

## Choose the right accommodation

Good accommodation arrangements can add considerably to the success of a CIFE college course. However, because students differ considerably in experience, maturity, family background and finances, what works perfectly for one is quite wrong for someone else. Getting accommodation right can take as much thought as choosing the best course.

There are four main accommodation options described below. Not every CIFE college offers each option, and individual colleges may restrict choice for some, especially if a student is under 18 years old. To find out more do [contact CIFE](#) or its member colleges.

### To live at home

For many students this is the only option, and in many colleges, especially the London-based ones, most students commute in to college from home. In general that works well, provided that the commuting time doesn't take more than an hour or so each way. Commutes longer than an hour start to become tiring, especially during the winter rush-hour.

### To live in a college-run residence

For younger students who can't live at home this is often a good option. Because the accommodation is directly controlled by the college it is likely to be well managed with good communication between teachers and residential staff. Not all colleges offer their own residential accommodation, and of course, you will need to satisfy yourself that the provision and the supervision offered are appropriate.

### Home-stay – living with a host family

This is a popular option with overseas families who are concerned to find accommodation offering facilities and supervision similar to those at home, especially if it might help learn English faster. Most colleges offer home-stay, and are expected to check such arrangements carefully and regularly. Drawbacks? Sometimes families don't provide as much personal contact as expected, and students may find it less easy to make new friends if their home-stay family is a long way from the college.

### Student hostel accommodation

Particularly in the big cities it is common to find independent hostels which offer rooms to students, and many colleges can make such arrangements. Student hostels are supervised, though the level of supervision may be more appropriate to undergraduates, and communication between college and hostel may or may not be close. But for the older student, hostels offer independence and a stepping stone to life at university.

### A bedsit or flat

For most colleges this comes bottom of their options for good accommodation. It's difficult or impossible to supervise, and the extra freedom can prove a big distraction for all but the most experienced student. For overseas students there are the extra issues of isolation or, if sharing with compatriots, of getting very little English practice once classes are over.

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