

# HOMESTAY FEES AND REFUND PROCEDURE

Version:	Approved by:				Approval Date:		Effective Date:		Next Review:	
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Policy Custodian:	Manager Admissions, Study Tours and Homestay						Document No:		UOWC-SS-PRO-57	
Purpose:	To document practices and outline rules and expectations regarding UOWCA Homestay Fees and Refunds.									
Scope:	UOWGE	✓	UOWCA	✓	UOWD		UOWCHK		UOWMKDU	
	This procedure applies to Staff, Students and Homestay Hosts who use the services provided by UOWCA Homestay Program.									
Related Documents:	Academic Integrity and Student Conduct Policy									
	Assessment of Host Family and Accomodation Inspection Procedure									
	General Delegations of Authority UOWC Ltd									
	Homestay Notification Form									
	Homestay Policy									
	Student Grievance and Appeals Policy									
	Under 18 International Student Welfare Procedure									
References and Legislation:	UOW Student Conduct Rules									
	National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students									
	NEAS Quality Assurance Framework									
	Working with Children’s Check (WWCC)									

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## 1. Definitions

Word/Term/Acronym:	Definition:
<b>Agent</b>	An external entity that, through a formal agreement with the Student, acts on their behalf in matters pertaining to their application for utilising the UOWCA Homestay program.
<b>Documentary Evidence</b>	<p>Documentary evidence must indicate the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The name of the Student which matches the name on their applicable education provider record;</li> <li>2. The date the certificate, Professional Authority Form or document was completed and signed;</li> <li>3. For a Medical Certificate or a Professional Authority Form, the health practitioner's details as below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Medicare provider number (for eligible health professionals recognised for Medicare services);</li> <li>b. The AHPRA Practitioner Registration number or ARCAP Register Number (for Social Workers and Counsellors);</li> <li>c. Telephone contact and address details of the health practitioner; and</li> <li>d. Severity and impact on ability to complete an assessment /exam.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. The start and end date for which the Student's circumstances are covered by the Documentary Evidence, and which match the Student's request for relocation; and</li> <li>5. Any additional information which may assist the Student in obtaining relocation request such as how the circumstances have affected the Student's ability to study.</li> </ol>
<b>Homestay</b>	Supported and supervised in-home accommodation offered for the purpose of housing domestic and international Students. The Homestay environment supports an immersive cultural and language experience within a safe and supportive environment.
<b>Homestay Hosts</b>	Any person appointed by UOWCA to provide Homestay accommodation for the purpose of housing Students.

<b>Nominated Welfare Period</b>	The period for which the UOWCA has taken on responsibility for approving arrangements for the Student's accommodation, support and general welfare.
<b>Registered Medical Practitioner</b>	A medically qualified person registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA) as a Medical Practitioner to practice in Australia.
<b>Staff</b>	Any person engaged or appointed by the UOWCA or UOW to perform work (whether on a full-time, part-time, or casual basis) including employees, contractors, and agents.
<b>Students</b>	<p>Any person who is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enrolled in any course or program offer at, or in conjunction with but not limited to, UOWCA, UOW, TAFE NSW or The Illawarra Grammar School; or</li> <li>2. A Visitor using the Homestay program such as: Professors, Research assistants, Supervising Agents, Teachers, Nurses, Study Abroad, Musicians, Community groups.</li> </ol> <p>Visitors will be referred to as a Student in this Policy. For Vocational courses, this may be referred to as a Learner.</p>
<b>Temporary Relocation Homestay Hosts</b>	Any person appointed by UOWCA to provide temporary Homestay accommodation for the purpose of housing Students.

## **2. Financial Terms**

- 2.1. Fees and payments are paid directly to UOWCA, who subsequently distributes the relevant funds to Homestay Hosts.
- 2.2. Students bear full responsibility for covering all fees related to direct debits and any instances of dishonors.
- 2.3. In the event the Homestay Host declines receiving a payment(s) from UOWCA at any stage of placement, the funds will be forfeited to UOWCA at the sole discretion of UOWCA.
- 2.4. Students (excluding Study Tours) under eighteen (18) years of age are required to pay a welfare set up fee at the time application, in addition to the placement fee.
- 2.5. Failure to pay the required fees will result in a CAAW not being issued.
- 2.6. UOWCA will not provide any financial advice. Homestay Hosts are to contact the Australian Tax Office (ATO) for tax assessment information.

