

**Admission Policy and Procedures to the Doctor of Philosophy in Education
Program of the Graduate School of Education at the autonomous organization
of education Nazarbayev University**

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Section 1. Purpose and Application

1.1. These Admission Policy and Procedures to the Doctor of Philosophy in Education Program of the Graduate School of Education at the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University (hereinafter – Policy and Procedures) establishes the policy and procedures for the management and compliance during the admission process.

1.2. These Admission Policy and Procedures are applied to the Graduate School of Education of Nazarbayev University.

Section 2. Keywords /Definitions

2.1. Basic definitions and abbreviations used in these are:

- 1) **Admissions Committee** – an advisory and consultative body of the University established to implement arrangements for admission to the Program;
- 2) **Admissions Department** – the unit of the University designated to facilitate admission to the foundation, undergraduate and graduate programs of the University;
- 3) **Admission period** – a set of deadlines for applying to the University which includes online registration, reviewing of documents, evaluation processes and enrollment, which may consist of one or more admissions rounds;
- 4) **Applicant** – a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a foreign citizen or a stateless individual taking part in the selection process;
- 5) **CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average)** – a calculation of the average of all of a student’s grades by the total graded credits contributing to the degree;
- 6) **Conditional admission/enrollment** – a type of admission/enrollment of applicants to the Program, which is limited to final year Master’s students or the applicants enrolled with Zero Year of Graduate Programs;
- 7) **ETS (Educational Testing Service)** – a private nonprofit educational testing and assessment organization; administers international tests including the TOEFL;
- 8) **External expert** – a recognized professional with relevant knowledge and experience who is familiar with the Program domain and is external to the School, in which he/she is involved in conducting reviews and evaluations of applicants, as well as serving as external readers or evaluators to assure quality assurance;
- 9) **GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)** – a standardized test used to measure verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, analytical writing and critical thinking skills, developed by ETS, the Educational Testing Service (USA);
- 10) **IELTS (International English Language Testing System, Academic version)** – a standardized test to define the level of knowledge of the English language, jointly managed by the British Council, IDP Education, and Cambridge English Language Assessment;
- 11) **Personal account** – online service providing a personal space on the University website upon registration;
- 12) **Program** – the Graduate School of Education Doctor of Philosophy in Education program;



13) **Strategic partner** – an organization approved by the authorized body of the University, having relevant resources (intellectual, scientific, methodological, educational, technological, technical, human) and implementing its activities in one or several of the following spheres: scientific-research, modern methodology and education technology, development and implementation of educational programs, etc., or other competent authority of the University as a Partner Institution to perform a basic or auxiliary advisory role in relation to the University, its Schools and/or subsidiaries in providing educational and/or research services under the relevant Agreement;

14) **School** – the Graduate School of Education of the University in which the Program is offered;

15) **TOEFL** (Test of English as a Foreign Language) – a standardized test to define the level of knowledge of the English language, developed by the Educational Testing Service (USA);

16) **University** – autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University;

17) **Zero Year of Graduate Programs** – a two-semester, non-credit bearing, full-time intensive English and refresher course of study for students accepted into an University graduate degree program but who lack the English requirement necessary for immediate entry into the Schools.

2.2. Terms and definitions not used in these shall be defined by the internal documents of the University.

2.3. The School shall follow these Policy and Procedures during the admissions process for all students applying to the Program.

Section 3. Main Provisions

3.1. Admission Requirements

3.1.1. Admission to the Program shall be competitive and based on merit.

3.1.2. In order to be eligible for inclusion in the selection process for admission to the Program, all applicants must meet the provisions of these Policy and Procedures which are formalized by the decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person after approval by the Academic Council and endorsement by the Managing Council.

3.1.3. Applicants applying to the Program are expected to have:

1) an undergraduate degree (Bachelor's degree or equivalent) in a relevant discipline;

2) a Master's degree or equivalent or a PhD degree or equivalent (if applicable) in a relevant discipline.

