



POLICY ON MEASURING AND TRACKING APPLICATIONS AND ADMISSIONS OF UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS



TERMEZ STATE UNIVERSITY



Introduction

Termez State University (TerSU) recognizes education as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for sustainable development, social equity, and national progress. In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Law “On Education” (2020), and the National Strategy for Human Rights, the University upholds the principles of equality, inclusiveness, and non-discrimination in all educational processes. Furthermore, TerSU aligns its commitments with international frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities).

The University acknowledges that certain groups within society—such as ethnic minorities, individuals from low-income families, persons with disabilities, non-traditional and mature students, women pursuing male-dominated fields, and newly settled refugees—face systemic barriers in accessing higher education. These barriers may arise from economic hardship, social marginalization, language challenges, or lack of access to preparatory education. As an institution committed to academic excellence and social justice, TerSU seeks to identify, measure, and address these disparities through an evidence-based and transparent system of application and admission tracking.

This policy establishes a comprehensive framework for the collection, analysis, and utilization of demographic and socio-economic data related to university admissions. It is designed to promote equitable access, ensure accountability in decision-making, and support the implementation of targeted measures that foster diversity and inclusion on campus.

Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or personal circumstances, have equal opportunities to apply, be admitted, and thrive at TerSU. The University’s approach reflects its dedication to the social responsibilities of higher education, as articulated in the UN’s “Education 2030 Framework for Action,” which calls upon universities to remove exclusionary practices and to strengthen the participation of disadvantaged groups.

The objectives of the policy are to establish a data-driven system for monitoring admissions, to create transparency in recruitment and selection processes, and to provide the foundation for evidence-based strategies aimed at reducing educational

inequalities. TerSU aims to identify patterns of underrepresentation, understand their causes, and introduce corrective actions that align with Uzbekistan’s State Policy on Youth Support, Gender Equality, and Social Protection.

Through this policy, the University commits to a holistic and continuous process of data collection and analysis that not only tracks representation but also informs the development of outreach, scholarship, and preparatory programs. The ultimate goal is to build a campus culture that reflects the diversity of Uzbekistan’s population and promotes mutual respect, inclusion, and equal opportunity for all.

Legal and Institutional Framework

This policy operates within the legal framework of the Republic of Uzbekistan and is consistent with the principles enshrined in the Constitution, the Law “On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (2019), and the Law “On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (2021). It also aligns with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-60 (2022) on the Development Strategy of the New Uzbekistan, which emphasizes inclusive education and the empowerment of marginalized groups.

At the international level, TerSU’s policy corresponds to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), the Global Compact on Refugees (2018), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966), all of which uphold the right to education without discrimination. Moreover, the policy reflects UNESCO’s vision that higher education institutions play a transformative role in promoting equality and diversity in society.

The University positions this policy within its broader strategic framework on equity and inclusion. It is linked to TerSU’s Admissions Policy, Anti-Discrimination Policy, and Gender Equality Policy, ensuring coherence across all administrative and academic functions. Oversight and implementation are coordinated by the Office of Student Affairs in collaboration with the Academic Council, the Department of Statistics and Analytics, and the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all academic programs and admission cycles of Termez State University, including undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. It covers domestic and international applicants alike, with particular attention to those belonging to historically underrepresented or vulnerable groups within the Uzbek context.

The policy governs all stages of the admissions process—from outreach and recruitment through application review, admission decisions, and enrollment tracking.

It also extends to monitoring the academic performance and retention rates of admitted students from underrepresented groups, ensuring that inclusion continues beyond admission.

Special consideration is given to categories that the University, based on national statistics and research, recognizes as at risk of exclusion or underrepresentation. These include: ethnic and linguistic minorities, low-income students, students from rural or remote regions, persons with disabilities, women entering fields with low female participation (such as engineering and technology), non-traditional students such as working adults, and newly settled refugee or migrant students seeking to integrate into the national education system.

The University affirms that data collected under this policy will be used solely for educational, statistical, and developmental purposes. All information will be handled in strict compliance with Uzbekistan's Law "On Personal Data" (2019), ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, and ethical use of sensitive demographic information.

Data Collection and Methodology

To implement the goals of this policy, TerSU employs a comprehensive data management system that records information at every stage of the admissions process. Data are gathered through application forms, entrance exam registration, and optional demographic surveys, allowing applicants to self-identify characteristics related to ethnicity, income status, disability, gender, or other relevant categories.

