

ERA EDUCATION COMPANY

4 RIDLEY ROAD, OXFORD OX42QJ TELEPHONE: +44 7557532717.
www.eraeducation.co.uk info@eraeducation.co.uk
Company Registered in England no. 11152007. Registered office as above.

Student Handbook 2020-2021

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If you cannot find the information you are looking for or if you have any further questions, please ask Era Education company and we will be happy to help.

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- Key Information

Key contacts:

Emergency service UK number is 999

Not urgent medical problems – 111

Your guardian's contact details -

4 Ridley road, Oxford, OX42QJ, United Kingdom

Telephone: 07557532717

Emergency Telephone: +44 7557532717 /07774760001

Email: info@eraeducation.co.uk

For NI number is to call Jobcentre Plus on 0345 600 0643

Safeguarding issues:

NSPCC: **0800 800 5000** - www.nspcc.org.uk

Child-line: **0800 1111** - www.childline.org.uk

Era's Child Protection Co-ordinators Vitalija Abare: **07557532717**

Oxfordshire Child Protection Concerns MASH (24 hours): **0345 050 7666**

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Alison Beasley - Designated Officer

Tel: **01865 815956**

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: **0800 028 0285** or help@nspcc.org.uk

Anti-Terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321

Public Holidays

	2020	2021
New Year's Day	1 st January	1st January
Good Friday	10 th April	2nd April
Easter Monday	13 th April	5th April
Early May Bank Holiday	4 th May	3rd May
Spring Bank Holiday	25 th May	31st May .
Summer Bank Holiday	31 st August	30th August
Christmas Day	25 th December	27th December – Christmas
Boxing Day	28 th December (substitute day)	Day (substitute day)

Christmas Break: 25th December 2019 – 1st January 2020

Emergency Numbers in the UK

999 (or 112) Emergency: Police, Fire Brigade, Ambulance Free

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101	Police (Non-Emergency)	Free
111	NHS (National Health Service, Non-Emergency)	Free

About ERA

Era Education

Era Education company provides wide range of services for the oversea students and our advices based on many years of experience in UK education. The company is based in Oxford, close to many of the UK's most prestigious educational institutions. Our consultant/guardian has been helping students to succeed in their education path and future career since 2015.

You will have access to your guardian 24/7. Era strive to provide good care and support, in order that every student is in a strong position to obtain the best academic results.

2 - Era role as your Guardian

UK schools require all their students whose families live overseas to have a guardian living in the UK, normally aged over 25 years. It is also now a UK visa requirement. Whilst at the school, your houseparent will take responsibility for academic progress and welfare, but there are times during the term and more importantly outside term time, when the school must be able to hand over these responsibilities to a properly appointed guardian. For example, exeat weekends, half terms, medical emergencies, suspensions and exclusions.

These responsibilities include:

- acting on behalf of your parents in situations where they are unable to do so due to distance or timing;
- looking after your welfare in the UK when the school is closed for holidays;
- providing a host family for you to stay with during half term and fixed exeat weekends when the school is closed;
- assisting you with things you may need – school uniform, sports equipment, pocket money, phone cards, mobile phone, UK mobile sim card, etc.;
- helping you arrange your travel both in the UK (taxi, train or bus) and back home (flight bookings, transfers);
- helping you if things go wrong:
 - if you get into trouble at school you may be suspended and asked to leave the school for a period, at short notice
 - if you have problems with immigration or passports (for example, lost or stolen)
 - if you get ill and need to go to hospital, or away from school
- being available for you anytime, particularly if you are worried about things like: - work
 - school
 - friends
 - your own family. It is not unusual to feel unhappy and maybe homesick when you first start at your school and do not know anyone. Relax and take some time, you should feel better after a few days. If you do not or if you have a personal problem, or need some advice or support, you can always contact us.

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- the host family you stay with. Life in the UK may be very different to your own country and we can give you some ideas and guidance to help you settle in more quickly and easily.

Era will be the main point of contact for guardianship issues for you during school terms. Era acts as your guardian, and will take responsibility for decisions made.

Era will ensure all arrangements are carefully put in place, and that confirmation is sent to you, your parents and your school. You may have regular contact with Era by telephone and email

You must provide your current mobile number and email to Era, especially if these details change!!
It is your responsibility to notify us of any change to your contact details as soon as they are in place.

3 - Arrival in the UK

Student arrivals: 10 top tips

Coming to the UK to study this year? Here are Border Force's top ten tips to make sure you have everything you need for a smooth arrival.

