



PENINSULA

GRAMMAR



**WELCOME TO HOMESTAY
HANDBOOK | 2019**



WELCOME TO HOMESTAY | 2019

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WELCOME TO HOMESTAY IN AUSTRALIA



I warmly welcome you to the Peninsula Grammar community.

Our school is unique, built on the foundations of learning, integrity, kindness and positivity.

The Peninsula Grammar journey is exceptional, one that ensures every student knows success.

Our reputation for offering an outstanding experience for international students is renowned.

We believe that it is the right of every child to pursue personal excellence in a supportive and nurturing environment and we provide this for all of our students.

We pride ourselves on being a school where students can achieve academic success.

Mr Stuart Johnston
Principal

PENINSULA INTERNATIONAL STAFF



Mr Tim Wallis
VCE Offshore Director - China



Mrs Wenna Foster
International Program Coordinator



Mrs Tracey Joyce
International Admissions Officer

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

If ringing from overseas, first dial **61** for the country code and **3** for the area code followed by the number shown below:

Mr Tim Wallis twallis@pgs.vic.edu.au	9788 7819
Mrs Wenna Foster wfooster@pgs.vic.edu.au	9788 7819
Mrs Tracey Joyce traceyjoyce@pgs.vic.edu.au	9788 7858
Mr Peter Ford Deputy Principal - Student Wellbeing pford@pgs.vic.edu.au	9788 7777
Mrs Lyn Bylart Head of Wellbeing lbylart@pgs.vic.edu.au	9788 7823

Please read the following information that is relevant to both parents and students in relation to your Homestay experience in Australia.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO SECURING A HOMESTAY PLACEMENT?

1. When you make an application to Peninsula Grammar and that application is successful, we evaluate the best accommodation arrangement for you, taking into account the capacity of our boarding houses.
2. If we are offering Homestay we will specify that in our Letter of Offer to you. Your Enrolment Agreement with Peninsula Grammar will also specify this offer if available.
3. We will complete an online application for you with our Homestay provider. The information we use will come from your application, the notes from our interview with you and any matters that have been recorded in our email correspondence to you. The Homestay provider's role is to recommend suitable Homestay hosts. However, Peninsula Grammar has the responsibility to ascertain that the Homestay hosts are suitable according to relevant criteria.
4. The Homestay provider will provide us with a list of options that are relevant to your application.
5. Unless we have already done so in the last three months, we will do several checks on the prospective Homestay host family. Our checks include, ID checks, reference checks and to ensure that adults in the Homestay environment have a valid Working With Children Check. We follow a procedure that is prescribed to Peninsula Grammar by Australian law.
6. For those host families for whom all checks are positive, we will conduct an inspection of the Homestay house or unit. We use an extensive checklist to ensure that you will be comfortable and safe in your Homestay environment.
7. Once we have approved the Homestay arrangement we will inform you of the contact details of your host. The Homestay provider will provide a Homestay host profile that will tell you basic information about each member of the household. Full contact details will also be provided.
8. We will also provide the Homestay family with you and your family's contact details. We encourage you and your family to be in close contact before you arrive and during your stay. If there are language barriers we encourage the use of WeChat, or a similar social media technology, that has a translation function.
9. Information will be provided to you in advance of your arrival to assist you in preparing you for your Homestay experience.

10. Within a short time of your arrival at Peninsula Grammar, the Homestay host will collect you from the International Office and we will brief them on any matters that may have arisen since your initial application. We will conduct a handover meeting for all related matters pertaining to your experience in Australia.
11. It is quite common for parents to accompany new students to their Homestay. We welcome this but must advise that there is not normally any capacity for the Homestay family to also accommodate parents overnight. We can assist parents in booking local hotels if required.
12. The Australian Government Department of Home Affairs calculates the following to be a guide to basic annual living costs for those seeking to reside in Australia:
 - student/guardian – AUD \$20,290.This is for comparative purposes.