This data is analyzed by the University's Department of Statistics and Analytics in coordination with the Office of EDI. Regular audits are conducted to ensure accuracy, eliminate bias, and assess the representativeness of applicant and admitted student pools. The analysis includes comparisons across years and programs to detect trends or disparities.

In addition to quantitative data, qualitative information is collected through applicant feedback, interviews, and community outreach programs. This mixed-method approach enables the University to understand not only numerical representation but also the lived experiences and barriers faced by students from underrepresented groups.

Institutional Mechanisms and Data Management

To operationalize this policy, TerSU will establish a dedicated **Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)** under the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs. The EDI Office will coordinate with the Department of Statistics and Analytics, the Admission Commission, and the Rector's Office to ensure accurate and consistent data collection and reporting.

All application and admission records will include anonymized demographic information relevant to monitoring representation. Data will be categorized by gender, region, income level, disability status, and, where legally permissible, ethnicity and migration background. The University will maintain a secure digital database that allows for longitudinal tracking of applicants and students across academic years.

Annual analysis will focus on identifying disparities between application and admission rates for different groups, as well as trends in scholarship allocation and retention. These findings will be compiled into the **Annual Equity and Inclusion Report**, submitted to the Academic Council and made publicly available through the university's website and relevant national portals.

The monitoring process will also assess the impact of specific interventions—such as outreach campaigns, mentorship programs, and preparatory courses—on improving representation. Recommendations will be made each year to refine recruitment strategies and strengthen institutional accountability.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The implementation of this policy requires continuous and systematic monitoring to ensure progress toward equality and inclusion in higher education. Termez State University shall develop a comprehensive **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework** that measures both quantitative and qualitative indicators related to the applications, admissions, and retention of underrepresented groups.

The M&E Framework will function as an integral component of the University's strategic planning system, aligned with the **State Program for the Development of Higher Education (2023–2030)** and the **National Indicators for Sustainable Development Goals** adopted by the Republic of Uzbekistan. It will serve to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional measures in promoting access and fairness.

Data for monitoring shall be collected annually from the Admission Commission, the Academic Affairs Office, and relevant administrative departments. The main categories of indicators include:

- **Application and Admission Rates:** Comparative statistics showing the proportion of underrepresented applicants who are admitted, compared with the overall applicant pool.
- **Retention and Graduation Rates:** Monitoring of progression and completion rates for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **Financial Assistance and Scholarship Allocation:** Analysis of how need-based or merit-based financial aid benefits target populations.
- **Participation in Preparatory and Bridge Programs:** Evaluation of access to special educational programs designed to assist low-income, disabled, or refugee students.
- **Qualitative Feedback:** Collection of experiences and perceptions of inclusion through surveys, focus groups, and interviews conducted among underrepresented students.

Evaluation results shall be reviewed biannually by the **Academic Council** and shared with the **Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation** as part of national reporting requirements. The University shall also participate in independent external audits or social evaluations when requested by government bodies or international partners.

Reporting and Transparency

Transparency is essential for ensuring accountability and maintaining public confidence in TerSU's commitment to inclusivity. Therefore, the University shall prepare and publish an **Annual Equity and Inclusion Report**, summarizing the results of data analysis, progress toward targets, and policy interventions implemented throughout the academic year.

This report will include:

- Statistical breakdowns of applications, admissions, and enrollments by category.
- Analysis of trends and disparities.
- Description of inclusion initiatives and outcomes.
- Recommendations for future improvement.

The report shall be made publicly accessible on the official TerSU website and submitted to the **Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, the **State Committee on Statistics**, and relevant UN partner organizations, particularly **UNESCO** and **UNDP**, as part of Uzbekistan's contribution to SDG progress monitoring.

The University will also conduct **open forums and consultation meetings** with local stakeholders—including representatives of civil society, community leaders, and advocacy groups for women, youth, and persons with disabilities—to discuss findings, receive feedback, and identify emerging needs. This participatory approach ensures that the policy remains responsive and socially grounded.

Targeted Support Programs

TerSU recognizes that equitable access cannot be achieved solely by removing formal barriers; it also requires proactive measures to empower and support disadvantaged groups. In accordance with the **Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 61 (2021)** on improving social support for students, the University will implement targeted programs designed to assist underrepresented applicants before and after admission.