- 1 Complete your landing card**
If you're from a country not in the EU or European Economic Area, please complete the landing card given to you during your flight before you arrive at border control.
- 2 Have your passport ready**
Remove it from any cover, and remember to remove sunglasses and hats before reaching border control.
- 3 Keep information about the course you're studying in your hand luggage**
This must be in paper copy (not an electronic copy on a tablet or phone). This includes your university confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) number.
- 4 Keep recent bank statements and details of where you are staying in your hand luggage**
Border Force officers may ask to see this information.
- 5 Expect Border Force officers to ask simple questions**
Expect Border Force officers to ask simple questions about your stay in the UK when you arrive at passport control.
- 6 Do not bring in any meat or dairy products from outside the European Union (EU)**
There are restrictions on traditional medicines, food products such as fish, eggs and honey, and some fruit, vegetables and plants (including bulbs, seeds, cut flowers and tree bark).
- 7 There are also restrictions on the amount of tobacco, alcohol and gifts you can bring to the UK**
If you exceed your duty-free allowance and do not declare them, all of your items could be taken away from you.
- 8 Why not become a Registered Traveller?**
If you plan on travelling in/out of the UK more than four times this year, why not become a Registered Traveller. Members do not fill in landing cards and are able to access ePassport gates. Find out more here: www.gov.uk/registered-traveller
- 9 You must declare cash of 10,000 Euros or more**
You must declare cash of 10,000 Euros or more (or the equivalent in another currency) if you are travelling from a country outside the EU.
- 10 Never give false or misleading information**
Never give false or misleading information (including forged or counterfeit documents).

Student Visas

If you are from a country in the EU or EEA, you will not need a visa to study in the UK.

If you are from another country, you will need a visa and, most of the time, will need to organise it before you travel. The most common visas are Tier 4 (General) and Tier 4 (Child).

If you do need a visa to study, you must:

- get it before you travel
- follow the rules
- think about your passport expiry dates
- not stay after your visa expires

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For the most up-to-date information, please visit this website
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

BRP Cards

If you are an international student and apply to come to the UK for longer than 6 months, you will need a biometric residence permit (BRP). Your visa decision letter will tell you if you need to collect a BRP card and will tell you where you can collect it from. You must collect it before your vignette expires or within 10 days of arriving in the UK, whichever is later. Your school should be able to help you with this.

Registering with the Police

Some international students will need to register their stay with the police. You must do this in the first week of your arrival in the UK. The stamp in your passport will tell you if you need to register or not. If you are not sure, please ask the school.

Arriving at the Airport

If Era has arranged an airport transfer for you, our designated driver will meet you at the arrivals hall and will be holding a sign so you can find them easily. DO NOT leave the airport alone, until you have found the driver. If you have trouble finding them, please call our office or emergency number and we will help you.

Abusive Behaviour

We do not accept any abusive behaviour by staff, students or visitors (this includes unkind words, messages and actions, verbal, mental and physical abuse, taking or damaging someone else's things, violence or anger towards another person, talking to/about people in an unkind way, teasing, harassment, bullying).

Bank Account

Opening an account in the UK can be difficult, but your school may be able to help. To open an account you will need a 'bank letter' from the school, your passport/ID and proof of your address.

If you open a bank account, keep your account numbers, PIN and cards safe at all times. Do not give this information to anyone.

If your bank card is lost or stolen, you must report it to the bank immediately so they can cancel the card and send you a new one.

Remember, if you change your address, you must inform the bank.

National Insurance Number

You will need a National Insurance (NI) number to work in the UK.

The easiest way to get an NI number is to call Jobcentre Plus on 0345 600 0643. Opening times: Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 18:00. You will need to make an appointment. You can also find further information here <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>

Take your passport, a letter confirming you have been offered work or are registered with an agency and a 'Certificate of Enrolment' letter from the school.

During your appointment, please ask them how long you will have to wait for your NI number, it is normally sent in the post.

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4 - Study and Development

Academic Mentoring

Era offers academic monitoring and mentoring services supported by a team of qualified and experienced tutors and education consultants upon request to suit all levels, interests and learning needs.

Whether or not our students know what they would like to do in the future, our education consultants will help them to prioritise the areas they want to focus on and monitor their progress. We will also give the students termly tutorials where they can discuss their strengths and areas to develop.

Tutoring

We have a team of qualified and experienced tutors who we are working with for many years on hand to provide valuable one-to-one support to students upon request. The tutors all have areas of expertise and can offer tutoring at all levels, from 11+ entrance exams to GCSE, A-level, IB and degree students in a wide range of subjects. Sessions can be arranged face-to-face throughout the UK or via Skype. We aim to keep all of our students motivated as they prepare for each exam. As well as past paper practice, they will have the opportunity to take control of their own learning in order to maximise their potential.

School / University Placement

Era has successfully helped students gain admission into reputable schools and universities all around the UK, allowing students to flourish and reach their potential. We provide a seamless and comprehensive service, offering a high level of support to students and parents. Every student is assigned a personal consultant who will help you to select the best schools and universities based on your needs.

