NJSC "ABAI KAZAKH NATIONAL PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY"

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (EDI)
STRATEGY

Almaty, 2023

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

As a center of education, science, and cultural development, **Abai University** plays a key role in shaping an inclusive and just society. In today's diverse world, issues of equality, respect for differences, and the prevention of discrimination are becoming increasingly relevant. The university strives to create an academic environment where every individual is respected, accepted, and provided with equal opportunities for growth.

This Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy outlines a systematic approach to ensuring fair opportunities for all members of the university community—regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, social or economic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristics.

2. MAIN GOALS

- Ensure equal access to education and opportunities for all.
- Promote and uphold a culture of inclusiveness and respect.
- Raise awareness of discrimination, inequality, and bias.
- Increase representation of underrepresented groups.
- Integrate EDI principles into all aspects of academic and administrative life.

2.1. Scope of Application

This strategy applies to all members of the university community, including students, faculty, researchers, administrative staff, and other employees, as well as external partners and contractors engaged with the university.

3. ABAI UNIVERSITY TODAY

Abai University is a significant educational, scientific, and cultural center, and one of the leading institutions of teacher education in Kazakhstan. In 2023, the university celebrated its 95th anniversary. It successfully combines a long-standing tradition of youth education and upbringing with modern scientific achievements and technological innovation, implementing advanced educational approaches.

Its key strengths include multilingualism, multiculturalism, openness, and inclusivity, while remaining committed to national educational values and actively contributing to the development of a fair and accessible educational system in the country. Its unique location in the historical center of Almaty, at the foothills of the Zailiyskiy Alatau mountains, makes the university especially attractive to students.

4. MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

This Strategy aligns with the mission, vision, and values outlined in **Abai KazNPU's Development program for 2023–2029**, and serves as a foundation for building the university's unique identity and for creating a competitive educational environment that meets labor market demands and fosters comprehensive personal development.

- **Mission:** To prepare competent educators capable of fostering an equitable, diverse, inclusive, and just society.
- **Vision:** A university that combines academic excellence, research leadership, and a just society based on the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Values:** The Abai University community embraces values such as professionalism, equality, responsibility, integrity, engagement, student-centeredness, diversity, creativity, leadership, flexibility, and inclusivity.

5. PRINCIPLES

- **Equity:** Eliminating systemic barriers.
- **Transparency:** Openness and accountability in actions.
- **Inclusivity:** Valuing a plurality of perspectives and experiences.
- **Participation:** Involving all stakeholders in decision-making processes.

6. STRATEGIC DIRECTION: ABAI UNIVERSITY – A CENTER OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Academic Process

- Review of academic programs for cultural sensitivity and representation.
- Support for multilingualism and intercultural dialogue.
- Availability of materials for students with special needs.

Infrastructure

- Ensuring physical and digital accessibility.
- Creating inclusive spaces (prayer rooms, gender-neutral restrooms, etc.).
- Publishing successes and challenges on the university website.

Physical Accessibility:

- Accessibility audit of all buildings and campuses by 2024.
- Installation of ramps, elevators, tactile indicators, and automatic doors — by 2025 (100% coverage).
- Adaptation of dormitories to meet the needs of students with disabilities — by 2025.

Digital and Academic Accessibility:

- Adaptation of all online courses and LMS for students with visual/hearing impairments — by 2025.
- Implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in educational programs — gradually by 2029.

Support and Guidance:

- Establishment of an Inclusive Education and Psychological-Pedagogical Support Center — by 2025.
- Implementation of a mentoring and support system for students from vulnerable groups — by 2025.

Partnership with External Organizations:

- Engagement of at least 10 NGOs and foundations working in the field of inclusion for joint programs, internships, and faculty development — by 2026.
- Signing of cooperation memoranda with relevant organizations — at least one annually.

Staff Training:

- Mandatory training on inclusion, intercultural competence, and anti-xenophobia — annually for all staff.
- Development of an online EDI module for students and staff — by 2026.

7. EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

1. Full implementation of the principles of equality, inclusion, and cultural diversity in educational policy.
2. Increased satisfaction among students and staff.
3. Establishment of a sustainable inclusive academic environment that meets modern international standards.

8. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Strategic Direction 1. Abai University – A Center of Academic Excellence
(in accordance with the Development Program of NJSC "Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University" for 2023–2029)

Objective 2.1. Creating Conditions for Inclusive Education, Equality, and Diversity (Equality and Diversity)

№	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	u.m	Responsible Entity	Planned Period						
				2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
1.	Level of physical and digital accessibility	%	Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs; Vice-Rector for Finance and Infrastructure Development	40	42	43	44	45	45	45
2.	Number of NGOs, public foundations, and associations engaged in inclusive education development	un.	Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs; Director of the Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
3.	Percentage of staff trained on EDI	%	HR Department; Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs	50	65	60	65	70	85	90
4.	Established Inclusive Education Center	fact	Rectorate	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
5.	Coverage of students from vulnerable groups receiving support	%	Director of the Institute of Pedagogy and Psychology	5	6	7	8	9	10	10

Objective: Ensure the Implementation of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

№	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	u.m	Responsible Entity	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
1.	Proportion of women in the executive body	%	Head of the Rector's Office	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

№	Indicator	Unit	Responsible							
2.	Proportion of women among heads of structural units	%	Head of the Rector's Office	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
3.	Level of equality, diversity, and inclusion	%	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	70	71	72	75	76	78	80
4.	Number of seminars and trainings aimed at raising awareness of units equality, diversity, and inclusion	un.	Vice-Rector for Social Development	2	3	4	4	4	4	4

9. ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Form
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
SEN	Special Educational Needs *(from Russian: Особые образовательные потребности)*
LMS	Learning Management System
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
IEC	Inclusive Education Center *(ЦИО: Центр инклюзивного образования)*
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
Abai University	Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University

Glossary

Inclusive Education – An educational model that ensures equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their physical, sensory, cognitive, socio-economic, or other characteristics.

Equality – Fair treatment and equal access to opportunities and resources for all participants in the educational process without discrimination.

Diversity – Recognition of and respect for differences among people, including ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, and other forms of diversity.

Inclusion – The active engagement of all members of the academic community in educational and university life, ensuring participation and a sense of belonging.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – An approach to designing educational programs that provides flexibility in teaching and accessibility for students with diverse learning needs.

Intercultural Competence – The ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures based on respect, empathy, and understanding.

Vulnerable Groups – Students and staff at increased risk of exclusion from the educational process (e.g., individuals with disabilities, ethnic minorities, students from low-income families, etc.).