Admission Policy and Procedures to the PhD in Business Administration Program of the Graduate School of Business

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Section 1. Purpose and Application

1.1.   These Admission Policy and Procedures to the PhD in Business Administration Program of the Graduate School of Business 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 Business 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) **Application form** – an application for admission to the PhD's programs posted in the Personal account;

6) **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;

7) **Conditional admission/enrollment** – a type of admission/enrollment of applicants to the Program, which is limited to final year Master's students which is made by the Decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person at the stage of enrollment;

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) **GMAT** (Graduate Management Admission TEST) - a standardized test for measuring aptitude to succeed academically in graduate business studies, developed by GMAC, the Graduate Management Admission Council (USA);

11) **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;

12) **Personal account** – online service providing a personal space on the University website upon registration;

13) **Program** – PhD in Business Administration Program of the Graduate School of Business;

14) **Representative of the School** – faculty, administration or leadership of the School involved in managing academic and administrative functions within a university;

15) **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;

16) **School** – the Graduate School of Business of the University in which the Program is offered;

17) **Test certificate** – test results required for admission to the University, based on program requirements;

18) **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);

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

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);

2) a Master's degree (or an equivalent) or Doctoral degree (or an equivalent) in a relevant discipline as determined by the Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee is responsible to determine the equivalency of a degree and the relevancy of a discipline.

3) 3.00 CGPA in applicant's Bachelor's and Master's degree (or equivalent);

4) strong reading, analytical and mathematical skills as demonstrated by GRE/GMAT test reports/certificates.

5) the required level of English proficiency indicated in sub-clause 1) of Clause 3.1.5 of these Policy and Procedures;

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

7) 2 (two) confidential letters of recommendation;

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

9) 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:

the absolute minimum requirement for English language proficiency test reports for admission to the Program is an overall IELTS test score of 6.5, with sub-score requirements no less than 6.0, or the equivalent TOEFL (except Home Edition) score 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:

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

2) 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;

3) the applicant is a graduate of the University.

3.1.6. Test certificates are considered valid if their results do not expire by the date of application submission by applicants.

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

3.1.8. Applicants must verify final transcripts of their highest degree diplomas based on one of the following options:

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

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

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

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

5) Diplomas and transcripts of the graduates of the University should be verified by the University system.

In case of impossibility to fulfill above mentioned options due to circumstances of force majeure following options can be considered:

1) provide a scan copy of a certificate on nostrification of a diploma, except Bolashak scholars, issued by the legal authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

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

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

3.2. Application process

3.2.1. Applicants applying to the Program before the indicated deadline in the Personal account (http://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 GRE, GMAT, IELTS or TOEFL (except Home Edition) certificate scores from the Test Administrator's system and submit its scanned copy.

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

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

3.2.4. 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.

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

3.2.6. 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. Applicants who falsify documents or violate test/interview procedure requirements must be disqualified from the selection process and he/she is not allowed to apply to University programs of any level in future for any type of funding.

3.2.7. The admission decision is not subject to appeal.

3.2.8. 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.

3.2.9. 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.

3.2.10. 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. 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 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) and including at least 1 (one) member as an External expert or a representative of the Strategic Partner.

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 a Vice-Chair. 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 due to annual or sickness leave, 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) ensuring the match of the language versions 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) collecting signatures and registration of meeting Minutes of the Admissions Committee;

9) the implementation of other activities in accordance with the instructions of the Admissions Committee and its Chair.

3.3.10. 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 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.

3.4.4. 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 (or Vice Chairperson if applicable) and the Secretary of the Admissions Committee.

The Minutes of the meeting(s) shall include a ranking of all recommended applicants, applicants placed on a waiting list, rejected applicants. The Admissions Department is allowed to exclude from the ranking the applicants who refused the admission offer or to participate in competition for any reason, including those who did not attend the orientation week.

3.4.5. 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.

3.4.6. All minutes of the Admissions Committee meetings are duly stitched, numbered, scanned and by the Secretary of the Admissions Committee, registered and kept in the School until their transfering to the University Joint Archive. Scanned copies of signed Minutes shall be provided to the Admissions Department prior to the start of the academic year according to the academic calendar of corresponding academic year.

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. The Admission Committee should not transfer applicants from one program to another while reviewing their applications. 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 representative 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 unconditionally 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 by the Admissions Department to the applicants on the waiting list, according to their rank on the waiting list, by notification on 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 formalized by the Decision of the Provost of the University or his/her designated person (the decision of enrollment)

based on the recommendation of Admissions Committee, approved quotas for allocated source of funding and Memo from School, which specifies attendance of applicants on Orientation week.

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.

3.5.10. 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. The School and Admissions Department must notify each other on the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the conditions of admission.

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

The sources of funding shall be determined as follows:

1)	the state educational order;
2)	a specific scholarship and/or sponsorship;
3)	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.

3.5.12. Deferred admission can be granted for 1 (one) academic year by the Admissions Committee or by the Dean of the School or his/her designated person prior to the Decision of the Provost on enrollment. Deferred admission cannot be granted to the conditionally admitted candidates.

3.5.13. 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).

3.5.14. 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.

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

3.5.16. Issues not covered by these Policy and Procedures shall be resolved by the Admissions Committee in cooperation with the Admissions Department.

Section 4. Waiver

4.1. The Provost is eligible to grant a Waiver of any provision of 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 Business, and the Charter of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University.

Appendix
to the Admission Policy and
Procedures to the PhD in Business
Administration Program of the
Graduate School of Business at the
autonomous organization of
education Nazarbayev University

Application package checklist for the PhD in Business Administration 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 (Applicants must verify final transcripts of their highest degree diplomas based on one of the options specified in Clause 3.1.8. of these Policy and Procedures).
5. Verified score report of valid Academic IELTS (except IELTS Online test) 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 the 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. 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 (if any).
9. Two (2) 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.