

The Admission Policy and Procedures to Master's programs at the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University

Category: Policy

Approval Date: 20.01.2023

Effective Date: 20.01.2023

Level of Access: Open to Public

Classification Number: 2.1 ADMS

Approving Authority: Provost

Registration Number: 07-Н/К

Owner: Admissions Department

Revision Date: 23.08.2023

Applicability: NU

Retired Documents:

Title: The Admission Regulations to the Master's programs at the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University

Date: 15.10.2021

Registration Number: 132-Н/К

Approving Authority: Provost



Section 1. Purpose and Application

1.1. These Admission Policy and Procedures to Master's Programs 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 Policy and Procedures are applied to the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University (hereinafter – University) and its applicants applying to the Master's program.

Section 2. Definitions

2.1. Basic definitions and abbreviations used in these Policy and Procedures are:

2.1.1. **Admissions Committee** – an advisory and consultative body of the University established to implement arrangements for admission to the Master's programs;

2.1.2. **Admissions Department** – a unit of the University designated to facilitate admission to the Foundation, undergraduate and graduate programs of the University;

2.1.3. **Admission period** – a set of deadlines for applying to the University, which includes online application, documents review, evaluation processes and which is finalized by the Decision on enrollment, which may consist of one or more admissions rounds;

2.1.4. **Applicant** – a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a foreign citizen or a stateless individual taking part in the selection process;

2.1.5. **Application form** – an application for admission to the Master's programs posted in the Personal account;

2.1.6. **CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average)** – a calculation of the average of all of a student's grades contributing to the degree;

2.1.7. **Conditional enrollment** – a type of enrollment/admission of applicants to Master's programs with a term or terms specified in the Decision on enrollment;

2.1.8. **Enrollment confirmation form** – a form filled by an applicant upon receipt of notification on admission to a Master's program of the University, which is the reason for enrollment/exclusion from enrollment to a program;

2.1.9. **External expert** – a representative of other School, University alumni or a Partner Institution under the relevant Agreement or an internationally recognized university or research institute, which has relevant resources (intellectual, scientific, methodological, educational, technological, technical, human), that is involved in conducting reviews and evaluations of applicants, as well as serving as external readers or evaluators to assure quality assurance;

2.1.10. **Zero Year of Graduate Programs** – a two-semester, non-credit bearing, full-time intensive English and refresher course of study for students accepted into a University graduate degree program;



2.1.11. **Personal account** – online service providing a personal space on the University website www.admissions.nu.edu.kz upon application;

2.1.12. **Program** – Master’s program offered by Schools except for Doctor of Medicine, Residency of the School of Medicine and Executive Master of Business Administration at the Graduate School of Business;

2.1.13. **Representative of the School** – faculty, administration or leadership of the School involved in managing academic and administrative functions within the University;

2.1.14. **Schools** – the Graduate School of Business, the Graduate School of Public Policy, the Graduate School of Education, the School of Medicine, the School of Mining and Geosciences, the School of Sciences and Humanities, the School of Engineering and Digital Sciences of the University in which Master’s programs are offered;

2.1.15. **Test certificate** – standardized internationally recognized test results required for admission to the University based on program requirements;

2.1.16. **University** – the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University.

Section 3. Main Provisions

3.1. Admission Requirements

3.1.1. Admission to Programs shall be on a competitive basis except for the cases stated in clauses 3.5.19. and 3.5.20. of these Policy and Procedures.

3.1.2. In order to be eligible for inclusion in the selection process for admission to Programs, all applicants must meet the provisions of these Policy and Procedures and minimum admission requirements.

3.1.3. Minimum admission requirements of Programs shall be developed by the Schools separately and approved by decision of the Academic Council upon approval of the Admissions Department before admission period and are not subject to change during admission period.