For more information or to book any of our additional services, please contact us.

Student Feedback

Your views and comments are very important to us. We welcome your feedback and opinions so that we can improve our services.

If you would like to leave feedback at any other time, please send it to us via email at info@eraeducation.co.uk or contact the office on 07557532717.

Changing School

Remember – sometimes it can take 2 or 3 weeks, or even a term, to feel comfortable in your school, with other students and your teachers, and with living in the UK. In your first term, try to relax so you can enjoy your time here as much as possible.

If you have a problem, please try to speak to the school first. We will try to assist if the matter does not get resolved. We can assign you with an education consultant if the School Placement service is required.

5 - School Rules

Each school has their own rules, please go through them carefully when given. In general, they include the following:

- English Only

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- Being Punctual
- Eating and Drinking is Not Allowed in Class
- Mobile Phones Should be Turned Off in Class
- Good Attendance: having poor attendance may result in expulsion or jeopardise your next visa application



Start and End of Terms

Please be aware that schools require students to conform to all school rules and to adhere to published school dates for the start and end of terms. Failure to do so can sometimes result in disciplinary action against the student and would almost certainly be marked down as an unauthorised absence.

You must provide what arrangements we need to make for you for each half term, exeat weekend and whenever you are not in school but in the UK.

6 - Homestay Accommodation

The students of Era Education company are staying with their guardian if they are on Half term or have any problems and no longer able to live at school. If your guardian won't be able to host you for any reason, Era will use experienced home stay company who can provide with good, experienced host families. The parents are also welcomed to arrange the homestay of their child directly with Oxford Homme stay and provide the details of the ost family and contact number to the guardian and child's school.

Students are expected to respect their host family's way of life in return for being accepted as a family member. Hosts are encouraged to include students in family life and to arrange activities and excursions. While staying with a host family, you will gain insight into the British way of life in a happy and supportive environment.

Please note, actual guardianship remains with Era during your stay with a host family, so you should speak to us about any concerns you may have or if you need to make any changes to the original arrangement.

House Rules

Every Host Family has their own house rules which will be given to you upon arrival. Please respect and follow them accordingly, for example:

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- When you should take a shower
- If you can use the kitchen
- If you can eat in your room
- If you can use the computer and internet

Behaviour and conduct when you staying with the host family

Homestay Host families are allowing Era students to stay in their home, so students should act respectfully by conforming towards the rules of that specific household. Upon student arrival, hosts should clearly outline what they deem as appropriate and inappropriate behaviour relevant to their household. Student's should the following general rules:

- Respect the Homestay Hosts home, family and property. This includes leaving the house clean and tidy during the stay, especially the bathroom and bedroom
- When leaving the house, inform the host family where you are going what time they can expect you back (please check curfew time) and if you will require a meal on your return
- Be polite and friendly at all times and interact with the family when and where possible
- You can invite your friends to a host family house with prior agreement with the host parents.
- Please make sure you don't use any home appliances without permission
- No smoking, drugs or alcohol are permitted whilst staying or travelling to/from the homestay host family home. This also extends to not breaking UK.
- Use of internet and Wi-Fi in the homestay is permissible, however students are not permitted to view material or films which are not age appropriate (refer to Safety policy). Permission must be asked before using a host family's computer and downloading is not permitted on a homestay host family's device.
- Respect the religion and culture of the homestay host family.
- You must exchange contact mobile phone numbers with the homestay host family.



Meals:

For breakfast you should get toast and cereal, and perhaps a cooked breakfast on occasion. If you are late getting out of bed, you may miss breakfast!

Lunch is normally light, perhaps soup, jacket potato, salad, sandwiches, cheese on toast and fruit or yoghurt.

Most host families take their main meal in the evening, and dinner should include fish, chicken or red meat, with vegetables and a dessert. The evening meal is often between 18:00 and 20:00, but please check the times of meals with your host.

If there are things you like or don't like to eat, please tell your host and they will try and provide accordingly, but remember the food will be very different to home, so do try everything - you never know, you may like it! If you are HUNGRY, please don't help yourself – ask the host family.

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Your family may be very interested in your own country's food – offer to cook!

Be sure to watch your table manners:

Wait until everyone is seated at the table and has their food before you start to eat.

If you want something from the table, ask someone to pass it to you. Remember to use 'please' and 'thank you'.

It is the English custom to eat quietly, with your mouth closed!

Hands are usually placed under the table when you are not eating.

Stay at the table until everyone has finished and then ask to leave.

When you leave the table, ask if you can help by taking your dishes to the kitchen, and leave them by the sink or place them in the dishwasher.

