

Demi Pair Student Handbook & Code of Conduct

Students taking part in the Demi Pair program must read this handbook which provides detailed information about the Demi Pair placement. The information in this handbook should be followed to ensure a successful and enjoyable placement.

Arrival and First Impressions

It's normal to feel nervous about meeting your host family for the first time. When you arrive in Australia, you may have jetlag and feel disorientated in your new environment. It is normal to feel overwhelmed when everything is new.

During the first few weeks, you will learn about the family, their routines and way of doing things, which may be different to what you are used to. The best way to adapt to your new family is to spend time with them. Spend time playing with the children as this will help you to bond with them and make your time in the family more enjoyable.

Accommodation

You will have your own bedroom in the family home. You will share a bathroom with the children, or you have your own bathroom. You need to buy your own toiletries (shower gel, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste etc.) and you will be expected to keep your bedroom and bathroom clean and tidy.

You can use the family's Wi-Fi for your homework or to call your family, but you must not view or download anything illegally, such as pirated movies or music.

You must respect the family's home and their personal belongings. If you break or damage anything, you must tell the parents. Accidents can happen and they will appreciate and require your honesty.

As a member of the family home, you are expected to use your initiative and be thoughtful towards family members. You are expected to clean up after yourself and help if you see that something needs doing. For example, setting the table for dinner or emptying the bin if you see it is full. These extra tasks are not part of your work hours, but are expected of you as an adult living in the family home.

Duties

You will provide 20 hours of help to your host family each week. In exchange for your help, your accommodation and meals in the host family home will be provided and you will receive your weekly allowance, for your living expenses.

When you arrive, the family will provide you with an orientation in their home. They will explain your duties and show you around their home. If cleaning the floors is part of your duties, make sure you know where the vacuum cleaner is kept. If you need to help with the laundry, make sure you know how to use the washing machine.

Be pro-active and ask questions about the children, for example which foods they like to eat and if they have any allergies. Use this opportunity to learn about the family so you are prepared to do your daily tasks, in case the parents are not at home to show or tell you.



Your host family will prepare a weekly schedule for you and it's important that you keep a record of your weekly tasks and hours of assistance. The Demi Pair Coordinator will make sure the help you provide to your host family is in line with the agreed task list. The Demi Pair Coordinator will also check that you are completing the duties the family require of you.

You will help the family on weekdays, Monday – Friday and you may have to help in the mornings and afternoons. Weekends are usually free for you to meet with friends and explore Sydney, but we ask you to remain flexible as the family may ask you to help at a weekend, for example babysitting on a Saturday night.

One night of babysitting is usually included within the 20 hours of weekly help that you provide the family. If you are asked to babysit in addition to your weekly 20 hours, please discuss the method of payment with the host family. The family will either pay you for your extra hours of help (at the national minimum wage of AU\$20 per hour) or they will give you a day off during the week.

Communication

Communication is a key part to making sure your placement with your host family is enjoyable and successful. Your host family want you to enjoy your time in Australia and your time with their family. If you have a question or a problem during your stay, speak to the family by yourself first as they can help to explain or clarify anything you are unsure of. Talking to the family face-to-face helps to clarify information. Avoid communicating with the family via text message, as this can lead to misunderstandings.

Support

The Demi Pair Coordinator is based at the Bondi campus and is here to support your placement and stay in the host family. You can talk to the Demi Pair Coordinator if you have any questions or problems during your stay. If you have already spoken to your host family and you are still unsure, the Demi Pair Coordinator can clarify any details with the family directly on behalf of you.

Discipline

The way that your host family disciplines their children may be different to the way you were brought up by your own parents. Consistency is very important for children and it will make your time in the family much easier if you follow the family's rules and way of responding to the children's behaviour.

Talk to the parents about the methods they use to discipline their children (e.g. time out, no TV etc.) so that you can follow their example. Be very careful not to discipline the children in ways that the parents have not directly told you is okay for you to do.

In Australia it is **illegal** to use physical force on a child. You **MUST NOT** hit, smack, slap or shake a child in your care. Your placement will be terminated immediately if you are found in breach and the host family may take legal action including contacting the police.

House Rules

To ensure a positive placement experience, you must follow the host family's house rules. If you have lived by yourself before joining the program it may be difficult for you to adapt to your host family's expectations, so please be aware of this.



