



# Group Leader Handbook

Summer 2024

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## Welcome

Welcome to PLUS, and thank you for choosing to work with us. Since our inception in 1972, ensuring the satisfaction of our clients has remained the cornerstone of our ethos. The loyalty of thousands of students from across the globe, who return to enrol in our programmes year after year, stands as a testament to the excellence we strive to deliver.

The secret to our success lies in the meticulous planning of every facet of our programmes, combined with the dedication, enthusiasm, and professionalism of our team. Your role as a Group Leader is equally integral to our continued success. We rely on your support to make the experience at PLUS memorable and enriching for both you and your students.

This manual is designed to guide you throughout your stay, providing guidelines, clear expectations, and answers to questions you might have. It covers some key aspects of your responsibilities, from your arrival at our centre to the safe return of the students to their families. Please read it thoroughly and reach out to our team should you have any queries.

We wish you a very pleasant and enjoyable stay with us.

*The PLUS Team*

## Associated Documents

This handbook must be read in conjunction with PLUS Safeguarding Policies Handbook, Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, and our Complaint Procedure, all of which are available on the footer of PLUS website at [www.plus-ed.com](http://www.plus-ed.com).



# Key People on Campus

## Campus Manager

Responsible for the overall management and operation of the programme. Ensures all services are professionally and punctually carried out, meeting our clients' expectations.

## Activity Manager

Oversees the Leisure Programme, managing Activity Leaders to ensure the successful delivery of leisure activities and excursions. Should you or any Group Leaders have concerns regarding Activity Leaders, please speak to the Activity Manager.

## Welfare Officer

Ensures the well-being, safety, and overall welfare of students. Also addresses issues such as damages and discipline to maintain a harmonious and positive atmosphere. This is in addition to also fulfilling Activity Leader duties.

## Activity Leaders

Support groups on arrival and departure and deliver the Leisure Programme, including games and activities on site and walking tours during excursions.

## Course Director

Manages the Academic Programme and teaching staff to ensure teaching quality and student academic progress. For issues related to learning or teaching personnel, please contact the Course Director.

## Assistant Course Director

Supports the Course Director with administrative duties and assists teachers in lesson planning, in addition to also fulfilling teaching responsibilities.



## Teachers

Deliver engaging English lessons tailored to the diverse needs of our international students. They promote interactive learning and a supportive classroom atmosphere for effective language acquisition.

## General Responsibilities

As a Group Leader, you hold a pivotal role in the care, well-being, and safety of our students. This requires, among other things, maintaining constant vigilance, promptly addressing any concerns or issues that may arise, and ensuring that all students feel secure and supported throughout their time with us.

You are responsible for ensuring that all students attend scheduled excursions, activities, and lessons on time, and that they participate actively. As a Group Leader, you will also manage student behaviour, making sure that all students adhere to PLUS' rules and expectations. Beyond this, it is also essential for all Group Leaders to be fully familiar with and adhere to all guidelines within our Safeguarding Policies Handbook including our Code of Conduct.

Please ensure that the students understand and follow the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Handbook. The Student Code of Conduct is available in several languages on the footer of our website. The Student Handbook, however, has not been translated. Younger students and those with lower English proficiency will require your support. Kindly offer the necessary assistance to ensure their comprehension of all guidelines, expectations, and rules, monitoring and reinforcing as needed.

The responsibilities detailed within this handbook are designed to ensure the delivery of an exemplary experience for your group, as well as for all others participating in our programmes. We expect Group Leaders to adhere strictly and precisely to all guidelines set forth in this manual. While we are committed to providing support and clarification as



needed, kindly note that PLUS Ed reserves the right to suspend or replace Group Leaders who fail to comply with these guidelines. Your cooperation and commitment to these standards are deeply appreciated.

## Supervision

As the primary caretakers of our students during their stay, Group Leaders are expected to supervise their students from breakfast until bedtime. Below, we outline key aspects of the supervision you are entrusted with.

- Your main responsibility centres on the full-time supervision of your students, ensuring their safety and well-being. Always ensure that you are monitoring the students' movements.
- Please be aware that PLUS staff are there to lead and deliver the activities within the programme but they are not responsible for or trained to supervise your students. At no time may your group be left on their own with PLUS staff with the exception of lesson time.
- Supervision is not required during lesson time, but it is required during lesson breaks and at any other time during the programme. This includes also meal times, free time on campus, and even rest and shower time, when you are still expected to supervise your students albeit less directly and without intruding on their privacy.
- The students may be granted unsupervised time during excursions, but it remains the responsibility of Group Leaders to maintain a watchful eye and direct contact with the group if and as needed, ensuring vigilant oversight at all times.
- Any unsupervised time must always be in line with the guidelines set out in PLUS' Safeguarding Policies Handbook (Welfare section) and subject to parental consent having been obtained for the student.



