Lachlan Stevens from St Patrick’s College Mackay recently attended the National Computer Science School (NCSS) during the summer holidays, held at the University of Sydney, New South Wales.

Lachlan said that the camp was, “ten awesome days packed with students from Years 11 and 12 from all over Australia who are interested in one thing; computers and technology.”

Over the course of these ten days there were two main streams or ‘courses’, Embedded and Python; each offering insights into two completely different types of computing. Lachlan was placed into the embedded stream where students tinkered with hardware to learn how electronics interfaced with the world. The python stream offered more of a focus on web development and the creation of a self-contained social media site like Facebook. Within both of these streams students were split into groups where they were able to meet and get to know a small group of people very well.

For the embedded stream the assignment was to create a final project within each of the groups which showcased something to do with ‘health’. Lachlan’s group worked to create a robot which moved when you jumped to then make a game of collecting various lights scattered across the ground.

Following these workshops the students participating were taken on site tours around software companies in Sydney, including visiting Google!

Lachlan said that there was the infamous NCSS all-nighter where they stayed up and programed all night (with pizza and coffee) accepting various challenges including who could build the highest tower out of newspaper, a cryptography challenge where they needed to solve and crack each other’s cipher and a programming competition.

“This camp was an amazing opportunity to meet people who shared similar interests and I made a lot of friends with each day offering something fun and new to do. I would highly recommend it to any new Year 11 students who are interested in this field.” Lachlan said.