

## Your Host Family

The host family environment is an important and rewarding part of your experience at Exeter College. For many students this may be your first time away from your home, and home country. Your host family home is more than just providing accommodation. It is, as the name suggests, about providing a home away from home. Your host family will provide a friendly and secure 'base' and will help you to become settled into life in the UK. It is expected that you join in with host family activities at the weekend and many students form strong bonds with their host families.

### Hosting period

All students that start their qualification/experience in host family accommodation, must remain in the host family environment for the duration of their time at Exeter college.

Please note that Exeter college is closed for two weeks over the Christmas period. All learners will be expected to return home for this period and return ready for the start of the new term. Our term dates are available to access from the front page of our website [www.exe-coll.ac.uk](http://www.exe-coll.ac.uk).

### Student & Host Agreement

Students will be required to sign an agreement which includes the terms and conditions included in this handbook and specifies your conduct in the home.

### Integration into the family home

All students are treated equally to other members of the family and encouraged to speak English as much as possible in the family home. Since you are a paying guest in the family, you will have no duties or chores other than to fit in and take part in family life in the best way possible. It is the responsibility of both parties to achieve this successfully and will require an effort from both sides. If you are unsettled or unhappy at home, it can affect your study as well as your health, please do get in touch with us if you have any concerns about how you are adapting to your host family environment.

### Host Family Rules

Additional rules may be put in place by the host family. You are expected to follow these rules for the duration of your stay with the host family. It's probably a good idea to talk to the host family about any household rules when you first arrive there.

### Cost and Payment

These payments should be made directly to the host family bank account from either your parents/carer or via your agent (\*Students under the age of 18 should not be paying host families directly (cash or bank transfer) - if your parents or agent are unable to make these payments you can discuss a payment plan set up through Exeter College). If there are any problems, please let the International Team know.

A student should not expect a rebate for absences of less than a week. If you wish to retain the room during longer absences such as Christmas Holidays/ Summer, leaving belongings there so that the room cannot be re-let, the host family will charge you a retainer fee of £50 per week.

### Termination of Accommodation

If a student requires to move to another host family, we advise students to give two weeks' notice of leave. This is also the same period of notice we expect host families to give to students. It is on these occasions that the records of payments and receipts given, may be important, especially in any dispute.



We strongly advise students to move from a host at the end of the calendar month to avoid confusion around monies owed. If the host and student has agreed a leaving date part way through the month and the two weeks' notice period has been completed, it is then expected that the host return the monies owed for the remainder of the month.

### Access to the home

You'll be able to access your host family home seven days a week during term time (including half term holidays).

### Curfew

If you are aged 16-18 years old, a curfew will apply. We expect you to be home by **22:00** within the college week, and **23:00** at weekends. There are no curfews for over 18s, however we do ask that you adhere to any rules within the home and are quiet and courteous if returning later at night.

We ask students, regardless of age, to always take their mobile phone with them, and to please keep in touch with the host family. If your plans change or you think you might be late home, you must inform your host family.

### Visitors

You are welcome to have visitors, but this must be previously agreed upon with the host.

- Parents/guardians will need to contact the college prior to visiting learners in residential accommodation. This is to ensure that over 18's may enter the residence without staff being present.
- No visitors are allowed on site between the hours of 10pm and 8am.
- The host family has full discretion to refuse entry to the residential accommodation of any non-resident.

### Home Alone

You may find that your host family has a pre-booked holiday during your stay with them. On these occasions you will be temporarily placed with another local family that has been approved by the college. In respect of students over the age of 18, you may stay in the home alone for a short period of time; however, this is through mutual agreement between yourself and your host. The college must also be informed of this arrangement in advance.

### Room Search

Any room search conducted as part of investigation into a breach of College properties regulations must only be done so by a member of college staff while the student is present (unless permission is sought from the Vice-Principal: Standards and Student Experience). The door to the learner's room must remain open throughout the search. Wherever possible a second member of staff should be present throughout the search.

## Host Family Facilities

### Bedroom

All students should have a room where they can study and be alone. Your room should be clean and comfortable and have adequate heating and lighting, with a table/desk and chair to ensure that you can study. Where a desk is not available in the room, you will be provided with a space to study freely and comfortably in another room free from distraction. This can include a separate study or dining room. It is expected that you keep your bedroom clean and tidy. Your host should always respect your privacy and seek permission to enter your room for any cleaning and tidying they may wish to do. If you would prefer to take care of all cleaning yourself then you may need to talk to your host at the beginning of your stay to avoid any misunderstandings.