Such measures include:

1. **Preparatory and Bridging Courses:** Special pre-admission training for students from rural or low-income backgrounds to strengthen academic readiness and increase admission chances.
2. **Scholarship and Financial Aid Schemes:** Establishment of need-based grants for students from economically disadvantaged families, refugees, and those with disabilities.
3. **Mentorship and Counseling:** Personalized academic advising and mentorship programs led by faculty and senior students to assist new entrants from vulnerable groups.
4. **Accessible Infrastructure:** Ensuring physical and digital accessibility through ramps, elevators, adaptive technologies, and inclusive learning platforms for persons with disabilities, in line with the Law “On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (2021).
5. **Psychosocial and Integration Support:** Providing psychological counseling, peer networking, and cultural adaptation services for refugee and migrant students.

Each faculty and department shall appoint an **Inclusion Coordinator** responsible for monitoring student progress, liaising with the EDI Office, and providing regular feedback on implementation. These coordinators will also play a central role in identifying talented individuals from underrepresented backgrounds for participation in academic research, exchange programs, and leadership opportunities.

Collaboration with National and International Stakeholders

To enhance the quality and scope of its inclusion efforts, TerSU will actively collaborate with governmental and non-governmental organizations at both national and international levels. Partnerships will be established with the **Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction**, the **Youth Affairs Agency**, the **Women's Committee of Uzbekistan**, and the **Agency for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**, ensuring policy coherence and resource mobilization.

At the international level, cooperation with the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, **UNESCO**, **UNICEF**, and the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** will strengthen the University's capacity to design, implement, and evaluate inclusive education strategies. These collaborations may include research projects, staff training, scholarship opportunities, and exchange programs that promote global best practices in educational equity.

TerSU will also participate in international benchmarking exercises, including the **Times Higher Education Impact Rankings**, to measure its progress against global standards in inclusion and equality.

XI. Ethical Standards and Data Protection

The collection and use of personal data under this policy must strictly comply with ethical standards and legal norms. TerSU reaffirms its adherence to the **Law "On Personal Data" (2019)**, ensuring that all data are collected transparently, securely stored, and used exclusively for institutional monitoring and reporting purposes.

Students' demographic information shall remain confidential and anonymized in all published reports. Consent for data use must be obtained during application or enrollment, with clear communication about the purpose of monitoring and protection of privacy. The University shall appoint a **Data Protection Officer** within the EDI Office responsible for overseeing compliance and investigating any potential breaches. All staff involved in data collection or analysis will receive periodic training on data ethics, privacy, and anti-discrimination principles, in line with the **UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)** and national ethical standards.

Accountability and Enforcement

The successful implementation of this policy depends on the active participation of all university units. The **Rector of Termez State University** shall have overall responsibility for policy enforcement, while direct implementation and oversight shall be carried out by the **Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs**, the **Vice-Rector for Youth Affairs and Social Development**, and the **EDI Office**.

Non-compliance with the provisions of this policy—such as failure to provide data, discriminatory behavior in admission decisions, or negligence in reporting—may result in administrative measures under internal regulations and relevant national laws. The University shall maintain a grievance mechanism through which applicants and students can report cases of discrimination, unfair treatment, or procedural violations. All complaints will be investigated promptly and fairly by an independent review committee established within the EDI Office. Findings and resolutions shall be recorded, and recurring issues shall inform future policy revisions.

Implementation Roadmap

The implementation of this policy will occur through a structured, phased approach that ensures sustainability, inclusivity, and alignment with Uzbekistan’s higher education reforms and the UN’s global equality agenda. The process will begin with the institutionalization of an **Equity and Diversity Implementation Committee (EDIC)** under the authority of the Rector. This committee shall consist of representatives from academic departments, administrative units, student organizations, and relevant external stakeholders, ensuring broad participation in decision-making.

In the first phase (2025–2026), the committee will establish data collection systems and conduct a **comprehensive baseline study** to identify the current representation of various groups among applicants, admitted students, and graduates. This study will provide a foundation for measurable targets and will be updated annually.

The second phase (2026–2028) will focus on building capacity through staff training, the development of inclusive admission procedures, and the expansion of support programs for underrepresented groups. During this phase, TerSU will integrate inclusion targets into departmental performance evaluations and align them with the University’s Strategic Development Plan.