Peninsula Grammar will only accept applications from international students who are a minimum of 14 years of age upon entry.

Life in Australia and in Australian homes can be quite different to what you are used to. We have surveyed new students and other visitors over several years. The information below is what we have been advised is useful information to know in advance of your arrival.

HOMESTAY

Your Homestay experience enables real insight into how people live in Australia. The following information provides you with a guide on how to create an enjoyable and rewarding Homestay experience.

YOUR HOMESTAY HOSTS

- Australia is a multicultural country and Homestay hosts come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds.
- Host family structures are not limited to the traditional "nuclear model". For example, there are single women, couples without children, single mothers with children and retired couples.
- If someone on your host profile is listed as a 'Visitor', he or she is generally a person who does not normally live in the home but may visit your host while you are living there.
- Homestay families host for various reasons. Many Homestay families are interested in having cross-cultural interaction, while others decide to host as they wish to "internationalise" their children by exposing them to other cultures. A lot of retired couples host for company as their children have all left home.

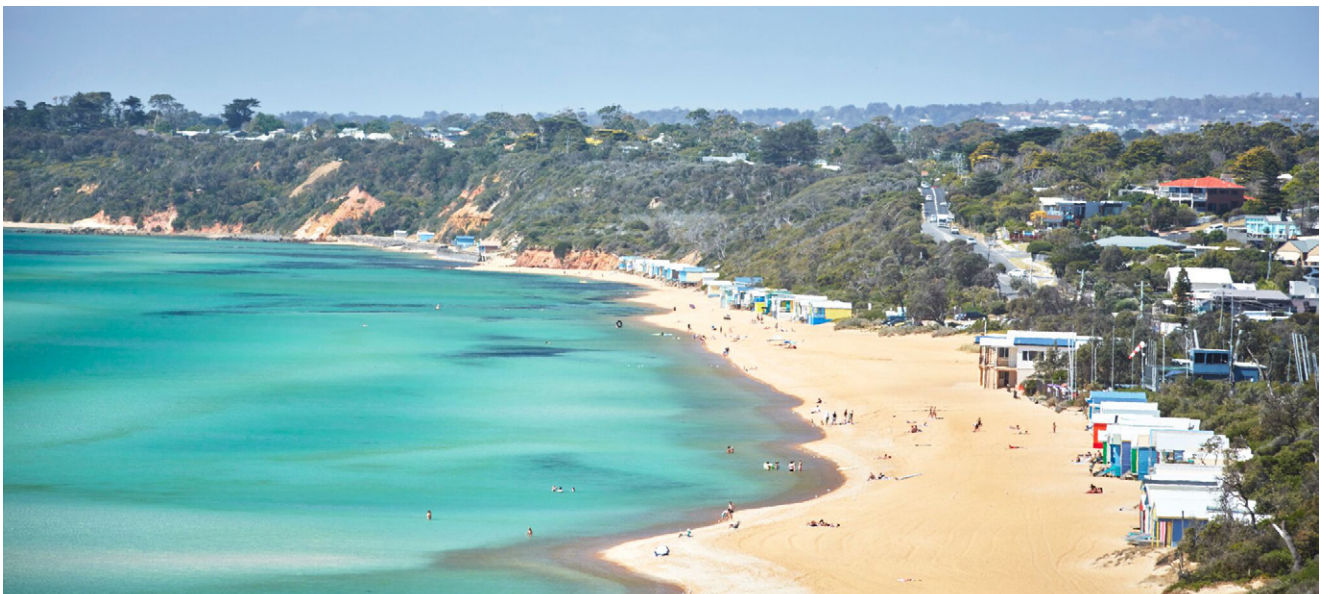
- All Homestay families have provided current police checks and have been interviewed prior to hosting their first student arriving. Their homes have been inspected and they have had their identity and references checked.
- Students in Homestay can be assured that each family with whom they reside has been closely vetted and must supply and maintain a valid Working With Children Check in accordance with Australian law. Each family also receives regular training related to Child Protection.

