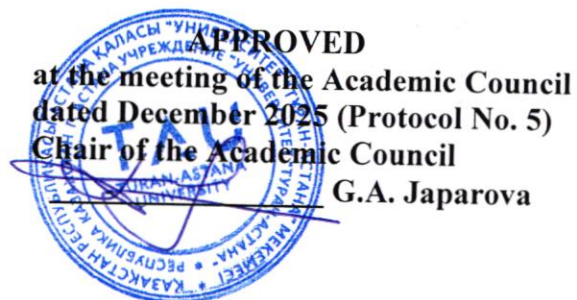


**“TURAN-ASTANA” UNIVERSITY**



**POLICY**  
**on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**  
**of Turan-Astana University**

**ASTANA – 2025**

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## **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1.1 This Policy defines the strategic areas of activity of Turan-Astana University (hereinafter referred to as the University) in ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations, and constitutes part of the University's sustainable development strategy.

1.2 The Policy establishes unified approaches to creating an inclusive, fair and non-discriminatory environment, as well as to integrating the principles of equal opportunities, respect for diversity and inclusion into the educational, research, administrative and other activities of the University.

1.3 The Policy has been developed in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education", the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Incheon Declaration "Education 2030: Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All", the Development Program (Strategy) of Turan-Astana University for 2025–2029, and internal regulations of the University.

1.4 The Policy is an internal regulatory document of the University and is mandatory for implementation by all structural divisions, employees and students, and violations of this Policy entail disciplinary liability.

## **2. MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

2.1 Mission: Turan-Astana University strives to create a fair, inclusive and supportive educational environment based on the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), ensuring equal opportunities for all students and employees regardless of their social, cultural, ethnic, gender or other differences.

2.2 The goal of the Policy is to ensure the establishment and sustainable development at Turan-Astana University of an inclusive, fair and safe environment based on the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), in which every student and employee is guaranteed equal opportunities for learning, professional development and participation in all areas of the University's activities.

The Policy is aimed at preventing discrimination and inequality, supporting diversity, and creating conditions for the full realization of the potential of each member of the University community.

2.3 Key objectives:

- Ensuring equal access to opportunities for all students and employees without discrimination.
- Creating an inclusive educational environment that takes into account diverse needs.
- Preventing discrimination, harassment and biased attitudes.
- Promoting a culture of respect and acceptance of diversity.
- Ensuring equal opportunities for professional development and participation in governance.
- Integrating EDI principles into all areas of the University's activities.

## **3. INTEGRATION OF EDI PRINCIPLES INTO UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES**

3.1 The key principles of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy adopted by the University include:

1. Equal Opportunities — ensuring fair access to education, resources and opportunities for all without discrimination.
2. Non-Discrimination — prevention of any forms of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion, social status and other characteristics.

3. Respect for Diversity — recognition, valuing and support of diversity in cultures, opinions, identities and life experiences of all members of the University community.
4. Inclusion — creation of an environment in which every individual feels accepted, respected and has the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of University life.
5. Equity — consideration of different needs and conditions to ensure genuine equality of outcomes, including the provision of additional support to those who need it.
6. Transparency and Accountability — openness in decision-making and responsibility for adherence to EDI principles at all levels of governance.
7. Continuous Development — regular assessment and improvement of EDI practices through training, monitoring and implementation of best practices.

3.2 The University ensures the systematic integration of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) principles into all areas of its activities, including educational, research, educational-developmental and social activities. This includes taking into account the principles of equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity in the development of strategies, decision-making processes, implementation of educational programs and conduct of research activities.

3.3 The integration of EDI is aimed at creating a University environment in which the principles of equality, respect and inclusion are naturally embedded in all processes and day-to-day activities of the University.

3.4 The following mechanisms shall be used for implementation:

- Incorporation of EDI principles into strategies/programs and internal regulatory documents.
- Review and evaluation of educational programs and instructional materials to ensure compliance with the principles of inclusivity and non-discrimination.
- Updating and implementation of adaptive teaching and assessment methods that take into account student diversity.
- Training and professional development of faculty members and staff on EDI-related issues.
- Consideration of EDI principles in recruitment, promotion and performance evaluation of employees.
- Development and implementation of accessible regulations and services in student support units in accordance with inclusivity principles.
- Monitoring and evaluation of compliance with EDI principles based on performance indicators, with reporting conducted once every six months.
- Establishment of feedback channels for students and employees on equality and inclusion issues.
- Support for research and projects aimed at developing EDI-related topics.

3.5 Within the framework of this Policy, the University guarantees protection for the following vulnerable categories of students:

1. based on age;
2. based on gender or gender transition;
3. based on disability (persons with disabilities and special educational needs);
4. based on race and ethnic origin (international students and representatives of ethnic and cultural minorities);
5. based on religion and belief;
6. based on family and social status (students from large families, students combining studies with work or family responsibilities, persons in difficult life circumstances);
7. based on pregnancy and maternity.

3.6 For all these categories of individuals, the University ensures the preparation of competitive specialists by integrating EDI principles into educational, research and governance activities, thereby contributing to the development of a more equitable and sustainable society.

