

Malawian community thrives at UK University

Students Wakisa Mphwanthe, Kavita Thaker and International Officer for Malawi, Kotana Hau, talked to us about the growing Malawian community at Nottingham Trent University (NTU).

Wakisa is currently studying MSc Quantity Surveying and completed his undergraduate degree at another UK university before he arrived in Nottingham. We asked him why he chose to study at NTU. "When I finished my undergraduate degree I had plans to do a Masters, but wasn't sure where. I checked the university league tables to see my options and that's what made me choose NTU. I selected ranking by course and NTU was up there at the top, so I applied!"

Before coming to the UK, Kavita was studying at St Andrews International School in Blantyre, Malawi. She had always wanted to study in the UK because of "its reputation for providing a high standard of education."

She told us about the support she received when applying to study at NTU. "I met Kotana at a meet and greet in Malawi. This really helped because it gave my parents the reassurance they needed. Kotana really supported me throughout the whole process; she was the number one reason I came to NTU."

Kotana had told Kavita about other opportunities and different ways to get into university. Kavita

did an International Year One in Computing at Nottingham Trent International College before progressing to NTU.

"The classes were much smaller and we had more direct contact

"It has been exciting to see the Malawi community at Nottingham Trent University grow over the years".

with tutors. It really helped me get into my first year at NTU."

Kavita's sister also studied at NTU. After hearing such good things about the university, she decided she wanted to study there too.

"The best thing about my course is its content. It's really interesting and relates to the outside world. A range of seminars offer one-to-one support, so the teaching is tailored to your own personal needs. I find that really helpful."

There are currently 18 international students from Malawi at NTU ranging from undergraduates to students taking their PhDs.

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Malawi community at Nottingham Trent University grow over the years" Kotana said.

Wakisa met the rest of the NTU Malawian community at a dinner hosted by the University.

"It really surprised me when I first started," he told us. "At my previous university there were only three Malawians and we barely made contact."

"The Malawian community at NTU was great and more exciting than I could have imagined. The community was a lot larger than I expected and I am still in contact with the friends I made there. Nothing is more exciting than spending time with people from your country; it's like having the essence of home away from home" Wakisa told us.

Wakisa told us what made his course at NTU stand out from other UK universities. "What I liked is that you get the opportunity to complete a work internship as part of the course. Other universities were not offering this."

Every course at NTU provides a work experience opportunity. This gives their graduates a competitive edge when entering the job market.



Wakisa Mphwanthe

Wakisa took advantage of this work experience and successfully received a placement with the third biggest construction company in the UK – Kier Group. He told us how he got the role.

"You have to think outside the box. I went online and found the regional manager for my area. I emailed him and explained I had met his team at a recruitment fair at NTU. I told him a bit about myself and we met the following week. I was interviewed by him and got the job!"

Wakisa told us that he is encouraging more Malawians to join the NTU family. "I have already recommended this course to a couple of friends back home. They're currently taking their final year and looking to study in the UK. I've suggested MSc Quantity Surveying at NTU."

Moving to a different country to study is a big step. Wakisa told us about his experience.

"I learned to connect with people and my environment to make my stay here in the UK as comfortable as it would be at home."

"What is clearly visible to all is the support that the students offer to one another even before departing Malawi. Being away from home and all those that we love, it is comforting to have a community that looks out for each other. Together we have an extended family of Malawians at NTU" added Kotana.



Left to right: Milca, Mixon, Kavita and Kotana

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*Times Higher Education Awards 2017

Meet Nottingham Trent University's representative, Ms Kotana Hau, in Malawi.

- Lilongwe City on 29 October, morning.
- Blantyre City on 31 October, afternoon.

Please email africa@ntu.ac.uk to make an appointment.

Visit www.ntu.ac.uk/malawi to find out more about studying at NTU.