MEALS

- Meals in Australia are likely to be quite different from what you are used to and may include more meat. Australians may eat more pre-made meals, frozen meals and home-delivered meals than you are used to. Please tell your Homestay mother/father if you are finding the meals too big, too small, too spicy etc.
- Please tell your host mother/father about the things you are not able to eat and/or to which foods you may be allergic
- Breakfast is generally self-served and might include bread (or toast), cereal, fruit or yoghurt. Your Homestay mother/father may show you where to find your breakfast items and expect you to help yourself
- Lunch is provided by your Homestay. If your host mother/father asks you to prepare it yourself, please check with her/him about which ingredients you can use. If she/he makes your lunch and you are not used to the food, let her/him know your preference. It is important to discuss with your host mother/father any issues that you may have regarding your meals.

INTERNET

- Most, but not all, Homestay families offer their students free internet access with the cost of internet included in the Homestay fee.
- Most hosts are on a limited internet plan. Some plans are as low as 2GB per month.
- When they reach their monthly limit, your host's internet may slow right down to dial-up speed or your Homestay host may be charged very high rates for excess usage (15c per MB is a standard excess charge). If you are responsible for the excess usage, you may have to pay the excess usage fees.
- Please ask your host what their internet limit is and how you can track your usage. In Australia, downloads and uploads are counted towards internet usage. Downloading YouTube, computer programs, music and movies will use up your Homestay's internet allocation very quickly. For example, a 12-minute video can use about 15GB.
- If your host allows you to use their home computer, please respect their property. Do not download programs or rearrange or change their folders, files or icons.
- If you bring your own laptop and your host gives you wireless access, please restrict your usage to email, Skype and research for assignments.
- Please make sure that you understand clearly what your Homestay host's internet usage rules are before you start using their internet. If in any doubt about anything, please check with your host.
- If you are using Skype or WeChat late at night, please be mindful to keep down the level of noise as your host family may already be sleeping.





BEING A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY

- Your Homestay has been oriented to accept and treat you as a part of their family. You will not be treated as a guest but as a family member. Please be considerate and accommodating of your Homestay host's lifestyle and any house rules that they may have.
- Show initiative and help out around the house with little chores, it's a great way of initiating interaction and learning about the Australian culture.
- Please remember to always be polite and say "please" when asking for something and "thank you" when something has been done or given to you.

TELEPHONE

- We recommend you purchase a pre-paid mobile phone or, if you bring your own mobile to Australia, buy a local SIM card for it.
- You should always give your host mother/father your mobile phone number, so she/he can contact you in case of emergency.
- Phone calls are not included in Homestay. If you want to use your host's phone, please consult them first as to how your phone costs are going to be paid.
- Remember to ask your Homestay host before using their phone, even if you are paying for the call.
- Calls to mobile phones are limited at various rates.
- To make international calls from your mobile phone at reasonable rates, we recommend you buy a pre-paid phone card from your local convenience store.

HEATING, COOLING AND USE OF FACILITIES

- Most homes are heated by a central heating system or portable heaters are used to heat individual rooms.
- Due to low humidity in Melbourne, many homes do not have air conditioning.
- Water conservation is an important issue in Australia and water restrictions are often in place. Please respect Melbourne's water restrictions.

BATHROOM

- Showering is more common than bathing in Australia. Due to the drought, water restrictions are often in place. Everyone must respect these restrictions because our water usage is being monitored. You should spend a maximum of four minutes in the shower.
- Some homes have a continuous heating system for hot water. Others have a tank water system where the supply of hot water is limited.

LAUNDRY

It is best to check with your Homestay host how the laundry is done in their house. You may be asked to leave your laundry in the laundry basket or to do your own laundry.