Applicants who obtained their degree diplomas/certificates from foreign education institutions must request their official transcripts to be sent directly to the Admissions Department of the University. In exceptional cases that the foreign education institution does not provide such service, hard copy of the transcript can be submitted to the Admissions Department directly by the applicant or electronic copy



of the transcript by digital credential services or by corporate electronic mail of foreign education institution. When the applicants provide a diploma nostrification certificate issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan or an apostilled document by a foreign education institution, sending an official transcript directly to the University Admissions Department are not mandatory;

3) a competitive CGPA in applicant's Master's degree (or equivalent);

4) strong reading, analytical and mathematical skills as demonstrated by GRE test reports/certificates (recommended). Although an official GRE scores is not an essential requirement, an applicant can enhance his/her application with a competitive GRE score;

5) the required level of English proficiency indicated in sub-clause 1) of Clause 9 of these Policy and Procedures;

6) 2 years of work experience in a relevant field. At the discretion of the Admissions Committee applicants with less than 2 years of work experience may also be considered;

7) high motivation and strong interest in the Program as outlined in a personal statement;

8) three confidential letters of recommendation;

9) relevant research interest and knowledge of research subject as demonstrated in a written research proposal;

10) CV/resume.

3.1.4. The relevance of the academic and experiential background, and the equivalency and appropriateness of earlier degrees, will be determined by the Admissions Committee.

3.1.5. The required level of English proficiency:

1) the absolute minimum requirement for English language proficiency test reports for admission to the Program is an overall IELTS test score of 7.0, with sub-score requirements no less than 6.0, or the equivalent TOEFL (except Home Edition) score as posted on the ETS website;

2) the absolute minimum requirement for English language proficiency test report for conditional admission to Zero Year of Graduate Programs is an overall IELTS test score of 6.0, with no more than one sub-score of 5.5, or the equivalent TOEFL (except Home Edition) scores as posted on the ETS website.

Applicants at the discretion of the Admissions Committee, can be exempted from submitting the language proficiency test report if:

one of their earlier academic degrees was earned in a country with English as the language of official communication, academic instruction and daily life;

an undergraduate and/or graduate degree was earned in a program which was officially taught in English. Applicants must provide an official document confirming English as the language of instruction;

the applicant is a graduate of the University.

3.2. Application process



3.2.1. Applicants applying to the Program before the indicated deadline in the Personal account (www.admissions.nu.edu.kz) are required to:

- 1) accept the consent for personal data processing and complete and upload an online application form;
- 2) upload scanned copies of the required documents indicated in Appendix to these Policy and Procedures;
- 3) pay a non-refundable registration fee. The procedures of charging a non-refundable registration fee or exemption from payment of the registration fee shall be approved by the University Managing Council;
- 4) verify results of valid IELTS or TOEFL certificate scores from the Test Administrator's system and submit its scanned copy.

The Admissions Committee and/or Admissions Department may request additional documents when necessary.

Documents of enrolled students required by these Policy and Procedures and submitted to applicant's Personal account during the admission period are available to the Office of the Registrar in electronic format and used for formation of student's personal folder.

3.2.2. The admission periods are set by the Dean of the School or his/her designated person upon consultation with the Admissions Department and are published on the website of the University.

3.2.3. All submitted documents shall be in English or with notarized English translation.

3.2.4. Providing false and/or incomplete information will result in exclusion from the admission or enrollment process or dismissal from the University in the case of enrollment.

3.2.5. The admission decision is not subject to appeal.

3.2.6. Applicants recommended for admission shall provide electronic scanned copies of application documents indicated in the special entry requirements defined in Appendix of these Policy and Procedures.

3.2.7. Applicants can apply for a maximum of 2 (two) programs of graduate level offered by the University in one academic year. In case of admission to both programs, the applicant must choose only 1 (one) program.

Submission of a complete application package does not guarantee admission to the Program.

3.3. Admissions Committee

3.3.1. The Admissions Committee is authorized to review applications, evaluate applicants and make recommendations with respect to admissions decisions.

3.3.2. The Admissions Committee members are responsible for ensuring that the admission procedures comply with these Policy and Procedures and the specific admission requirements of the Program.

3.3.3. The Admission Committee members shall declare secrecy/confidentiality of process information unless compelled legally to divulge such information.



3.3.4. The Admissions Committee for the Program is composed of faculty members from the School and at least one External expert or a representative of the Strategic Partner.

