.
- Hosts must provide:
 - A functioning Wi-Fi connection, and
 - Access sufficient to allow online learning, exam preparation, and academic participation.
 - Internet access must not be limited by:
 - ✓ Time of day,
 - ✓ Duration of use,
- ✓ Students must comply with:
 - ✓ All applicable Irish laws, and
 - ✓ Rules prohibiting illegal internet use.
 - ✓ Internet usage must not disturb others.
 - ✓ Any behavioural expectations related to internet use must be reasonably agreed but may not restrict availability itself.

5.12 Address Registration and Mail

- ✓ For stays of one month or less, hosts are not obliged to permit use of their address for official registration, or online orders.
- ✓ During this period, students are expressly prohibited from using the host's address for any official or private purposes.
- ✓ For stays exceeding one month, hosts must permit use of their address for official matters, including but not limited to:
 - ✓ PPS number registration
 - ✓ Leap Card
 - ✓ Mobile phone contracts
 - ✓ Other requirements necessary to establish daily life in Ireland.
- If a Host refuses address usage for official purposes in stays longer than one month:
 - ✓ The student is entitled to special termination without a two-week notice period, and
 - ✓ May move out early without penalty.
- Upon moveout, students must:
 - ✓ Deregister the address immediately, and
 - ✓ Cease all use of the host's address.
- Any misuse may result in legal action; the College assumes no responsibility in this regard.

5.13 Damage and Destruction

- Any damage caused by one party to the other party's property must be fully repaired, replaced, or reimbursed.
- This obligation applies mutually.
- The College:
 - ✓ Assumes no liability, and
 - ✓ Is not involved in damage claims.
- Photo documentation at move-in and moveout is strongly recommended.

5.14 Damage and Destruction

- Reasonable, careful use of the accommodation is required at all times.
- Normal wear and tear may not be charged.
- The burden of proof rests with the party making the claim.

5.15 Heating (Minimum Standard)

- The house should be warm and comfortable. Unauthorised heaters are not permitted unless expressly approved.
- Heating may not be restricted in a way that prevents the minimum temperature standard.

5.16 Severability and Minimum Standards

- These terms constitute mandatory minimum standards.
- Deviations are valid only if agreed in writing.
- Any attempt to undercut these minimum standards may constitute grounds for:
 - ✓ Immediate termination, and
 - ✓ Removal from the program for either party.

5.17 Extension of Stay

- Any extension of the stay must be individually and expressly agreed between student and host.
- The College is not responsible for extensions.

5.18 Communication and Conduct

- Daily communication in English is an essential part of the homestay experience.
- Both students and hosts are expected to:
 - ✓ Communicate openly,
 - ✓ Address concerns promptly,
 - ✓ Attempt to resolve issues directly before escalation.
- If a student is asked to leave due to rule violations:
 - ✓ They are solely responsible for finding new accommodation, and for all resulting costs.

6. Payment Terms

6.1 Role of the College (Intermediary Only)

- The College acts solely as an intermediary to facilitate initial contact between students and host families (“Hosts”).
- The college is not a contractual party to any accommodation agreement between the student and the host.
- The College assumes no liability for refunds, disputes, early termination, or any claims arising between student and host.

6.2 Booking Period and Duration

- Students may book accommodation with a host for a maximum duration of six months.
- Extensions are not organized, guaranteed, or processed by the College.

6.3 Rent, Payments, and Payment Responsibilities

6.3.1 Payment Structure

- Rent is payable to the hosts in monthly instalments.
- Partial months are calculated pro rata based on the number of days stayed.
- The entire monthly rent must be paid in one single lump sum.

6.3.2 Payment via the College

- The College processes all payment received in advance by the student
- The College forwards this amount to the host.
- Early move-out does not affect this payment.
- Any refund must be settled directly between student and host.

6.3.3 Payments Beyond Original Booking

- The college is not involved in collecting, forwarding, monitoring, or enforcing these payments
- All payment terms from month two onward must be **individually agreed** between student and host.

6.4 Host Payment Details

- Every Host must provide a valid IBAN to receive payments.
- Payment is considered valid only once the amount has successfully reached the host’s account.
- Failure to pay constitutes a breach of agreement between student and host, not involving the College.

6.5 Early Termination and Early Move-Out

- An early move-out does not alter payment obligations already made or due.
- Any reimbursement, adjustment, or refund resulting from early termination must be resolved between student and host.
- The college does not mediate, refund, or intervene in early termination disputes.

6.6 Short-Notice Cancellation and Sanctions

- Short-notice cancellation by either party is considered a serious breach.
- Consequences include:
 - ✓ Hosts may be removed from the accommodation list.
 - ✓ Students may lose any entitlement to a replacement host or be moved to the bottom of the placement list.

6.7 Binding Nature and Signature Obligation

- Any person signing or accepting these terms is legally and personally bound by them.
- No third party may claim exemption or shift responsibility once acceptance has occurred.
- It is the responsibility of the signing party to ensure they fully understand these obligations.

6.8 Refunds and Early Termination

- Refunds are generally excluded in cases of early termination; these are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- A two-week notice period applies in all cases and must be paid in full.
- Any further financial settlement is exclusively between student and host.
- The College:
 - ✓ Pays up to the full pre agreed booking period and
 - ✓ Does not refund that amount
- All other payment rules are governed by the Payment Sections of the T&Cs.

7. Disputes, Refunds, and Liability Exclusion

- All disputes regarding payments, refunds, extensions, cancellations, or early termination are solely between student and host.
- The College:
 - ✓ Does not process refunds
 - ✓ Does not assume financial liability
 - ✓ No claims may be brought against the College in relation to accommodation agreements.

8. Inspections

Host families will be inspected annually

9. Issues with Students

Please refer to the host family [Grievance Policy](#)

10. Final Provisions

- These Terms apply to each and every accommodation booking facilitated by the College.
- Any deviation or special arrangement must be made directly between student and host and does not bind the College.

11. GDPR

In signing this agreement, you agree to data sharing to Griffith College and the student of:

1. Your personal details (name, phone, email, address)
2. Bank details (Griffith College only)

For Griffith College GDPR policy please see [HERE](#)

If an arrangement is not working well, please remember that we are always here to talk with you in confidence. Please feel free to contact us about any difficulties or questions you may have. In the unlikely event that you have a serious problem during a student's stay; it is very important that you bring it to our attention as soon as it arises so we can help you resolve it.

By signing the below, you have read and understood this handbook and will adhere to the guidelines listed above.

Date: _____

Host family (where applicable): _____

Student (where applicable): _____