

Living in Homestay Information

Homestay Information for International students (2025)

Living in a homestay environment is a popular accommodation choice for international students, especially for students coming to NZ for the first time. We recommended homestay accommodation to students who want to improve their English, live in a safe and supportive environment, and want additional guidance and support when settling into a new country and education system.

What is Homestay Accommodation?

Homestay accommodation means that you live in a home in the Hamilton community.

It provides a safe, stable and supportive environment for easy settlement in NZ.

A homestay is more than just a room rental. You get the opportunity to converse in English and enjoy normal NZ life, for example, participate in activities, celebrations, religious practices, and sporting events.

Who are Wintec's Homestay Hosts?

There is no such thing as a 'typical' NZ family, so homestay hosts can be parents with children, single parent households, retired couples, or single host households.

Some homestay hosts have other international students in the home, which is a great way to make friends from other countries.

Many households have pets (e.g. a cat or a dog) who live as part of the family, often in and outside the house.

New Zealand is a multicultural country, and we have families of all nationalities registered with us.

Hosts are carefully selected for their kind and caring nature, are police vetted, receive training, and are interviewed regularly.



What is provided?

Homestay accommodation includes:

- A clean & comfortable home
- A private bedroom, furnished with a bed, study space and storage
- Meals & snacks
- Pillows, blankets, sheets & towels
- Access to shared spaces, e.g. lounge, dining, backyard etc
- Laundry access & washing powder
- Internet access / Wi-Fi

Homestay is fully catered

Homestay accommodation includes:

Breakfast: You will have access to the kitchen to make your own breakfast. Your host(s) will help you with this when you first arrive.

Lunch can be made either by yourself or your host - discuss this with them as this varies from home to home.

A hot **dinner** at night is a great time to talk with your hosts about your day, practice your English and learn about NZ.

You will also have access to snacks / fruit etc. If you want to have some of your own snacks, your host family can show you where supermarkets are around Hamilton so you can purchase these yourself.

Benefits of living in a homestay



Living with a local host means you adapt to your new life in NZ much faster:

- You have time to settle in and focus on your studies rather than having to think about finding a flat, going shopping, cooking, cleaning etc.
- You get to be part of family life, e.g. birthdays, family functions, outings and weekend activities. You become part of the household, and you expand your support network by adopting a NZ family.

- Host families care about your wellbeing, safety and settlement. They will ask how your studies are going and offer support and advice.
- They can show you around Hamilton, teach you how to get to campus each day and support you with taking the bus to Wintec each day.
- Some people settle in and create a great connection with their host and chose to live with their homestay host for years.

Costs of Homestay Accommodation

The 2025 fees are:

Students aged under 18	
	\$340 per week
	\$1,360 for 4 weeks
Students aged 18+ years	
	\$360 per week
	\$1,440 for 4 weeks

Each application incurs an application fee of \$350, which is non-refundable.

Placement Length

Placements are for a minimum of 4 weeks. This can be extended if you and your host are happy with the arrangement.

- The first 4 weeks in a homestay is non-refundable & non-transferable.
- After the first 4 weeks, you will need to pay your host directly. The weekly fees are set by Wintec and cannot be changed or negotiated with the host family.
- If you go on holiday or are away from your homestay for 7+ days and you wish to keep your room, you must pay a room holding fee. This is set at 50% (half) of your weekly homestay fee. Discuss this with us and your host family in advance.

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Finding the right family

We ask a lot of questions about who you are, what you like/dislike and what type of family you are looking for. We ask our homestay hosts similar questions. You must answer questions on the application form honestly so we can try our best to match you with the best family for you.

Location & Transportation

All host families are located within Hamilton. You will likely need to get to and from Wintec each day by bus, but all hosts live within walking distance from a bus stop. Your homestay host will show you where the bus stop is, how to buy a bus card and how to get to and from Wintec. Wintec students get cheap bus tickets with their student ID.

Expected Behaviour

Living in a homestay means living as part of a family and community.

Our hosts have specifically applied to look after international students because they have a genuine interest in learning about new cultures and helping others. They will do their best to make you feel comfortable.

Most hosts have some house rules (for example about noise late at night, dinner times, communication etc.) and these apply to everyone in the home. Your hosts will talk to you about these when you arrive.

You are expected to respect the home, your host, and the rules. We also expect your host to be respectful and kind. Show respect, receive respect.

If behavioural standards are not followed, or if your conduct becomes unacceptable, Wintec reserves the right to terminate your stay with the host family immediately without a refund of any prepaid homestay fees.

Moving or changing Homestay

If you want us to find you a new homestay, contact us.

Leaving the Homestay

If you want to move out of your homestay or your host family asks you to leave, you must give each other at least 2 weeks' notice.

A completed '2-week notice form' must be submitted to Wintec. The form is available online: [2-Week Notice Form](#)

Failure to submit the form may result in additional fees being charged.

Tips to an amazing time in Homestay

Here are some tips to make your time in homestay the best it can be:



- Don't be shy! Be brave, talk & ask questions. Get to know your host, their customs and your new home.
- Embrace your mistakes: There will be much to learn, and some mistakes or awkward moments are to be expected. These are best dealt with by laughing about it with your host.
- Bring a gift: Opening up your home to a student is a very kind thing to do, so show your appreciation. Be kind and grateful, and perhaps bring a little gift from your home country to present when you arrive.
- Help out: Ask your host family if you can help with anything (e.g. set the table for dinner). Make sure you keep your room tidy and make your bed each morning.
- Your host family is there to help you. Although they are not your real family, they can provide support like your family back home. Homesickness is expected but there are many ways your host family can help you, so don't lock yourself in your room, talk to them.

Most importantly, you need to decide to have a great time. If you accept that this will be a great experience and have an open mind, you will have an amazing adventure!

Students aged under 18

You must stay in Wintec approved accommodation:

- Wintec Homestay; or
- [Wintec Student Village](#); or
- With a Designated Caregiver

We check on all under 18 students regularly and to make sure everything is going well, including your homestay experience.

If you wish to change homestays or move to the Wintec Student Village while you are under 18, you must talk to your dedicated under 18 student advisor *prior* to giving notice to your homestay.

When you become 18 years old, you can choose to leave your homestay. You must give 2 weeks' notice and make your own future accommodation arrangements.

How to apply for homestay

We recommend you apply early as demand can be high and spaces are limited.

Applications must be received at least two weeks prior to arrival in NZ.

Application forms can be found [here](#).

Payments

Homestay & application fees must be paid to Wintec before your homestay booking is finalised and confirmation is sent.



Contact Details:

For homestay information, advice and bookings, contact us:

Email:

International.accommodation@wintec.ac.nz

Web:

<https://www.wintec.ac.nz/international>