The required level of English proficiency:

1) The absolute minimum requirement for English language proficiency for admission to a Program is an overall IELTS (except IELTS Online test) test score of 6.5, with sub-score requirements no less than 6.0, or the equivalent TOEFL iBT (except TOEFL Home Edition) score as posted on the ETS website;

2) the absolute minimum requirement for English language proficiency for conditional admission to Zero Year of Graduate Programs is an overall IELTS (except IELTS Online test) test score of 5.5, with no more than one sub-score of 5.0, or the equivalent TOEFL iBT (except TOEFL Home Edition) scores as posted on the ETS website;

3) the absolute minimum requirement of the number of subjects taught in English is 70 % out of 100% for applicants who earned their degree in English according to official confirmation by a university of study.

The Schools cannot set lower requirements, than specified above.



3.1.4. Test certificates are considered valid if their results do not expire by a date of application submission by an applicant.

3.1.5. Transfer credits of applicants are carried out according to Academic Policies and Procedures for graduate programs of the University.

3.1.6. For former University Master's program students who completed at least one semester, and were voluntarily withdrawn or dismissed from the University for reasons other than disciplinary, two specific conditions apply:

3.1.7. Within 5 years of leaving University, former students shall refer to the Office of the Registrar. For these former students, all University ECTS credits and grades will be accepted as part of the readmission process;

3.1.8. Beyond 5 years of leaving University, former students need to re-apply as new students.

3.1.9. The relevance of academic and professional background and the equivalency and appropriateness of earlier degrees will be determined by the Admissions Committee.

3.2. Application process

3.2.1. Applicant applying to a Program is required to:

1) Complete and upload the online Application form posted in a Personal account;

2) pay a non-refundable application fee unless exempted by the Managing Council of the University. The amount of registration fee shall be approved by Managing Council of the University;

3) upload to the Personal account scanned copies of documents required in accordance with the minimum admission requirements to a Program and submit the application by the indicated deadline.

Graduates of higher educational institutions in Kazakhstan, except for graduates of the University, must upload an official electronic report of valid test certificates required by the Programs. The test certificates shall be provided to the University through an electronic version from a Test Administrator with the obligation to submit a scanned copy.

3.2.2. Applicants must verify their final transcripts of a degree diploma based on one of the following options:

1) Official hard copy sent directly to the Admissions Department via postmail by previous institution of study;

2) official soft copy sent directly to the Admissions Department email address from corporate email address of the previous institution of study;

3) official final transcript provided to the Admissions Department or verified through official digital credential services;

4) Applicant provides a hard copy of an official final transcript to the Admissions Department. The original hard copy will be returned to an applicant/student upon verification by the Admissions Department;

5) diplomas and transcripts of graduates of the University should be verified by the University system;



In case of impossibility to fulfill abovementioned options due to circumstances of force majeure, the following options can be considered:

1) Provision of a scan copy of a certificate on nostrification of a diploma issued by the legal authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

2) provision of a scan copy of an apostille document of a foreign educational institution;

3) provision of a scan copy of notarized diploma and transcript.

3.2.3. Applicants may apply for a maximum of two graduate level programs offered by the University in one academic year. In case of admission to both programs, applicants must choose only one program.

3.2.4. The Admissions Committee and/or the Admissions Department may request additional documents/information, when necessary.

3.2.5. All submitted documents shall be in English or with notarized English translation, if other not specified in the minimum admission requirements.

3.2.6. Providing false and/or incomplete information in a personal account will result in exclusion from the selection process or dismissal from the University in case of enrollment. Applicants who falsify documents or violate test/interview procedure requirements shall be disqualified from the selection process or dismissed from the University in the case of enrollment and are not allowed to apply to University programs of any level for any type of funding in the future.

3.2.7. Submission of a complete application package and meeting entry requirements does not guarantee admission to a Program.

3.2.8. Admission period, number of rounds and all deadlines related to admission to Programs are set by the Admissions Department and approved by a Dean of School or his/her designated person and are published on the website of the University.

3.2.9. Decisions of the Admissions Committee are not subject to appeal.

3.2.10. Applicants recommended for admission must provide electronic copies of application documents indicated in the minimum admission requirements defined in clause 3.1.3. of these Policy and Procedures.

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. The Admissions Committee procedures must comply with the internal documents on conflict of interests and confidentiality.

