

# Getting To Know Our Students

Dr Mohamed Faizal Bin Badron, PhD graduate



**Dr Mohamed  
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is the Head of Department  
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Secondary School,  
and a PhD graduate.

## Please share with us your professional life journey thus far, and at which point in your career did you aspire to do a graduate programme.

I have been in the teaching service for 15 years. Currently, I am the Head of Department (HOD) for Science at Bukit Batok Secondary School and I teach Physics.

In the early years of my career, I was given the opportunity to lead a couple of Professional Learning Committees (PLCs). This exposed me to action research in school and I enjoyed the experience of presenting the findings at conferences, both in NIE and overseas. Midway through my career, I was blessed with the opportunity to be seconded to NIE as a Teaching Fellow. I had great colleagues from the Natural Sciences and Science Education (NSSE) Academic Group and I learned more about research through conversations with them. Eventually, I decided to pursue my PhD with NIE, under NSSE.

## What attracted you to your chosen programme at NIE?

I am passionate about science and science education which made up the heart of my research. Doing my PhD in NIE provided me with the opportunity to work with esteemed professors who had done remarkable work in science education research and shared the same passion as me in science. In addition, the part-time PhD programme allowed me to juggle both my work and research commitments. The flexibility in choosing the courses that were relevant to my research focus also deepened my knowledge in my field of study.

## What aspect of your programme stood out for you?

One particular course which I found useful was Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students. It touched on writing skills in academic papers. At that point, I was struggling with how to write my thesis well. The course delineated the structure of a thesis and the components in each section of the thesis. It was such an “a-ha” moment, and the knowledge gained from that course allowed me to start my thesis on a proper footing.

## Which was the best part of being a student in NIE?

I love the evening lessons at NIE. Despite coming from work and feeling tired at times, I experienced the joy of learning. I enjoyed the rich discussions, listening to different perspectives from my classmates and the arguments they put forth. I enjoyed the reading materials which my tutors had selected, and having a cup of warm coffee from the vending machines at the end of my tutorials made my day.

## Has your experience in NIE been beneficial to you in bringing forth changes in your work area?

Without a doubt, yes. My experience in NIE brought about changes to my school's research curriculum for secondary two students. The research package was reviewed and the students were exposed to conducting literature reviews for their research projects.

## Would you recommend the programme at NIE to someone else? What would you say about it?

This is a definite yes. If you want to learn the ropes of conducting research at the graduate level and perhaps the opportunity to publish papers with your supervisor, NIE is the choice of institution for you. The assessment process of the thesis is rigorous and the feedback from the professors or supervisors helps to sharpen your research focus.