

UCA UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSION POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ASIA

Reference Number: RGR-004

Functional Area:

Approved Date:	4 September 2025
Approved by:	Academic Council
Effective Date:	4 September 2025
Applies to:	All prospective students
Responsible Office:	Registrar's Office
Last Reviewed/Updated:	4 September 2025
Scheduled Review Date:	

Rationale: To ensure equitable treatment of applicants by establishing common standards for application and admission into the programmes at the University of Central Asia

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. The University of Central Asia (UCA) is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and merit-based academic environment.
- 1.2. The Undergraduate Admissions Policy (Policy) is designed to ensure that all applicants are evaluated fairly, transparently, and equitably, based on their academic achievements, personal potential, and alignment with UCA's mission and values.
- 1.3. The admissions process at UCA is holistic, considering not only academic records but also leadership qualities, extracurricular involvement, and contributions each student can make to the university community.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure a fair, transparent, and merit-based selection process that promotes diversity and equal opportunities for all applicants. This Policy aims to uphold academic excellence and integrity while fostering an inclusive and dynamic educational environment.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This Policy applies to all prospective students seeking admission to the UCA academic programmes. It encompasses the entire admissions process, including eligibility criteria for academic programmes, application procedures, selection methods, and appeals processes.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. Applicant from a Founding State. An applicant who is a citizen of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.
- 4.2. International Applicant. An applicant who is a citizen of and/or permanent resident of any country other than those listed above under "Applicant from a Founding State."
- 4.3. Candidate. An applicant who successfully passed Stage 1 of the application process (admission test, interviews).
- 4.4. Selection Committee (SC). A group of qualified external academics and professionals from the Founding States, those representing international partner institutions, and UCA faculty and staff. The SC's Terms of Reference and Composition are stipulated in Annex 1 hereto.

5. POLICY

- 5.1. This Policy pertains to UCA Undergraduate Academic Programmes.
- 5.2. Admission to UCA is competitive, based solely on merit, and considers an applicant holistically, including academic performance, leadership potential, and extra-curricular
- 5.3. The proportion of international applicants admitted to SAS shall comprise no more than 20% of the total number of students admitted each year. The top 50 international applicants will be invited to sit at the admission test.
- 5.4. The distribution of the newly admitted students shall be 85% from the Founding States, 15% - international students.
- 5.5. Applicant pools from the Founding and non-Founding States shall be separate.
- 5.6. The minimum age is 16 years old to be admitted to the Preparatory Programme and 17

years old to be directly admitted into the Freshman year, based on the University's admissions requirements and any other criteria UCA may establish from time to time set at the minimum entry level to the Undergraduate Programme. Parental consent is needed for all candidates below the required age.

5.7. Admission Test

- 5.7.1. All applicants to the SAS, except for those who submit SAT, IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge test, and other certificates annually approved in the Key Admissions Guiding Principles by the Academic Council, must sit the University-approved Standardised Admission Test (SAS Test) and achieve a score at or above the annual passing threshold.
- 5.7.2. The minimum passing score shall be set each academic year by resolution of the Academic Council and published no later than 30 days before the first scheduled test date.
- 5.7.3. Registration and Fee Payment
 - 5.7.3.1. Candidates must complete the official test registration form by the published deadline.
 - 5.7.3.2. Registration is confirmed only upon submission of proof of payment of the non-refundable test fee.
 - 5.7.3.3. Applicants who fail to register on time or to provide fee-payment confirmation will not be permitted to sit the test.
- 5.8. Admission to UCA is determined by a Selection Committee that makes its final recommendations based on the overall assessment of all applicants, including their academic performance in high school, results on the admission test and/or SAT, IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge test results, and other certificates, as determined by the requirements of an academic programme, depending on the requirements of specific programmes, interviews with the faculty, extracurricular activities including volunteer work, and the motivation to study at UCA.
- 5.9. UCA expects all applicants to provide truthful and complete information during the admissions process. If, at any point during this period, UCA suspects fraudulent actions or documents, it shall investigate the matter. If confirmed, the applicants' candidacy shall be withdrawn. If such information and/or actions are discovered after an applicant becomes a student, the student shall be requested to permanently withdraw from UCA.
- 5.10. Conditions not outlined in this Policy shall be referred to the Academic Council.

6. APPEALS

- 6.1. An appeal regarding admission test results can be submitted by an applicant (or accompanied by a parent or legal guardian if a candidate is underaged) within 48 hours after the announcement of the admission test results. It shall be processed within three days after the announcement of the results.
- 6.2. Appeals will only be considered on the following grounds:
 - 6.2.1. Procedural irregularity where the Applicant believes the University has not adhered to the Policy,
 - 6.2.2. The emergence of new information which may have affected the decision,
 - 6.2.3. Evidence of bias or prejudice,
 - 6.2.4. Errors in the admissions tests.
- 6.3. Applicants will need to provide specific examples with supporting documentation to evidence any of the above.

