

Guidelines for au pair organisations

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IAPA
INTERNATIONAL
AU PAIR ASSOCIATION

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GUIDELINES FOR AU PAIR ORGANISATIONS

The Code of Conduct for Au Pair Organisations and its corresponding Guidelines set standards for “au pairing”, including basic criteria for the selection of both au pairs and families, and establish rules for the conduct of business between members, thereby allowing for practical co-operation between au pair organisations.

Each Member of IAPA must abide by the Code of Conduct for Au Pair Organisations and all Guidelines.

IAPA's guidelines represent minimum standards to be achieved by all Members of the International Au pair Association. Individual members may choose to set higher standards for their own organisation.

INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN AU PAIR APPLICATION FORMS

AU PAIR PLACEMENT

- First date available to start programme
- Last date available to start programme
- Length of placement

PERSONAL DETAILS

- Last name
- First name
- Street address
- Post code, City
- Country
- Telephone number, home
- Telephone number, work
- Email
- Date & place of birth
- Age
- Nationality
- Passport number
- Date and place of issue
- Expiration date
- Height
- Weight (may be included in the medical report)
- Are you willing to live in a family with animals?
- Would you be willing to live with a single-parent family?
 - Male
 - Female
- Have you ever lived away from home for any length of time (ie two months or more)? Give details.

RELIGION

- Do you regularly attend religious services? (Optional to answer)
- Would you accept a host family of a religion different to your own?

SMOKING

- Do you smoke?
- How many cigarettes per day?
- If you do smoke, are you willing to refrain from smoking in the host family's house or in the presence of the children?

DRIVING

- Do you hold a current driving licence?
- Do you have an international driving licence?
- When did you receive the licence?
- How much experience do you have?
- Are you willing to drive in the host country?

DETAILS OF PARENTS / GUARDIANS / FAMILY

- Parents' address
- Parents' telephone number
- Parents' email

DETAILS OF PARENTS / GUARDIANS / FAMILY CONT.

- Father's occupation
- Mother's occupation
- Family members - brothers/sisters and ages
- Contact person in case of emergency (if other than parents)

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

- School attended, examinations and qualifications
- Future educational plans (can be included in essay)
- Do you have knowledge of first aid or life saving?
- Do you have any certificates?
- Have you taken any course relating to child care?

EMPLOYMENT RECORD

- Past employment
- Present employment
- Length of notice required

EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN

- Do you have experience with newborns, children aged 9 - 12 months, 1 - 3 years, 3 - 6 years, 6 - 10 years, older than 10 years? How often (frequency)?
- Do you have experience with disabled children?
- Have you ever been an au pair before? If so, in which country, and for how long?

PREFERENCES

- Are you willing to care for a disabled child?
- Age group you prefer to work with: newborns, 9 - 12 months, 1 - 3 years, 3 - 6 years, 6 - 10 years, older than 10 years (age groups may be divided up differently)
- Would you prefer to be placed in a family with one, two, three, or four children?
- Would you prefer to live in a big city, a small town, a suburb or in a rural area? (Preferences may be included on a separate page, which will not be shown to the host families)

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

- What are your special hobbies/interests?
- Do you participate in sports?
- Do you swim?
- Do you have a background in music or dance?
- Can you ride a bicycle?

LANGUAGE ABILITY

- Languages spoken: mother tongue, first and second foreign languages
- Verbal skills: Fluent/Good/Fair/Poor
- Number of years studied, certificates held.

INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN AU PAIR APPLICATION FORMS | CONTINUED

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION REQUIRED

- Which educational courses do you wish to attend in your host country?

REASONS FOR APPLYING

- Why do you want to be an au pair?
- Why do you want to travel abroad to XX (the host country)? (may be included in essay)

SIGNATURE

- Confirmation that information is correct, and a promise to follow rules and regulations.
- Signed copy of IAPA's Au Pair Agreement (refer to Code of Conduct for Au Pairs and Host Families).

REFERENCES

- Two references (including name and address of writer), one relating to childcare and one relating to character.

MEDICAL REPORT

- How long has the applicant been treated by this doctor?
- Signature and address of doctor
- Signature of au pair

HEALTH

- Do you have any medical problems?
- Are you allergic to animals?
- Do you have any other serious allergies? Please describe (can all be included in medical report)
- Do you have a special diet (e.g., vegetarian)? If yes, explain.

