



Testimonial Sofia

Sofia is at Yeronga State High School in Brisbane from July 2025 to December 2026

Hello Everyone,

My name is Sofia and I am 16 years old, living in Brisbane. Yes, you heard that right not Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast or somewhere else having the beach directly in front of my house.

Living in Brisbane:

Of course, at first, I questioned my decision, but in the end, I think I made one of the best decisions, one of the pros is that I must speak English 24/7. I don't have any German friends here, which put me quite into a culture shock at first but now everything seems normal to me, all these cultural differences and the communication between people. Especially Aussie people take time in opening up to you, so don't hesitate if u want to become friends with one of them, they are just a little bit shy. One of my favourite activities is going to the movies or staying over at my friend's house Nina. Or even going to an AFL game with my friend Charlie, he is the biggest Footy fan.

My Homestay Family:

You will never believe if I tell you, but to explain my relationship with my homestay is that we even went to Japan and Sydney together. Yeah, I know right, JAPAN! If I would have first started my exchange, I would have never imagined that from happening, but we grew so close especially with my 7-year-old homestay brother Luka, he is the sweetest little boy. But also with my Homestay parents, they are in on all my gossip, if something big happens or I like to talk about something serious, they're the first ones I talk too. When I first came to Australia, I was a little bit uncomfortable, because they were so many new things and I didn't know a single person from back home, which a unique experience nowadays. So, it may have taken me a while to really open up to them and feeling welcomed.

Yeronga State High School:

There are so many differences between an Australian High School and a German High School. They can't be compared because they have such big differences. My daily school life is really special, I don't have the same classes with the same people every day, which makes it a lot more fun, we have way longer breaks and school starts a little bit later. At school I normally hang out with my friends Charlie, Elsie, Clem and Isla, but also with Nina and her friends. I love getting lunch at the Tuck shop it is the best thing ever, we have a Pizza Day, a Nachos Day and so many other yummy food options, at my school you are even able to get a Coffee at the Cafe.

If you would ask me about what classes I have, you would be like "oh no", but for me those are literally my favourite subjects ever. I have Visual Art, Chemistry, Biology, Sport and Fitness, English as a second language and Maths Methods. After around my first term I changed Physics for Fitness and sport and after 2 Terms I changed Ancient History to Visual Art, and to be fair I messed up in

choosing this subject, because I loved the teacher, but this was literally such a hard subject as a second language English speaker.

The Holidays:

So for the first holidays between Term 3 and 4 I already had booked an holiday program, which took us to the Outback, it was the best decision ever, we did a 10 day road trip from Darwin down to Alice Springs, don't underestimate the heat you will have to face trough that adventure but it was definitely worth it.

For my second holidays, I didn't have planned anything at first, but you kind of make plans with people more spontaneously around here. Keeping in mind those were summer holidays and they lasted around 8 weeks. The first week I was at my friend's house in the Sunshine Coast that I met on the trip from the last holidays. Me and my Homestay went camping for a week in the mountains, around 2 hours from Brisbane. For New Years Eve my friend planned a little get together, were everyone got together after the first half of the holidays. In the fifth week my homestay and I went to Sydney, which was so incredible to be able to visit during my time here in Australia. I manly hung out with my friends, worked and had to study for some of my subjects in Term 1.

The holidays between Term 1 and 2 were pretty much booked out, I went to the movies a lot, I went on a trip to Stradbroke Island with my friend group, I hang out with my friend Nina a lot and I stayed over at her house too. Then there also was a movie and games night planned by my friend Elsie and I was invited over to a friend's house, were a lot of the people from my grade were and some that graduated last year. And the second week I was in Japan for the whole week, which was cool, we stayed in Gifu for a night and then Nagoya for like the other 6 days, where I got to do a lot of sightseeing and thrifting of course.

Working Part-time:

I normally work Saturdays and Sundays morning, I first started doing that, because I wasn't sure what to do on the weekends, and I kind of wanted to work to make some money that I could freely spend here in Australia without being bounded to my parents, but I definitely started taking off on some weekends, because I have been really busy with friends. It is definitely a thing that you should think about, I am currently working at a small cafe close to my house, but I would suggest personally to you, that at an ice-cream shop or a bakery will be the best and easiest option, but you might get paid a little less. But the workload is a lot easier.

I am definitely not done here yet, so looking forward to my next testimonial when I am back home in Germany.