#### **4. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES**

4.1 The University implements activities aimed at ensuring equal access to educational, research and career opportunities for all students and employees based on the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), taking into account social aspects and sustainable development requirements.

4.2 The University guarantees the creation of a fair and accessible environment that ensures equal starting conditions, opportunities for participation and professional development for all members of the University community.

4.3 Accessibility of education at the University is considered a key principle of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), aimed at ensuring equal opportunities to obtain quality education for all students regardless of their individual, social, economic, cultural and other characteristics. The University strives to create an educational environment in which every individual can realize their academic potential without barriers and discrimination, as well as receive the necessary support for successful learning and professional development.

4.4 Accessibility of education includes not only physical and organizational access to learning, but also equal conditions for participation in the educational process, fair treatment, and the possibility of choosing individual educational pathways.

4.5 Within the framework of this Policy, the University ensures:

– *Transparent and non-discriminatory admission procedures* for students in accordance with admission regulations, ensuring access for individuals of all ages and genders, persons from low-income families, rural regions and other vulnerable categories.

– *Development of support programs for socially vulnerable groups* (grants, tuition discounts and scholarships). Within the framework of this Policy, educational grants, social scholarships and various forms of financial assistance are provided to students, which affect the actual tuition fees paid by students (including grants and tuition discounts based on entrance examination results and portfolio achievements; merit-based discounts for holders of the Altyn Belgi award and winners of academic competitions; other incentives for specific categories of applicants; financial assistance; and accommodation benefits in dormitories, particularly for international students).

– *Provision of accessible educational infrastructure for persons* with special educational needs in all academic buildings and libraries, including the availability of digital platforms and services. For persons with disabilities, ramps, specialized sanitary facilities and adapted parking spaces are provided. The University's infrastructure is organized in accordance with accessibility and safety principles for all categories of students and employees. Special attention is given to eliminating barriers that may limit participation of certain student groups in the educational process, including economic, physical, informational and organizational barriers.

4.6 In order to ensure accessibility of education, the University also provides for continuous improvement of the educational environment based on feedback, monitoring of student satisfaction through surveys, focus group activities and analysis of best international practices related to inclusion, equality and quality of the educational process.

#### **5. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

5.1 The University develops an inclusive educational environment that ensures equal access, participation and successful learning for all students and employees regardless of their individual characteristics and needs. The inclusive environment is aimed at eliminating barriers in learning, communication and participation in University life. The University strives to create conditions in which every student feels accepted and respected and has the opportunity to fully realize their academic potential.

5.2 The inclusive educational environment includes the adaptation of the educational process, infrastructure and digital resources, taking into account the diversity of students. Special attention is given to students with special educational needs, international students, as well as representatives of vulnerable groups. Educational programs are reviewed in order to ensure the accessibility of content, teaching methods and assessment procedures.

5.3 The mechanisms for implementation at the University include (taking into account training in humanities and socio-economic programs):

- implementation of inclusive pedagogical tools, use of flexible forms of learning (including blended and distance learning), as well as adaptation of instructional materials;
- integration of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) into the learning process;
- ensuring accessibility of educational infrastructure, including the development of a barrier-free environment in accordance with modern requirements, establishment of specialized classrooms and facilities, and use of digital platforms aligned with the principles of universal learning design;
- development of a system of academic, social and psychological support for students, including counseling services and mentoring;
- provision of free professional development opportunities for faculty members and staff in the field of inclusive education.

5.4 The University applies a system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the inclusive environment based on student feedback, analysis of educational outcomes and key accessibility indicators. The results of monitoring are used for continuous improvement of educational processes.

## **6. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY**

6.1 The University creates a fair University environment in which all students and employees, regardless of sex and gender identity, have equal rights, opportunities and conditions for learning, professional development and participation in governance.

6.2 The University adheres to the principle of preventing gender discrimination in all forms and ensures equal access to educational programs, research activities and career opportunities. Special attention is given to expanding the participation of women in academic and governance sectors, as well as supporting balanced representation at all levels.

6.3 The mechanisms for implementation of this area include:

- Regular monitoring of gender balance among students, faculty members and administrative staff, as well as analysis of career development conditions and participation in decision-making processes. Based on the obtained data, measures are developed to eliminate identified imbalances.
- Implementation of non-discriminatory recruitment, promotion and professional development procedures, ensuring equal opportunities for all employees regardless of sex, in accordance with the Human Resources Policy of Turan-Astana University (TAU). Special attention is given to supporting women in academic and governance careers, including creating conditions for their professional growth and participation in decision-making.
- Organization of activities aimed at raising awareness, fostering a culture of equality and supporting women's leadership potential. Such activities include seminars, training sessions, round tables and informational outreach campaigns dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Creation of a safe environment, including systems for prevention of and response to cases of gender discrimination and harassment, as well as accessible feedback channels.

## **7. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

7.1 The University implements a policy aimed at preventing all forms of discrimination, harassment and biased treatment in educational, research and administrative environments. This area is a key component of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and is aimed at ensuring a safe, respectful and fair university environment for all students and employees through the functioning of the Compliance Service, the Department for Youth Affairs and the Student Ombudsperson.

