

## Abhishek Seth and Paramvir Singh

**Country:** India

**Course:** Diploma of Community Welfare

**Institute:** TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute, Nirimba College



Abhishek Seth travelled to Australia with his friend Paramvir Singh from Chandigarh, India to study the Diploma of Community Welfare at TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute, Nirimba College.

Both students already had friends living in Australia who recommended the course at TAFE NSW to them. "This course is in demand and you get really good jobs here," said Abhishek, who plans to apply for Australian residency and work in the field of Community Welfare once he finishes studying. Paramvir is quick to add that to be suited for the Community Welfare course "you need to be inspired about community services and the community welfare work. You have to listen a lot; you have to talk a lot in the field."

Abhishek and Paramvir have been very impressed with the course and services offered by TAFE NSW. "The teachers are very helpful and we've got a very good International Student Coordinator," Abhishek said. "If we have any problems we go straight to them."

Their Australian education experience is different compared to what they are familiar with from India. "It's quite practical here. That's a good thing. The course is giving us 400 hours of practical experience," Abhishek said. "In my first semester they placed us in a community centre. We work with youth, aged people, minorities. This was something I had never done before." Paramvir added, "I'm working on an African youth monitoring project, and seeing how these youth are treated in Australia."

The Community Welfare students spend much of their time in the workplace at local community centres where they do both practical and theoretical training. Nirimba College is in the Blacktown city area. Blacktown is a city with diverse, young communities and a home to people of over 30 different cultures, so the students get valuable experience in the workplace.

Many cultural and social differences also stood out to Abhishek and Paramvir when they first came to Australia. "You think of Sydney and then you come here and it's so different," Abhishek said.

Abhishek and Paramvir initially found it difficult to adapt to the relaxed Australian attitude in the classroom. Abhishek conceded "I've started calling teachers by their names. It feels funny sometimes and you treat the teachers like your friends." But Paramvir insists on calling the teachers "M'am and Sir" to "show respect to the teachers", like he would back in his homeland, India.

The pair has found that living in Sydney offers many opportunities to get good jobs and good money once they finish their course at TAFE NSW. "It won't be difficult to get a job," Abhishek said. Just to be safe, however, they came to Australia with some back-up funds. "I got very good advice from my agent to take A\$4,000 with you," Abhishek said. "You need to have back up finances," Paramvir added.