3.3.2. The Admissions Committee members are responsible for ensuring that the admission procedures comply with these Policy and Procedures and the minimum admission requirements defined in clause 3.1.3. of these Policy and Procedures.

3.3.3. Each program should have its own Admissions Committee and Secretary. The Admissions Committee is composed of faculty members and may include a Representative of a School and/or External expert determined at the discretion of a School.



3.3.4. The total number of voting members of the Admissions Committee shall not be less than 4 (four). In the case of a tie vote, the Chairperson of the Admissions Committee or his/her designated person makes a decision.

3.3.5. Members of the Admissions Committee, including the Chairperson, shall be approved by the decision of the Provost or his/her designated person. The activities of the Admissions Committee and Secretary are managed by the Chairperson of the Admissions Committee or his/her designated person.

3.3.6. The Admissions Committee may have a Vice Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson of the School Admissions Committee, his/her powers shall be exercised by the Vice Chairperson, if other is not specified in the agreement with the strategic partner. In addition to voting members, the Admissions Committee may include non-voting members.

3.3.7. The Secretary of the Admissions Committee shall be appointed by the decision of the Provost or his/her designated person. The Secretary is a non-voting member. In the absence of the Secretary of the Admission Committee due to annual or sickness leave, the Chairperson of the Admissions Committee or his/her designated person appoints the temporary replacement Secretary with indication of such replacement in the Admissions Committee meeting minutes.

3.3.8. The Secretary of the Admissions Committee is responsible for:

- 1) Accuracy of information containing the Admissions Committee meeting minutes;
- 2) coordination of activities of the Admissions Committee, and organization of the Admissions Committee meetings;
- 3) invitation of shortlisted applicants to an interview;
- 4) execution of the Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings;
- 5) ensuring the match of the language versions of the Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings.
- 6) maintaining applicants' application packages and interview evaluation results (where applicable).
- 7) close cooperation and interaction with the Admissions Department on admission issues.
- 8) collecting signatures and registration of the meeting Minutes of the Admissions Committee.
- 9) responsible for the safety of Minutes until being transferred to the University Joint Archive.
- 10) Implementation of other activities in accordance with instructions of the Admissions Committee and its Chairperson.

3.3.9. Admission to Nazarbayev University programs is based on the principle of meritocracy, which implies the selection of applicants on the basis of their academic achievements, providing everyone with equal opportunities at admission, and facilitating the selection of the most promising and talented students without the influence of external factors. Each applicant for admission to the Programs shall be evaluated individually, fairly, comprehensively and consistently by 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 achievements and career goals conform to those of the Schools and who are most likely to contribute to and benefit from, the Schools learning environment.

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

3.3.11. In case of impossibility to arrange/take either of required entry examinations due to circumstances of force majeure the Admissions Committee is entitled to replace main exams with other alternatives. In doing so, the Admissions Committee develops and approves effective selection methodology and evaluation criteria by indicating in the meeting Minutes.

3.4. Admissions Committee Meetings

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

3.4.2. The Admissions Committee members must be familiarized with the Regulations for managing documents and information containing confidential data at the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University and with the Policy and Procedure on Conflicts of Interest.

3.4.3. The Admissions Committee may take votes and make decisions in the meeting through conference call, video-conferencing or in other interactive ways. 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.

3.4.4. Decisions of the Admissions Committee shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes of those voting and counted in determining the quorum. The Chairperson has the deciding vote in case of tied votes.

3.4.5. Decisions of the Admissions Committee are final and recorded in the Minutes of the meetings by the Secretary of the Admissions Committee according to the specified requirements for preparing Minutes of meeting at the University. The Minutes of the meetings shall include a ranking of all recommended applicants, applicants placed on a waiting list, rejected applicants. The Admissions Department is allowed to exclude from a ranking the applicants who refused the admission offer or to participate in competition for any reason, including those who did not participate at the orientation week. The working language of the Admissions Committee meetings is English. The Minutes in English and Kazakh shall be signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Admissions Committee or their designee(s).