- Group Leaders must be able to handle safeguarding responsibilities effectively, remaining vigilant on signs of distress, discomfort, or any unusual behaviour.
- The need for full supervision extends until the scheduled group's departure, and any special arrangements made for a particular student such as an early departure must be in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in our Safeguarding Policies Handbook.

## Health and Medical Care

As Group Leaders, you play a crucial role in addressing health-related concerns and emergencies. Group Leaders must be able to supervise and ensure the safety and well-being of their students, including providing first aid, medical assistance, and emergency response. Some important considerations are outlined below.

- It is essential that you manage swiftly and effectively any incidents requiring first aid, medical attention, or emergency services. In cases of medical needs, you should not hesitate to visit the nearest the hospital or call an ambulance as needed, ensuring you remain with the student at all times for support and supervision.
- In scenarios where medical conditions require splitting your group – such as a student being sick or a student requiring a hospital visit – coordination with the Campus Manager is essential to ensure that appropriate supervision arrangements are made. Please refer to PLUS' Safeguarding Policies Handbook for further information (Medical Care section). Under no circumstances should any student including sick students be left unsupervised.
- Group Leaders bear responsibility for managing the medical information provided through parental consent forms, including overseeing the administration of any medications.



## Night Supervision

Group Leaders are to ensure that all students are settled in their assigned rooms by 22:30, with all lights turned off by 23:00. Following this, your direct supervision duties for the evening conclude, allowing you to take your well-deserved rest. Our team will continue to support you by conducting night checks for all groups to ensure compliance with curfew and quiet hours regulations.

Despite the conclusion of your direct duties, we require you to remain on-call throughout the night. This ensures that you are available to respond to any incidents or emergencies involving your students. Please also make sure that your students are aware of where your room is located to facilitate contact in case of emergencies.

We have a zero-tolerance policy for night-time disturbances. PLUS takes the rest and well-being of our camp participants, college staff, and any other residents very seriously. Should any night-time incidents occur, we will take any necessary action to maintain the tranquillity of our environment.

## Safeguarding and Child Protection

This section outlines key responsibilities and actions you must undertake to protect our students from harm and ensure a safe, supportive environment.

- Ensure you are fully acquainted with and understand all the guidance, policies, and procedures included in PLUS' Safeguarding Policies Handbook.
- Stay vigilant for any signs of physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect among students. This includes unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, and signs of distress.
- If you suspect abuse or a student discloses information suggesting they are at risk, it is imperative to act promptly. Do not attempt to investigate; instead, report your





concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Team using the detailed procedure outlined in our Safeguarding Policy.

- Create an environment where students feel safe to share their concerns. If a child confides in you, listen attentively, reassure them, and follow our protocols.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times. Information about safeguarding concerns should only be shared with the Safeguarding Team and relevant authorities.
- In case of immediate danger to a student, contact emergency services without delay. Inform the Safeguarding Team as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Keep accurate records of any incidents or behaviours that raise concerns, including dates, times, and details of your observations.

Remember, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Your vigilance, understanding, and prompt action can make a significant difference in the lives of the young people we serve.

## Phone Communication

All Group Leaders are expected to have a dedicated work phone number which should be shared with the group's students and PLUS staff, ensuring availability for communication around the clock.

We will use WhatsApp for day-to-day communication between the Campus Manager and Group Leaders. Given the widespread availability of free Wi-Fi across the UK and Ireland, including airports, many local businesses, and city-wide networks in places like London and Edinburgh, staying connected should pose no significant issue. However, should you encounter any challenges using WhatsApp, you may place a regular phone call to connect with our Campus Manager.

Please remember that on arrival, once aboard the coach on your way to the campus, it is your responsibility to contact the Campus Manager and confirm expected arrival time.



It is strongly advised that students carry their mobile phones during excursions, and it is mandatory for any periods of unsupervised activity to ensure their safety and ease of contact.

## Mobile Phone Etiquette

Mobile phones represent one of the biggest obstacles we need to overcome in order to provide an enriching and memorable experience to our students. Phone usage can get in the way of learning, hinder participation and engagement, and diminish the overall quality of our programme.

We have made sure to schedule enough free time in our programmes when the students can use their phones, but we will implement a policy of zero tolerance for phone use during lessons and organised activities.

