QISP STUDENT HANDBOOK

Arrival:

As you were preparing to come to Qualicum, you were very excited thinking about what your new life in Canada was going to be like. Here are some tips and practical solutions to things you will encounter while in Homestay in Qualicum.

At the Airport:

Your Homestay family will meet you at the Nanaimo, Comox, or Qualicum Airport to take you home. They will be very excited to meet you. Some students are concerned because at first, the Homestay Family doesn't ask a lot of questions about you, what your life is like, etc. They will! The family realizes after your very long journey you are tired, hungry and probably just want to go to bed! They are saving their questions for later when you are refreshed. Don't worry, they want to know you!

In the Homestay:

The family will give you a tour of the house showing you where everything is. Don't think you need to learn everything at once! Your family realizes you will take some time to settle in and expect you to ask questions.

Talk to your homestay parents and ask what expectations are regarding:

- mealtimes (weekdays and weekends)
- absences from meals
- shower schedule (how long and what times)
- curfews (weeknights and weekends)
- visitors
- family chores (doing the dishes, cleaning bedrooms, personal laundry responsibilities, etc.)
- television (how much and how late)
- family activities (church, etc.)
- telephone rules (how often, how long, how late, etc.)
- internet (how often, how long, how late, etc.)
- smoking
- privacy

Ask for the guidelines to be written down for you so you can read them and absorb it in your own time. It is hard to remember everything the first time you are told.

Your Room:

In your homestay, you will find your family has prepared a comfortable room for you. There will be a bed, closet, dresser for your clothes, night table, lamps, desk and chair. If there is something you need, such as an extra blanket, pillow, etc., don't be afraid to ask your Homestay family; they want you to be comfortable in your room.

Keep your room clean and tidy. Do not eat in your bedroom unless it is permitted. If you are permitted to eat in your room be sure to bring your dishes out to the kitchen when you are finished. Do not leave dirty dishes in your room; take them to the kitchen. Dirty dishes in your room will begin to smell, mould and attract insects. Clean the dishes and put them away or put them in the dishwasher.

Your bedroom is your personal space. However, your Homestay parents may, from time to time, inspect the room for cleanliness and that you are treating the room and furnishings with respect. Should you accidently damage anything, tell your Homestay family immediately. Accidents do happen and it is better to deal with the issue right away rather than wait.

Other family members will not enter your room without permission. You should not enter other family member's room without permission and the Homestay parent's room is, of course, off limits.

Ask how often you are to change the sheets/linens on your bed and where you can find extra items if needed. You may have to wash the bed linens yourself and replace them the same day if there are not spare linens. Keeping your room, bed and the space clean, tidy and undamaged is your responsibility.

It is against ISP Homestay Program rules for members of the opposite sex to be in your bedroom at any time. Please do not ask to take your girl/boy friends into your room even if the door is open. This is a very uncomfortable request and is also sometimes perceived as being disrespectful.

In the Kitchen:

In the kitchen, you will be told to help yourself to whatever foods and drinks you want. Do not be shy! You are a member of the family and therefore expected to serve yourself. Make sure you clean up after yourself, leave everything as you found it. Your family will appreciate this very much.

Your Homestay parent may point out certain things they may not want you to eat; this is usually because there are plans to use the items for dinner, a dessert, etc. Please be respectful of any requests.

Be moderate in your consumption of items. For example, don't eat 4 small containers of yogurt at once, or drink several juice boxes at once. Eat a variety of foods so there are foods available for everyone. You can always ask your Homestay parents about this; they will be happy to help you.

Meals:

The homestay family is responsible for providing the foods you like to eat, within reason. They are not required to provide overly expensive, exotic items or "junk" foods, or protein powders or bars. Students are expected to purchase these items themselves. If you are unsure, don't be afraid to ask!

International students, in fact most Canadian family members as well, are expected to prepare their own breakfasts, lunches and snacks. The main meal of the day is prepared by the homestay

parents and usually enjoyed together as a family. It is your responsibility to find out what time you are to be home for dinner and to help with the mealtime set up or clean up and perhaps preparation of a salad, etc. This is a great opportunity to be a real part of the family and get to know each other.

Students will be expected to clean up after themselves should they make a snack in the kitchen. Do not expect others to clean up after you. You shouldn't take food into your bedroom but if you do, be sure to bring the dishes out right away and clean them or put them in the dishwasher.

In the Bathroom:

You may have your own bathroom, but it is more likely you will share the bathroom with other family members. You will be shown where you may keep your personal items such as toothbrush, shampoo, etc.

