

SHYMKENT UNIVERSITY



**METHODOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS
AND UNIVERSITY STAFF WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH
SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

SHYMKENT, 2025

1. General Provisions

These methodological recommendations have been developed to implement an inclusive approach in the higher education system of Shymkent University. They are aimed at creating equal conditions for students with special educational needs (SEN) to receive a quality education, based on the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

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Legislative framework for inclusive education:

- Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Kazakhstan" No. 39-III ZRK (with amendments and additions as of December 3, 2015);
- Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Status of a Teacher" dated December 27, 2019 No. 293-VI ZRK;
- Concept of Inclusive Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025–2030 (approved by Government Resolution No. 1143 dated December 30, 2024);
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated August 20, 2004, No. 696 "On standard curricula for special (correctional) educational organizations";
- Letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated March 16, 2009, No. 4-02-4/450 "Methodological recommendations for organizing inclusive (integrated) education for students with disabilities";
- Letter of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 8, 2012 No. 4-5/647 "Instructional and Methodological Letter on Providing Software and Hardware for Workplaces of Students with Disabilities Studying at Home";
- Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 17, 2013 No. 499 "Model Rules for the Activities of General Education Organizations";
- Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 4, 2013 No. 258 "Model rules for the activities of special educational organizations for students with developmental disabilities."

The document is aimed at providing the organizational, pedagogical, methodological and infrastructural conditions necessary for the education of individuals with special educational needs, as well as their full integration into the educational environment and socio-cultural life of the university.

2. Terms and definitions

Special educational needs (SEN) are the needs of a student that arise due to disabilities and require an individual approach, adaptation of the educational environment, and provision of additional educational and social services.

A disabled person is a person with a health condition that causes a persistent

impairment of bodily functions, caused by illness, injury, or defect, leading to a limitation of life activities. Recognition of disability is carried out through a medical and social assessment.

A student with special educational needs is a student who requires special psychological, pedagogical, methodological, social or technical support in the process of obtaining higher education, due to physical, sensory, intellectual or other disabilities.

An assistant (tutor) is a person who accompanies a student with special educational needs in the educational process, providing assistance in movement, communication, mastering educational material and adaptation in the social environment of the institute.

3. Categories and characteristics of students with special educational needs

Within the framework of the inclusive approach, the following categories of students with special educational needs (SEN) are distinguished, each of which requires certain conditions for the successful mastery of educational programs:

- ***Students with hearing impairments***

Includes individuals with hearing loss or deafness that impedes or prevents verbal communication. The use of alternative communication channels is recommended: sign language interpretation, visual materials, text accompaniment, and technical aids.

- ***Students with speech impairments***

These are students with dysarthria, alalia, aphasia, and other developmental disabilities in oral and/or written speech. They require adapted forms of assessment and expanded use of nonverbal forms of expression.

- ***Students with visual impairments***

Students range from completely blind to visually impaired. Accessibility requires the use of specialized formats (audio, Braille, large print), as well as specialized software and support.

- ***Students with musculoskeletal disorders***

These are students with limited mobility (for example, due to cerebral palsy, injuries, or illnesses). A barrier-free architectural environment is required, as well as a flexible organization of the educational process (convenient seating, technical support, assistants).

- ***Students with multiple disabilities***

The combination of several types of disabilities (for example, hearing and vision) requires individual support, an integrated approach, and the collaboration of specialists from different fields (teachers, psychologists, special education teachers, tutors).

- ***Students with chronic somatic illnesses***

These are students who require regular medical monitoring, a special study schedule, and a flexible schedule (including academic leave, individual assignments, online learning, etc.).

4. Creating an inclusive educational environment: approaches and recommendations

Shymkent University, implementing an inclusive education policy, strives to ensure equal access to quality education for all students, including those with special educational needs (SEN).

Special educational needs are understood as the individual characteristics of students caused by disorders in physical or mental development, requiring the creation of special learning conditions.

These conditions include:

- provision of specialized psychological, pedagogical, and methodological support;
- use of specialized technologies, methods, and teaching aids adapted to the abilities of students with special educational needs;
- organizing an educational environment that takes into account the characteristics of perception, movement, communication, and psychosocial needs;
- ensuring continuous monitoring and adaptation of the educational process;
- participation of all participants in the educational process in supporting the student.

