

ABBNEY COLLEGE MANCHESTER

HOST FAMILY STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026



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2025 - 2026

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Host Families are carefully selected based on their ability to provide an environment that is safe, friendly and welcoming in a location that is within reach of main public transport links into Manchester city centre, where Abbey College is situated.
- Morning and evening journeys are usually between 45 and 55 minutes using a combination, or just one, mode of public transport – tram, train or bus.
- All our Host Families are experienced hosts and have a proven track record in working with young, international students from Abbey College Manchester or at other international schools in Manchester.
- Host Families may accommodate students from other institutions providing they are not hosting CSA (Compulsory School Age – students aged 16 or under) from Abbey College Manchester at the same time.
- Abbey College Manchester's policy is that all Host Families (and members of their family aged 16 and over) provide evidence of a current Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check if they wish to host students, regardless of the student's age.

Important note:

DBS Certificates prove that a person's criminal record has been checked, any outstanding convictions have been disclosed and the person has not been barred from working with children and young people.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST FAMILY

Host Families will:

- Provide you with a place to stay **in their home**. It is important that students respect all members of a host family and do not treat any of them as 'staff'.
- Provide you with safe, clean and welcoming accommodation where you feel at home and as comfortable as possible – even though this will be different from what you experience in your home country.
- Respect the different cultural backgrounds of students staying in their home - and be sensitive to your needs whilst also ensuring you are made aware of and respect British values and cultural norms within the host's home and while living in the UK.
- Help you to feel at home and treat you as a member of the family as far as possible, rather than a paying guest. It is also important to communicate with your Host Family and any other people in the house in **English** during your stay to improve your English language skills.

- Maintain a supportive and stress-free environment, making sure you study and rest adequately, free from harassment and disruption.
- Show due concern for your welfare, safety and security during your stay and maintain close liaison with the Host Family Administrator (hereafter called HFA) to help resolve any problems you or they may encounter.
- Apply ACM rules in relation to curfews, absences from college (for whatever reason) and ensure you give sufficient notice, with parental permission, about your whereabouts, when these vary from the norm – such as staying elsewhere at weekends or during college holiday period. **You cannot just decide to go somewhere or take time off from college without permission/authorisation from your Host (for illness) or your parents/guardians for anything else.**

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE HOST FAMILY'S HOME

- Host Families will be present when you arrive to welcome you into their home. They will also show you around the local area, including the closest bus/train/tram stops, local shops, sports facilities etc.
- A **house key** will be given to you to allow access to and from the house as and when required, along with details of alarm codes & instructions as applicable.
- **Within 2 weeks of your arrival, the Host Family must have registered you with the local doctor. You must take your passport and eVisa as proof of entitlement to NHS services.** The College will provide a *Proof of Study and Accommodation* letter to support your registration.
- Your Host will be provided with a copy of your timetable, so they know what time to wake you up in the morning, and what time to expect you home later in the day. It is your responsibility to get up when you have been woken and to leave the house in time to get to college in good time.

ACCOMMODATION

- **Your room is for your exclusive use.** The room will be clean, have a door and window and will be big enough to accommodate the following as a minimum:
 - a bed, clothing storage, A chair and table/desk, A lamp for study
 - additional storage and/or shelving, internet access, a waste bin
 Clean bed linen will be provided at least every two weeks. You will have access to all **communal** areas within the Host Family's house.
- The Host should have access to the room, at least on a weekly basis. This **requires you** to keep the room tidy and clear of any items that should be put in cupboards or taken down to the kitchen, so enable floor vacuuming.
- **Your personal laundry (clothing)** will be done weekly by the Host. If you wish to do your own laundry speak to your Host about this. If they are okay with this, then clear instructions should be given to you before you use any of their laundry equipment.