It is very important to keep the bathroom clean and tidy. You must leave the bathroom in good condition for the next person. Wipe up any water that is spilled on the counters or floors. Put wet towels in the designated area; don't leave them on the floor or furniture in your bedroom.

Ask where extra toilet paper is kept and if you use the last of the roll, replace it with a new one for the next person.

Please ensure feminine hygiene products are properly disposed of, do not flush them down the toilet.

Other Areas in the Home:

Please feel the home is yours as well as the family's home. You will be able to watch the TV, use most equipment in the home, such as media devices. If you are not sure how to use something or if you are permitted to use something, please ask your Homestay parents.

If you use an item belonging to a Homestay brother or sister, ask permission each time; do not assume you will always be permitted to use the item.

Always treat the home and belongings respectfully and if something gets broken or damaged, tell your Homestay parents. As mentioned, accidents do happen and are best dealt with right away.

In the Yard/Garden:

Please enjoy the garden and yard! In good weather Canadians often spend a lot of time relaxing and enjoying the nature. Please make sure you close all gates and do not leave garbage lying around. If you use any recreational equipment, please make sure you put it away.

Laundry:

Please talk with your homestay family about the laundry requirements; ask if you are expected to do your own laundry or if it can be done with the family's laundry. You may be assigned a specific day to do your laundry. Please be respectful of this arrangement so you do not inconvenience other family members. Ask how often you are expected to wash your bed linens, as well. If there are items you wish to wash by hand and hang to dry, ask where you can do this.

Curfew Guidelines:

International students will have to abide by curfews set in place by the Homestay Program and their Homestay families. Generally, curfews range from 9:00 pm on school nights and 10:00 pm to 11:00

on non-school nights. These guidelines will be at the discretion of the Homestay Parent, based on the student's age, maturity and activity. General guidelines on weekend curfew should coincide with their grade.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the Homestay parent always knows where the student is, who they are with, what they are doing and when and how, they will be getting home. No student is to be outside the Homestay beyond midnight without the expressed permission of the Homestay Parent.

Students are strongly discouraged from spending every school night outside the home until curfew. One or two nights, depending on the activity, is generally sufficient. Remember you have joined a family; this means you should spend time with your family getting to know them and doing activities with them. Also, most school nights, after dinner, students will be expected to be doing any homework they have and interacting with the family.

Many students make the mistake of staying in their rooms all of the time. Many find themselves lonely and feeling like the Homestay family is not interested in them. This habit also makes the Homestay family feel that the student is not interested in them. Certainly, you will need your quiet, private time in your room but make sure you come out from time to time to converse, watch TV or do activities with your family. You will not feel as lonely and homesick and your family will be happy to learn about their new family member.

Culture Shock:

Everyone will experience some degree of culture shock, homesickness and loneliness during their stay in Canada. This is very normal and you are not alone. The best solution when you are feeling this way is to talk to some one. Your Homestay Parents, the Homestay Coordinator and your teachers at school are all committed to helping you through these tough times.

Don't sit in your room and cry. Come out of your room and talk to someone. You will find these periods will decrease in frequency and severity.

Cultural Norms

Cultural norms are different from country to country and home to home. It is your responsibility to find out what is acceptable in your Homestay, School and in public.

Ask your Homestay Parents where to put your shoes and coats when you come home. What time meals are served and expectations of being home for those meals. Some families may pray before a meal, others not. While some things may seem very strange to you, you need to remember that they are not wrong, simply different.

Parties/ Alcohol and Drugs:

While attending parties with friends and other students is a part of socializing, International Students must understand and respect that sometimes these parties will include alcohol being consumed and possibly, illegal drug use.

Canadian students may have different rules with their family however, International Students are forbidden to possess, purchase or consume alcohol any illegal drugs/vape e-cigarette while in Canada. Students caught using substances may be dismissed from the International Program and sent home immediately.

Students need to be aware of the activities around them and if they find themselves around people who are using alcohol and especially drugs, need to remove themselves from the situation.

Never be afraid to call your Homestay parents to help you if you find yourself in a situation you know you should not be in. Homestay parents are concerned for your safety and will always come and get you. If you cannot reach your Homestay family, contact your Homestay coordinator who will also assist you.

The following is taken from the Homestay Family Handbook and is what the homestay parents are responsible for. This means it is your responsibility to provide the following information:

- Students must obtain the permission of the homestay family before attending any party.
- The homestay family must have the address and phone number where the party is to be held.
- The homestay family must make prior contact with the responsible parent who will be in attendance at the party throughout the duration.
- If there is no responsible adult in attendance, the student will not be permitted to attend the party.
- Students are prohibited from consuming any alcoholic beverages or drugs. To do so could result in immediate dismissal from the ISP Program and return to the home country.
- Overnight attendance at parties is forbidden except in cases preauthorized by the Homestay Coordinator.