VALUABLES

- While in Australia please store your valuables, including your passport and flight ticket, in a safe place (probably best to keep them locked in your suitcase).
- Before departure, check that you have all of your valuables and carry them in your hand luggage, not in your suitcase.
- When going out, take with you only as much money as you think you will need each day.

GOING OUT/INVITING FRIENDS

- If you would like to go out please seek permission from your Homestay host. They will need to know where you would like to go and what time you will be home. Your Homestay family knows that you are in a new country and will be concerned if they don't know where you are.
- If you would like to invite friends home, please seek permission from your Homestay host prior to bringing them home.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

- Ask your host how to use electrical appliances such as the microwave and oven.
- If you are planning to bring electrical items, you will need an adaptor and/or transformer.
- Please remember it is rude to turn off the television or change channels when other family members are watching. If there is a special program on television that you wish to watch please ask your host before changing channels.

PRIVACY

Please respect the privacy of everyone in your Homestay household.

PETS

- 65% of households in Australia have pets. This is partly because space is not an issue and most people have a backyard. Pets are generally treated as members of the family.
- We do our best to accommodate students with strong reasons for not wanting to live in a household with pets (e.g. an allergy or a phobia).

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

We aim to provide the best possible environment for students to succeed at Peninsula Grammar. To succeed means to embrace all that the School has to offer. High expectations exist for students to achieve very well academically and to participate in a range of school activities.

To achieve the best results academically a student needs to have a minimum of eight to nine hours sleep each night. All students must utilise their time well and balance work and study commitments.

Sleep at night time and full engagement in the daytime academic program is insisted upon. Computer use ceases at 9:30pm for students in Year 7 - 9 and at 10:00pm for students in Year 10 - 12. Reading of English books or final written study is encouraged from this time onwards.

PASSPORTS AND VISA

Whilst Peninsula Grammar will be happy to assist with the renewal of your child's visa if necessary, you and your child are responsible for ensuring that their passport and visa are valid and current for the duration of their study at Peninsula Grammar. Failure to do so means that the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs have the right to subject your child to the arrest and detention process.

OVERSEAS STUDENT HEALTH COVER (OSHC)

Before your child's arrival in Australia, they are required by the Commonwealth of Australia to have Overseas Student Health Cover for the duration of their visa. This will be arranged through the School upon confirmation of enrolment. Once the OSHC subscription has been paid, a membership card will be sent to the School. The School's Health Centre will keep the card on file and will arrange for the reimbursement of any approved medical claim. Please note that OSHC does not always cover 100 percent of the cost of a visit to a doctor/medical facility. Any extra payment will be the responsibility of the student.

OSHC is for basic medical and hospital cover and emergency ambulance. It does not cover such things as dental, optical, physiotherapy etc. Extra cover is available for these services. Please contact the OSHC provider directly for further information and cost of additional cover.

CLAIMS FOR THE COST OF MEDICAL TREATMENT

There are two ways in which your child can claim medical treatment costs from OSHC:

- If they are seen by the School doctor, the doctor will charge the OSHC provider directly. Any difference between the OSHC refund and the doctor's charge must be paid by the student
- If they are seen by a doctor outside of the School, your child will have to pay the doctor's account first and obtain a receipt from the doctor. Your child will then give the receipt to the School Health Centre who will process the claim to obtain any eligible refund.

Students are not encouraged to bring their own medication from home. Any medication they do bring must be seen by the School Health Centre nurse and then given directly to the Homestay host for safe-keeping and administration.

In the event of illness or injury, the School Health Centre nurse may give permission for your child:

- to miss school sporting activities or other school events
- make an approved doctor, dental, physio or other medical specialist appointment.



SCHOOL COUNSELLORS

The School has three counsellors available for student appointments throughout the School week. Any student may request to see a counsellor via the School Health Centre. A staff member may also request that a student is seen by the School counsellor.

