

Getting To Know Our Students

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Dr Aliamat

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Which aspect of the programme and courses do you like the most?

I like the courses which I took during the first part of the programme as I was able to interact and work closely with local teachers who were also pursuing their postgraduate studies. There is also an abundance of seminars/short courses and top class facilities offered to all students.

Share with us a memorable experience you had during your time at NIE?

One of the memorable experiences that stuck with me to this day was when I attended another student's confirmation seminar. To me, the presentation was well prepared. However, the examiners had unanimously ordered the candidate to re-write the proposal and this impacted my perspectives towards my confirmation seminar and final write-ups. This experience has somehow shaped me to become a more critical researcher than I used to be.

Describe your relationship with the NIE faculty members.

I'm truly inspired by the work ethics of both the academics and non-academics. There were times when I had to approach teaching staff for matters pertaining to my research and they were all willing to guide me out of my intellectual misery and see me succeed. The hospitality given to me by the support staff was also great.

At what point in your career did you consider pursuing a higher degree education?

I joined Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) in 2004, and I knew that sooner or later, I needed to pursue my PhD. While I was doing my Master's at University of York, my wife was reading her Master's at NIE. It was then that I had the opportunity to visit my wife in Singapore and NIE. I was instantly hooked by NIE's international reputation and the quality of expertise offered by its Malay Languages and Cultures Department. I was very determined to apply for a place at NIE as soon as I got tenured at UBD.

Describe the factors that led you to choose NIE?

The main factor is its reputation. I like to challenge myself. At that time, no local academic from my faculty graduated from a Singapore university. Almost everyone that I sought advice from encouraged me to go to Europe, or to Australia or even the US as the system is 'simpler' and is popular amongst the Bruneians. The feedback about Singapore that I was given were that Singapore universities are tougher. And this made me think: isn't tough good? Moreover, most education seminars in Brunei had keynote speakers from Singapore, which could be because Brunei and Singapore have a lot in common; one of which is the education systems.

Will you recommend NIE's programmes to your friends?

Of course. In fact I did.

Was it easy to integrate into the learning environment at NIE? (for international students)

It was somehow a smooth experience for me. My classmates were very helpful and the atmosphere was very positive. Even when it started to get tougher when I began writing my research proposal, my supervisors continued to be supportive, and so did my course-mates. Although I spent most of my time at my workstation, networking with other students during breaks was a norm. We would spend time together and share our thoughts especially about our research.

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