Driving and Owning a Car:

International students are forbidden to drive or own any motor vehicle. Students can take lessons through an Accredited Driving Company upon obtaining permission from Mr. Pepper.

Family Absences:

International students are forbidden to remain in any home overnight where there is no parental supervision. If your homestay parents need to be away they may ask a family member or friend, who has been approved of by the Homestay Program, to come and stay with you. If there is no one who can come and stay, the homestay coordinator will arrange for you to go to a temporary, approved homestay.

Medical Insurance and Illness:

Students are covered by a private medical insurance called guard.me International Insurance. This is very comprehensive insurance and it is mandatory. Information about the insurance and coverage can be found at https://www.guard.me/qsd There is a language tab that will translate the contents into your language. There is also a place to download and print claim forms.

If you feel ill and wish to see a doctor, speak with your homestay family; they can help determine if you need to go to the hospital or the doctor's clinic. In Canada, we try to use the hospital for emergencies only such as bad bleeding, broken bones, difficulty breathing, etc. However, if you wake in the middle of the night, are obviously ill and the clinics are closed, your homestay parents will take you to the hospital and get you the care required. Do not be afraid to ask for help! Don't

call your parents at home; they cannot help you, talk to your homestay parents or homestay coordinator.

For most visits to the doctor's office, student will have to pay a fee, then the insurance claim form is completed, (homestay coordinators or homestay parents can help with this) and your money is reimbursed, usually within two weeks.

If you attend the hospital, make sure you take your **guard.me** Insurance card and your study permit with you; this proves you have insurance and the hospital will bill the insurance company directly. If you do not have the card with you, you may be required to pay for services first. This is usually about $700.00 CAD plus any other costs associated with diagnosis and treatment such as blood tests or x-rays, etc.

It is the student's responsibility to pay all fees, do not ask your homestay family to pay these fees for you. If you need assistance, contact your homestay coordinator.

Money Matters:

International Students are not permitted to loan money to homestay family members or to their friends. Nor are students to borrow money from homestay family members or friends. If you are having trouble with money, either not enough or you are being pressured to loan money, please speak to your homestay coordinator. Do not take large amounts of money or any other valuables to school. Be sure to lock up your belongings, especially during physical education classes.

Cell Phones:

In Parksville-Qualicum Beach, most people have cell phone plans that include texting with minimum data. You cannot rely on free wifi to communicate with your family, therefore, you need to have a proper cell phone plan during your stay. It is NOT SAFE to be without proper communication at all times, especially if you want to be out with your friends. Your homestay will not be able to call you if you do not have a Canadian phone number, therefore you will need to get a plan in Canada with a LOCAL Canadian phone number. QISP recommends using PhoneBox. You can also go to a Cell Phone kiosk at the Woodrove mall to see what options they may have. If you don't have a cell phone, you will need one, so ask your Homestay parent for help.

Privacy and Security:

As mentioned earlier, your bedroom is your private space and other family member's rooms are theirs and are to be respected. Do not borrow items without asking permission. Being given permission once does not necessarily mean that you will be given permission each time so make sure you ask. If you lose or damage something that is not yours, you will be expected to replace it.

You are also responsible for helping to maintain security in the home. Ensure doors and windows are locked before you leave the home. Take your keys with you and do not give copies of your keys or alarm codes to anyone. If you lose your keys, the family may feel the need to change the locks. You may be responsible for this charge. If you do lose your key, tell your homestay parents. Do not borrow a key from another family member and copy it.

Public Transit Information and Friends with Driver's Licenses:

While homestay parents may occasionally drive to and from school or to social events, you are expected to become familiar and to use the public transit system. Homestay parents are not taxis.

Your homestay parents will help you to learn the bus routes, schedules, etc. They will show you where to buy monthly bus passes; this cost is your responsibility. If you miss a bus and know you are going to be late, call your family! They will worry about you.

Do not accept rides from strangers. Also, in British Columbia, driving laws for young people are on a graduated system. Teens who have an "L" driver's license are learner's and not permitted to drive without the direct supervision of a licensed adult, 25 years or older. The red "L" sticker will be displayed on the back of the vehicle.

Teens that have an "N" driver's license are permitted to drive without supervision but are not permitted to have more than one passenger. Green "N" stickers are also to be displayed on the back of a vehicle. Do not ride in a car with more than one passenger if the driver is an "N" driver. They do not yet have the experience to drive safely or lawfully, with more than one passenger.

