When Julia Lee decided to study in Australia with her brother, it was easy for her to choose which NSW government school she would attend. “My cousin already lived in Australia and studied at the Ryde Secondary College. She said it was a good school, I was going to live with her and I wanted to study with her also,” she said.

Julia prefers school in Australia compared to Korea. “I studied at the Hogok Middle School ILSAN in Korea, but Ryde Secondary College is much better,” Julia said. “The school environment is friendly, class sizes are small and, overall, the school has fewer students.”

Julia finds the teachers and staff at Ryde Secondary College to be very helpful. “Most teachers will help you if you have any questions or doubts about your work. The teachers know their work and teach you well,” Julia said. “The International Students Coordinator is very approachable and helpful. She does her job very well and helps international students settle in.”

Julia made many friends at school and enjoys spending time with them after school hours. “When I am not at school, I enjoy watching movies, playing games and shopping with my friends in the city,” Julia said. “Most of my friends are of Korean background, but I have made an effort to make sure I have friends from other backgrounds too because they are friendly people and it helps improve my English language skills.”

Like most international students from a non-English speaking background, the biggest challenge Julia faced when she first came to Australia was learning to study in English. “My English language skills were not very good when I first arrived, but studying in English is much easier now,” Julia said. “When I finish my Higher School Certificate next year, I hope to continue studying Hospitality Management at an Australian university.”

Julia describes her decision to study at Ryde Secondary College as “a really good thing for me and my future. I have already told some friends back home in Korea that they should come and study at Ryde Secondary College.”