## **3. Fees**

### **Accommodation Placement Fee**

- 3.1. Prior to processing a student's application, a non-refundable placement fee for (1) placement with a Homestay Host must be paid by the Student to UOWCA.
- 3.2. A maximum of two (2) Homestay initial options may be offered to a Student per placement fee.
- 3.3. Should a Student reject the two (2) options, the Student will be required to pay an additional placement fee prior to additional placement options being sourced.
- 3.4. Failure to arrive at a Homestay placement is not a basis for requesting a refund.
- 3.5. A refund may only be offered if:
  1. UOWCA is unable to offer the Student a Homestay placement with a registered Homestay Host. The Student or Agent will be notified in writing.
  2. Where a Student is unable to take up their Homestay placement due to factors beyond their control which prevent their arrival in Australia, a refund may be considered on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of UOWCA.
- 3.6. The Student may apply for a refund as per Section 7 of this Procedure.

### **Accommodation Fees**

- 3.7. Current Homestay accommodation fees are displayed on the UOWCA website.
- 3.8. The initial period of a Homestay accommodation is four (4) weeks (excluding Study Tours).
  1. The initial four (4) week period fees are paid directly to the Homestay Host by UOWCA, once arrival of the Student is confirmed by the Homestay Host.

2. All fees and payments related to Clause 3.8.1 will be processed on the next payment cycle.
- 3.9. A Student who wishes to extend their Homestay placement, must consult with UOWCA regarding availability and continue to maintain an “in advance” payment system with UOWCA.

### **Students Under 18 Years of Age**

- 3.10. Students under eighteen (18) years of age pay increased accommodation fees per week for the additional level of care and responsibility required from the Homestay Host.

### **Placement Requirements of a Student**

- 3.11. Whilst UOWCA will endeavour to provide the choice of accommodation style (twin/triple/single share) as requested, it may not always be possible to do so.
- 3.12. UOWCA reserves the right to substitute accommodation styles where necessary.
- 3.13. In those circumstances UOWCA will only refund the difference between the accommodation rate paid by the Student and the accommodation the Student was provided. (e.g. A Student paid for a single room but provided a twin share room).

## **4. Room Holding**

- 4.1. UOWCA offers Students the option to hold their room while they go on holiday.
- 4.2. A Student may keep their belongings in their designated room and pay fifty per cent (50%) of the normal Homestay fee.
- 4.3. Room holding guarantees the room will not be used for other purposes by the Homestay Hosts and no other person will stay in the room while the Student is away.
- 4.4. The Homestay Host must agree to accept room holding rates while the Student is away. Refer to Clause 2.3 in this Procedure for more information.
- 4.5. A Student must adhere to the following:
  1. The Student must be away for a minimum of seven (7) nights. Full fees apply if the holiday is six (6) nights or less.
  2. The Student is to provide written notification to UOWCA and the Homestay Host of their holiday plans two (2) weeks prior to departure via the *Homestay Notification Form*.
  3. The room will be held for the period agreed to by all parties prior to the Student's departure.
  4. The Student is to provide written notification to UOWCA and the Homestay Host if there are any changes to their scheduled return date. UOWCA requires seven (7) days' notice of such changes, and any additional fees will be charged to the Student accordingly.

5. If the Student has not arrived back at the Homestay by the scheduled return date and no contact has been made with the Homestay Host or UOWCA, UOWCA will attempt to contact the Student using the contact details listed on their profile.
  6. If UOWCA is unable to reach the Student and unable to process the payment via the Student's nominated payment method, UOWCA reserves the right to organise the Homestay Host to pack up the Student's belongings and remove them from the Homestay premises.
  7. If the Student fails to pay the room holding fee, all belongings must be removed from the Homestay Host's premises.
  8. If the Student wishes to re-enter the Homestay program on their return, the Student will be required to pay a new placement fee and four (4) weeks of Homestay fees to UOWCA.
- 4.6. UOWCA cannot guarantee the same Homestay Host will be available on the Student's return if the room holding fees are in arrears.