We ask that you actively monitor phone usage among your students, enforcing strict guidelines, and if necessary, confiscating phones to ensure compliance with our policy.

We also ask that you set a positive example for students by minimising phone usage while on duty. Similarly, our staff are instructed not to use their mobile phones while on duty, except for essential internal communication. Should you observe any Activity Leader breaking this rule, please report the incident to the Activity Manager.

## Lanyards

On arrival, you will be issued lanyards and ID cards. Your students must accurately fill out these ID cards with:

- Your phone number as their main contact.
- Allergies, written in English.
- The correct Group ID number.



Remind your students that in emergencies or for any concerns, they should first contact you, their Group Leader, and only reach out to PLUS staff when absolutely necessary.

Wearing lanyards at all times is mandatory for identification and safety reasons. Kindly emphasise this to the students and monitor for strict compliance at all times.

## Deposits

As part of our commitment to maintaining the quality of our services and facilities, we may request that students bring a cash deposit to the camp. This deposit serves as a precautionary measure against any potential damages or incidents during their stay, and it will be used to cover any relevant costs if needed.

The deposit will be handed over to PLUS staff on arrival, and from that moment PLUS will bear responsibility for its custody. Please note however that PLUS staff are not responsible for safekeeping any other personal belongings.

If the stay concludes without any damages or incidents resulting in additional expenses, the deposit will be refunded in full before your group departs.

In instances where damages or incidents occur and a responsible party cannot be identified, the cost will be equally deducted from the deposits of all students across groups who have had access to the area concerned. This collective responsibility ensures that facilities remain in excellent condition for all users.

## Rooms

The PLUS team will make every effort to accommodate rooming requests, but due to Safeguarding policies and the specific layout of each Campus, it may not always be feasible to meet requests and preferences. Upon arrival, Group Leaders will be informed



of the bed allocations for their group, which must be adhered to without exception. To ensure a smooth and safe stay, please follow these guidelines:

- Ensure that students have entered their designated rooms. Accurate room allocation is vital in emergency situations, and so Campus Managers must have precise records for safety protocols.
- Ask your students to report any issues in their rooms such as malfunctioning fixtures without delay.
- Conduct thorough checks to identify and report any damages, following the Campus Manager's instructions. Additionally, inspect for potential hazards such as sharp objects or cleaning products to prevent accidents.

All assignments communicated by the Campus Manager are final, which means that room changes are not permitted. Please understand that allocations are made with the best intentions and considerations.

Campus Managers cannot authorise room changes, and unapproved adjustments by students or Group Leaders are strictly prohibited. Non-compliance with room assignments is seen as a serious violation of our terms as they compromise the safety and order of our programme.

## Meals

Please supervise your students effectively during meal times, ensuring they queue in an orderly manner. Pay special attention to any students with allergies to prevent exposure to allergens.

The first meal provided upon your arrival will be dinner, and the final meal before your departure will be lunch. Depending on the timing of your airport transfers, the first and last meals might be packed.



On days designated for excursions, packed lunches will be provided. Please check your group has collected their lunches before departure. Please ensure that your students only collect the meals assigned to your group. If any students take meals assigned to other groups, an additional cost will be incurred.

## Your Programme

Upon your arrival, the Campus Manager will provide you with a detailed overview of your Activity Programme. If you notice any discrepancies between what you expected and the information provided, it is important that you bring this to the attention of the Campus Manager. The Campus Manager will then liaise with our Head Office, if necessary, to verify the details. Should there still be concerns about inconsistencies, you are encouraged to communicate these concerns through your Agent, who can then reach out to our Head Office team on your behalf.

Please be aware that Campus Managers do not have the authority to make alterations to your programme. Any changes required must be approved and coordinated through our Head Office, ensuring all adjustments are centrally managed for consistency and quality control. This also means that we cannot assume responsibility for any alterations made to the programme without Head Office's authorisation.

In instances where you and your group decide to opt out of certain scheduled activities, you will be required to complete and sign an opt-out form. This process ensures that all parties are informed of the changes and can manage the activity schedule accordingly.

If you are interested in additional excursions or entry tickets beyond the planned programme, please contact your Agent. Your Agent can contact our Head Office team on your behalf to arrange these bookings. Your Campus Manager does not have the authority to make such bookings.



## The Language Course

Courses are structured to include 12 hours of teaching each week. On the course's initial day, students may need to undergo a Placement Test to ensure they are assigned to the most suitable level. Should there be any concerns regarding a student's level placement, please consult with the Course Director.