- You will always have access to **bathroom facilities** and be able to have a bath or shower daily. Please note that in some Host Families you will need to share the facilities with the Host Family. Clean towels will be provided, weekly.
- You should be allowed to make and receive calls from parents or family members on your mobile. However, reasonable consideration of time differences between your home country and the UK must be taken into account. Example: If everyone in the UK house is asleep, talk VERY quietly.
- The Host Family is entitled to request that **reasonable house rules** be complied with and that you keep your bedroom tidy and presentable. You should always show courtesy and be punctual. To help with this we recommend that a set of '**house rules**' is drawn up and the Host discusses them with you on your arrival. A copy of these will be placed in your room and somewhere in the communal area of the house.
- It is the responsibility of the Host to have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and to make you aware of the evacuation procedure in case of fire or other emergencies.

MEALS

- The Host will provide you with a balanced and appropriate diet using fresh ingredients, including fruit and vegetables. Processed ready meals and 'take aways' should only be used occasionally and must not be provided as standard.
- **Full board accommodation** means **breakfast, a packed lunch and evening meal** should be provided on weekdays, during college term.
- At weekends and during college holidays students should be provided with access to food for **breakfast, lunch and evening meal** as agreed with your Host Family. This will also apply if you are absent from college due to illness and remain at your Host's house, while unwell.
- If for any reason, you will not be home for a meal that you were expected for it is **necessary for you to advise your Host in advance**, so they do not waste food and effort unnecessarily and so they know where you are instead.
- Meals should consist of the following as a minimum:

Breakfast: A selection of cereals, toast and spreads, juice, tea/coffee - and perhaps at weekends a cooked breakfast. Some students may prefer protein and fruit for breakfast rather than cereal based carbohydrate to start their day. Discuss this with your Host.

Lunch: Sandwiches, pasta, salad or similar for you to bring into college or eat at weekends or in holiday periods.

Dinner: A main course including either fish, meat, or an appropriate protein as a vegetarian option, accompanied by either a starter or dessert.

- At other times you will be allowed to help yourself to soft drinks/hot drinks and snacks such as biscuits, cereal bars, fresh fruit, etc.

WELFARE AND ILLNESS

- While you are staying with a Host Family, **the Host, or a responsible member of the Host Family will remain at home, as much as possible, during term time evenings and weekends.** Your Host may well go out to work in the daytime.
- Host Families avoid taking holidays in term time, particularly if you are under 18. However, if this is unavoidable the Host Families will notify College Manchester **in advance** if they plan to go away and provisions will be made for a responsible adult, **who is DBS checked (please refer back to Page 2),** to live in and look after you until the Host returns. If this is not possible, alternative arrangements will be made by Abbey College Manchester.
- Hosts will contact **Abbey College Reception staff** if you are not able to attend College due to illness or another **valid** reason. This call must be made **no later than 8.45 am each day you are unwell and unable to attend college. 0161 817 2700**
- **If you are unwell, it is the Host responsibility** to ensure you are seen by a doctor, if necessary, and reasonable care and supervisory arrangements are in place if you are unable to attend college.

Important: *You need to remember your daily attendance at college is electronically recorded & monitored, as a requirement of your eVisa and ensure your personal safety.*

CURFEWS & ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISITS ELSEWHERE

- You are required to abide by Abbey College Manchester's **Duty of Care practices.** These require you and your Host to follow the set curfew times. If you go out in the evening, you must return to your Host's house **no later than 9.00pm during the week** (Sunday through to Thursday)
- There can be an extended curfew until **10.00pm at weekends (Friday and Saturday evenings) but only if agreed with your Host.** You **will not be allowed** to stay out overnight during the week unless there are exceptional circumstances and parental permission has been provided, in writing, to the HFA.
- It is understood that at weekends (Fridays and Saturdays) and during college holidays, you may wish to visit friends or family that live further away from Manchester. This might mean staying away from the Host Family's house for one or more nights. **All students must provide the HFA with parental permission, in writing and in advance of such a trip.** Full details **must** be given as to where you will be staying, who with (name and contact number) and for how long.
- As a young international student, you will be more vulnerable whilst learning about the different culture and surroundings you are experiencing – more vulnerable than you would be in your home country. The college has these strict rules in place on curfews and 'visits away' to ensure:
 - your health, safety and welfare are always protected.
 - you are not suffering from lack of sleep
 - you are not getting into potentially unsafe situations
 - you are fulfilling your full academic potential.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS OF ABBEY COLLEGE MANCHESTER (ACM)

