Huy Long Nguyen won the 2008 International Student Academic Award and dux of Ashfield Boys High School, shares his experiences studying at a New South Wales Government School.

“The teachers at Ashfield Boys High School are very friendly and cordial. They offered me help even before I asked them. In addition to helping me familiarise myself with the education system, the teachers also asked me if I wished to visit places in Sydney and NSW, like the Darling Harbour or the Opera House. Continued support from my teachers made me feel very comfortable to live here in Australia.

I had the freedom to choose the subjects that I was interested in. In Year 11 and 12, I chose mainly science subjects, like chemistry and biology, because my aim is to study Bachelor of Pharmacy at the University of Sydney. Studying in New South Wales was a different experience compared to studying in Vietnam - I had lots of privacy to study and that helped me to set my own timetable. I also had time to relax and play my favourite sport, and to go out with friends to watch the cinemas. With a personal timetable, I was able to do step-by-step lessons and that’s a really good thing as it helped me to develop time management skills, which will be very useful when I enter university. I had to work really hard to focus on my studies, but it paid off in the end.”

Huy Long achieved a University Admissions Index score of 99.85 and was listed on the HSC Honour Roll for band 6 (over 90%) results in every subject.

“I came to Australia for senior high school studies but I really wish that I had come to Sydney earlier, at least in Year 7. When I talk to my friends who studied in Sydney for a longer time, they tell me about the time they spent at school, the excursions they went on, bush walking experiences, the games they played together, their visits to museums and other fun activities, and I really feel very jealous.

Completing two years to gain the HSC at Ashfield Boys High School has made me realise that I have grown up a lot. Recently when I visited Vietnam, all my friends and family commented that I have become a young adult with good knowledge and skills. That made me feel very happy.

With the skills, knowledge and the confidence that I have gained through studying at a NSW Government school, I am very confident that I am well prepared for university and my future.”