



# Islington Centre for English

## Accommodation Information

Booking accommodation in London from abroad can be a nerve-racking thing to do. Where will I stay? What will my 'host family' be like? At ICE, we want to make this process as easy as possible for you and this document is here to help answer many of your questions.

At ICE, we offer:

- 1. Renting a room**
- 2. Student Halls accommodation** in University halls of residence
- 3. Budget Hotel Islington**
- 4. Family Homestay** accommodation with a family

## An overview

### 1. ICE Room Rent

The Islington Centre for English maintains a list of local rooms for rent in the Islington area as well as working with outside providers who can arrange temporary accommodation for students in many parts of London. Rooms are inspected regularly either by ourselves or other agencies in order to ensure they are suitable and provide good value for money.

### 2. Student Accommodation or 'University Halls'

Stay with other overseas students, in a secure, sociable environment. Student halls are a really great way to share your London experience with others just like you.

ICE offers some high quality 'student halls' within easy reach of your English classes. Students will have single or double rooms with or without en-suite bathroom and/or cooking facilities. Most halls have free Wi-Fi access. Some halls have additional facilities such as on site gyms.

### 3. Budget Hotel Islington

Family run hotel in a great Islington location close to I.C.E. Rooms are basic but clean with en suite bathrooms. Several buses pass by the hotel to the school, alternatively you can choose to walk which takes around 20 minutes. Wi-Fi is available in communal areas. Prices include a continental self service breakfast.

## 4. Homestay

All the homestay families used by ICE have been carefully selected, inspected and visited regularly, in accordance with British Council regulations by our accommodation agency. Staying with an English-speaking family will be an important part of your visit and we – and our families – want to make it a success. Of course, you are likely to find the environment and lifestyle different from what you are used to.

So, the notes on the next pages are meant to help you decide if homestay is for you - and if so, they will help you settle in quickly, feel confident in dealing with your hosts, and get the most out of your stay.

### **Please remember:**

*London is for many students an expensive city, and accommodation costs very much reflect this. Students should not expect the equivalent level of luxury or size of accommodation for the same amount of money you may pay in your country of origin.*

*Your homestay will be in zones 1, 2, 3, or 4. We will try our best to ensure that your journey to school will typically take a maximum of half an hour, though this is not always possible. You may need to change trains or underground, take a bus or do a mixture of these. Unless you choose the Islington homestay (limited availability) very unlikely what you will find a homestay within walking distance to school.*

*Our homestay families reflect the great ethnic and cultural diversity of London. The vast majority are British. If English is not their first language, we can assure you that all families will speak English to a high standard and will speak English in the home*

### **General Rules**

1. Please remember that you are staying in somebody else's private home. The facilities will not be the same as in a hotel, and of course – just like in your own family – there will be domestic arrangements and rules that everyone living in the house needs to know. We ask our host families to explain these to you when you arrive.
2. Please do **NOT** pay your family any money for your room. ICE or its designated homestay agency will do this. You should **only** pay your hosts for occasional meals that you have with them 'by arrangement', or for extra items such as the use of a telephone, laundry, etc.
3. If you plan to leave your accommodation earlier than the date you originally gave us, or you need to extend your stay, it is very important to tell us – and your host – as soon as possible. If you do not give us at least one week's notice, you will lose one week's rent.
4. Finally – and most important – there may be misunderstandings or problems, as in any family, but our staff will do everything they can to ensure that your stay is a happy one.  
**We can nearly always resolve problems, provided that you tell us about them.** So please don't hesitate. Talk to any available staff member and tell them what the problem is – however small. They will know what to do and can put you in touch with the correct person – probably our Accommodation Manager.

## **What You Can Expect From Your Hosts**

- Your own, private room, unless you have specifically asked to share with a friend or partner.
- A friendly welcome, with explanations of how to use things in the house and the best way to get to the school.
- Information about local shops, restaurants, pubs and other facilities.
- Advice or help if you have a problem.
- Facilities to do your washing and ironing (or your hosts may do it for you).
- A chair and desk or table with a light for studying.
- A wardrobe or cupboard for your clothes.
- Breakfast, Lunch and Evening meals, if your homestay booking already includes these.
- An occasional evening meal 'by arrangement'. In this case you must agree days and times with your hosts.
- Sheets and towels (laundered once a week).
- A front door key, so you can come in and go out when you like.
- Facilities for a bath or shower every day.
- The opportunity to receive telephone calls (within reasonable hours).
- The opportunity to make telephone calls (you may have to pay for these).
- The opportunity to watch TV with your hosts or in your room if it has a TV.
- Use of the kitchen to make drinks, and possibly snacks. Your hosts may also allow you to use the refrigerator.

