

Getting To Know Our Students

Aw Hui Teng, PhD student



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is currently working as a Research Associate at the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning and is a PhD student at the English Language and Literature Academic Group.

What are you currently working as and at which point in your career did you aspire to do a higher degree programme?

I am currently a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student at the English Language and Literature Academic Group and a Research Associate at the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning (GPL). Prior to this, I was a secondary school teacher.

Having taught in secondary schools for several years, I realised that I needed greater teaching expertise in order to equip students to meet the challenges of the 21st century; which was why I embarked on professional learning programmes offered by the Ministry of Education (MOE) (in collaboration with NIE). Shortly after, NIE offered the Master of Education (English Language) programme under the MOE's Professional Development Continuum Model (PDCM) scheme, and I seized the opportunity for professional development. The programme piqued my interest for research and after my master's degree, I continued to pursue my PhD at NIE.

What attracted you to a higher degree programme at NIE?

The Master of Education (English Language) programme was conducted by highly qualified lecturers and the PDCM structure (specially catered for school teachers) allowed me to hone my teaching knowledge and skills while at the same time cope with the demands of the school. More importantly, I was greatly inspired by Professor Christine Goh's (my master's dissertation supervisor) passion for education to continue with my research and professional development. As such, after my master's degree, I was encouraged to pursue my PhD full-time under her supervision.

What was your research on? Did the research yield the desired outcome that you hoped for?

My master's thesis was on the impact of high-stakes speaking assessment. It helped me to clearly understand the trends and developments of speaking assessment globally, and also become more aware and competent when I teach speaking in the classroom. My PhD dissertation is on the teaching of speaking and it is a continuation of my efforts to understand the lack of emphasis on teaching speaking. I have had my research published and received the Dean's Commendation for Research; and am currently still writing papers for journal submissions. The great sense of satisfaction of having contributed to the field and gaining knowledge and expertise is certainly the desired outcome I had hoped for.

What was the best part of being a student at NIE?

You never feel alone and you also have the space to pursue your passion, knowing that NIE will always support you in whatever you do.

How would you describe your interactions with NIE faculty members as a student and now, as a fellow colleague?

The strong sense of fraternity remains, no matter whether you are personally acquainted with the members or not.

Could you describe more about the work that you are currently doing in GPL?

My current work mainly involves literature reviews, data analysis and writing of papers. Such work requires massive reading of information, analysis of data and writing.

How have the programmes prepared/enabled you to do the work you are doing in GPL?

The programmes have sharpened my research and thinking skills, and helped me gain deep knowledge and understanding of the development of the various fields. This enables me to meet the demands of my current research work in GPL.