



Nova Scotia
International
Student
Program

Policy Manual

2005 – 2006

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I. Acceptance, In Loco Parentis Agreement and Homestay Letter Procedures

Successful applicants to the Nova Scotia International Student Program will receive an acceptance letter and guardianship letter within two weeks of receiving their complete application, unless informed otherwise.

For all applications received before June 15th, homestay placement letters will be sent out within four weeks of complete application packages being received by their placement board. Students not placed within the four-week period will be moved to the next board on the rotation schedule. For applications received after June 15th, homestay placement letters will be sent within two weeks of receiving the application.

At the end of the two-week period the following must be completed:

- a) Acceptance Letter from the NSISP indicating the student's full name, date of birth, and beginning and ending date in the program
- b) In Loco Parentis Agreement letter
 - Signed by the school board representative
 - Notarized or witnessed by a Commissioner of Oaths

At the end of the four-week period the full documentation must be completed, including:

- a) Homestay letter consisting of:
 - A welcome to the program
 - An introduction to yourself, and confirmation that if they have any questions or concerns at any time to contact you
 - Information about the high school
 - Information about the host family, their interests, where they are located in relation to the school, store, etc. (approximately a 5-6-line paragraph)
 - Encouragement to contact the family before they arrive
 - Full address, phone, and email if applicable of the homestay
 - A photograph of the family home
 - Any other information that is relevant at that time

The acceptance, guardianship and homestay letter originals must be mailed to the NSISP office for agent fax and mail-out.

II. Homestay Approval Process

When homestay applications are received from families wishing to host international students, the attached process is followed:

- a) The homestay co-ordinator contacts the interested family to arrange a home visit. The enclosed application form must be filled out and the following will be viewed by the co-ordinator: kitchen, bathroom, student's bedroom, and laundry facilities.
- b) Students must have their own room in the home.
- c) Consideration should be given to others who may be home or who are frequently in the home.
- d) Students of approximately the same age and opposite sex are not to be housed together.
- e) Cultural considerations (i.e. alcohol consumption, over night guests, frequent parties) must be acknowledged and considered when placing an international student in a home.
- f) Permission must be acquired for the family to undergo a criminal records check (to be done by RCMP or local police).
- g) A Child Abuse Registry form must be completed and investigated.
- h) The host school (principals or head of guidance) must be contacted for information on the family's relationship with the school or the community.

The School Board representative will give final approval of the host family.

Homestay Policy after Placement

- a) Boards are required to update the homestay form once a year.
- b) Minimum of once a year visit in the host family home by the homestay coordinator and/or board representative.
- c) Once a month minimum contact with the host family.

**Homestay Questionnaire enclosed*

Homestay Questionnaire (Sample)



Homestay Questionnaire

Date: _____

Please complete the following parts to this application. It will assist us in matching students and families.

1. Applicant's Name: _____

2. Street Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Mailing Address (if different than above): _____

Telephone: (902) _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

3. Occupation (F): _____ Telephone: _____

4. Occupation (M): _____ Telephone: _____

5. Number of student bedrooms available: _____

6. Laundry facilities: Yes No

7. Children at home:

Name	Age	Gender	School	Grade

8. Children outside the home/frequent visitors/other houseguests:

Name	Age	Gender	Relationship	Duration of visit

9. Pets: _____

10. Are you able to accommodate special dietary needs of the student (i.e., vegetarian, diabetic, allergies, etc.)? Yes No

11. Do you have homeowners Liability insurance? Yes No

12. Are you willing to submit to Child Abuse Registry and criminal record checks? Yes No

13. Do any members of your family smoke? Yes No

14. Do you permit smoking in your home? Yes No

15. How did you hear about this program? _____

16. Has your family ever hosted an international student before?
If yes, what nationality, when, and for how long did he or she stay?