3.3.5. The total number of voting members of the Admissions Committee shall be odd, but not less than 5 (five) including at least 1 (one) member as an External expert.

3.3.6. The activities of the Admissions Committee are managed by the Chairperson of the Admissions Committee (hereinafter – the Chair). Membership of the Admissions Committee, including the Chair, shall be approved by the decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person.

3.3.7. The Admissions Committee may have Vice-Chairs. The Vice-Chair shall be appointed by the Decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person. In the absence of the Chair of the Admissions Committee, his/her powers shall be exercised by the Vice Chairperson. In addition to voting members, the Admissions Committee may include non-voting members.

3.3.8. The Secretary of the Admissions Committee shall be appointed by the decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person based on the recommendations of the Dean of the School. The Secretary is a non-voting member. In the absence of the Secretary of the Admission Committee, the Chair of the Admissions Committee or his/her designated person upon consultation with the Dean of the School appoints the replacement Secretary with indication of such replacement in the Admissions Committee meeting Minutes.

3.3.9. The Secretary of the Admission Committee is responsible for:

- 1) coordination of activities of the Admissions Committee, and organization of the Admissions Committee meetings;
- 2) execution of the Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings;
- 3) accuracy of information containing the Admissions Committee meeting Minutes;
- 4) authenticity of languages of the Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings;
- 5) invitation of shortlisted applicants to the interview;
- 6) maintaining applicants' application packages and interview evaluation results;
- 7) close cooperation and interaction with the Admissions Department on admission issues;
- 8) forwarding Minutes of the Admissions Committee meeting for registration and filing with the Admissions Department;
- 9) the implementation of other activities in accordance with the instructions of the Admissions Committee and its Chair.

3.3.10. Each applicant for admission to the Program shall be evaluated individually, fairly, comprehensively and consistently by the members of the Admissions Committee.

In this regard, the Admissions Committee members shall develop and adopt the most effective methodology/process/selection criteria which will identify applicants whose life experiences, personal attributes, past academic preparation (including



discipline and research language knowledge) and achievement and career goals conform to those of the School and who are most likely to contribute to, and benefit from, the School's learning environment.

Methodology/process/selection criteria must be applied equitably during the interview and selection processes should be attached to the Minutes of the first meeting of Admissions Committee for the correspondent academic year.

3.4. Admissions Committee Meetings

3.4.1. Meetings of the Admissions Committee shall be held as needed during the admission round period with a quorum, defined as the simple majority of the Admissions Committee voting members present.

3.4.2. The Admissions Committee may take votes and make decisions in the meeting through video or audio conferences or in other interactive ways of communication. Such participation shall be recognized in determining the quorum. The means of interactive participation of a voting member of the Admissions Committee shall be indicated in the Minutes of the meeting.

3.4.3. Decisions of the Admissions Committee shall be taken by simple majority of the votes of those voting and present. The Chair has the deciding vote in cases of tied votes. In cases in which the Admissions Committee has Vice-Chairs, in the absence of the Chairperson, tied votes shall be resolved by the decision of the Vice-Chairs.

3.4.5. Decisions of the Admissions Committee are final and recorded in the Minutes of the meeting(s) by the Secretary of the Admissions Committee according to the specified requirements for preparing Minutes of meeting of the University. The working language of the Admissions Committee meetings is English. The Minutes of meeting in Kazakh and English shall be signed by the Chair and the Secretary of the Admissions Committee.

The Minutes shall be updated and include a ranking of all recommended applicants, applicants placed on the waiting list, who accepted the admission offer, deferred admission applicants, voluntarily or non-voluntarily rejected list of applicants.

3.4.6. The Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings are confidential and not the subject for dissemination to the third parties, except for employees of the University in the frame of their duties.

3.4.7. All minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings are duly stitched, numbered, scanned and bound by the Secretary of the Admissions Committee, registered and stored in the Admissions Department, which is responsible for their safety until being transferred to the University Archive.

