NAZARBAYEV UNIVERSITY

Support for Students with Disability and Special Learning Needs Policy and Procedures of the autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University

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Section 1. Purpose and Application

1.1. The present Policy and Procedures address the need for a multidimensional inclusion of students with special learning needs in Nazarbayev University´s educational system. Hence, this document presents the interconnection between institutional, management, teaching, and learning elements to favor a just, appropriate and effective inclusive environment. These Policy and Procedures outline University policy for supporting students with disabilities and other special learning needs, in line with our legal obligations and our duty of care.

1.2. The Policy and Procedures outline Nazarbayev University's commitment to embracing a positive attitude toward the promotion of equality and diversity, taking pride in Nazarbayev University efforts to create a working, educational and social atmosphere which is inclusive of everyone. Nazarbayev University actively welcomes and values the diversity of its institution.

1.3. Nazarbayev University guarantees no discrimination on the basis of Special Learning Needs against a qualified person with a disability in regard to application, acceptance, grading, advancement, training, discipline, graduation, or any other aspect related to a student's participation in a program of Nazarbayev University. This Policy applies to all students and applicants for admission to the University.

1.4. These Policy and Procedures apply to all current undergraduate and graduate students as well as all credit and non-credit courses, academic programs, instructional activities, and non-academic activities and accommodation of the Nazarbayev University where there is a continuing relationship or students holding qualifications conferred by the institution, who are defined as having special learning needs and a disability. Specifically, Nazarbayev University will not act in a way that disadvantages Special Learning Needs and students with disabilities in comparison with non-disabled students.

1.5. This policy applies to all students regardless of nationality, fee status, place of residence, or any other characteristic involved in University-related activities including Higher Research Degree students and students visiting from another institution.

Section 2. Definitions

2.1. The following terms and abbreviations are used in this Policy and Procedures:

2.1.1. HWC – Health and Wellness Center.

2.1.2. NU or University – autonomous organization of education Nazarbayev University.

2.1.3. SLNC - Special Learning Needs Committee of Academic Council.

2.1.4. UMC - University Medical Centre.

2.1.5. Disability and Special Learning Needs - disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Disability covers a wide range of physical and mental impairments that may co-occur and may or may not be visible. Special learning needs include conditions that are physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, and psychological in nature that impede a student's access to the Nazarbayev University environment, learning content, or assessment practices of their courses or program. These conditions can be temporary, permanent, or intermittent and must be diagnosed or validated (not imputed) by a recognized assessor such as a medical practitioner or psychiatrist.

2.1.6. Accommodation - the term "accommodation" may be used to describe an alteration of aspects such as environment, curriculum format, or equipment that allows an individual with a disability to gain access to the learning environment, content, and/or complete assigned tasks. They allow students with disabilities an equal opportunity to engage in a course of study. Students who receive accommodations must meet the academic requirements of the course or program studied as well as any inherent or essential requirements or components of the course of study.

2.1.7. Reasonable Accommodation - an accommodation is reasonable if it successfully balances the interests of all parties affected. An accommodation is not considered reasonable if it would do either of the following:

1) fundamentally alter the essential nature of the course, curriculum, or program;
2) result in an undue administrative or financial burden for the university.

Reasonable accommodations for students are measures taken by the University to enable students to have full access to the provision of all educational services on the same basis as students without a Disability such as:

1) Admission and enrollment.
2) Participation in a course or program.
3) Use of facilities and services.

2.1.8. Inclusion - the process of supporting all students to participate in the university learning environment. Inclusion involves the processes that the University, schools, faculty, and students engage in to ensure all students can experience a sense of belonging and can be provided with the appropriate resources to support their success.

2.1.9. Documentation - documentation is required for students requesting accommodations, and needs to be provided by a medical professional. Students may be exempt from this requirement if their disability is clearly visible (e.g., the use of a wheelchair) or their diagnosis was assessed through specialized psychoeducational testing (e.g., learning disability). The following requirements are needed regarding the documentation:

1) Documentation should reflect the student's current state.
2) Medical professionals preparing and providing documentation shall have comprehensive training and experience in the relevant specialty and hold appropriate licensure and/or certification.

3) Documentation from a family member or someone with a personal relationship with the student, despite qualifications, will not be accepted.

4) Documentation must be in English or verified by a Nazarbayev University employee, typed on official letterhead with the title and credentials (including licensure/registration information) of the professional writing the report, dated, and signed.

2.1.10. Timely Manner - first the student provides qualified documentation from a medical professional as defined in 2.1.9, then meets with the vice-dean (or equivalent officer) to determine and agree upon appropriate accommodations, and the final step is to share the approved accommodations with the teaching faculty. Accommodations are applicable from the time of agreed implementation and will not be applied retroactively.

2.1.11. Confidentiality - students who self-disclose disability information for the purposes of receiving accommodations will have their information and documentation included in their NU student academic record. Accommodation information will only be shared with those who need access for implementation, and medical documentation, including diagnosis, will only be available to those creating accommodations. Student information will not be shared with any private or government entity outside of NU.