Yes No

Nationality: _____

Length of stay: _____

17. What are your reasons for hosting an International Student?

18. What are your family's hobbies and interests? _____

19. What activities would you include the student in? _____

20. What kind of assistance are you prepared to give your student with school assignments? _____

21. What do you feel is important to inform your student about regarding your household (rules, diet, cleaning, etc)? _____

22. What are the work schedules of family members? _____

23. Would the student have access to a home computer? Yes No
Procedures: _____

24. What would be the procedure regarding the telephone: _____

25. Please list the schools nearest your home:
Elementary school: _____
Middle school/junior high: _____
High school/senior high: _____

26. **Preferences (please check one)**
Gender: Male Female
We would prefer a male student, but we can take a female student _____
We would prefer a male student; we cannot take a female student _____
We would prefer a female student, but we can take a male student _____
We would prefer a female student; we cannot take a male student _____

Duration:
Short term (4, 5 and 6 months) _____
Full year _____ Summer months _____

27. Religion
Denomination: _____
Do you attend religious services? Yes No
Frequency: _____

26. **Your Home**
Briefly describe the characteristics of your home.

Dwelling (single detached, duplex, apartment, etc.) _____
Levels: _____
No. of bedrooms: _____
No. of bathrooms (full, half, etc.): _____
Back yard: _____
Front yard: _____
Other unique features: _____

Describe the room the student will sleep in
Location: _____
Furnishings: _____
Size: _____
Windows: _____
Bathroom: _____

Please give a brief description of your neighbourhood: _____

References:	Date Contacted
1) _____	_____

2) _____

3) _____

Recommended: Yes No

Reasons: _____

Name: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Updated: _____

Note: Please include a photograph(s) of the exterior of the home, the family, and student's bedroom with this application.

III. Homestay Placement Change

If there is a problem that requires a student move to another homestay:

- Fax the Agent and NSISP office, using the *Homestay Placement Change* form, indicating there will be a homestay change
- Explain the reasons for this change
- Give the new address and phone number

Students may be required to pay an administration fee if the homestay placement changes are not deemed necessary by the homestay coordinator or their Director.

**Change of Host Family form enclosed*

**Homestay Placement
Change Form (sample)**

Your board logo

**NOVA SCOTIA INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
PROGRAM
CHANGE OF HOST FAMILY**



STUDENT NAME: _____

COUNTRY/AGENCY: _____

CURRENT SCHOOL: _____

NEW SCHOOL: _____

HOMESTAY COORDINATOR: _____

DATE OF MOVE: _____

CURRENT HOST FAMILY: _____

REASON FOR CHANGE OF HOST FAMILY: _____

NEW HOST FAMILY INFORMATION

FAMILY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ POSTAL CODE: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

HOST MOTHER: _____ OCCUPATION: _____

HOST FATHER: _____ OCCUPATION: _____

CHILDREN (AGES): _____

PETS: _____

OTHER INFORMATION: _____

SIGNED: _____

POSITION: _____

DATE: _____

IV. Independent Travel Policy

Independent Travel is defined as travel that is not part of a school, school board or Nova Scotia International Student Program organized trip or event.

Students registered in the NSISP may be permitted to travel during the school year upon completion of the following criteria:

- Students wishing to travel **within** Nova Scotia must receive permission from their homestay family.
- Students wishing to travel **outside** of the Maritime provinces must obtain written permission from their parents (in home country) and inform their agent, host family and school board representative **two** weeks prior to travelling.
- Procedure: students must obtain translated permission from parents and have it faxed to the school board representative.
- **Please note:** the renting of hotel rooms by an unaccompanied minor is illegal in Canada and this practice cannot be supported by the NSISP.

V. Behaviour/Discipline Policy

The NSISP believes in working with parents and agents in the home country for the management of student behaviour/discipline. Quarterly reports are sent out to update parents and agents on issues of student progress and behaviour in the home and school. If there are discipline issues then the flow of information should begin immediately. As the legal body responsible for students during their stay in Nova Scotia, the school boards are responsible as well for communicating discipline issues to parents and agents. It is important that all discipline issues be documented and that written reports of all major incidents, as well as Behaviour Contracts, go to parents and agents in the home country. Please note that the final decision on all student discipline matters rests with the host school board.

The NSISP has a three-stage process for managing behavioral discipline issues:

Stage One (Minor infraction) – verbal warning and written report to agent in home country to be forwarded to parents in home country.

Stage Two (Major infraction or 2nd minor infraction) – Written **Behaviour Contract** and meeting with Program Director and school principal. Behavior Contract sample enclosed.

Stage Three (2nd major infraction or illegal activity) – Student returned to home country.

Please note: As the student and parents have signed a contract prior to participation in the program outlining the rules of the program and responsibilities of the student, the NSISP reserves the right to terminate participation in the program of any student found in violation of the terms of the NSISP contract.

