As he studies for his HSC year, Bhargar Trivedi knows he has made a wise decision coming to Australia for his senior high school years.

“I found the teachers, office staff and students at Epping Boys High School to be very friendly and approachable,” he said. “The information about syllabus and exam time is received well in advance which helps me to be organised and to have good preparation.”

In India, Bhargar’s school had only one computer room, so the information technology facilities at his Australian school have impressed him. “Every student has his own computer and internet log in here. It is a very helpful study tool,” he said.

Bhargar has also been impressed by other resources. “The playgrounds are so large, there are great study resources for subjects like science and the facilities like the library are very amazing.”

After completing the Indian equivalent of his Year 10 School Certificate, Bhargar came on a two month holiday to visit his cousins in Australia. “I liked it here and wanted to come back to Australia to study Year 11 and 12,” he said. “I was looking for a change while doing Year 10 in India. Australia has more a practical oriented education system and there are many more opportunities here.”

When Bhargar first came to study in Australia he found it very difficult to communicate. “That was the hardest thing. My English was very bad,” he said. “I did not study in English before I came to Australia, so it was a challenge for me to study here; but with extra effort I established myself in my studies and now have a good rank in the majority of my subjects.”

Bhargar certainly put in the extra effort, spending his first months in Australia focused on learning English. “I watched ABC television, the news mostly, and listened to a lot of talk radio,” he said. “Now I can focus on my study and in my spare time play soccer and computer games with my friends.”

Making sure he gets the most out of the opportunities Australia can provide, Bhargar has joined several community groups including East Care Gardening and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. “East Care Gardening is an organisation made up of volunteers who get together every weekend and help the elderly people to maintain their garden,” he said. “With the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, I have come to know many different aspects of life other than study and been given the opportunity to mingle with new people and do community service.”

When Bhargar finishes his HSC at the end of 2008, he hopes to study at an Australian university. “I understand that there are world reputed universities here. I am planning to study one of the health-related disciplines so I can help needy people in society, which I enjoy doing,” he said.

Despite being a long way from home, he recommends NSW government schools. “Australia is really good. If you are thinking about it, you should come!” he said.