Our teaching staff comprises professionals who are not only well-prepared and experienced but also selected for their friendly demeanour and enthusiastic approach to teaching. Each teacher holds a minimum of an ELT certificate or qualified teacher status, aligning with British Council standards. In the event of teacher absences, the Course Director may adeptly adjust class arrangements to ensure continuity of learning, which may occasionally result in larger class sizes.

Attendance at classes is mandatory, with adherence to the set timetable being strictly enforced. Teachers are responsible for daily attendance registration, with any absences promptly reported to the Course Director. Repeated or unexplained absences could breach immigration regulations and will be addressed immediately.

## Leisure Activities

Our Leisure Team will coordinate a variety of on-site leisure activities designed to enhance the students' experience beyond the classroom. Attendance and active participation in these activities is expected for all students. These activities not only serve as a fun break from studies but also as a vital part of the cultural and linguistic immersion experience and an integral part of the programme.

We strictly prohibit students from wandering the campus unaccompanied while these activities are taking place, and under no circumstances are students permitted to return to their rooms without proper supervision from their Group Leaders.



Should a Group Leader choose to opt the entire group out of a scheduled leisure activity for an alternative outing, please inform the Campus Manager in advance.

While leisure activities require less supervision than off-campus excursions, the presence of at least one Group Leader per group is mandatory throughout these activities. This ensures that any language barriers are bridged, facilitating full participation and understanding among students. Group Leaders play a crucial role in fostering an inclusive atmosphere, encouraging all students to get involved, especially those who may find social interaction challenging. Additionally, managing and guiding student behaviour as needed is vital to maintaining a positive and respectful group dynamic.

## Excursions

To ensure that the excursions are enjoyable and run smoothly for everyone, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Always carry a list of all students' emergency contact information including also their parents' or guardians' contact details, along with any relevant medical details.
- If a student goes missing during an excursion, please follow PLUS' protocol as outlined in our Safeguarding Policies Handbook (Welfare section).
- Make sure all students clearly understand the designated meeting points and times.
- Coaches operate on a strict schedule and cannot delay departure for latecomers. Please ensure your students are aware of the importance of being on time.
- Your Activity Programme includes the specific times when attractions have been booked, and it is essential that you diligently check these times to avoid any missed attractions due to delays, miscommunication, or other preventable issues. Our team will support you to ensure timely arrival at all attractions.
- Our policy instructs Activity Leaders to proceed with the entry into an attraction, wherever possible, even if part of a group is left behind. It is crucial that all



participants gather at the designated entry point at least 10 minutes before the scheduled entry time to avoid missing the attraction.

- Your students must not leave the group at any time without your explicit permission.
- Encourage students to download any videos for the day's walking tour from the PLUS app before the excursion.
- Kindly note that all visits to attractions must be pre-booked. Please refrain from taking your group to any attractions without a prior booking, as this could lead to unforeseen issues. If you wish to visit an additional attraction not included in your programme, either book tickets in advance or get in touch your Agent to request support from PLUS on your behalf.

## Visitors

Under normal circumstances, visitors not affiliated with the programme, including family members, are not permitted on site. If there are exceptional reasons for a visit, please communicate this request to the Campus Manager well in advance. The Campus Manager will review your request according to our established protocols as outlined on our Safeguarding Policies Handbook (Welfare section). They will then inform you if the visit can be authorised, along with any next steps required.

Should your visitors require meals during their stay, these must be requested ahead of time and will be subject to the college's standard charges which must be paid in advance.

## On Departure

The Campus Manager will provide as much support as possible to facilitate your departure. It is crucial that you organise your students the night before your departure and bear in mind the following:





- Check and monitor your flight and transfer details with the Campus Manager and your airline in advance in case of last-minute changes.
- Meet with your students at least 30 minutes before the actual coach departure time.
- Ensure that the students don't leave anything behind, remind them that PLUS cannot take responsibility or make arrangements for any lost items.
- Return the keys to the designated PLUS staff member.
- Make sure all your students board the coach before leaving the campus (head count).

In the event of a student missing and when a minimum of two Group Leaders are present, one Group Leader should remain with the missing student while the other departs on the coach with the group. If there is only one Group Leader accompanying the group, immediate communication with your Agent and the Campus Manager is necessary to decide on best course of action.

## Closing Message

Thank you for taking the time to read this manual. We hope that it provides you with valuable insights and guidelines to successfully lead your group during their stay at our camp. On behalf of the entire PLUS team, we extend our warmest wishes for a pleasant and unforgettable experience. Remember, we're here to support you every step of the way.

**Welcome Aboard!**