The college is responsible for :

- giving you **clear and accurate details of the accommodation**.
- **intervening in cases of disputes** which may arise concerning perceived misconduct on the part of **either the Host Family or the student** and will try to help resolve such disputes. We encourage students and the Hosts to try to resolve any disputes amicably. However, in situations where more mediation is required the **first point of contact should be the HFA at Abbey College**. Abbey College are the ultimate arbiters.
- Contacting your agent and/or parent if it is felt that any inappropriate behaviour has taken place or serious issues have arisen.
- Will maintain regular communication with the Host to give support and respond to any concerns or issues.

TENANCY PERIOD

- The tenancy period runs from **Saturday 30th August 2025 until Sunday 28th June 2026**.
- This period **includes all college holidays** within the academic year (these do not exceed 295 days). **You are expected to leave your Host Family and return to your home country for the Christmas holidays.**
- If for any reason you cannot return to your home during the Christmas holiday it **might** be possible for you to stay with your Host Family depending on their plans and availability. If this is not possible and there are no family relatives, friends or guardians that you can reside with, the college will arrange another Host Family for you for the Christmas holiday. Please be aware that there would be an additional cost for this.

The full fees for Host Family accommodation must be paid before you arrive in the UK to study. If the full amount has not been received, you will be unable to take up residence with your Host Family unless permission has been granted by the college Principal.

RENTAL PAYMENTS

- Rent for Host Family accommodation is paid directly into the Abbey College Manchester bank account, by your parents or guardians or another guarantor.
- Fees for accommodation for the whole academic year **2025 - 2026** are **£16,440 including VAT of 20%** (VAT = Value Added Tax)
- You will not be asked directly to compensate for any loss, damage or breakages within the home. The Host Family will contact the college and send receipts for any claims. The college will then reimburse the Host Family from the Deposit paid by your family when you enrolled.

- The **rent paid covers** the following:
 - Breakfast, Lunch & Evening Meal, 7 days a week (Including college holidays)
 - All utility costs such as electricity, gas and water
 - Internet access
 - Washing and drying of clothing & bedding and towels
- The **rent paid does not cover** the following:
 - Insurance for the student's personal belongings whilst staying with a Host Family.
- Students who wish to return to the same Host Family in **September 2026**, and need to leave their belongings over summer holiday period, must pay a retainer of 30% of the current weekly rent. **This is paid directly by you to the Host Family.**

LEAVING – TERMINATION OF ACCOMMODATION

- **You are booked to stay with the Host Family for the full academic year.**
- If you wish to leave the accommodation early **there must be a valid reason and a full 4 weeks of notice must be given.**
- **In the first instance**, you **must** speak with your parents and the HFA at college about the issues around why you want to move elsewhere. The HFA will discuss these matters with the Host Family, you, and your parents to try to resolve the situation if possible.
- It may be possible for you to leave before the 4 week notice period is completed, but a **full 4 weeks of rent must still be paid.**
- **However, if there is a situation where the reason for wishing to leave requires some investigation, final decisions regarding the timing of the notice period will be taken by Abbey College Manchester.**
- Host Families have the right to raise any issues with the college if they have concerns regarding a student or perhaps feel that parental or guardian intervention is required.
- If there is a situation where the Host Family feels unhappy with their student or things are not working out, contact **must** be made with the HFA with an explanation of what the issues are.
- If these cannot be resolved, or things do not improve, the Host Family has the right to request, in writing to the HFA, that the student needs to leave the Host Family's accommodation. The required notice period is **4 weeks**. Reasons for doing this may be personal, practical, or other but such decisions should only be taken after all the issues and possible solutions have been carefully worked through with College staff.
- **If you are unable to secure a visa** you will **not** be required to pay compensation to a Host Family, as such circumstances are unforeseen.
- **It is not the responsibility of a departing student to find a replacement student for the Host Family.**

