

DE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STORIES



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School: [Central Sydney Intensive English High School](#)
Program: [International Student Program](#)



I started living in Sydney in April 2019 with my mother and sister. Until then, I'd never been outside Japan, let alone to Australia. When I first arrived, I found the differences between Japan and Australia confusing. My father, who was the only one in our family who could speak English, soon returned to Japan and I doubted I could really live here going forward.

In May, I started attending the Central Sydney Intensive English High School. At first, I struggled to understand what my teachers and classmates were saying and it took all my effort just to follow what was happening in class. However, with the help of a Japanese teacher and the teachers of each subject, as well as the support of my friends, I was gradually able to understand conversations and to speak in class. Each day brought something new and I came to enjoy learning and developing new skills.

I think a big difference between studying in Japan and studying in Australia is the opportunity for engagement with other cultures. If you are studying at a public school in Japan, you rarely have the opportunity to experience the culture of a different country. Back in Japan, living amongst my Japanese friends and only speaking in Japanese, foreign countries seemed very far away and I could not even imagine the people living there. However, Australia has people from different regions, such as Asia, Oceania, South America and Europe, each with their own culture. The intensive English high school is especially for international students whose native language is not English and there are many students from countries that I rarely heard about in Japan.

There weren't any other Japanese students in my class, so I told my classmates about the differences between Japan and Australia, and I heard from them about their home countries. In this way, I became a little more familiar with countries that I had never been involved with before and more interested in the wider world. By getting to know people of various nationalities, I also learned the importance of respecting each other's culture. Speaking a language different from your own and engaging with someone who has lived in a culture you never knew before is a rare experience in Japan, but I think it is very important.

Here in Australia's mild climate and laid-back environment, I've had many 'first time' encounters over the past eight months, making the time more fruitful than when I was in Japan. I will forever treasure this valuable experience of moving to a foreign country as a teenager. I would like to thank my parents for giving me such an experience and all the people who have supported me so far. I would like to continue to learn new things and further expand my world.

