

DE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STORIES



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School: Pennant Hills High School
Program: [International Student Program](#)



Ever since I was a kid, I had a natural talent of fiddling and breaking stuff. Clocks, toy cars, keyboards, you name it. None of those could survive in my house for more than a day without being reduced to spare parts.

However, this particular talent is not widely appreciated in my birthplace. Behaviours such as taking my writing instruments apart were even punished.

I came to Australia at the age of 14 in 2014, in the hope to ease my depression raised by immense study load and social competition, and to be able to study the subjects I'm most enthusiastic about, like physics, maths and woodwork.

The experience I had on arrival was mixed. I was excited to see the new environment, yet a bit scared. Everything was so different, the food, the language, the people, not to mention the cultural shock you get when the views you see on TV appear in front of your very eyes, like the Sydney Opera House and the harbour bridge. There's a saying that we humans only enjoy a certain mixture of innovation and novelty, that too much new stuff will leave people feeling confused and unsettled. That certainly was the case for me.

However, as I progressed my study career, from cautious to slowly opening up to the outside world, I got to adapt to the new environment, and lots of new friends were made along the way. I'm confident to say that my hope did become the reality. I can recall the wonderful experience I had, especially maths extension and woodwork, where I made countless friends with locals and international students alike. I even made a nightstand that I've been using to this day. The teachers were friendly and patient, they helped me immensely with my difficulties, both academic and social.

I completed the HSC in 2017 with an ATAR of 97.95. My curiosity and creativeness had transformed into my interest in science and engineering. Currently, I'm taking a double degree in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering and Advanced Physics at UNSW.



An example of Steven's timber work