TRANSPORT

Peninsula Grammar is situated in the suburb of Mount Eliza which is approximately 55 kilometres southeast of Melbourne. A regular train service runs from Frankston (a suburb located seven kilometres from the School) to Melbourne. There is also a regular bus or taxi service from Mount Eliza to Frankston.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT ZONES

The Melbourne metropolitan transport service system is divided into two zones. Zones radiate from the central business district of Melbourne over various distances. Public transport operates using a card system called Myki.

Please note that travel concession cards are not available for overseas students who hold an International Student Visa and are aged 17 years and over. Students over 17 years must select the full fare ticket on Myki before using public transport. It is illegal to travel on public transport without a valid ticket for the zone, date and period of travel. Train inspectors and Police travel on the trains and will issue substantial fines for anyone caught without the appropriate ticket. Fines are also issued for such offences as putting feet on seats, vandalism and consuming alcohol on public transport. Students should familiarise themselves with the rules and regulations that apply to travel on all public transport.

TELEPHONE

MOBILES

Students who take mobile phones to school must store them securely throughout the School day. Rules regarding student use of mobile phones throughout the day vary according to which Learning Area the student is in. Students need to refer to the appropriate handbook which is published annually with up-to-date information pertaining to the specific year levels.

BANK ACCOUNT

New students are strongly advised to open a bank account within the first month of arrival in Australia. The School can provide assistance to open a bank account. Peninsula Grammar's preferred bank is National Australia Bank (NAB).

To open an account, banks use a 'points system' as a security check. Before being permitted to open an account, you will need identification documents such as your passport and/or any other form of identification approved by the bank.



ADJUSTING TO YOUR NEW ENVIRONMENT

When you first arrive in Mount Eliza you may experience a lot of different emotions as you adjust to your new environment. This is perfectly normal, you do not need to worry. We have a network of pastoral support staff who provide nurturing positive relationships between students, teachers and parents. Our pastoral team include the School Chaplain, school counsellors, careers advisers, medical staff, special education teachers and our staff within the International Operations department.

It is important for all students to feel a strong sense of security and connectedness within the School community. Making new friends and taking an active part in school sports and co-curricular activities is a great way to help you to settle down and adjust to life at your new school.

Our pastoral team have a good understanding and appreciation of what each student needs both educationally and socially and are here to encourage, help and support you during your time at Peninsula Grammar.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS

In Australia, it is common practice to thank someone for the smallest deeds. For example, when someone gives you something or does something for you, it is common courtesy to say, 'thank you'. The domestic and cooking staff at the Boarding House are not servants and it would be very impolite not to say 'hello' and 'thank you' to them. It is also common practice to look someone in the eye when you are talking to them.

LEAVE REGULATIONS

Leave will only be approved by the International Department if all required details are provided and satisfy the School and student visa conditions in terms of welfare.

The leave form must be completed and signed by parents and returned to the International Department no later than 5:30pm on the Wednesday prior to the proposed weekend leave, or four weeks prior to the proposed school holiday leave.

Requests must be submitted to the International Department using the official leave form available online or in hard copy from the International Program Coordinator.

ANNUAL INFORMATION

Important information that is updated annually may be found on the School website www.peninsulagrammar.vic.edu.au. This includes:

- School fees
- Booklists
- Term dates.

EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES

For a comprehensive list of Embassies and Consulates in Melbourne please go online to www.onlymelbourne.com.au and type 'Embassy' or 'Consulate' in the search box.

WHAT MORE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

On arrival at Peninsula Grammar you will be provided with an **Orientation handbook**. This handbook covers matters of general concern to both boarding and Homestay students. We will ask that you retain a soft copy of the orientation booklet on your tablet computer. It will help you a lot, particularly in your first days and weeks.

Never forget:

If you have any questions or concerns you should speak as soon as possible with a Peninsula Grammar staff member. For urgent matters you will be given a wallet card with after school hours and emergency contact details.

We wish you a rewarding
Homestay experience in
Australia and a valuable learning
experience at Peninsula Grammar.



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— G R A M M A R —

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