Of course, it goes without saying that you should never drive with someone who has been drinking alcohol or using drugs. If you ever find yourself without a safe ride home, call your homestay parents. They may be a little annoyed and may even tell you to take a taxi home, but they will ensure y get home safely. Alternatively, you can also call your homestay coordinator who will also help to ensure your safe arrival home.

Sleepovers:

It is a good idea to bring your friends to your home so that your homestay parents can get to know these friends. It will show them that you are choosing good friends and they will then feel safe allowing you to have sleepovers at your friends home from time to time. They will also feel comfortable with your friends in the homestay, should you wish to invite your friends overnight.

If you ask to go to a friend's home for a sleepover, it is your homestay parent's responsibility to phone the parents who will be hosting you to confirm that your plans are accurate and that there will be a parent home throughout the night to supervise. It is up to you to provide the phone number, as well as the address and names of the parents. If you do not provide this information, you will not be permitted to spend the night at your friend's. If plans change, be sure to contact your homestay parents and get permission for the change.

ISP Program rules prohibit sleepovers involving students of the opposite sex or any type of romantic sleepover. This also includes "group sleepovers" unless approved by the Program.

Telephone and Internet:

Your homestay families will not mind if you use the family phone as long as you are respectful of a few things:

- Keep the length of the call to about 15 minutes. Of course, if you are speaking with your natural parents, they will permit extended use of the phone.
- Find out if there is a "Call Waiting" feature, what the signal is and how to take a message if you are using the phone and a call is coming in
- Never bill any long-distance charges to your homestay phone. This is inappropriate. Purchase long-distance calling cards that are available at a variety of locations, (ask your homestay family to help you) or call collect
- Be respectful of the "No Calls" hours. In most homes, it may be between the hours of 9:30pm to 7 am, but check with your family.

If you miss a bus, or plans have changed, you need to call your family to ask permission and let them know of changes, etc.

Homestay families are not permitted to sign cell phone contracts for students. Students who cannot live without a cell phone will have to purchase the phone and buy "pay as you go" minutes to load to the phone. It is, basically, time credits. Make sure your homestay family has the number and always keep the phone "loaded" with time so that they can contact you and you can cal them.

Homestay families are not responsible for supplying internet or computers to international students. You may find most homestay families have wireless internet and will allow you to use it if you have your own computer. If you do not have your own computer and the homestay family lets you use theirs, you must be very respectful of following the rules for such a privilege. Such rules may include:

- No downloading of any files, music or videos. This is to avoid virus' and to avoid additional "bandwidth" charges. In the past, homestay families have been cut off by internet providers for using too much bandwidth and it was caused by students downloading movies and music
- Some families may not permit chat programs such as Messenger or Facebook
- Be respectful of the times you are permitted to use the computer

If you have your own computer, do not spend every available minute you are home on it. Come out of your room and socialize with your homestay family. They are interested in getting to know you.

Do not stay up until very late hours at night chatting or game playing. On school nights, most families will expect that you turn the computer off by 10:30pm and go to sleep. You need your sleep to be able to function effectively at school. Students who consistently stay up to late on computers, have trouble getting up for school and performing well, may have Internet privileges reduced or revoked.

Emergency 911:

In most areas of North America, 911 is the universal call number if police, fire or ambulance personnel are required. If you require any of these services, do not be afraid to call. 911 is not a toy and should never be "tested". Misuse of the 911 system is a Criminal Offense under the Criminal Code of Canada punishable by fines and expulsion from the international program.

Make sure you have learned your homestay address and phone number should you ever need to give it to emergency personnel or if you be come lost or disoriented. That way, some one can always help you. You will be given a card with this information but it is a very good idea to learn it, also.

Student Travel and Travel Form Information

No travel form is needed for:

• Vancouver day trips (with or without the host family)
• Overnight Island travel with the host family (camping, Victoria etc.) unless you are out of service
• Overnight travel to Vancouver/Lower mainland with the host family
• Sleepovers within the Parksville/Qualicum community

Travel form needed for:

• Overnight student travel outside of Parksville Qualicum without the host family
• Overnight Island travel with the host family in Out of Service Areas
• Overnight travel off Island/Outside of Vancouver (ie. Interior) with the host family
• Out of Province/country travel with or without the host family

****Forms must be submitted 7 days before departure or 14 days before if leaving Canada**

In District Day Trips
In-District includes Parksville/Qualicum, Nanaimo or Mt. Washington. Students who are doing day trips within these communities will only need permission from their homestay family. Students should ensure that they have a working cell phone for communicating with their family.