### Bathroom

You will have access to the bathroom and washing facilities. Agreements regarding times need to be made in busy households, particularly during the morning routine. Towels will be provided as many students often do not bring their own due to them being bulky to travel with. In addition, the host family are asked to explain the use of all



bathroom facilities as some students may not be familiar with their use.

### Laundry

You will be entitled to one wash load per week. As well as a weekly change of bedding and towels.

### Telephone

We will provide you with a UK SIM card to use in your mobile phone. To prevent any problems of misunderstanding or misuse, your host family will speak to you about outgoing calls on the landline telephone. It is reasonable to expect you to receive incoming calls at acceptable times.

### Wi-Fi and Internet usage

You will have access to Wi-Fi at your accommodation. You should talk to the host family about passwords and download limits at the beginning of your stay. Please ensure that you are clear about internet usage, and, download limits to ensure that no unexpected bills arrive.

All Exeter College students sign a code of conduct when they start at college, this includes an agreement on the appropriate use of the internet. International students are expected to follow the code of conduct for the entirety of their stay, including at home with your host family.

### Meals

Daily breakfast, lunch and main evening meal are included in the weekly charge. Appropriate and healthy food will be offered to you, and the host family will ask you if you have any preferences or requirements when you arrive. The International team should be informed of any allergies or intolerances before you arrive in the UK. This ensures you are matched to a host that can appropriately support your needs.

We understand that breakfast may be hectic within a busy household, and it is reasonable for your host family to ask you to prepare your own meal. Examples of a suitable breakfast would include toast and cereal, or fruit with yoghurt, along with a hot drink and fruit juice. A packed lunch will be provided during the college week, with a light prepared lunch at the weekends.

The evening meal will always be a substantial dinner including meat, chicken, fish or cheese or a suitable vegetarian/vegan alternative. You will sit down with the household and eat with them. We expect you to arrive on time for cooked meals and to inform the host family in good time if you won't be home. In this instance, a cold meal could be offered instead if it is reasonable to do so.

In addition, the host family may be happy for you to have a snack when you come home from college or at the weekend. You will also be provided with some small storage to store your own small snacks. The host family will make it clear with you what is acceptable for you to help yourself to and what is not. To make it more enjoyable for you, and easier for the host family, we would strongly suggest having a conversation when you first arrive about your likes and dislikes. You should be aware that you are coming to the UK to experience British culture, and therefore the host family is not expected to cook anything different than they would normally.



## Important Information

### Insurance

It is strongly recommended that you organise the following insurance prior to travelling to the UK. Exeter College will not be held accountable for lost, broken items, or cancelled travel plans:

- Travel insurance
- Contents insurance for personal items with in host household
- Medical insurance (for those students who are not from the EU)

### Smoking/Alcohol/Drugs

Exeter College is a non-smoking/alcohol/drug environment, and it is illegal for students under the age of 18 to purchase cigarettes, tobacco or alcohol. Host families support the college in this approach and strongly discourage students under the age of 18 from smoking or drinking. Adult students who smoke will be made aware of where they can go, and whether it is appropriate for them to smoke indoors or outdoors. You will be asked to follow the rules that the household has in place. Exeter College will endeavour to match students that smoke with hosts who indicate the same preferences; however, we cannot be held responsible for information that is not provided by both parties. In this instance, we ask that you speak to your host family directly to resolve the issue.

### Travel Permission

If you are under the age of 18 and you are planning an overnight stay away from your host family (example a trip to London) then you **must** complete a travel release form. This form must be signed by all appropriate parties (student, parent, host family and agent) and handed in to the International office 5 days before the purposed trip, it is **your** responsibility to complete and return this form.

Students should not be travelling on college days without the express permission of their tutor and the International team. This form should also be completed if you are travelling home for all college holidays (Half term, Christmas, Easter and Summer). You can request a travel release form from the International Team Office.

### Complaints

If you are unable to resolve an issue directly with the International Team or are unhappy with the service received, then you can make a formal complaint by following the college complaints procedure available on the 'contact us' section of the college website. Alternatively, you can address your complaint to 'The Quality Assurance Manager, Exeter College, Hele Road, Exeter, EX4 4JS.