Section 3. Main Provisions

3.1. Responsibilities

3.1.1. Students are responsible for:

1) disclosing their disability, if they choose, to the University and providing the required documentation to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be considered and implemented;

2) requesting the renewal of accommodations as needed if they have been deemed temporary, or need to be adjusted for new classroom expectations;

3) sharing their accommodations with their relevant teaching faculty;

4) reporting to their Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (or equivalent officer) irregularities in the provision of approved accommodations.

3.1.2. Teaching Faculty are responsible for:

1) being aware of NU policy and procedures for supporting students with disability and special learning needs and to treat all students with special learning needs in accordance with this policy;

2) implementing any approved accommodations in a timely manner;

3) seeking support in implementing accommodations if needed;

4) sharing relevant information regarding the accommodations made for students with special learning needs with those legitimately involved in the implementation of the accommodation, such as teaching assistants;

5) understanding that any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary processes.

3.1.3. Vice-Deans and School Leadership are responsible for:

1) coordinating collaborative meetings with the student, including relevant parties on behalf of the student and the School;

2) ensuring the student's documentation concerning their disability and/or special learning need meets the requirements stated in 2.1.9;

3) completing the required documentation of agreed accommodations made for students with special learning needs, including the time frame required for a review;

4) supporting faculty and staff with the relevant resources to facilitate the development of the support of students with disabilities and other special learning needs;

5) determining actions to be taken following any breach of this policy.

3.1.4. SLNC and members are responsible for:

1) participating and providing advice when required in school meetings concerning the support and development of accommodations for students with disabilities and special learning needs;

2) disseminating information on policy and procedures and current best practices in schools which may include meetings or professional development sessions;

3) ensuring all meetings are minuted as set out by the Bylaws adopted by the SLNC approved by the Academic Council;

4) developing a process of documenting official record-keeping systems in relation to accommodations made for students with special needs;

5) advocating for the awareness and support of inclusive practices in education within the university;

6) participating in the review of these Policy and Procedures document as and when required.

3.1.5. NU is responsible for:

1) supporting the legal and administrative requirements of the SLNC.

3.1.6. Universal Responsibility:

1) Confidentiality. A student's special learning needs, disability status, medical information, and accommodations should be kept confidential. The SLNC, department heads, faculty, and staff should keep this information strictly confidential unless there are legitimate concerns about a student's well-being or there is a legitimate educational interest or need to know, such as sharing with a teaching assistant responsible for the implementation of an accommodation.

3.2. Implementation Framework

These Policy and Procedures have been developed in accordance with the NU Teaching and Learning Policy and the NU Quality Assurance Policy as well as other internal documents of the University.

№	Stages	Functions	Comments
3.2.2	Student	Contact SLNC and submit their request according to the form provided by SLNC, disclosing the nature and extent of the disability and providing relevant documentation via email. Documentation provided by students as defined in 2.1.9.	See 2.1.9 for documentation requirements.
3.2.3	SLNC	SLNC reviews the student's request and contacts the appropriate Schools' Vice-Deans. SLNC arranges a consultation meeting with the Vice-Dean or designated representative appointed by the Vice Dean, including the student, to discuss the Accommodation Plan, not later than ten (10) working days after receiving the request. The consultation meeting is intended to allow the student to demonstrate the medical documentation, provide further information, and discuss the accommodation(s) requested, the period of time the accommodation will be implemented, and a date for review. The process and the decisions taken are documented in a strictly confidential way.	In addition to any accommodation measures, the committee may suggest that the student contact the NU UMC and HWC to receive professional support, if necessary. If the documentation provided by the student does not conform to the requirements described in section 2.1.9, then the committee may request the NU UMC and HWC to provide an independent assessment/verification of the student's disability. Lack of information, as foreseen in section 2.1.9, should not prevent this ad hoc committee from taking immediate action.
3.2.4.	SLNC	The accommodation plan is to be shared with the teaching faculty, who will implement the accommodations in collaboration with the student. Upon reaching the date for review of an accommodation agreed between the student and the consultation committee, if the student	

		believes they require a continuation of the accommodations, they are to submit their request as per 3.2.2.	
3.2.5	Student	The student is responsible for communicating their accommodation plan to their teaching faculty and following the accommodation plan accordingly.	

3.3. Appeals

3.3.1. Students denied accommodation or unsatisfied with the Accommodation Plan may act according to sections 3.3.2. and/or 3.3.3. of these Policy and Procedures.

3.3.2. Students may initially attempt to resolve matters by contacting the NU SLNC to discuss the nature of the complaint, factors to consider as part of the interactive process, and whether an alternative resolution process with the program that denied the accommodation could be engaged. Often, an alternative resolution process is sufficient to address the accommodation concern.

3.3.3. Students may file an appeal in the Office of the Provost and must do so, in writing, within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date of the Accommodation Plan release or the accommodation denial regardless of attempts to resolve matters through an alternative resolution process.

Section 4. Waiver

4.1. Academic Council is eligible to waive any provision of this Policy and Procedures.

Section 5. Temporary Provision

5.1. Not applicable.

Section 6. Revision

6.1. This policy is subject to formal review and revision as required on a regular basis.

Section 7. Related Documents

7.1. Not applicable