

DE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STORIES



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Year: 2017
School: [Beverly Hills Girls High School](#)
Program: [International Student Program](#)



In 2014, my parents decided to let me experience a different environment of studying and living, so at the end of Year 9, I left the city where I'd lived for 15 years and arrived in Sydney.

At Beverly Hills Intensive English Centre (IEC), we learnt not only English, but also Australian culture, history and relevant terminology of common subjects taught in high school. Most importantly, I was in an environment with peers who were new to Australia, which allowed me to gradually transition into Australian living and high school life.

I started Year 10 in early 2015 at Beverly Hills Girls High School, which was right next to the IEC. Every Monday, we would have a meeting with our international student coordinator to share what's happening at school, in NSW, in Australia or in our home country. If we needed support for school learning or life outside school, the coordinator was always there to help with her patience. We also had the chance to know the other international students and mentor the new ones to know the school.

Other than the basic subjects, there were many recreational subjects, for example: textiles, drama, IT, languages and food technology (my favourite). Studying a Certificate II in both Food Technology and Hospitality in my senior years guided me to my current degree. Getting involved in school events, festivals and the SRC provided me with opportunities to develop leadership and communication skills, which were useful to the charity works (in China) I was doing distantly.

At the end of Year 12, I was awarded first place at school in ESL (English as a second language), Mathematics Acceleration, Food Technology and French Beginners. More excitingly, I was nominated for the NSW International Student of the Year and was awarded as the winner for the schools category.

For many international students, the term 'studying overseas' implies stepping out from our comfort zone, living without shelter from our families and sometimes struggling between cultural barriers. I had thoughts about 'I don't want to be here for one more day' too, but it could not be the solution to my future. We need to build ourselves to be independent and organised to leave no regrets.

One little tip for future students: when choosing subjects, especially for Preliminary and the HSC, choose the ones you like because your interests can make study easier and much more fun.



Katherine was the winner of the 2017 NSW International Student of the Year Award - Schools category