



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR GROUP LEADERS

## HOME-STAY

We are so glad you have decided to bring a group of students to study with us at Mackenzie School of English. Before you travel to the UK we have collected some information together to help you feel ready for your trip. Please read the following and take a look at our 'Get Ready!' section on our website for downloadable forms and info sheets. If you have more questions don't hesitate to contact us.

### PRE-ARRIVAL

There is some information that we need from you in advance. Please ensure you get this information as soon as possible:

- Student details (names, ages, allergies, dietary requirement and sharing preferences)
- **Parental Consent Forms** for all students signed and sent back to us.
- Decide a **curfew** (time to be back with their host) for the students in the evenings.
  - The school is open in the evening from **19.30 – 22.00**. Curfew is normally 22.30 but it can be as late as 23.00. It can also be earlier. It will depend on the students' ages and what we agree in advance.
  - If **parents** choose to **consent** to their children socialising at school in the evenings we encourage teachers to go along with this.
  - Group Leaders must come into the school in the evenings if students are allowed in. **Staff are on duty** in the school every evening and look after the students as they socialise in our common room but, in case of a fire, at least one Group Leader must also be in school for every 20 students.
  - Keeping our students safe is always our top priority and there are systems in place to ensure their **safety**. In the evenings:
    - Students sign in and out.
    - Students must tell their hosts where they are going and for how long.
    - A member of Mackenzie staff supervises while they are at school.
    - Students cannot visit the city centre unless they are with a teacher or Activity Leader.
    - Mackenzie staff make calls to hosts to check students are at home if they have not signed in at school.
    - Hosts contact us if students are late home and miss their curfew.
  - If the Parental Consent Forms say the students must stay in with hosts in the evenings then, of course, this will be adhered to.
- Make sure you have valid travel insurance before your trip begins
- Evidence of Police checks
  - We have a duty of care to all students under the age of 18 and as a result we must follow British Council Guidelines on this matter.
  - Please read the Police Check document for more information on this
- Over 18s Declarations
  - If you are travelling with students older than 17 as part of your group we will need them to sign this form.
  - **N.B. in the summer we do not accept students older than 17 or younger than 12.**



## ARRIVAL DAY

When you arrive at the airport we will be waiting to greet you and welcome you to Edinburgh. Please ensure that you:

- Have your airport 'Meet & Greet' person's **telephone number**.
- **Wait in the arrival lounge**; do not wander around the airport. Even if you can't see a Mackenzie School of English member of staff they will be there or on their way to you. Please stay in one place so we can find you easily!

Transfer from the airport takes about 30 minutes. At school, you will meet your hosts. The Host Introduction can take between 15-45 minutes; this will vary depending on the size of your group.

Please remember:

- All our hosts have been chosen because they love having students or Group Leaders stay with them. They are very **welcoming and accommodating**.
- It's important to remind your students not to forget to **communicate with their hosts**. They are not telepathic so if a student has a problem or a question they need to talk to them!
- Prepare your students (and yourselves) for **cultural differences**. Managing expectations is important. Little differences can feel really strange to a student who is travelling away from home for the first time.
- Try to talk to the students about comparing hosts in advance. **Each host is different**; all students will have a different experience.
- Allow a **couple of days to settle** in. It takes some students longer than others to feel at home. If they tell you they are not happy after an hour or so with their hosts, try to give them some time to adjust and encourage them to give it a chance.
- Most small **problems are solved quickly** by our team. If a student has a formal complaint, it will need to be done in writing.
- Encourage your students to have a **positive attitude**... no need to be nervous!

## WHAT'S NEXT...

On the group's first academic day, although you will have time to relax and get comfortable, you are expected to be in school for:

- Student Placement **Test**
- Student and Group Leader **Induction**
- During the students' first lesson you will have a **meeting with management** to go over your expectations, student welfare, tuition and your programme. This will be your chance to ask any questions and make more plans for your stay with our help.



## THE REST OF YOUR STAY

As well as making sure your students have a wonderful time, it is important that you do too...

- We do everything in our power to ensure that group leaders feel **welcome, comfortable** and **part of the team**.
- We have a **group leader room** where you can relax and use the tea/coffee making facilities and make yourselves at home within the school.
- We have a **reception desk** which you can visit at any time for assistance or with questions or concerns you may have.
- If you are planning on taking your group on an **independent activity** (e.g. shopping in the city centre without one of our activity leaders) we will need to know about this in advance. We will do a **risk assessment** with you for each independent activity.

There can sometimes be uncertainty about a group leader's responsibility or how much you should participate in the programmes. We understand that you also want to explore and enjoy some time for you, so here are a few points about **what we expect**:

- Group leaders are a **part of our team**. We are aiming for the same thing – to provide the students with a fantastic experience whilst maintaining their safety and welfare.
- Group leaders and staff cooperate fully and **communication** is key.
- Group leaders **lead by example** – if group leaders are late for activities, the students will think they can be too.
- Group leaders always encourage the students to **speak English**. Avoid using your mother tongue with students.
- Group leaders are **contactable 24 hours a day**. If you prefer to purchase a UK sim card to use during your stay we can advise on where to get one. They cost around £10 which normally includes some call time and 3 or 4G data.
- In accordance with fire safety regulations, group leaders **sign the register** at reception on entering and leaving the school building.
- In line with **health and safety** regulations, hot drinks are only to be consumed in the group leader room.
- For safeguarding reasons, group leaders wear '**Group Leader**' ID whenever in the school building.
- At least one group leader is **present for activities outside of the school**, i.e. local visits and excursions. You do not need to be here for activities in school, such as drama sessions or cinema nights. We will assume you'll be present unless informed otherwise.
- If a student needs to **visit a doctor** or attend the hospital, it is the **group leaders' responsibility** to accompany the student. The school can arrange appointments and transport if required but any costs incurred, i.e. taxis or medical bills are the responsibility of the group leader or student, unless the problem/injury is due to negligence or liability lies with the school.
- Group leaders deserve free-time too and we fully understand this so **you don't need to be at school while the students are having lessons** but you do need to be here in the evenings if your students are coming in for free time.
- Our staff are well-trained and professional but always welcome the extra assistance from group leaders! After all, many hands make light work and can **make the experience more enjoyable** for everyone.



✓ **CHECK LIST** ✓

<b>PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS RETURNED</b>	
<b>STUDENT DETAILS EMAILED</b>	
<b>POLICE CHECKS DONE</b>	
<b>OVER 18S DECLARATIONS (WHEN NECESSARY)</b>	
<b>CURFEW DECIDED</b>	
<b>EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR TRAVEL</b>	
<b>MEET &amp; GREET NUMBER FOR ARRIVAL</b>	
<b>STUDENTS PREPARED FOR HOST EXPERIENCE</b>	
<b>QUESTIONS OR DOUBTS ANSWERED</b>	
<b>PACKED AND READY TO GO!</b>	
<b>TRAVEL INSURANCE</b>	