Talk to the parents about their house rules, for example whether you have to be home by a certain time on weeknights. Although you are an adult and you will have your own independence, your host family are responsible for making sure that you have a safe stay in Australia and you will become another adult role model to their children.

Safety

Keeping the children safe is the most important part of this program. You must be alert and responsive at all times and you may be responsible more than one child at once, when the parents are not with you.

Make sure that you know what to do if there is an emergency and who to call. The family will provide you with a list of emergency contacts, which should be kept in a safe place.

Australia is a hot, dry country and the sun is very strong. During the summer months (December – February) you must make sure the children have drinking water, wear sunscreen and a hat when you let them go outside.

When you are with the children outside of the home, hold hands with them children as you walk and always keep them on the side of you that is furthest from the road. Traffic in Australia comes from the right-hand side, so always look both ways before crossing the road.

You must never leave a child at home or in a car by themselves. Leaving a child unattended in a car is illegal in Australia as cars can get extremely hot inside during summer.

Children's Health

If the children have any serious health conditions or allergies, you will be informed about these details as part of the placement matching process. You cannot miss classes to stay at home and take care of a sick children and you must never give a child any medication without the parent's permission.

Driving in Australia

If your host family require you to drive, you must hold a valid driving license with an English translation and an international driving permit (IDP) to allow you to drive in Australia. You will need to organize this yourself before arriving in Australia. Your host family will arrange car insurance in case you have an accident whilst driving.

There are important rules to follow when you drive in Australia, called the NSW Road Rules, which can be found in the NSW Road User's Handbook.

Driving conditions in Australia may differ to your home country, so please make sure you are familiar with the road rules. If you get any parking or speeding tickets during your stay, you are liable to pay these charges.

Young children must always sit in a car seat. The host family will show you how to fit the children's car seats in the car. Children must always sit in the back of the car and must always wear a seat belt. Never leave children by themselves in the car.



Privacy and Confidentiality

You must keep all information about your host family private at all times. Do not discuss any of family matters with your classmates or friends. If there is a family matter that you are worried about, talk to the Demi Pair Coordinator.

Many families try to reduce their children's online involvement to protect their children's identity and keep them safe, so taking photos with the children should be avoided and posting photos of the children online is not allowed.

Posting photos or sharing information about your host family, their home or their children on social media (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter etc.) or personal blogs is also not allowed.

Your Health

If you become unwell during your stay in Australia, you must see a doctor to get treatment or medication and a medical certificate. You should come to Australia with a health insurance policy to cover any medical costs during your stay.

You can ask the host family to show you where the local doctor and dentist is close to the family home or you can ask the Demi Pair Coordinator to help you find one.

If you see a doctor during class time, it's important that you ask your doctor for a medical certificate as you'll need to provide this to the Demi Pair Coordinator, so your attendance at school is not affected.

Appearance

As a young adult in the family home, you will become a role model to the children and they might even see you as their older sibling! You are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all times, so be mindful about the way that you behave and dress during your stay in the family home. It is not appropriate to wear short, revealing clothes such as low-cut tops, crop tops, "hot pant" style shorts or mini dresses. If you're at the beach with the family or in the swimming pool, it is not appropriate to wear a bikini when around the children.

How you dress in your spare time is your decision, but remember that you are living in a family environment with children so your behaviour and the way you present yourself is going to be noticed.

Mobile Phone Usage

You should bring your mobile phone with you to Australia. Make sure that your mobile phone has been unlocked in your home country, so that you can use an Australian sim card. You will need to buy a sim card here in Australia and you must provide your host family and the Demi Pair Coordinator with your Australian phone number.

You must not use your mobile phone when you're looking after the children, unless you have permission from the host family. Your host parents may need to contact you and you will need to have your phone with you, but you should not use your phone inappropriately such as checking social media or messaging friends. This should only be done once you've finished your duties, in your private time.



In Australia, using your phone whilst in the company of others is considered rude. You are required to be alert during your placement and using your mobile phone can distract you.

Transport

You should expect to spend between AU\$40-\$60 per week on public transport, which will include the transport you take to and from school. In Sydney, you will need to buy an Opal card to use the buses and trains. You need to pay for your own transport costs from your weekly pocket money allowance.