3.5. Admission Terms and Procedure

3.5.1. The selection process for admissions to the Program consists of the following stages:



1) The first stage – The Admissions Department reviews application packages indicated in the Personal account and checks the compliance with the minimum entry requirements for the Program. The Admissions Department provides the Admissions Committee with information on applicants' status on compliance with the entry requirements before an applicant can progress to the next stage of the selection process;

2) The second stage – the members of the Admissions Committee review and short-list complete application packages that meet admissions requirements according to the methodology/process/selection criteria developed by the Admissions Committee. All shortlisted applicants will be interviewed either in person or via videoconference by the Admissions Committee members.

As necessary, Admissions Committee may assign interviewers, who are appropriately qualified members of faculty of the School, External expert or representative of the Strategic Partner (via videoconference). The number of designated interviewers shall not be less than 2 persons per interviewing candidate.

3) The third stage – the Admissions Committee makes a recommendation on all reviewed applicants and determine finalists for admission based on the review of the admissions package and interview results.

The Admissions Committee may, at its discretion, add additional requirements to the admissions process.

3.5.2. Incomplete applications are progressed to the Second or Third stage only upon the Admissions Committee's request otherwise should be rejected by Admissions Committee.

Enrollment can only be conducted on complete applications. Applications not progressed to enrollment will be rejected.

3.5.3. After reviewing application materials and interview results, the Admissions Committee recommends successful applicants for enrollment to the Program directly or on conditional basis.

3.5.4. Applicants recommended for admission to the Program and rejected applicants will be notified by a notification letter distributed via electronic transmission by the Admissions Department within 10 (ten) working days of the Admissions Committee's decision.

3.5.5. The Admissions Committee may place on a waiting list the applicants who fully meet admission requirements, but were not admitted to the Program due to limits in number of places open in the Program. Applicants on the waiting list will be ranked by the Admissions Committee. Should a place become available prior to the first day of classes according to the Academic Calendar of the year of enrollment, it will be offered to the applicants, in order of rank on the waiting list, by a notification letter of admission.

3.5.6. Upon receipt of the admission offer from the University, the applicants should notify the University of their acceptance or refusal the admission offer decision in the format during the period indicated in the notification letter on admission.

3.5.7. In the event that an applicant recommended for admission does not accept the offer or does not reply within the stated time limits of the notification



letter, the offer will be withdrawn and a notification letter on admission shall be sent to next most highly ranked applicant from the waiting list.

3.5.8. Enrollment of applicants shall be legalized by the Decision on Enrollment of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person (the decision of enrollment) based on the recommendations of the Admissions Committee and notification of acceptance into the Program from the applicants

Applicants may be enrolled conditionally based on evidence from graduating university the applicants have completed the educational program and the applicant expects formal issuance of final transcript and/or diploma by certain date. In that case, the decision on enrollment shall prescribe the period of time, within which the applicants shall provide the necessary documents to the University. In the event that an applicant fails to provide the required documents to the University Program within the prescribed period of time, the applicant will be dismissed from the University.

3.5.9. Applicants who have already earned a Ph.D. degree under the Republic of Kazakhstan state fund are not eligible for enrollment under the “state educational order” to the Program with or without Zero Year of Graduate Programs.

3.5.10. Zero Year of Graduate Programs students are considered as students of the Programs to which they were conditionally enrolled. In order to change from conditional status, students must successfully complete Zero Year of Graduate Programs by passing all English and content courses in accordance with Academic Policies and Procedures for the Zero Year of Graduate Programs of the University.

3.5.11. If the Zero Year of Graduate Programs student fails to achieve the required passing grades and/or the attendance requirement, he/she shall be dismissed from the Programs in accordance with the internal rules of the University.

3.5.12. Zero Year of Graduate Programs students are accepted with the expectation that they will continue to the University Ph.D. degree program to which they applied and for which they were interviewed. Students will not be allowed to change their program of study during Zero Year of Graduate Programs. Zero Year of Graduate Programs students who wish to study in the University’s Ph.D. program, which is different from the program for which they were accepted, may apply to another Ph.D. program of the University and submit all the required documents. However, there is no guarantee of placement in their new Ph.D. application even if they are successful in Zero Year of Graduate Programs.