OTHER APPLICATION MATERIAL

- Passport photographs
- Letter to the host family (essay)
- Photo collage

OPTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Country preferred
- Region preferred. Why?
- Do you know anyone in your preferred host country? If yes, what is your relationship?
- Have you ever been denied a visa? If so, which country/ies?



INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN HOST FAMILY APPLICATION FORMS

AU PAIR PLACEMENT REQUESTED

- Requested start date
- Length of placement?
- Are you willing to accept a male au pair?
- Would you accept an au pair that smokes? (Yes/No/Yes, if they refrain from smoking in the house and while looking after the children)
- Should your au pair hold a driving licence? (No, not necessary/ Yes, if possible/Yes, in any case. If yes, why?)
- Would you host an au pair without basic knowledge of the language of your country but with very good knowledge of another language? If yes, which language?
- Have you ever had an au pair before?
- Do you have household help? If so, how often does he/she help you?

PERSONAL DETAILS

- Last name
- First names
- Street
- Postal code, City
- Country
- Private telephone number
- Host mother's work number
- Host father's work number
- Email
- Host father (last name, first name, date of birth, nationality, mother tongue)
- Host mother (last name, first name, date of birth, nationality, mother tongue)
- Who is legally responsible for your children?
- Children (names, dates of birth, gender)
- Do you have disabled children? If so, please describe.
- Other persons living with you (surname, name, relation, date of birth)

RELIGION

- Do you regularly attend religious services?
- Would you accept an au pair of a different religion to your own?

SMOKING

- Do you smoke?
- If so, do you smoke in your family home?
- Are there other aspects of your family life which should be given consideration (eg, vegetarian diet)?

PETS

- Do you have any pets? If so, which pets do you have?
- Do you want the au pair to care for them?

SPECIAL SKILLS

- Should your au pair have any special skills (eg swimming or riding)? If so, which ones?
- Which language is mainly spoken in your family?
- What other language do you speak?

YOUR HOME

- Where do you live? (in a rural area, small town, the suburbs, in a city)
- Is there public transportation from your house into the town/ city centre?
- Distance from your home to the centre of the city.

HOST FATHER'S DAILY SCHEDULE

- Profession
- Typical working hours (including commute)
- Do you have to work on weekends? (Yes, no, occasionally)
- Do you have to travel? If so, how often?

HOST MOTHER'S DAILY SCHEDULE

- Profession
- Typical working hours (including commute)
- Do you have to work on weekends? (Yes, no, occasionally)
- Do you have to travel? If so, how often?

CHILDREN'S DAILY SCHEDULE

- Name of children, times they are at school or otherwise out of the house (sports, etc.)

DAILY SCHEDULE OF OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD

- Name, times they are out of the house

A LETTER TO YOUR AU PAIR | INTRODUCTION OF YOUR FAMILY

- Introduction: members of your family, your everyday life, hobbies and interests, particulars
- Brief description of your town, your house and also room for your au pair
- What expectations do you have of the au pair placement?

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE FOR YOUR AU PAIR

- Tasks au pair is to perform
- Sample time plan

PHOTO ALBUM OF YOUR FAMILY

- Photos of your family, children, your house, au pair's room, etc.

REFERENCE

- Written reference from a person who is not related to the family



APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE AU PAIR INTERVIEW REPORT

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Obtain additional information that is not on the application form, which would be useful for both receiving organisations and potential host families
- Obtain a personal impression about the au pair to assist in making the most suitable match
- Verify an agency's aims, objectives and understanding, regarding the au pair cultural exchange programme

The following is a list of suggested questions that may help you form your opinion about an au pair applicant and assist you to complete the interview report.

- Why have you decided to be an au pair?
- How do you think this will help you in the future?
- What do you want to achieve from this experience?
- What do you think your host family will expect from you?
- What will you expect from your host family?
- Describe the sort of family where you think you will be happy
- Have you ever travelled abroad without your own family? Where? For how long etc?
- Tell me about your own family
- What do they think about your becoming an au pair?
- How will you cope with any homesickness?
- Have you ever lived on your own?
- Do you help with household chores on a regular basis?
- What household chores are you good at?
- What household chores don't you like doing?
- When you first arrive as an au pair, what will you do to give the family confidence in you?
- Tell me more about your experience with children
- What are your views on raising children?
- What age of children do you feel most comfortable looking after? Why?
- What do you enjoy about looking after children?
- Imagine you don't get along with the children, how would you handle it?
- If the children will not listen to what you ask them to do, how will you handle it?
- Have you ever had to cope with an emergency? What did you do?
- If you don't get along with the family, what will you do?
- What do you do in your free time now?
- How do you plan to spend your free time during your au pair stay?
- What are your plans on completion of your au pair stay?