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

- Students and Host Families **must not** lend or borrow money from each other.
- Students must not enter into any form of payment with their Host Family (apart from the summer retainer as mentioned on Page 7).
- **Students must not sign any contract, drawn up by the Host Family, binding him/her to take the accommodation for a fixed period; all such contracts are between Abbey College Manchester and the Host Family.**
- Should it be necessary for a student to move out early, the student must have: -
 - The permission of their parents or guardians to do so and this permission must have been given to the HFA in writing having first discussed the situation.
 - all rental fees must have been paid in full, the correct notice period must be given, and recompense for any loss or damages to the Host Family's property be made.

CONCLUSION

- Host Families will make you welcome and try to involve you in as many aspects of family life as possible.
- Conversation will be of particular importance as most students need to improve their English.
- Equally, you must make the effort to fit in with the family and behave in an acceptable manner.
- Problems very occasionally arise because of a student's lack of English skills or due to cultural differences and are usually easily resolved. Students are encouraged to try to solve problems by discussion with the Host Families in the first instance.
- If there are any general concerns, problems or worries about accommodation arrangements or about the host family for any reason, please contact the **Host Family Administrator**, on 0161 817 2700, or by email: hosts@abbeymanchester.co.uk.

DECLARATIONS

- ☐ I and my parents/guardians have read this **Host Family Student Handbook**
- ☐ I and my parents/guardians understand its contents agree to be bound by its terms and conditions.
- ☐ I and my parents/guardians agree that I will comply with the rules and curfews in place.
- ☐ I and my parents understand that if I fail to comply with the conditions of living within the Boarding House I will be subject to disciplinary measures.

Student declaration

Full name:

Signature of student:

Date:

Parent/guardian declaration

Full name:

Signature:

Date:

Abbey College Manchester declaration

Full name: Helen Fletcher

Position: Host Family Administrator

Signature: *Helen Fletcher*

APPENDIX 1

MEDICAL CONSENT FORM

Name of student:

Date of Birth:

Please be aware that withholding known facts about your child's health will not help us to support them if they become unwell. Please be completely honest.

- I declare that I have disclosed all medical information about my son/daughter (named above) to Abbey College Manchester on the Health Induction Questionnaire.
- I understand that any information given will remain confidential and will only be given to members of staff who 'need to know' so that appropriate care can be provided.
- I give permission for my son/daughter:
 - to receive planned medical care (non-emergency) by National Health Service Medical practitioners
 - to be given Dental and Medical treatment (including prescribed medicines) by the Doctor and Dentist with whom they are registered
 - to be given emergency **First Aid** treatment by trained First Aid staff at the college. This would include using plasters, bandages and sterile dressings and treatment for burns
 - to be given Emergency medical treatment by National Health Service Medical practitioners if required

Full name of Parent/Guardian:

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

Date

APPENDIX 2:

TERM DATES

Autumn Term 2025	
Pastoral and Academic Induction (New Students) Monday 1st & Tuesday 2nd September 2025 Classes Start - For All Students Wednesday 3rd September 2025	
Half Term Break	Monday 20 th October – Friday 24 th October 2025
Term Ends	Friday 12 th December 2025
Spring Term 2026	
Term Starts	Monday 5 th January 2026
Half Term Break	Monday 16 th February – Friday 20 th February 2026
Term Ends	Thursday 2 nd April 2026
Summer Term 2026	
Term Starts	Monday 20 th April 2026
Bank Holiday	Monday 4 th May 2026
Half Term Break	Monday 25 th May - Friday 29 th May 2026
Classes Finish	Friday 19 th June 2026 For Years 10, 12 and 13 (IFP only)
Public Exams Finish	Friday 26 th June 2026 For Years 11 (GCSE) and 13 (A level only)

Please do not book flights home before college term ends or arrive back into Manchester after the term starts.