## **5. Change of Homestay**

### **Voluntary relocation requested by the Student**

- 5.1. Prior to processing a relocation application to an alternative Homestay accommodation, an additional placement fee must be paid, with the exception of extenuating circumstances, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of UOWCA.
- 5.2. UOWCA cannot guarantee that a relocation will be possible as it is subject to availability.
- 5.3. All fees and payments during the temporary relocation period are paid to the Temporary Relocation Homestay Hosts.

### **Involuntary- No fault of the Student**

- 5.4. If a Student is required to be relocated through no fault of their own, UOWCA will arrange new Homestay accommodation.
- 5.5. The Student will not be charged another placement fee for this service.
- 5.6. Homestay Hosts are required to provide the Student and UOWCA with two (2) weeks' notice when requesting student relocation to alternative accommodation.
- 5.7. Homestay Hosts must refund Homestay accommodation fees from the relocation date to UOWCA.

### **Involuntary – Due to Inappropriate behaviour/personal misconduct of the Student**

- 5.8. Students required by UOWCA to relocate due to their own inappropriate behaviour / personal misconduct will be required to pay an additional placement fee and are not entitled to a refund of any payments paid in the initial four (4) week period.
- 5.9. For Students under the age of eighteen (18), failure to pay an additional placement fee, may result in cancellation of a CAAW and/or exclusion from the Homestay Program. Refer to the *Under 18 International Student Welfare Procedure* for more information.
- 5.10. A Student who has exceeded the initial (4) week period, will be required to pay two (2) weeks accommodation fees in lieu of notice and will only be entitled to be refunded any fees paid in advance beyond the two (2) weeks' notice period.
- 5.11. A Student who is in arrears of their accommodation payments to UOWCA and does not rectify this within seven (7) days notice from UOWCA, may be required to leave their Homestay placement without further notice.
- 5.12. Prior to processing a relocation application to an alternative Homestay accommodation, an additional placement fee must be paid, with the exception of extenuating circumstances, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of UOWCA.
- 5.13. UOWCA cannot guarantee that a relocation will be possible as it is subject to availability.
- 5.14. All fees and payments during the temporary relocation period are paid to the Temporary Relocation Homestay Hosts.

## **6. Additional Services Fees**

- 6.1. Where applicable, Students are subject to additional services fees, including but not limited to, transfer fees, The Illawarra Grammar School (TIGS) management fees and private transportation fees provided by their Homestay Hosts.
- 6.2. Homestay Hosts are only permitted to directly charge Students for lunches on weekdays or specific dietary requirements if requested by the Student.
- 6.3. Prior to any direct charge to the Student, the Homestay Hosts must seek approval from UOWCA.
- 6.4. Homestay Hosts are not permitted to directly charge a Student additional fees for internet access, laundry, and utilities.

## **7. Application for a Refund**

- 7.1. Students are to apply for a refund in writing via email to [homestay-enquiries@uow.edu.au](mailto:homestay-enquiries@uow.edu.au).
- 7.2. All requests must be accompanied by documentary evidence to support the application.



- 7.3. Refunds will only be paid to the applicant in Australian dollars.
- 7.4. Refunds will only be made via the method of payment received i.e. same credit card or bank account from which the initial payment was made.
- 7.5. UOWCA will not pay any bank charges related to the processing of the refund.
- 7.6. No refund of payment for the initial four (4) week period will be made if the Student elects to move out before the initial period has expired (except in extenuating circumstances which will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of UOWCA).

## 8. Disputes Related to Payment

- 8.1. Disputes will be managed by UOWCA via email [homestay-enquiries@uow.edu.au](mailto:homestay-enquiries@uow.edu.au).
- 8.2. UOWCA will investigate and respond within fourteen (14) business days.
- 8.3. Homestay Hosts or Students who are not satisfied with the outcome, can request this to be escalated to the relevant delegated authority.

## 9. Change History

Version	Approved By	Date Effective	Amendment
1	Felix Lanceley	30/09/2013	New Version. Include any superseded documents and major amendments..
2	UOWCA Deputy General Manager and Director Global Programs	05/03/2024	All Sections updated and Additonal Service Fees added.
3	Acting UOWCA Deputy General Manager and Director Global Programs	02/04/2024	Added Clause 3.11, 3.12 and 3.13 in line with NEAS Homestay Providers Framework Clause O2.3.