Tell the family in advance if you wish to miss a meal and eat elsewhere.

Your Room:

You will be provided with a single, double or twin room (one or two beds)

Clean bedding and a towel are provided.

The room will have some storage facility (depending on the length of your stay) and a desk and adequate lighting for working. Sometimes host families provide a table in another room (like the Dining Room) for working instead of the bedroom.

Make your bed and keep your room tidy, especially on your departure. Remember to say THANK YOU to the host for their hospitality.

Report any damage to the host and apologise for it.

Shower and Bathroom:

You will probably need to share the bathroom with your host family and they will tell you the most convenient time for you to use the bathroom and shower in the mornings and evenings. Host families will often need to be up early, so please don't make them late for work!

Please make sure you shower regularly (every one or two days) but remember that hot water may be limited, so you should spend no longer than 15 minutes in the shower.

Make sure the shower curtain is on the inside of the shower cubicle to avoid flooding the bathroom.

Laundry:

Hosts are happy to help you with any washing you may have, especially during a longer break like half term. Ask your host if they would mind doing the washing for you (or offer to do it yourself) and where to put your dirty clothes. They will usually wash them and return them to you.

Phone:

Please use your mobile phone to make calls when you are staying with your host family. If you need to use the host's phone, you must ask for permission first. Remember to be courteous when using your phone at the host family or in public places – do not speak too loudly or call someone late at night.

Internet Access and Host Computers:

Most families have a wireless broadband connection, and many are happy for you to use this for reasonable access to the Internet from a laptop computer (such as social networking). Please do not use the family's Internet connection to download or stream songs, TV shows, games or movies. You should NOT expect to use the host family's own computer.

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Unrestricted Access - There is increasing concern about the dangers to young people of free and unrestricted access to the Internet without appropriate controls. Era have guidelines for host families, and will advise hosts to limit access in the best interests of the student. For example, wireless Internet will sometimes be switched off overnight, and schools will also have restricted networks.

Curfews

If you go out, you must tell your host family where you are going and when you will be home. Make sure you have the telephone number of the host family and Era's emergency phone number (07557532717) with you and that the family have your mobile number. Your phone should have enough battery and be switched on at all times. If you are delayed, you must phone the host family to let them know.

15 and under	Must be accompanied by an adult member of host family
16 & 17	10pm at the latest
18 and over	11pm at the latest

Bedtimes are at the discretion of the host. Please remember many families NEED TO BE UP EARLY to go to work, therefore please be considerate (do not take a shower late at night!) and be QUIET!!

You are not allowed to stay out all night unless Era has already received specific permission, in writing, from your parents (see Other Accommodation).

You are not allowed to have friends to stay overnight unless agreed by EEC and the host family in advance.

Other Accommodation

We have an obligation to your parents, schools and even the UK Immigration to care for and protect our students and to provide safe host family accommodation. If you would like to make alternative care arrangements during half term / exeat weekends, please follow the rules below.

- Students Aged 18 and over

Parents Permission in writing in advance is required, during office hours.

- Students Aged 16 & 17

Parents Permission in writing in advance is required, during office hours. PLUS details of the accommodation and travel plans, as well as the main contact person, who should reside in the UK and be over 25 years old, and agree to full responsibility for the student during the stay.

- Students Aged 15 and under

Must stay in homestay accommodation arranged by Era unless otherwise agreed.

Travel

For transfers between the airport and school, or between the host family and school, Era have a team of designated and reliable drivers available to meet students and take them to the arranged address in the UK. If Era has booked a driver for you to travel, please be certain to keep your mobile switched on so that we can contact you. If you are travelling by car in the UK, you must use a seat belt.

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Travel by rail and coach can be arranged for economical long distance transfer. Era will check timetables, book tickets and arrange for an escort if required (**children under 16 years of age are not allowed to travel unaccompanied**).

Pocket Money

You do not need to bring too much pocket money to the host family, as your parents will have already paid your meals and accommodation during your stay with the host family. If you need extra pocket money, we will only issue this to you after we receive your parents' permission. Please ensure you gain permission from your parents first.

Personal Hygiene

It is important to present yourself well in school and when you are staying with the host family. Remember to shower regularly (every one or two days), brush your teeth twice per day, use deodorant and wash your clothes regularly.

Homesickness

Feeling homesick is common, especially for international students. Whether you are missing your family and friends or a favorite meal, feeling homesick abroad can be hard to handle on your own. Though this feeling will eventually go away, we share tips on how to deal with homesickness.