To standardise the assessment of a candidate's language abilities in all four skills where possible, agencies are recommended to use the English Speaking Union's Nine Level Scale for any language.

It will assist both sending and receiving organisations in making the correct assessment.

LEVEL	ABILITY TO USE A LANGUAGE	DEFINITION
1	Able to use a few words or phrases such as greetings, and recognise some public notices or signs	Beginner
2	Able to use a narrow range of language, adequate for basic communication. Basic communication is possible with assistance	False Beginner
3	Able to use a limited range of language adequate for short communication and practical needs. Problems cause frequent breakdown of communication, but the message is usually recovered with repetition and/or assistance	Elementary
4	Able to use a basic range of language sufficient for familiar and non-pressuring situations. Frequent problems restrict prolonged communication, but the message can be communicated with repetition and/or assistance	Pre-Intermediate
5	Able to use the language adequately in familiar situations. Rather frequent problems but usually succeeds in communicating general message	Lower Intermediate
6	Able to use the language competently in a variety of situations but with noticeable problems. Communication is usually effective. When difficulties arise, communication is recovered with ease	Intermediate
7	Able to use the language effectively in most situations with few problems. Communication is effective and consistent, with few hesitations or uncertainties	Upper Intermediate
8	Able to use a full range of language with proficiency approaching that in the speaker's own language, with occasional minor problems	Advanced
9	Able to use an extensive range of language equivalent to that used in the speaker's own language	Proficiency

AU PAIR INTERVIEW REPORT

NAME OF CANDIDATE						
INTERVIEW METHOD (tick box)	In person		By telephone		Date	
NAME OF INTERVIEWER						
NAME OF AU PAIR AGENCY						

EVALUATION OF A HOST FAMILY (Rating on a scale of 1 - 6, where 6 is the highest)		
Flexible/Adaptable	Able to fit into family life, to understand the 'give and take' of the relationship	Rating
Independent/mature	Able to make a life in a new culture and environment, to exist without dependence on her/his own family	
Motivated	Has a clear objective about what she/he wishes to achieve from the au pair experience in the context of her/his longer-term plans	
Responsible	Acts with maturity, understands the need to be accountable for work carried out	
Co-operative	Able to follow clear instructions about how to manage children, duties, rules of the house etc.	
Initiative	Thinks about what needs to be done in various situations that might arise and can act without instruction if necessary	
Sensitive	Understands and respects both the family's and children's needs	
Clean and tidy	Regarding both her/his own room and the rest of the house	
Common sense	Has a practical view about what to do	
Firm	Able to gain respect from children in order to exercise the necessary control according to family guidelines	
Language	Able to speak the language of the host country, at least at a basic conversational level	

EVALUATION OF CANDIDATE'S INTERVIEW ATTITUDE (Rating on a scale of 1 - 6, where 6 is the highest)									
Outgoing		Open-minded		Reserved		Talkative		Polite	
Cheerful		Patient		Warm		Modest		Serious	
Confident		Easy-going		Nervous		Bubbly		Sullen	

EVALUATION OF CANDIDATE'S LANGUAGE ABILITY (Rating on the ESU scale of 1 - 9, where 9 is the highest)							
Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing	

WHAT TYPE OF FAMILY WOULD SUIT THIS CANDIDATE? (tick all the relevant boxes)			
Children ranging from 2 - 6 years		Working parents requiring an independent au pair	
Children aged from 10+ years		Family wanting an au pair to be part of the family	
Children ranging from 6 - 10 years		Family requiring an independent au pair	
Any ages		Very active family with sports interests	
Number of children in the family		Family with wide range of interests	
Family with cultural interests		Family with many social interests	

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT MIGHT HELP PLACE THIS AU PAIR

Signature of interviewer:

APPENDIX B

EXAMPLE HOST FAMILY INTERVIEW REPORT

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Obtain additional information that is not on the application form, which would be useful for both the sending organisation and au pair candidates
- Obtain a personal impression about a host family to assist in making the most suitable match
- Verify an agency's aims, objectives and understanding, regarding the au pair cultural exchange programme

The following is a list of suggested questions that may help you form your opinion about a host family and enable you to complete the interview report:

FAMILY

- How would you describe your family? (according to the scale of 1 - 6, where 1 is lowest and 6 is the highest): outgoing, cheerful, confident, open-minded, patient, reserved, social, talkative, busy
- How would you describe the character of your child(ren)?
- What are your views on raising your children?
- Do any of your children need special attention? (allergy, handicap, social behaviour etc.)
- What does the family do at weekends?

AU PAIR

- What is your reason for having an au pair?
- What do you expect from your au pair in terms of childcare, in terms of household duties?
- What are your demands, wishes and expectations of an au pair in terms of age, childcare experience, smoking, cooking, first aid skills, driving, etc.?

HOUSE

- How would you describe your house and location?
- Can you describe the au pair's room - is it a private room? A suitable study place?

HOUSE CONTINUED

- Are there places of interest, language schools etc. near the family home?
- Is public transport available?

GENERAL

- Do you have alternative options for childcare if the au pair gets sick, leaves the family earlier etc.?
- How would you deal with issues like culture shock, homesickness and language difficulties?
- Do you have house rules - inviting friends to the house, use of the telephone, privacy etc.?
- What do you understand by cultural exchange?
- How do you plan to meet the agency's expectations regarding cultural exchange?
- Do you understand the rules about working hours according to government regulations?
- Do you understand the rules about free days and free time according to government regulations?
- Do you understand that you must provide sufficient food and balanced meals for an au pair?
- Do you understand that you must provide meals seven days a week and the au pair should eat with your family?

HOST FAMILY REPORT

NAME OF HOST FAMILY					
INTERVIEW METHOD (tick box)	In person		By telephone		Date
NAME OF INTERVIEWER					
NAME OF AU PAIR AGENCY					

EVALUATION OF A HOST FAMILY (Rating on a scale of 1 - 6, where 6 is the highest)		
Criteria	Definition	Rating
Flexible/Adaptable	The family demonstrates flexibility/adaptability which will be required for the "give and take" of the relationship	
Independent/mature	The family require an au pair who is fairly independent, who will make her/his own friends/company, and organise her/his own free time	
Motivated	The family is 'action orientated' and is therefore likely to need a similarly motivated au pair	
Sensitive	The family demonstrates an understanding of and respect for the au pair's needs e.g. the need to study at college	
Clean and tidy	The family keeps their house very clean and tidy and therefore would expect those standards from the au pair	
Firm	The family has strict guidelines for their children's behaviour	

EVALUATION OF HOST FAMILY'S SELF DESCRIPTION (Rating on a scale of 1 - 6, where 6 is the highest)									
Outgoing		Open-minded		Reserved		Talkative		Polite	
Cheerful		Patient		Warm		Modest		Serious	
Confident		Easy-going		Nervous		Bubbly		Sullen	

WHAT TYPE OF AU PAIR WOULD SUIT THIS FAMILY? (tick all relevant boxes)		
Criteria	Definition	Tick
Flexible/Adaptable	Able to fit into family life, to understand the 'give and take' of the relationship	
Independent/mature	Able to make a life in a new culture and environment, to exist without dependence on her/his own family	
Motivated	Has a clear objective about what she/he wishes to achieve from the au pair experience in the context of her/his longer-term plans	
Responsible	Acts with maturity, understands the need to be accountable for work carried out	
Co-operative	Able to follow clear instructions about how to manage children, duties, rules of the house etc.	
Initiative	Thinks about what needs to be done in various situations that might arise and can act without instruction if necessary	
Sensitive	Understands and respects both the family's and children's needs	
Clean and tidy	Regarding both her/his own room and the rest of the house	
Common sense	Has a practical view about what to do	
Firm	Able to gain respect from children in order to exercise the necessary control according to family guidelines	
Language	Able to speak the language of the host country, at least at a basic conversational level	

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS THAT MIGHT HELP PLACE AN AU PAIR WITH THIS FAMILY

Signature of interviewer:



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