## **Will Your Host Expect From You**

- NOT to smoke in the house if you are staying in non-smoking accommodation.
- NOT to make a noise if you come home after 10.30pm, when other people in the house may already be asleep.
- To close the front door properly when you return, and lock any doors or windows they have asked you to.
- To turn off lights and heating where possible. Unless it is very cold, many British families do not normally leave the central heating on all night.
- To be considerate if you are sharing the bathroom with your hosts or other guests, so they are not held up.
- To keep the bathroom as tidy as possible, and clean up after you use it.
- To keep your own room reasonably tidy, so that it can be cleaned.
- To arrange and pay for any evening meals you have with your hosts. Please do not wait for the host to raise this and ask you for this payment.
- To make sure your family and friends do not telephone early in the morning or late at night and keep your calls as short as possible. Remember the time difference!
- To let your hosts know if your plans change during the day – for example, you decide that you do not want an evening meal with your hosts.
- To let your hosts know if you intend to stay out all night. If you do not, they may worry about you, or need to lock doors and windows.
- To allow your hosts some privacy so that they can lead their own lives. Do not expect them to be there all the time just for you.

## **Frequently Asked Questions...**

### **What will I have in my room?**

You will have a bed and bedding, some space for your clothes, adequate lighting and usually a desk or table suitable for studying at. If you do not have a desk in your room your host will provide one elsewhere in the house. You will also be able to use the living room at the home-stay.

### **What will my host give me to eat?**

You may find that the food provided by your host is very different to the food you normally have at home. Remember that trying new food is all part of the experience.

Breakfast: will usually consist of cereal, toast and spreads, coffee/tea and/or juice. Your host *may* prepare this for you, but remember that many of our host families may be busy preparing for their working day, so they may simply show you where to find the items in the kitchen.

Evening meal: will probably consist of meat/chicken/fish, vegetables/salad and, of course, the English favorite – the potato! English people also enjoy food from other countries so you may find that you are served a variety of dishes during your stay. Your host will ensure that you receive nutritionally balanced food. If you have special dietary requirements you should ensure that you inform us at the time of booking.

### **Can I use the kitchen?**

Your host will usually allow you to use the kitchen, but only to prepare snacks and drinks. If you don't choose to have an evening meal with your host you will not be able to prepare your own meal in the kitchen at the home-stay.

### **How often can I have a shower?**

You will be able to use the shower every day and your host will ensure that there is sufficient hot water for you to do so. When you have finished please ensure that you leave the bathroom as you would wish to find it, especially if you are sharing it with other members of the household.

### **Will I have a key to the home?**

You will be given your own key to the homestay. Please take care not to lose it. There will probably not be a lock on your bedroom door – remember that this is someone's home and it is not usual to have a lock on a bedroom door.

### **Do I need to bring towels or sheets?**

No, your host will provide them and will change your bed linen and towels once a week.

### **How can I wash my clothes?**

Your host will probably wash your clothes as part of the weekly wash done for the family. You will probably have to do your own ironing. If you wish to wash your clothes independently, then your host may allow you to use the family washing machine or may ask you to use a nearby launderette.

### **Will I be able to talk with my hosts?**

Our hosts are interested in you and will provide you with opportunities to practice your speaking and listening. Make sure you use these opportunities when they are presented but also remember that hosts need their own private space, just as you do.

### **Can I use the telephone?**

You will generally be able to receive telephone calls, but please try to ensure that these are at times that

will not be inconvenient to the family. The same goes for outgoing calls, and the family is entitled to ask you to pay for the calls you make.

**Can I watch TV?**

You may have a TV in your room but this is not guaranteed. You will be able to watch TV in the living room at your home-stay.

**Can I bring visitors back to my home-stay?**

You must not bring anyone back to your home-stay without agreeing this beforehand with your host. If you have friends or family coming to London to visit you then you should not expect your host to accommodate them as well. It is usually better to find hotel