- **Focus on why you came to study here.** Write down all the reasons that you chose your new school and why you came to study in the UK.
- **Explore your new town.** Make a list of things to do and see, like visiting local museums or trying new restaurants. Getting outside of the school on weekends will help you avoid being homesick and allow you to try new things that you could not do back home. (please see the rules of the school about students leaving the school's premises)
- **Meet new people.** Make it a priority to meet other students. Some are new like you and probably want to make new friends, too, so don't be shy.
- **Create a routine.** Having structure in a new place can help you stop feeling homesick. Whether it is always getting a snack at 3pm or attending a sports game each week, routines help you keep yourself grounded and on a schedule.
- **Stay active.** Distracting yourself means that you are spending less time feeling homesick. Going for a walk, hitting the gym or exploring your school's facilities are great ways to feel more energetic and positive.
- **Focus on the here and now.** Resist the urge to focus on family and friends. The more you lament on what is far away, the less you can focus on the good things in front of you.

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Remember you are not alone

Plenty of people get homesick. Reach out to people who can give you support on how to deal with homesickness.

- **Your house head girls/boy** has likely experienced homesickness and helped other students with it, too. Mention how you are feeling and ask if you can schedule a time to talk. Your Housemaster/mistress will be able to speak to you and give some hints to reduce homesickness.
- **Counselors at school** are trained to provide support and guidance. There is nothing embarrassing about feeling homesick or wanting to talk about it.
- **Talk with other students.** They are probably feeling the same way and might have some tips of their own. Discussing your experiences can also be a way to bond and make new friends.
- **Call your friends and former classmates.** Reach out to your friends who may be dealing with homesickness at school, too. You can support each other and share tips.
- **Call your guardian.** She always available for you and from her experience with other students can advise good ways to keep yourself up and not feel lonely.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY

Schools frequently need a parent or guardian to sign for parental permission for you to participate in school activities and excursions. Our policy is to forward these to your parents for approval. Otherwise we will sign, unless your parents have indicated otherwise on the Application Form.

8 - Living in the UK

Student cards

You are entitled to receive discounts from travelling, clothes purchases and entertainment as a student, For example:

Young Persons Railcard for travel on trains (<http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/using-your-railcard/where-to-buy/>)

Oyster Zip Card for travel around London (<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares-and-payments/travel-for-under-18s/zip-oysterphotocards>)

International Student Identity Card for student discounts (<https://www.isic.org/cards/>)

Phones

Era can help you to buy a “Pay as you Go” mobile sim card or phone, but we cannot enter into monthly contracts on your behalf.

Culture

Going to a new country and being part of a new culture can be confusing and difficult (culture shock). Try to learn as much about the British culture, customs and behaviour as possible. People will be more helpful and much kinder if you are polite and show respect for others.

For more information about British culture, please visit:

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Preparation-and-Arrival/Facing-culture-shock>

Manners and Customs

British people say “please”, “thank you” and “sorry” very frequently so make sure you do the same. When you meet someone for the first time, they will usually shake your hand. If you are meeting a friend, they may give you a hug or a kiss on the cheek.

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People queue in the UK – if you are waiting for something (e.g. to pay in a shop, to buy a ticket, to use the toilet in a public place or to get on a bus) and there are other people waiting, you will need to join the queue and wait for your turn.

British people are generally punctual so make sure you always arrive on time.

Do not spit, pick your nose or stare at people in public places – these are all considered to be very rude.

Religion

There are many places of worship in the UK. For more information about places of worship speak to the school.

Links to useful websites

www.visitbritain.com Official Tourist Office site with information about the UK

www.ukcisa.org.uk Advice for international students www.bbc.co.uk/news

News in the UK and around the world www.ukstudentlife.com Information for students coming to study in Britain www.educationuk.org/global/articles/safety

A useful site for safety in the UK

Health

There will be a School Doctor and Nurse in the school who will look after your health.

When you are staying with your host family, they will look after you if you are unwell or have an accident.

They will usually contact their GP (doctor) and book an appointment for you (your school doctor will have already registered you with the NHS). If the illness is more serious and/or you need to go to hospital, the host family will contact Era and we will inform your parents. If you require any other medical care such as a dentist, they will also be able to book an appointment for you.

In emergency situation or if you are alone and no one can help you please call your guardian on her 24/7 number 07557532717 or 999. If the matter is not urgent and your GP is not accessible, please call 111 (24/4 GP consultancy service) for the advice.

Safety and Security Advice -

Always put your safety first.

- **Make sure your phone always has battery and credit.**
- **Make sure you have all of the contact details, addresses or maps that you need (e.g. school, accommodation).**

Contact with Era

As your dedicated guardian, we need to know your whereabouts at all times. If you go missing from your school or homestay accommodation and we cannot reach you, we will report you to the police as a missing person. Therefore, you must always inform us if there are any changes to your accommodation/travel plans and make sure your phone is always switched on.

