I have always loved learning, particularly in STEM subjects. Mathematics has a rich history in Europe having produced many of history’s greatest mathematicians and mathematical institutions. Additionally, every culture and university has a unique approach to education and pursuing a global experience can expose me to new areas and paradigms in mathematics and computer science. Furthermore, Mathematics and computer science are fields rooted in community collaboration and peer reviews meaning interacting will a variety of other academics in the field is crucial to learning and improving, something exchange is perfect for.

I have been working as a software engineer for several months now and our team is very culturally diverse. This is not unique to my company, rather it is an attribute of the field itself and it is crucial to interact with people from all over the world to gain an understanding of cultures that I am not yet familiar with.

Personally, I have always had a love for football and Europe is home to the best football in the world. Real Madrid is arguably the best team in the world, and I have supported Liverpool FC all my life.

After immigrating from South Africa at 18 months old I have lived in Sydney with my parents my whole life. Studying overseas will help me gain independence and allow me to step outside my comfort zone as well as experiencing a new place and new culture. Moreover, I would love to learn another language studying in Spain provides a unique opportunity to do so.

A challenge I faced came when I was a prefect in high school. During my tenure, the head boy and a close friend suffered a mental illness that stopped him from coming to school for 6 months. The situation was very delicate - whilst we had to fill the void left in the leadership team, we had to be careful to not upset the head boy who was experiencing severe mood swings. Together with a small group of prefects I stepped up to share his responsibilities in addition to my own as well as my increased workload going into my HSC year. The situation strengthened my leadership abilities by increasing my flexibility and adaptability during unforeseen circumstances as well as my teamwork and cooperative skills. Filling in the vacant role on top of my pre-existing responsibilities forced me to plan my time effectively to avoid being overwhelmed and stressed.

I am lucky to be Australian and to attend the university of Sydney and I plan to represent both with a great deal of pride. I plan on showing how welcoming Australia and Usyd are towards other cultures by engaging in as much respectful dialogue with other people as possible. That way I can share what makes my culture special while opening myself up to experiencing others, demonstrating the cultural competence fostered at the University of Sydney.