3.5.13. The number of enrolled students shall not exceed the number of places allocated to the Program.

The Minutes of the Admissions Committee will record:

- 1) the reasons for granting conditional admission;
- 2) the candidate’s area of weakness;
- 3) the option of the term of fulfillment;
- 4) a timeline for the fulfilment of the terms of conditional admission which cannot be more than one year.

To change the status of conditionally enrolled student all terms must be fulfilled. In the event of failure to fulfill the terms of conditional enrollment, the student will be dismissed from the Program.



3.5.14. The decision on enrollment shall specify the source of funding for each admitted applicant.

The sources of funding shall be determined as follows:

the state educational order;

a specific scholarship and/or sponsorship;

applicant's own expense - for self-funded applicants or applicants whose costs will be covered by their employer.

Awarding applicants University grants, scholarship or sponsorship and enrollment on a fee-paying basis shall be carried out according to the procedure established by the internal documents of the University.

3.5.15. Deferred admission can be granted for 1 (one) academic year by the Admissions Committee with the approval of the Dean of the School or his/her designated person. Deferred admission cannot be granted to the conditionally admitted candidates.

The awarding of grants or any financial support for deferred admission candidates is carried out in the framework of a consideration of a new pool of applicants on a competitive basis. Deferred admission allows a student to be enrolled to a Program following year based on previous year application but does not retain earned funding (if any).

All documents and other materials submitted by or for applicants in connection with their application for admission to the Program become the property of the University and are subject to the University's rules and regulations concerning confidentiality. Any documents of the enrolled applicants are not subject to return.

All information related to the selection process of applicants is confidential.

Issues not covered by these Policy and Procedures shall be resolved by the Admissions Committee independently.

Section 4. Waiver

4.1. The Provost is eligible to grant a waiver from these Admission Policy and Procedures.

Section 5. Temporary Provision

5.1. Not applicable.

Section 6. Revision

6.1. These Admission Policy and Procedures shall be revised in 1(one) year to monitor if it works effectively.

Section 7. Related Documents

7.1. The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Status of Nazarbayev University, Nazarbayev



Intellectual Schools, and Nazarbayev Fund”, the By-Laws of the Graduate School of Education, and the Charter of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University.



Appendix
to the Admission Policy and Procedures
to the Doctor of Philosophy in
Education Program of the Graduate
School of Education at the autonomous
organization of education Nazarbayev
University

**Application package checklist for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education
program**

1. Complete Application form.
2. Scanned copy of a national ID or passport.
3. Scanned copy of official document confirming name change (if applicable).
4. Scanned copy of official degree diplomas/certificates with transcripts. Diplomas/certificates with transcripts received from Kazakhstani educational institutions must be notarized. Applicants who obtained their degree diplomas/certificates from foreign educational institutions additionally refer to clause 3.1.3 of these Admission Policy and Procedures.
5. Verified score report of valid Academic IELTS or TOEFL (except Home Edition) test certificate downloaded from the Test Administrator system and its scanned copy. The last IELTS/TOEFL certificate submitted to Personal account will be considered in admission competition. IELTS or TOEFL certificate valid (no more than 2 years) as of date of online documents submission. An applicant must indicate the Nazarbayev University as a recipient when registering for the test. In case if the applicant passed the test earlier, he/she can contact the test center and indicate the University as a recipient.
6. Scanned document confirming English as the language of instruction (only for applicants who earned their degree in a program which was taught in English and request an exemption from submitting IELTS or TOEFL).
7. Verified score report of valid GMAT or GRE test certificate valid as of date of online documents submission and its scanned copy (optional). An applicant must indicate Nazarbayev University as a recipient when registering for the test. In case the applicant passed the test earlier, he/she can contact the test center and indicate the Nazarbayev University as a recipient.
8. Scanned notarized copy of Labor card with English translation or another documented proof of work experience.
9. Three confidential letters of recommendation written within the last two years (to be provided by referees via University system or in scanned copy).
10. Personal statement (300-500 words) outlining the applicant's prior educational career, statement of his/her interest in the Program, his/her long-term career goals, and how the Program would help her or him to achieve these goals.
11. Preliminary research proposal (1500-2000 words) outlining the research topic the applicant would like to pursue in the Program.
12. CV/resume.