The goals of psychological and pedagogical support for students with special educational needs:

- protecting the health and developing the physical resources of students through the introduction of health-preserving technologies and individual forms of physical activity;
- developing cognitive abilities and cognitive activity by creating adapted learning conditions;
- developing constructive communication skills, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal competence;
- providing psychological assistance aimed at harmonizing interpersonal and family relationships;
- fostering positive self-esteem, self-confidence, and creating conditions for educational and life success.

4.1. Rules for admission of applicants with special educational needs

Admission of applicants with special educational needs (SEN) to Shymkent University is carried out in accordance with the current regulations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the internal regulatory documents of the University, and taking into account the principles of inclusive education.

Particular attention is paid to ensuring equal access to education, providing reasonable conditions, and supporting applicants with special educational needs at all stages of the admissions process.

The Admissions Committee of Shymkent University provides information, consultation, and technical support to applicants with special educational needs, including the involvement of specialists from the psychological and pedagogical services, as well as, if necessary, sign language interpreters or assistants.

For applicants to educational programs requiring creative or specialized examinations, we provide conditions that eliminate discrimination and barriers during entrance examinations. The use of adapted assignment forms, technical aids, and extensions of examination time are permitted, subject to expert approval.

Applicants with special educational needs have the right to submit an application for an individualized approach during the admissions process. All information regarding diagnosis, disability group, and degree of limitations is confidential and will not be disclosed.

4.2. Educational Process Adhering to the Principles of Equal Access and Support for Individuals with Special Educational Needs

The educational process for students with special educational needs (SEN) at Shymkent University is organized within the framework of an inclusive approach, taking into account individual educational needs and in accordance with the current regulatory legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

When enrolling a student with SEN in a higher education program:

- An individual meeting is held with the student to identify their characteristics, needs, and preferences regarding the educational environment, learning conditions, hardware and software, tutoring, and other forms of support;
- An individual educational itinerary is developed that takes into account both the student's academic interests and psychophysical development.
- In consultation with the student and faculty, an adapted class schedule is developed to ensure an optimal learning rhythm and access to educational resources;
- Individualized course syllabi are developed, providing for possible alternative forms of participation in classes and assignments;
- Flexible teaching methods and formats are used, including classroom, distance, blended, project-based, and other methods, ensuring accessibility and successful acquisition of the educational material.

The University provides reasonable accommodations, including:

access to classrooms and resources (classrooms, libraries, information systems, restrooms);

- use of technical and digital tools to compensate for disabilities (screen magnification programs, speech synthesizers, subtitles, voice input, specialized software);
- support for the student by a tutor, assistant, or inclusive education coordinator;
- participation of a psychological service specialist to ensure the student's emotional well-being;
- ensuring the confidentiality of information about the student's health and respect for their rights to equal participation in academic and extracurricular activities.

All teachers working with students with special educational needs receive training and methodological support from the Inclusive Education Psychological Support Service at Shymkent University. Interdepartmental consultations and joint discussions on the individualization of the educational process and assessment procedures are held once per semester.

Students with special educational needs have equal academic rights, including:

- participation in academic mobility;
- Internships in adapted positions;
- Opportunities to implement research projects and creative initiatives;
- Individualized approach during midterm and final assessments;
- Access to psychological and social support if needed.

The inclusive educational process at the University is built on the principles of:

- Humanism and respect for the individual student;
- Individualization and flexibility of the educational process;
- Interdisciplinary interaction between teachers, specialists, and administration;
- Continuous monitoring and feedback;
- Openness to the development of teachers' professional competencies in the field of inclusive education.

4.3. Methodological Approaches to Teaching Students with Diverse Learning Needs

Organizing the educational process for students with special educational needs at the University requires the use of differentiated approaches to ensure the most effective acquisition of knowledge, development, and socialization. This section provides practical recommendations for teaching students with various types of disabilities.

4.3.1. Students with Hearing Impairments Methodological Recommendations:

- Use of visualized educational materials (slides with subtitles, infographics, multimedia presentations).
- Use of sign language interpretation and/or a subtitling system during lectures.
- Inclusion of visual diagrams, tables, and animations to explain concepts.
- Interaction through written instructions, flashcards, and supporting materials.
- Use of communication technologies: chats, forums, question and answer boards.

Teaching guidelines:

- Clear articulation, calm speech, and an open teacher's face.
- Requirement for eye contact and indication of who is being addressed.
- Additional clarification of new terms and abstract concepts using visual imagery.
- Assistance from a teacher of the deaf or an assistant, if needed.