Your host family will show you where the closest bus stop or train station is to their home that you can take to school. You can also download apps to your phone including Opal Travel and TripView. The Demi Pair Coordinator will confirm the quickest route to school before you arrive.

Climate

Australia is a dry and hot country, but can also be cold and wet during the winter season. The summer months are December – February and the winter months are June – August. Summertime in Sydney can be hot (average 25C and as high as 40C) and the winters can be cold and wet (average 13C and as cold as 5C). It is important to bring appropriate clothing for the seasons, including a warm jumper and waterproof coat in the winter season!

Water usage

There may be water restrictions in place for residents to conserve water during the dry seasons. You should limit your shower usage and time spent in the bathroom, not only to save water, but to be mindful of other family members that need to use it.

Friends

You will easily make friends with your classmates at school, but you must ask permission from your host family before you invite a friend to the family home. Always inform the family if you will be out for dinner or staying at a friend's house, so they know not to expect you at home.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking is not allowed in the family home, the family car or in the presence of the children. If you smoke, you will be asked to sign the Smoking Statement as part of your application to the program to declare that you will abide by the smoking rules during your Demi Pair placement.

There are many smoke-free zones in Sydney which you should be aware of if you choose to smoke outside of the family home. Smoking in Australia is generally regarded as an anti-social behaviour and you can't smoke in most public places, including at the beach.

You **MUST NOT** be under the influence of alcohol at any time in the family home or in the presence of the children. Returning to the family home drunk is not allowed and if you cause any disturbances whilst under the influence of alcohol, this can upset the family and cause problems in your placement. Many public places in Sydney are alcohol-free zones, such as public transport and streets, so you must follow the law or you may receive a penalty fine.



There is a zero-tolerance policy towards consuming illegal drugs during your placement. If you are found to be in possession of illegal drugs or under the influence of illegal drugs, your placement will be terminated immediately.

Placement End

Once your course finishes at International House, your Demi Pair placement will also end. You must leave your host family the weekend after your course finishes. It's normal for the children to be very sad to see you leave, so make an effort to keep in touch with the family. You might like to give the family a gift or cook a special meal to thank them for your experience.

Demi Pair Code of Conduct

Students must read the statements, tick the box and sign the document to show they have understood and agree to follow the Demi Pair code of conduct.

I will take an interest in getting to know my host family and the children and I will take the opportunities provided to me to involve myself in their family.

I will talk to my host family and ask questions if I am not sure. If I am unsure, I will ask for help or clarification from the Demi Pair Coordinator.

I will talk to the Demi Pair Coordinator as soon as a problem arises in my placement. I will not discuss my problems in class or with my friends.

I will abide by my host family's rules and the ways they discipline their children. I understand that under no circumstances am I to use physical force on a child and understand that my placement will be terminated immediately if I do so.

I will follow my host family's house rules. I understand my host family want to keep me safe during my stay in Australia. I will communicate my plans with my host family, such as if I will be home late or if I will miss dinner.

I will be alert and make sure the children are safe at all times. I will keep the children safe at home and when I am with them in public.

I will never give the children any medicine unless agreed by the host family.

If I drive with the children, I will follow all the Australian Road Rules and make sure the children are using car seats and seatbelts. I will never leave the children by themselves in the car.

I will keep all host family matters private and confidential. I will talk to the Demi Pair Coordinator if I have a problem.

I will make sure I am dressed appropriately when I am in the presence of the host family and children.





- I will only use my mobile phone when its necessary to do so during my placement. I will not use my mobile phone for social media, to take photos or to message friends or to talk to my family or friends during my work time.
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- I will not post information or photos about my host family to social media or blogs without permission from the host parents.
- I will not drink alcohol or smoke in the host family's home, car or in the presence of the children. I will not possess or take illegal drugs and I understand that my placement will be terminated immediately if I do so.
- I will treat my host family's home and belongings with respect. If I break anything, I will tell the parents. I will keep my personal areas clean and tidy up after myself.
- I understand that if I do not abide by the rules set out in the Code of Conduct, my placement will be terminated and I will be asked to leave the Demi Pair program.

Student Full Name	
Student Signature	
Date	

