



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

10th October 2023

**RE: Expedition to Malawi. July-August 2025. Year 10 – 12.
Parents Meeting at 6.30 on Thursday 19th October in the School Hall**

I am writing to inform you about a very exciting opportunity to take part in an expedition to Malawi in 2025. This follows on from a successful visit to South East Asia in 2023 and previous expeditions to India, Borneo and Tanzania, indeed the school has been running expeditions for the last 25 years.

The expedition programme is an 18 month long endeavour with both UK and Malawi based phases. In the UK, students are given advice and guidance for their fundraising effort that also facilitates team building. As a school and in liaison with the expedition company we lay on a programme of events to include school based training and team building, parental and student meetings with expedition leaders and a training weekend, usually in the Peak District.

The Malawi based phase is a 30 day multi activity and student led expedition. We have chosen Malawi for the reputed friendliness of its people, the abundance of its wildlife, variety of its terrain and the dynamism of the country. It is also a safe and stable country to visit according to the UK FCO. The proposed itinerary is subject to change following input by the students on the expedition, giving them ownership of their expedition. We have provisionally included visits to wildlife areas, lowland and highland trekking, service/learning, safari and kayaking on lake Malawi.

Malawi is well known for its wildlife and we have planned visits to Kuti Wildlife Reserve and the Luwana Wilderness Trail. Kuti is famed for its megafauna but also notable in that there are no dangerous predators in the area meaning students can explore on foot and close up rather than from vehicles. The Luwana wilderness area is best explored on a multi-day trek, including overnight camping, from the high plateau down into the African Rift Valley. We also have time for a game drive (safari) in the Liwonde National Park.

A key part of the expedition is to take the opportunity to give back to the local community and/or undertake conservation work. In Malawi we hope to achieve both and have planned a visit to an NGO / not-for-profit lodge, called Fisherman's Rest, based in a 500-acre forest overlooking the Rift Valley. There is ample opportunity to both engage with the wildlife and the local community across a wide range of projects.

During the expedition there will be physical challenges as well as cultural. As mentioned above there is a lowland trekking element, and we also have planned a highland trek to summit Mount Mulanje. Standing at just over 3000m, it will literally be the pinnacle of the expedition. Malawi is famed for its lake which makes up most of its eastern border. We have planned a kayaking and camping trip to catch a glimpse of this vast, high altitude expanse of water.

The trip is organised with Outlook Expeditions, an experienced school expedition operator. Full details of how an expedition works and what to expect can be found on the link [here](#). Furthermore, Outlook Expedition are running an information evening at QMGS for parents and students on **Thursday 19th October at 6.30pm** in the **school hall**. Parents and students can register their interest in the expedition by filling our a contact form on the link above.

The total cost of the 4 week visit is £4845. We appreciate that this is a large amount of money. Students are expected to fundraise much of this themselves, they will get more out of the whole expedition programme if they do. Support and advice is provided by Outlook Expeditions as well as experienced members of Queen Mary's staff. The cost of the expedition is all inclusive for the 30 days in Malawi as well as UK based training events. It does not include personal equipment (clothing, rucksack, passport etc) but does include medical insurance, all activities, visits and entrance fees, all food and accommodation for the month, as well as UK airport transfers.

The deadline for the payment of the first deposit of **£275** is on the **2nd of November 2023** – **this is to be paid directly to the expedition company via their dedicated QMGS expedition page** [here](#).

Students eligible for Pupil Premium may receive funding up to a maximum of £100, per academic year. If this is the case, please complete our financial assistance form which is available on the school website and can be found [here](#).

Expeditions are at the very top of a broad range of trips and visits that are offered at Queen Mary's. It can be a life changing experience for young people and is much more than just another trip. Please have a look at the online resources provided on the links above. For any other questions please do not hesitate to contact Mr Rendu via email m.rendu@qmg.merciantrust.org.uk .

Yours sincerely,

Mr Richard Langton
Headmaster

Mr M Rendu
Head of Science