Overnight stays outside the family home, but within Parksville-Qualicum (sleep overs), are subject to the approval of the homestay parents, and homestay parents should confirm details with the friend's parents.

Out of District Day Trips
Out of district day trips includes any travel outside of Parksville, Qualicum, and Nanaimo. In order to travel outside the district for ONE DAY (not overnight), Host parents and students must go over the following:

- Asking their natural parent's permission
- Having your permission
- Giving you their travel plans
- Confirming their transportation
- Confirming who they are travelling with (they must be with someone and not alone)
- Confirming that they will have a cell phone and a way of contacting you in an emergency

Out of District Overnight
When students are not with their own host family, overnight stays outside of Parksville-Qualicum are only allowed if the student is with an adult over the age of 25, and permission will only be granted if the ONLINE Student Travel Form has been completed by the Homestay parent. This form must be sent in 7 days prior to the planned trip.

*Students are **not** permitted to stay in a hotel by themselves. They must be with a responsible adult.*

Christmas Break / Spring Break

If the travel is taking place during a school closure (Winter Break/Spring Break), the forms must be in 7 days prior to the start of the break. If the student is leaving the country, forms must be in 14 days prior to the start of the break. (No forms to be submitted during a school break).

Student Discipline:

Again, the following is taken directly from Program Policies and Procedures.

Student Discipline

The ISP Program is designed for students who wish to further their English, succeed academically, and participate in Canadian culture. Every attempt is made by Program and school staff to help

the student achieve these goals.

The student, of course, must also bear responsibility for his/her own success. The student is required to obey all Program rules, including attending all classes, maintaining good academic achievement, and cooperating with homestay families. Prior to the student's arrival in Qualicum, s/he and his/her parents sign a Participation Agreement clearly outlining these requirements.

If a student fails to fulfill Program requirements, ISP personnel must intervene. At times the misdemeanor is the result of cultural misunderstanding, and counseling is successful. At other times disciplinary action and more serious consequences are necessary

The ISP Student discipline process in the Qualicum School District is very fair and very thorough. It has three basic steps (a "three strikes" procedure), designed to provide the student optimum opportunity to alter unsatisfactory behaviour. With each step, the student's parents are notified. The District Principal--International Education, in consultation with school and Program staff, is responsible for implementing the disciplinary process and for notifying parents.

The three steps are:

Step 1 - **Initial Reminder**. ISP Program staff will meet with the student to discuss the unacceptable behaviour and the requirements for improvement.

At the discretion of the ISP District Principal, a second offence may result in a Second Reminder if the student's misdemeanor is not of a highly serious nature, and it appears the student truly intends to improve. If, on the other hand, the second offence warrants more serious action, this second reminder is skipped, and the discipline moves to step 2 below.

Step 2 - **Probation**. This contract delineates the student's unacceptable behaviour and the requirements for improvement, and requires the student's signature indicating the intention of improving. A review date is defined.

Step 3 - **Final Warning.** This written contract again describes the problems and the required solutions. Again, a review date is defined. This final step requires both the student's signature and the host parent's signature.

Failure on the part of the student to fulfill the requirements of the Final Warning results in dismissal from the ISP Program. The student is returned to his/her home country, and the Study Permit is returned to Immigration Canada.

As per the published refund policy of the Qualicum School District, no refund of tuition is granted in the case of a student's dismissal from the ISP Program.

Time to Go Home:

At least a week before you are to leave back to your country, start looking through your belongings to see what you will take and what you do not need. Be sure to ask your Homestay for help with what to do with your garbage and the things you are leaving behind.

Students must pay for their luggage on most airlines so make sure you are aware of the weight restrictions. Overweight bags will have to have things removed at the airport until it is the correct weight. Check with your airline's website to see what your baggage limits are.

ISP Contact Information:

Office:	250-951-0857 Fax: (250) 951-0843
Emergency:	Krista Smith 604-616-1996
	Jenny Atkinson 250-954-7162

ISP Office Staff:

ISP Principal:	Mr. Kevin McKee
ISP Secretary:	Ms. Becky Breitsprecher

ISP Homestay Staff:

Homestay Coordinator	Ms. Krista Smith- 604-616-1996 homestay@sd69.bc.ca
Homestay/Activities	Ms. Jenny Atkinson- 250-954-7162 jatkinson@sd69.bc.ca

ISP Advisors:

Ballenas Secondary	Ms. Carrie Philip- 250-713-9805 cphilip@sd69.bc.ca
Kwalikum Secondary	Mr. Ryne Barton- 250-327-4511 rbarton@sd69.bc.ca