4.3.2. Students with Visual Impairments: Methodological Recommendations:

- Use of materials adapted for visually impaired students: large font (at least 16 pt), high contrast, audio versions, tactile diagrams.
- Read information written on the board or in a presentation aloud.
- Permission to use voice recorders, electronic magnifiers, screen magnifiers, and on-screen readers.
- Use of Braille for students with complete visual impairment (if any).

Support Features:

- Clear orientation in the classroom (description of the location of objects).
- Consideration of lighting conditions, the location of light sources, and glare.
- Conduct individual safety briefings.
- Provide navigational support on campus, use of markings.

4.3.3. Students with Motor and Mobility Impairments: Methodological Recommendations:

- Individual selection of seating in the classroom (easy access, comfortable location).
- Access to elevators, restrooms, libraries, and other amenities.
- Ability to choose a comfortable work position (sitting, reclining, etc.).
- Permission to use laptops, tablets, and assistive devices (head-mounted mice, touchpads, etc.).

Teaching Features:

- Flexible class formats (in-person, remote, or blended).
- Extended assignment deadlines.
- Assistant support available in the classroom or on campus.

4.3.3. Students with Visual Impairments: Methodological Recommendations:

- Use of adapted materials. Consider the pace of assignment completion, and prefer a modular or portfolio assessment format.

4.3.4. Students with Psychoemotional and Communicative Disabilities Methodological Recommendations:

- It is important for the teacher to remain calm, avoid criticism, and maintain constructive dialogue.
- Include pauses during explanations, encourage questions, and allow students to write down key ideas.
- Use short-answer or multiple-choice quizzes.
- Use multimedia and role-playing teaching methods, and playful interactions.

Interaction Features:

- Reduce psychoemotional stress.
- Individual consultations.

- Situations of success, positive reinforcement, and praise for even small achievements.
- Psychological support upon student request.

4.4. Supporting Academic Success: Assessment, Certification, and Internship for Students with Special Educational Needs

The assessment of the academic achievements of students with special educational needs (SEN) at Shymkent University is carried out taking into account the principles of an individual approach, adapting knowledge assessment methods, and creating conditions that ensure an objective and comfortable assessment of academic results. During ongoing assessment and midterm evaluation, it is recommended that students with SEN be provided with the following conditions:

- Increased time to complete assignments;
- Use of adapted assignment forms (taking into account the specific learning styles of students);
- permission to use assistive technology (magnifying devices, screen readers, audio formats, etc.);
- the possibility of conducting assessments individually or in small groups;
- development of individual assessment criteria by teachers based on the specific learning characteristics of individual students.

In the event of significant difficulties in mastering a subject due to the health limitations of a student with special educational needs, the traditional form of final assessment may be replaced with an alternative: creative work, project, essay, report, or other forms consistent with the educational program.

4.4.1. Individualized Forms of Final Assessment

Final assessment of graduates with special educational needs is conducted taking into account their individual needs and based on the current Regulations on Final Assessment. Where necessary, the following may be provided:

- additional time to complete the qualifying work or final exam;
- an assistant (tutor) to provide technical assistance;
- adaptation of the presentation and defense formats for final theses (including remote defense, multimedia presentations, and other formats).

At the request of a graduate with a special educational background, a final exam or other assessment may be waived, subject to agreement with the department and academic staff.

4.4.2. Adaptation of Practical Training for Students with Special Education Backgrounds

The organization of industrial, educational, and pedagogical internships for students with special educational backgrounds is aimed at developing professional competencies, taking into account individual capabilities and characteristics.

Departmental internship supervisors are obligated to:

- provide instructions on how to safely conduct internships, taking into account the student's health;
- select the internship site, taking into account a barrier-free environment and the accessibility of the facility;
- provide methodological support in adapting internship assignments and reporting forms

4.4.2. Adapting Practical Training for Students with Special Education Needs

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- provide instructions on how to safely conduct internships, taking into account the student's health;
- select the internship site, taking into account a barrier-free environment and the accessibility of the facility;
- provide methodological support in adapting internship assignments and reporting forms;
- collaborate with the host institution on support for students with special educational needs.

Students with special educational needs are provided with tutor support if necessary; internships can be conducted remotely or in an adapted format (e.g., with reduced hours, simplified reporting, etc.).

