

Dida and Kamel El Haje

Country: Lebanon

Course: Diploma of Children's Services and Advanced Diploma of Electrical Engineering

Institute: TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute, Bankstown College



Dida and Kamel El Haje are siblings from Lebanon who have come to Australia to study at TAFE NSW. The brother and sister duo both chose to study at TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney Institute, Bankstown College, located in the heart of Sydney's Lebanese community.

The campus is located close to rail transport, actively supports its students who come from many cultural backgrounds and has a reputation for assisting in the recognition and upgrade of overseas qualifications.

Dida came to Australia first, about two years ago, and believes that TAFE NSW has been beneficial for her. "I am now a lot more fluent in English since I started studying at TAFE," she says.



Dida is studying the Diploma of Children's Services, and has enjoyed her Australian study experience. "It's been a fun and enjoyable course, although I do find it challenging at times," she said. "I keep my head above water and do my best."

Over the past two years, Dida has found the staff at Bankstown College very helpful and believes they have helped her get through the course. "I am very grateful for the teacher assistance. They have helped me broaden my knowledge during the course," she said.

Dida is also grateful to the many friends she has met while studying at TAFE NSW. "My friends have always been there for me. We always try our best to achieve the best."

As a result of Dida's positive experience at TAFE NSW, her brother Kamel came to Australia to study the Advanced Diploma of Electrical Engineering. "I am doing quite well in the course. I try my best to get the highest achievements in my subjects," he said.

It hasn't been all easy for Kamel since coming to Australia but, like his sister, he has had great support. "I experienced some challenging moments at the beginning of the course but I have also had a bit of help from my peers," he said. "It's also been great getting assistance from the staff here - they've helped me out in many ways."

Despite these challenges, Kamel has not looked back on his decision to come and study at TAFE NSW. "I am grateful that I have been given the opportunity to attend this college, and to complete this course to help me further fulfil my dreams," he said.

Bankstown College is a major centre for courses in both children's studies and engineering, with established Diploma-to-Degree pathways with the University of Western Sydney. The college has been providing vocational education and training for over 50 years and has strong links with local and international industries, communities and schools.

When not studying at TAFE, both Dida and Kamel spend their time with their friends and family and working at their part-time jobs.