Electrical Appliances

Electrical appliances from overseas, specifically phone chargers and laptop power devices could pose a significant fire risk so if possible, purchase UK versions. Do not overload extension leads or adaptors.

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Fire Prevention and Precautions

- Cook safely – do not leave food you are cooking unattended, take care with electrics in the kitchen (keep them away from water) and do not put any metal in the microwave.
- Do not use the open fire equipment without supervision of an authorised adult
- Make sure all fire exits are kept clear.
- If there is a fire:
 - At school: follow the school's fire safety. This usually means heading to the nearest fire meeting point outside.
 - At your host family: go to the nearest exit immediately.
 - If you are the first to notice a fire, pull the alarm or shout "FIRE FIRE". Call 999.
- If a fire escape is blocked:
 - Put bedding around the bottom of the door to block out smoke.
 - Call 999 then open a window and shout "HELP FIRE".
 - If you are on the ground or first floor, try to escape through a window.
 - Use bedding to cushion your fall and lower yourself down carefully. Do not jump.
 - If you cannot open the window, break the glass in the bottom corner. Make jagged edges safe with a towel or blanket.
- Fire extinguishers are helpful for putting out small fires. To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word "PASS":
 - **P**ull the pin. Hold the fire extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you and remove the pin to unlock it.
 - **A**im low. Point the nozzle at the base of the fire.
 - **S**queeze the lever slowly and evenly.
 - **S**weep the nozzle from side to side.

E-Safety – stay SMART

Safe	Do not give your personal details to anyone online (e.g., full name, contact details).
Meet	Do not meet with people who you have met online as it can be dangerous.
Accept	Do not accept messages, emails or open files from people you do not know or trust as some can contain viruses or nasty messages.
Reliable	Some information may be untrue or people can lie about who they are. Always check information with other websites, books or a member of staff.
Tell	If something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried tell your parent, host parent or a staff member.

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Bullying and Cyberbullying

“Bullying occurs when a person is repeatedly, and over time, exposed to negative comments or actions by another person. These negative actions can cause injury (e.g. physical violence by pushing) or emotional discomfort to another person (e.g. name calling, spreading rumours).” – My virtual medical centre.

Bullying can take place in person (e.g. by a student or teacher at school) or online. If you think you are being bullied or if you feel uncomfortable in a situation or with another person, please speak to someone you feel comfortable talking to: this can be your EEC guardian, a teacher, your housemaster or another adult at school. They will be trained in how to deal with similar situations and will know how to help you.

Road Safety and Street Awareness

Only cross at crossings and look both ways. Look for all vehicles, including bicycles.

Wait for the traffic to stop – you can press the button on the traffic lights and wait for the green man. Look confident and look as if you know where you are going.

Walk on well-lit roads and ignore people who are rude or abusive. If you think you are being followed, go into a shop or where there are other people or phone a friend, telling them where you are and why you are worried. If you need some help, approach people directly or call out to them, don't shout 'help', say what is happening and what help you need.

Belongings and Valuables (e.g. mobiles, cameras, money)

You do not have to carry your passport or ID card with you in the UK.

Try not to carry more money than you will need, and keep some money in a different pocket/place to use in an emergency.

Theft of mobile phones (especially the latest models) is quite common; therefore, pay attention to people around you when using your phone in a public place. It is not a good idea to listen to an iPod or other personal stereo when walking alone as it can attract the attention of thieves and you will be less aware of people approaching you.

TIP: We recommend that you register your belongings, such as mobile phones and bicycles, with Immobilise. This is free of charge and will help you if your things get stolen. Visit www.immobilise.com

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Taking out Insurance

We strongly recommend that every student takes out a comprehensive insurance which covers reimbursement of school fees as well as theft, damage and medical costs. Please ask us for our recommended partners who specialise in student travel insurance.

Cashpoints

When withdrawing cash at cashpoints, be careful not to let anyone see you entering your PIN. Be careful if someone tries to help you, they may not be honest. If someone is standing too close or tries to distract you, cancel the process or wait until you have finished and you have both your cash and the card before you turn away from the machine.

Food Hygiene

- Wash your hands before and after handling food.
- Keep food preparation surfaces clean.
- Wear closed-in shoes to protect your feet, in case of hot spills or breakages and tie back long hair.
- Store food appropriately.
- Wash vegetables and fruit under cold water before use.
- Do not run around the room where food is being prepared.
- Wipe up food spills immediately.
- Handle knives and other sharp equipment with care.
- When using a knife, always cut away from yourself or downwards on a chopping board.
- Turn handles of saucepans away from the front of the stove when cooking.
- Use oven mitts when taking hot dishes from the oven or microwave.
- Wash kitchen and eating utensils after use in hot soapy water.