The University provides employment assistance to graduates with special educational needs, including career guidance, informational support, and assistance in finding positions that match the graduate's level of preparation and health capabilities.

5. Organizing Academic Mobility for Students with Special Educational Needs

Academic mobility for students with special educational needs (SEN) at Shymkent University is organized in accordance with the principles of inclusive education and respect for the rights and individual characteristics of each student.

Academic mobility for students with SEN involves their participation in educational programs and exchanges (domestic and international), internships, scientific conferences, and other forms of academic interaction on an equal basis with other

students.

To ensure the accessibility and effectiveness of academic mobility for individuals with SEN at the University:

- Support and advisory assistance are provided at all stages of academic mobility (before, during, and after participation);
- An individualized approach is provided when developing curricula and schedules, and the timing and content of the academic program are coordinated with the host institution;
- Access to necessary infrastructure, including transportation, accommodation, meals, educational materials, and communication tools, is guaranteed;
- Equal access to scholarships and other forms of financial support is ensured, including special grants for students with disabilities or other special educational needs;
- Partnership agreements are established with partner universities, taking into account inclusive conditions and the possibility of accommodating and supporting students with special educational needs;
- Monitoring and feedback mechanisms are developed and implemented to assess the quality of the conditions and content of academic mobility for students with special educational needs.

Academic mobility is coordinated by the university's Department of International Cooperation and Academic Mobility, in conjunction with the Inclusive Education Psychological Support Service and curators. Responsible departments maintain records, provide consultations, and support to students with special educational needs at all stages of mobility programs.

Academic mobility at the institute is viewed as a crucial element of inclusion, development, and expansion of opportunities for students with special educational needs.

6. Supporting the Educational and Personal Success of Students with Special Educational Needs

The success strategy for students with special educational needs (SEN) at Shymkent University is based on the principles of an individualized approach, the creation of a supportive educational environment, and the implementation of inclusive values.

Key areas of success strategy include:

1. Individualized learning:

- Development and implementation of individual educational trajectories;
- Flexible planning of the educational process, taking into account the student's capabilities;
- Providing differentiated assignments appropriate to the student's level of

preparation and developmental characteristics.

2. Psychological and pedagogical support:

- A team of specialists (tutors, psychologists, special education teachers);
- Regular monitoring of academic and personal achievements;
- Conducting corrective and developmental activities and consultations.

3. Providing an accessible environment:

- Barrier-free architectural design;
- Use of assistive technologies (aids, equipment, software);
- Possibility of assistance from assistants if needed.

4. Motivation and Support:

- Organization of interest clubs and inclusive groups;
- Conducting events that promote leadership skills and confidence;
- Public recognition of the achievements of students with special educational needs, including at official events.

5. Interaction with parents (legal guardians):

- Informing parents about academic achievements;
- Involvement in the planning and implementation of individualized support;
- Psychological and pedagogical counseling for families.

6. Support in career development:

- Organization of career guidance events;
- Inclusion in practice-oriented learning;
- Assistance in the employment of graduates with special educational needs.

Effective implementation of these areas allows us to create conditions in which every student with special educational needs can realize their potential, develop academic and personal qualities, and successfully integrate into the professional environment.

7. Improving inclusive practices in accordance with the Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2025–2030)

In accordance with the Concept of Inclusive Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2025–2030, Shymkent University is focusing on the following methodological approaches in implementing inclusive education:

- Transition from a medical to a social model of disability aimed at eliminating barriers and ensuring conditions for equal participation;
 - Conducting systematic professional development for teachers on inclusion issues, including through internal training and external courses;
 - Implementing mechanisms for the early identification of special educational needs and individual support for students with special educational needs;
- Integration of digital and assistive technologies (screen readers, speech synthesis

programs, electronic devices) needs and individual support of students with special educational needs;

- Integration of digital and assistive technologies (screen readers, speech synthesis programs, electronic educational resources) into the educational process;

- Fostering an inclusive culture through information campaigns, dialogue platforms, and the participation of students with special educational needs in the university's social life;

- Establishing and developing partnerships with civil society organizations, government agencies, and employers to create a sustainable environment of support and professional integration for graduates with special educational needs;

- Conducting internal monitoring of the inclusiveness of the educational environment based on the indicators defined in the Concept, with subsequent adjustment of the support strategy.

These recommendations serve as a basis for improving inclusive practices at Shymkent University and ensuring the full inclusion of students with special educational needs in the educational space.

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