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

3.4.7. All the Minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings are duly stitched, numbered, scanned and bound by the Secretary of the Admissions



Committee, registered and transferred to the University Archive. Scanned copies of the signed Minutes shall be provided by the Secretary to the Admissions Department prior to the start of an academic year according to the academic calendar of a year of enrollment.

3.5. Admission terms and procedure

3.5.1. Applicants meeting the following eligibility criteria can take part in the competition:

- 1) Students in the final program year of higher education institutions;
 - 2) Applicants who have graduated from higher education institutions;
- Other minimum admission requirements are set by a particular School.

3.5.2. The admissions process to the Programs consists of the following stages:

1) First Stage – the Admissions Department reviews application packages in Personal accounts and checks the compliance with the minimum entry requirements for the Programs and provides the Admissions Committees with information on applicants' status on compliance with the entry requirements before applicants can progress to the next stage of the selection process.

2) Second Stage – the members of the Admissions Committee review application packages that meet admission requirements according to the methodology developed by the Admissions Committee. The number of Admissions Committee members evaluating application packages is specified in the methodology. The Admissions Committee may, at its discretion, include the interview to this stage. If necessary, all shortlisted applicants can be interviewed either in person or via video-conference by the Admissions Committee. If necessary, the Admissions Committee may assign interviewers who are not members of the Admissions Committee: representatives of Schools, University alumni, external experts or representatives of a strategic partner. The number of designated interviewers for interviewing applicants shall not be less than 2 (two).

3) Third Stage – the Admissions Committee members create a ranking of applicants based on the Second stage results and make recommendations on admission. University graduates with honors can be recommended for admission to a relevant discipline without placing into ranking. Relevancy of a discipline is determined by the Admissions Committee.

3.5.3. While reviewing applications, the Admission Committee may initiate the transfer of an applicant from one program to another program of the same level within a School, subject to the agreement of an applicant.

3.5.4. After reviewing application materials and interview results, the Admissions Committee recommends successful applicants for admission to the Programs unconditionally or on a conditional basis.

3.5.5. Incomplete applications can be progressed to the Second and Third stages only upon the Admissions Committee's decision otherwise should be rejected by the Admissions Committee.

3.5.6. Applications not progressed to enrollment are rejected by the Admissions Committee.



3.5.7. Applicants recommended for admission, placed on a waiting list or rejected applicants will be notified only by the Admissions Department within 10 (ten) working days of the Admissions Committee's decision.

3.5.8. Applicants recommended for admission by the Admissions Committee who received notifications on admission must officially notify the University by accepting or refusing the admission offer in accordance with dates written in an admission offer by filling the Enrollment confirmation form in their Personal accounts. Otherwise, applicants will not be enrolled in a program and admission offers will be sent to the next most highly ranked applicants from a waiting list.

3.5.9. The Admissions Committee shall place the applicants who fully meet admission requirements of a relevant Program and passed competition stages according to clauses 3.5.2. and 3.5.4. of these Policy and Procedures, but who were not admitted to the Programs due to limits in the number of available places on a waiting list. Applicants' order on a waiting list should correspond to the final ranking order. It is strongly recommended that the number of applicants on a waiting list of each program is not less than 20% of all eligible applicants for admission to a program. Should a place in the Programs become available prior to the first day of classes according to the Academic Calendar of a year of enrollment, it will be offered by the Admissions Department to the applicants in the waiting list, in order of rank, by notification on admission.

3.5.10. Enrollment to a Program shall be formalized by the decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person based on recommendation of the Admissions Committee, approved quotas for allocated source of funding and Memos from Schools, which specify attendance of applicants on Orientation week.

3.5.11. Decision on Enrollment shall specify the source of funding for each admitted applicant and shall be determined as follows:

- 1) The state educational order/Nazarbayev University educational grant;
- 2) a specific scholarship and/or sponsorship;
- 3) fee-paying basis – for self-funded applicants or applicants whose costs will be covered by their employers.

3.5.12. Applicants who have already earned a Master's degree under the Republic of Kazakhstan state fund and/or Bolashak international scholarship are not eligible for admission under the state educational order to the University's Master's degree programs with or without Zero Year of Graduate Programs.