Laws in the UK

Smoking: is banned in all public buildings in the UK, including bars, restaurants, shops, cinemas, stations and on public transport. It is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone under 18 years old.

Drinking: You must be 18 years old or over to buy or drink alcohol in public places. Some bars and nightclubs have a 21 years old and over policy.

- It is illegal to buy alcohol for anyone under 18 years old.
- In some outdoor places, the police can confiscate (take away) alcohol.
- Alcohol is not allowed at school or with host families.

Drugs: The possession and use of recreational (leisure) drugs is illegal. Penalties can include up to 7 years in prison and/or an unlimited fine. You are strongly advised not to use illegal drugs during your stay.

Shoplifting: People who are caught stealing from shops will probably have to go to court and may have to pay a fine (money).

Weapons: It is illegal to carry any weapon for defence, including gas and sprays. You will be arrested if the police stop you and you have a knife.

Cycling: You cannot ride a bike on a pavement/footpath. You can only ride a bike on designated bicycle paths or on the road.

You must have lights if you cycle at night. A helmet is not compulsory but is strongly recommended.

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Sexual activity:

The age of consent to any form of sexual activity is 16 for both men and women. It is an offence for anyone to have any sexual activity with a person under the age of 16. Era expect all students to adhere to UK Law whilst residing in the UK. However under the terms of the guardianship provision in place the company does not permit students of any age to engage in sexual activity at any time.

What to do in case of an arrest

1. If you are arrested, the police will usually take you to a police station, hold you in a custody cell then question you. The police will search you and take away your possessions while you are in the cell.
2. The police can hold you in custody for up to 24 hours. After 24 hours, the police must either charge you with a crime or release you.
3. The police must explain your rights which include: free legal advice, telling someone where you are, medical attention if required, a written notice of your rights (e.g. food and toilet breaks) in your language or provide you with an interpreter.
4. If the police ask you questions, you can choose to answer or not. However, please note that you may harm (damage) your defence if you do not answer their questions.
5. The police do not need your permission to take photographs of you, finger prints, a DNA sample (mouth swab or hair root) or a skin swab from your hands/arms.
6. The police do need your permission to take a blood or urine sample from you (unless you are suspected of drink or drug driving).
7. If you are under 18, the police must try to contact your parent or guardian and find an adult to help you.

Legal Problems

For free legal advice you can go to a Citizens' Advice Bureau - www.citizensadvice.org.uk

9 - Equal Opportunities

Era and all of its staff, strive to achieve equal opportunities across its service scale. We believe that everyone should be treated equally and given the same chances.

We have zero tolerance for abusive behaviour and will take action against and also support any member of the organisation who is a victim of such events.

Students under Era's care can expect:

- honesty and accuracy in all information and publicity about our services
- a warm friendly service from all our members of staff, including support and advice when required
- to have regular opportunities to discuss their progress through regular tutorials with our education consultants and opportunities to seek advice about their future plans
- to stay in clean and comfortable homestay accommodation
- to be taught by appropriately qualified and professional tutors who plan and prepare suitable lessons, if required

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- an interesting and varied Social Programme including many free activities

Era expects its students:

- to read through this Student Handbook to learn about our services and advice on studying in the UK
- to abide by all school rules and homestay rules to ensure the school and homestay accommodation remain safe and happy places and all students gain the best possible experience from their stay
- to inform Era of any change of address or contact details
- to follow the E-Safety policy and to not use any computers inappropriately or to download inappropriate material
- to respect other people's cultures, traditions and beliefs and to avoid behaviour or language that may cause offence
- to be polite and respectful when speaking to all students, staff members and visitors

10 - Complaints

Informal Complaints

Many complaints can be resolved quickly and informally. You can speak to your guardian about your complaint, no matter how small.

If you make an informal complaint:

1. It will be acknowledged immediately (if made in person or over the phone), or within 1 working day if made via email (please remember that the office is open Monday to Friday, 09:30 – 17:30).
2. We may ask you further questions, to repeat and clarify information and/or to provide evidence (photos, for example) to support your complaint.
3. We will tell you when and how you will get an outcome (result)– this will be within 2 working days.
4. We may give you an 'action plan' to tell you what will happen next.
5. You will be asked to confirm if you are happy with the solution.
6. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint

If you are still unhappy, you can make a formal complaint.

To make a formal complaint:

1. Please email us with your complain information.
2. The form should be completed and returned to us.
3. We will send you written confirmation that your complaint has been received within 3 working days.
4. We may invite you for a meeting so we can discuss the issue.
5. We will respond to you via email or in writing within 10 working days.
6. We will keep a confidential record of your complaint.

Formal Complaint - Second Stage

If you are still unhappy or feel you have been treated unfairly, you can ask for help from AEGIS.