Behaviour Contract (Sample):

Upon acceptance into the Nova Scotia International Student Program, I understood my agreement to be the following:

I understand that in order to succeed in the Nova Scotia International Student Program, I must attend all my classes, complete all homework assignments, and participate in extra-curricular activities offered by the school. I understand that the program reserves the right to terminate my participation in the International Student Program and can send me back to my home country, at my own expense or my parents' cost, if I break program regulations such as: driving a car; drinking alcoholic beverages or using illegal drugs; working illegally; breaking the rules of the homestay; becoming involved in any illegal activities; breaking school rules such as chronic absenteeism, poor conduct. I have read and understand the above and agree to abide by these rules, as well as to cooperate with the program administrators, the teachers and the students at my new school, and my host family.

Contrary to this agreement, on _____, I, _____

Date

Name

I understand this agreement and once again confirm my acceptance of its' principles. I also understand that should I break this contract again I will be immediately sent back to my home country.

Signed:

(Student Name)

(Signature)

Witnessed by:

(Principal signature)

(Date)

(Director Signature)

(Date)

VI. Length of Stay in Nova Scotia

School Holidays

The school year in Nova Scotia runs from September to June. Major holidays occur in December (2 weeks), March (1 week), July and August. Students may visit their home countries during the school holidays. However, it is not recommended that students go home in December or March during their first year in the program. As well, any extension of these holidays that involves students missing school is strongly discouraged; and any exams or tests missed due to that practice will be forfeited.

Students are not the responsibility of the NSISP upon completion of their school year. A student's year finishes depending on the length of term in the program; most students opt for the 5 or 10 month program. This would have them ending typically January 31st or June 30th. Students are strongly encouraged to leave by that date. The NSISP does not accept responsibility for the student after the above dates unless prior arrangements have been made with the school board representative. **Please note:** Students staying beyond those dates are responsible for their own homestay arrangements and any payments to homestay families must be made directly.

VII. High School Graduation

- Students must indicate upon applying to the program their interest in graduating from Nova Scotia.
- Graduation is not possible if the student has already graduated in their home country.
- Students must fulfil the Nova Scotia graduation requirements.
- Students must successfully complete a minimum of five grade 12 Nova Scotia high school credits—one must be English.
- Students will incur the cost of additional course(s) necessary for graduation offered outside the regular school day.
- Students may not take/be awarded more than eight credits in an academic year.

VIII. Student Driving Policy

Students enrolled in the Nova Scotia International Student Program are not permitted to drive or own vehicles while in the NSISP. Students will be permitted to enroll in driver's education at their own cost with notarized English translated permission from their natural parents. All drivers' training and exams will be taken under the guidance of a certified driving instructor. Once a student has passed the driving exam, their license must be given to their program coordinator and will be sent to their home country upon conclusion of the academic program. At no time will students be permitted to operate homestay family vehicles.

IX. Visiting Parents

The NSISP welcomes parents visiting their children as part of the program in Nova Scotia. However, parents visiting in the first month can be quite disruptive and stressful for the new host family as well as making it difficult for their child to make a transition to a new culture, family, and school. Therefore, the NSISP strongly discourages parents accompanying their children to attend our program. Should they accompany their child anyway, they **may not** stay with the host family during the first month of school. As well, NSISP host families are not obliged to host visiting parents at any point during the school year.

X. Payment Policy

- Invoices will be issued upon acceptance into the Program
- Full year students may pay per term
- Total payment per term is due 60 days prior to the students' arrival
- If payment is not received prior to students' arrival there will be a \$500.00 penalty fee
- If outstanding balances have not been received within the first month, the student will be required to withdraw from the program

XI. Student Evaluation/Progress Reports

Student academic evaluations and progress reports will be forwarded to agents for distribution to parents under the following schedule:

November 30 th	Mid-term marks and progress reports for all students.
February 28 th	Final term one marks and progress reports for all full-year students. Final transcripts only for all departing students.
April 30 th	Mid-term marks and progress reports for all students.
July 1 st	Final transcripts only for all students.

XII. Transcripts

Once a student's program is finished, the respective school will issue each NSISP student an official transcript with school seal and signature. Please ensure the student's name is spelled as it appears in their passport. Each of these transcripts will be forwarded to the NSISP office for distribution to the agent or consulate for authorization where needed.