7. OFFER SEQUENCING AND PRIORITY PLACEMENT

- 7.1. Offer Sequencing Based on Ranking.
 - 7.1.1. Admission offers shall be extended in descending order of the final composite ranking approved by the Selection Committee. Candidates with higher rankings shall receive offers before those with lower rankings. If such offers are rejected by the candidates, the offers of admission are further sent to the candidates on the waitlist until the list of admitted students is full.
- 7.2. Priority Placement for National Academic Honours
 - 7.2.1. Irrespective of their composite scores, applicants who hold one of the following nationally recognised academic distinctions shall be placed at the top of the candidate list:
 - Golden Certificate (Kyrgyz Republic)
 - Altyn Belgi (Republic of Kazakhstan)
 - Golden Medal “For Outstanding Academic Achievement” (Republic of Tajikistan)
- 7.3. Procedural Application
 - 7.3.1. Eligible certificates must be verified at the time of application.
 - 7.3.2. Verified recipients will be ranked above all other candidates, followed by the remaining applicants in order of composite ranking.
 - 7.3.3. All other provisions of the Admissions Policy, including acceptance deadlines and confirmation procedures, apply equally to priority and non-priority candidates.
- 7.4. If a candidate accepts an offer of admission, he/she must pay a deposit for \$150 (one hundred fifty dollars) in the currency of the candidate’s country of residence to the account specified by the Finance department.
- 7.5. Candidates who receive a 100% scholarship are exempted from payment of a deposit.
- 7.6. It is the candidate’s responsibility to provide all documents necessary to get an entry visa to the Administrative department.
- 7.7. The admissions process must be completed before 1 August.

8. DEFERRALS

- 8.1. It is understood that from time-to-time circumstances beyond the control of a candidate may warrant a deferral of admission.
- 8.2. After admission to a programme of study, a student may request deferred admission for the following reasons:
 - 8.2.1. Family/health/personal reasons,
 - 8.2.2. Financial issues in the family.
 - 8.2.3. Study visa issues.
 - 8.2.4. At the discretion of the Admissions Committee, attendance at certain overseas study programmes such as Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) may also be considered for deferral.
- 8.3. A request for deferred admissions should be made in writing, including submission of all supporting documentation, prior to the start of the academic year. The conditions of deferral shall be made clear when a student approaches the University Registrar or an authorised UCA staff member in the Registrar’s Office during the application process. Deferrals shall be granted at the discretion of the University and will be

dependent on its interpretation of the explanation by the applicant. Where the student requesting deferral fails to satisfy the reasons for or conditions of deferral, the deferral may not be granted.

- 8.4. Deferrals are granted for one year, and the student should confirm, in writing, to the University of their intention to study by 30 April of the year in which the student will start attending.
- 8.5. All requests for deferred admissions will be granted by the Admissions Committee on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.6. Students granted deferred admission to a programme of study will be admitted to the programme of study in the next academic year and will not be required to rewrite the admissions test, re-sit for an interview or pay a new application fee. Subsequent requests for deferred admission shall not be considered.
- 8.7. Where a request for deferred admission is denied, the student shall have the option to either withdraw and reapply for admission next year or commence studies in the year to which he/she has been admitted.
- 8.8. The decision of the Admissions Committee is final and may not be appealed

9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 9.1. The Registrar's Office is responsible for drafting, reviewing, disseminating, implementing and monitoring the Policy.
- 9.2. The Academic Council can review and change the provisions of this Policy when necessary.

10. CONTACT INFORMATION

The Registrar's Office (registrar@ucentralasia.org)

11. REVIEW HISTORY

Revision №	Date	Approved by	Revision description	Process Owner
1	4 September 2025	Academic Council	Re-formatted according to the template approved by the MEC. Provision for candidates with national academic distinction from Founding States was added. SC TOR approved by the AC on 30 January was added as an Annex	Registrar's Office
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UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ASIA SELECTION COMMITTEE
PROPOSED COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

OVERVIEW

The main objective of the Selection Committee (SC) is the provision of a fair, equitable, and transparent admission process for prospective students through reviewing short-listed applications in a structured presentation format to give each applicant an equal opportunity.

COMPOSITION

The members of the Selection Committee are approved by the Academic and Students Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees (ASAC). The SC comprises ten to twelve (10-12) members from diverse professional backgrounds and areas of expertise (SC membership categories/composition are presented in Annex 1). A quorum is complete if more than half the total members are present at the meeting in person or electronically.

UCA strives to provide a balanced representation of academic, business, and professional persons, both external and internal to the University. The Committee is chaired by the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and will receive an introductory briefing by the Rector at its first meeting.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. SC Members shall hold the position for a term of three years.
2. Each SC member confidentially rates the “applicability” of prospective students to be admitted to UCA based on the UCA admissions test (English and Math) results or SAT certificates, and applicants’ leadership potential, soft skills, and character, judged by extra-curricular involvement and interview answers.

Annex 1

UCA Internal Members	External Members
1. UCA Representative 1/4: Dean of SAS • Dean of SAS, also a member of the UCA Management Executive Committee (MEC).	2. Active Tajik Academic, with: • Undergraduate or Graduate Teaching role • International degree or work experience • Administrative Experience
3. UCA Representative 2/4: Student Life Staff • A staff member who works with students within the Student Affairs Department	4. Active Kyrgyz Academic, with: • Undergraduate or Graduate Teaching role • International degree or work experience • Administrative Experience
5. UCA Faculty Representative 3/4: Preparatory Year Faculty • A faculty member who teaches in UCA's Preparatory year, understands the UCA curriculum and the calibre and character of students that UCA needs to admit	6. Active Kazakh Academic, with: • Undergraduate or Graduate Teaching role • International degree or work experience • Administrative Experience
7. UCA Faculty Representative 4/4: Years 2-5 Faculty. • A UCA faculty member teaching undergraduate courses who understands the UCA curriculum, and the calibre and character of students UCA needs to admit.	8. One Faculty from an International University or College (<i>may be a partner</i>) • An international faculty member who understands the UCA curriculum, and/or is connected to the region via research and has experience with liberal arts education.
	9. One Central Asian Professional • Professional from a large respected private sector company or successful entrepreneurial endeavour who regularly recruits new university graduates, ideally from one of UCA's offered disciplines.
	10. One Central Asian or non-Central Asian • Professional from the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), based in Central Asia and/or focused on the region's development.