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The Wheelhouse, Bond's Mill Estate, Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3RF Website:
www.aegisuk.net

You should write details about how you have already tried to resolve your complaint with Era and include any supporting documents, including the written outcome of your complaint.

11 – Termination working with the student

If you do not follow Era's Rules or Policies, we may terminate the contract and cease the service without giving you a refund. We may ask you to leave for the following reasons:

- **Abusive behaviour**
- **Not following all rules relevant to your stay in the UK**
- **Damage to school or homestay property / Unsocial behaviour / Criminal activity. We could also ask you to pay for any damages to school property and/or accommodation.**

If you break the rules or do not follow the Policies, we will:

1. Give you an official verbal and written warning and notify your parents. This aims to stop you from repeating any offence.
2. Permanently exclude you from the services and notify the school, if you repeat the offence or break any other rules.

12 - Safeguarding Policy

Era has a legal duty of care toward young people who use our services. We have a policy and procedure in place to help protect our students from harm and for reference in case something goes wrong. All staff members are responsible for students' safeguarding.

If you would like to speak to someone or report a safeguarding issue, please contact one of the officers in the school and/or Era's a DSL or Vitalija Abare.

Useful telephone numbers and websites:

NSPCC: **0800 800 5000** - www.nspcc.org.uk

Child-line: **0800 1111** - www.childline.org.uk

Era's Child Protection Co-ordinators Vitalija Abare: **07557532717**

Oxfordshire Child Protection Concerns MASH (24 hours): **0345 050 7666**

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): Alison Beasley - Designated Officer

Tel: **01865 815956**

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: **0800 028 0285** or help@nspcc.org.uk

Era's Ways of Safeguarding

Student Handbook and Child Protection Policy are given upon arrival.

Parents have to send a consent / registration form where rules and contact details are provided.

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Under 16s are kept separate from older students in different homestay accommodation. Era works with a transfer provider who only uses licensed and DBS-checked drivers.

Regular contact with students.

Era only places under 18 students with families where the main host will be DBS-checked.

Era ensures that under 18s return by curfew times by educating the students, parents and host families. If a student does not return home by the specified time, the host must call the student and if necessary, inform Era via the emergency number.

On occasion, under 18 year olds may be placed in residences, but only when in groups and after ensuring they comply with our safeguarding policy (a responsible and DBS-checked adult must always be present, especially overnight). When staying in Residential accommodation the ratio of residential adults to students will be at least 1-20 for students aged 12-17 and 1-15 for students under 12.

Following safer recruitment practices and ensuring all roles involving responsibility for, or those with substantial access to under 18s will have suitability checks, for example with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These roles include teaching, administration, social activities and management staff.

EEC ensures that management and all staff are trained to a minimum safeguarding level 1 and that students are aware of safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding Procedure – Child Protection

Information which shows an adult may have:

- behaved in a way that has/may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child in such a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if working closely or regularly with a child

Types of abuse: grooming, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, neglect, controlling, coercive and threatening behaviours.

If you have a concern about any of the above, please contact one of the officers at school or EEC's Director.

It is not for staff to decide if the allegations are true or not. Their role is only to listen, report to the authority as accurately as possible and allow the official procedure to then take over.

Era's PREVENT Policy

Era is aimed to ensure that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

Everyone plays an important part in it. All students are expected to look after each other and raise concerns with a responsible adult if necessary.

Prevent and Designated Safeguarding lead is Vitalija Abare: 07557532717 (24/7 contact number) or info@eraeducation.co.uk

Anti-Terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321

Reporting terrorist material online at https://eforms.homeoffice.gov.uk/outreach/terrorism_reporting.ofml

How does Era PREVENT?

- Raising awareness and educating.

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- Promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination to learn to understand others, to value diversity and promote shared values.
- Promoting a safe and supportive international environment via clear expectations of accepted behaviours and those, including radicalisation and extremism, that will not be tolerated.
- Promoting British values, culture and traditions, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respectful tolerance of different faiths or beliefs.
- Providing information and School Rules upon arrival.
- Recognising the signs:
 - students talking about exposure to extremist materials or views outside school
 - changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming isolated
 - fall in standard of work, poor attendance, disengagement

Procedure

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If radicalisation behaviour is suspected or witnessed it must be reported to the school. Parents will be kept informed, where necessary.
- In the occurrence of any radicalisation behaviour, the following disciplinary steps will be taken:
 1. The giving of an official verbal and written warning, in the hope to cease offending.
 2. In the event of a second occurrence (even if the victim or offence differs from the first), permanent exclusion from the services. No refund or alternative arrangements will be made.

If the abuser is a staff member, the action to be taken will follow the 'disciplinary procedures' within the staff handbook.