3.5.13. Applicants that were placed on a waiting list according to clause 3.5.9. of these Policy and Procedures can be considered for fee-paying basis.

3.5.14. The number of enrolled students shall not exceed the number of places allocated to the University Master's Programs.

3.5.15. 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 the 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.



3.5.16. 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 a Program in accordance with the internal rules of the University.

3.5.17. Zero Year of Graduate Programs students are accepted with the expectation that they will continue to the University Master's degree program to which they applied and for which they were interviewed. Students will not be allowed to change their program of study during or after Zero Year of Graduate Programs studies.

3.5.18. Besides conditional enrollment associated with the Zero Year of Graduate Programs, the conditional enrollment can be practiced in some exceptional cases upon approval of the Provost or his/her designated person. The Provost or his/her designated person retains the right to deny the conditional enrollment. The Admissions Committee recommends to the Provost or his/her designated person for approval of the conditional enrollment in the following cases:

1) The applicant indicated in subclause 1) of clause 3.5.1 of these Policy and Procedures including students of the University recommended for admission may be enrolled conditionally based on evidence from graduating university that an applicant has completed an educational program and an applicant expects formal issuance of the final transcript and/or diploma by a specified date. In that case, the decision on enrollment shall prescribe the period of time within which an applicant shall provide the necessary documents to the University.

2) Students of the University in their final summer semester of study may be considered for conditional admission to a Program without the diploma and/or official final transcript based on the memo from a School of study of the University indicating that the applicant is eligible to graduate and fulfills the program requirements and will receive his/her diploma in the next degree conferral. These applicants can be considered for admission with the condition that they submit the final transcript and diploma by the end of the first Fall semester according to the Academic calendar of a Program of the year of enrollment.

The minutes of the Admissions Committee will record:

- 1) Reasons for granting conditional enrollment;
- 2) Timeline for the fulfillment of terms of conditional enrollment, which cannot be more than one year from the date of enrollment.

To change the status of a 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 a Program. The Schools and Admissions Department must notify each other of the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the conditions of admission.

3.5.19. Deferred admission may be granted for 1 (one) academic year by the Admissions Committee or Deans of the Schools or his/her designated person prior to the Decision on enrollment of the Provost. Deferred admission cannot be granted to applicants recommended for conditional admission. The awarding of grants or any financial support for deferred admission applicants is carried out in the framework of consideration of new pool applicants on a competitive basis.



3.5.20. An applicant with the deferred admission will be considered for enrollment to a Program following year based on the previous year application, but does not retain earned funding (if any).

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

3.5.22. Application stages that are not indicated in Clause 3.5.2., additional sub-stages and methods adopted by the Schools have to be included in the minimum admission requirements mentioned in clause 3.1.3. of these Policy and Procedures .

All documents and other materials submitted by or for applicants in connection with their application for admission to the Programs become the property of the University and are subject to the University's rules and regulations concerning confidentiality.

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

3.5.24. The Admissions Committee in cooperation with the Admissions Department shall resolve issues not regulated by these Policy and Procedures independently and resolution of these issues must be included in the Admission Committee meeting minutes.

Section 4. Waiver

4.1. The Provost is eligible to grant a Waiver from certain provisions of these Policy and Procedures.

Section 5. Temporary Provision

5.1. Not applicable.

6. Revision

6.1. This Policy and Procedures to the Program shall be reviewed within one year after approval and completion of the admission round and revised if necessary.

Section 7. Related Documents

7.1. Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Status of Nazarbayev University, Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and Nazarbayev Fund" dated January 19, 2011 No. 394-IV.

7.2. Charter of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University approved by the decision of the Supreme Board of Trustees dated 18 April 2013 #2.

7.3. Policy for preparing some internal administrative documents on core activities and students contingent in the autonomous organization of education



Nazarbayev University, approved by the Decision of the Executive Vice President dated 29 September 2022, #83-Н/К.

7.4. Procedures for preparing some internal administrative documents on core activities and students contingent in the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University, approved by the Decision of the Executive Vice President dated 29 September 2022, #83-Н/К.