7.2 The University recognizes the unacceptability of discrimination on any grounds, including sex, age, ethnicity, religion, social status, health condition, language and other characteristics.

7.3 The University strives to create a culture of zero tolerance towards harassment, bullying and any forms of psychological or physical pressure.

7.4 The mechanisms for implementation of this area include:

- Development and implementation of internal regulatory documents clearly defining the concepts of discrimination and harassment, as well as establishing procedures for their prevention and handling of complaints.
- Establishment of accessible and confidential complaint channels (Rector's Office hotline, work of the Student Ombudsperson, online submission of complaints using modern information tools), ensuring protection of complainants from retaliation.
- Conducting regular awareness-raising activities, trainings and educational programs for students and staff aimed at fostering a culture of respect and non-discriminatory behavior.
- Implementation of a corporate culture system and mandatory training for managers and teaching staff on corporate culture and ethics of interaction.
- Introduction of a rapid response system for cases of discrimination and harassment, including investigation, application of disciplinary measures and provision of support to affected individuals. Cooperation with authorized units is ensured, along with adherence to principles of fairness and confidentiality.

7.5 The protection of employees' rights is carried out in accordance with the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, internal regulatory documents of the University and labor relations. All University employees have the right to protection of their labor, academic and social rights, including protection from discrimination, harassment, unfair treatment and other violations.

7.6 The University guarantees equal access to rights protection mechanisms without fear of retaliation or deterioration of working conditions.

7.7 The mechanisms for protecting employees' rights include:

- functioning of a transparent system for submitting and reviewing appeals, complaints and suggestions;
- consideration of appeals by authorized (disciplinary) commissions in accordance with the principles of objectivity and impartiality;
- availability of pre-trial dispute resolution and mediation procedures through the Compliance Service;
- involvement of relevant structural units for prompt response to violations;
- informing employees about their rights and available protection mechanisms through internal resources and the University trade union.

7.8 The effectiveness of the employees' rights protection system is regularly evaluated through analysis of complaints, internal audits and staff satisfaction surveys. The results of monitoring are used to improve internal procedures and strengthen a culture of fairness and trust.

## **8. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN PROMOTING A CULTURE OF RESPECT AND DIVERSITY**

8.1 The University pays special attention to the development of a culture of respect and diversity within the University environment, based on mutual respect, recognition of the value

of diversity and the prevention of any forms of intolerance. A culture of respect and diversity implies recognition and acceptance of differences between individuals, including cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, gender and social characteristics.

8.2 The University strives to create an environment in which differences are regarded as a resource for development rather than a factor of division.

8.3 The mechanisms for implementation of this area include:

- implementation of educational and awareness-raising programs aimed at developing intercultural competence, tolerance and skills for effective interaction in a diverse environment;
- regular conduct of trainings, seminars and informational campaigns for students and staff;
- integration of topics related to diversity and respect into educational programs through courses such as “Morality and Ethics,” “Business Communication,” “Psychology,” as well as through educational work and extracurricular activities;
- support for student initiatives aimed at developing intercultural dialogue and strengthening social cohesion;
- creation of a safe and supportive environment that excludes manifestations of discrimination, bias and intolerance;
- introduction of feedback and response mechanisms for violations of the principles of respect and inclusion.

8.4 Monitoring of the effectiveness of this area is carried out through satisfaction surveys, analysis of the university climate and assessment of the engagement of students and staff in activities aimed at developing a culture of respect.

## **9. AREAS OF ACTIVITY IN ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE**

9.1 The University ensures equal opportunities for professional development and participation in governance for all employees based on the principles of equality, which enables the creation of a fair and transparent system of career advancement, as well as the expansion of employee participation in decision-making processes regardless of sex, age, social status and other characteristics.

9.2 The mechanisms for implementation include:

- implementation of transparent and non-discriminatory procedures for recruitment, certification and promotion of staff in accordance with the Human Resources Policy and qualification requirements for employees;
- ensuring equal access to professional development programs, internships and professional training;
- development of a mentoring system and support for employees’ career growth;
- expansion of employee participation in collegial governing bodies and working groups;
- consideration of EDI principles in the formation of HR policy and managerial decision-making;
- regular monitoring of equal opportunities in career development and managerial involvement;
- creation of feedback mechanisms and consideration of employees’ proposals on governance and university development issues.

9.3 The effectiveness of this area is monitored through the internal quality assurance system via satisfaction surveys, analysis of the institutional climate at department level, structural units, and the University as a whole.

## **10. FINAL PROVISIONS**

10.1 This Policy shall enter into force from the date of its approval in the established manner.

10.2 This Policy is an open document and shall be published on the official corporate website of the University for free access by interested parties.

10.3 The University regularly ensures disclosure of information on the results of the implementation of this Policy to stakeholders through publication of relevant information on the corporate website, as well as its inclusion in the annual report.

10.4 Amendments and additions to this Policy shall be introduced in connection with changes in the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in line with the development of the University.