

## **[Communication Strategies]**

Documented communication with parents and guardians or carers is another area that needs attention to ensure the ongoing welfare of the student - both academic and physical. Regular correspondence regarding the under 18 student's academic performance, and physical and emotional welfare is vital. Some Centres have bilingual staff who are responsible for communication with families. Otherwise, the family may well expect this information to be provided via an in-country relative or the education agent who is in a position to translate it for them and act as a conduit if you have concerns about the student's welfare.

A comprehensive communication strategy needs to encompass three stakeholder groups - agents, families and homestay or other accommodation providers. Remember that under the National Code, a Centre is responsible for the actions of their agents. This is why it is essential to communicate with your agents regularly and train them thoroughly. This is particularly important for under 18 students. Similarly, it is important to communicate with offshore parents and guardians. Regular reports home to parents and guardians regarding students' progress and welfare is crucial to maintaining a reputation for duty of care.

For onshore accommodation providers such as homestay, regular newsletters and evening information sessions are reliable ways of imparting information and giving providers the opportunity to ask questions and confirm practices and procedures. They can also give your newer providers the opportunity to learn from the experience of the old hands.

Regular meetings with homestay providers is another good way to ensure that providers get to compare their experiences and receive the best feedback from you.