The third phase (2028–2030) will involve evaluation, consolidation, and institutionalization. By 2030, the University aims to achieve a demonstrable reduction in representation gaps, particularly among women in STEM programs, students with disabilities, and applicants from rural and low-income communities. The outcomes of this phase will be reflected in national reports on the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4 and SDG 10)**, demonstrating TerSU’s contribution to inclusive education and reduced inequality.

To ensure long-term impact, every new policy, project, or partnership at TerSU must undergo an **Inclusion Impact Assessment (IIA)** to evaluate potential implications for equity, access, and participation. This mechanism will embed inclusion as a cross-

cutting principle across all institutional processes, consistent with the **Law on Education (2020)** and the **National Strategy for Human Rights of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2020–2025)**.

Institutional Integration and Resource Allocation

For this policy to be effectively operationalized, inclusion and equity must be mainstreamed across all levels of university governance. The **Office for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)** will be expanded and equipped with qualified personnel specializing in sociology, educational management, and data analytics. This office will coordinate policy implementation, ensure compliance, and manage communication with government ministries and international partners.

Adequate resources will be allocated annually through the university budget to finance data systems, accessibility infrastructure, preparatory programs, and awareness campaigns. The University will also explore additional funding opportunities through international grants and partnerships with organizations such as **UNDP, UNICEF**, and the **European Union's Erasmus+ program**.

To promote accountability, each academic faculty and department shall develop an **Equity Action Plan**, setting specific, measurable objectives for improving diversity and inclusion. The Rector's Office will evaluate these plans annually, linking progress to departmental performance reviews and resource distribution.

Periodic Review and Continuous Improvement

In line with best international practices, this policy will be subject to a **comprehensive institutional review every three years**, led by the EDI Office and supervised by the Academic Council. The review process will include data analysis, stakeholder consultations, and evaluation of implementation outcomes.

The main objectives of the review will be:

- To assess progress toward measurable goals of equitable access and participation.
- To identify emerging barriers or new vulnerable groups requiring attention.
- To evaluate the adequacy of data systems, transparency measures, and stakeholder engagement.
- To propose amendments or refinements ensuring alignment with new national or international legal frameworks.

The review report will be submitted to the **Rector**, the **Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation**, and, where relevant, shared with the **UNESCO Regional**

Bureau for Education. Recommendations emerging from the review will guide updates to the University's Strategic Development Plan and be reflected in operational policies.

Alignment with International and National Legal Frameworks

This policy is rooted in and guided by the legal and ethical standards of both the **United Nations** and the **Republic of Uzbekistan**. Internationally, it draws upon:

- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**, Article 26, which guarantees the right to education without discrimination.
- The **UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)**, emphasizing equality of opportunity.
- The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)**, particularly Articles 9 and 24, on accessibility and inclusive education.
- The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, especially **Goal 4 (Quality Education)** and **Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities)**.

At the national level, it aligns with:

- The **Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (2023)**, Article 43, affirming equality before the law and prohibition of discrimination.
- The **Law on Education (2020)**, ensuring access to quality education for all citizens.
- The **National Strategy for Human Rights (2020–2025)**, promoting inclusive governance and social justice.
- The **State Program for the Development of Higher Education (2023–2030)**, supporting access for youth from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds.

By integrating these frameworks, Termez State University ensures that its inclusion policy is legally sound, ethically grounded, and internationally recognized.

XVII. Policy Renewal and Long-Term Commitment

Termez State University envisions inclusivity not as a temporary initiative but as a permanent institutional value. The University commits to the **continuous renewal of this policy** through stakeholder engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and regular adaptation to emerging social realities.

Every five years, the EDI Office shall convene a **University Inclusion Forum**, inviting participation from faculty, students, alumni, civil society, and government partners. The Forum will serve as a platform for evaluating the long-term social impact of inclusion measures and shaping the next phase of policy priorities.

In the long run, TerSU aims to become a **national model for inclusive higher education**, demonstrating that diversity strengthens academic excellence, innovation, and community engagement. The University's mission will continue to be guided by respect for human dignity, equality of opportunity, and a deep commitment to building an educational environment where every individual—regardless of background, ability, or circumstance—can learn, contribute, and thrive.

Final Provisions

This policy shall enter into force upon approval by the **Rector of Termez State University** and shall remain valid until superseded by a revised version. All previous internal regulations inconsistent with this policy are hereby amended or repealed.

The EDI Office, in coordination with the Rector's Office and relevant administrative bodies, is responsible for the dissemination, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of this policy. Copies shall be made available in Uzbek, Russian, and English, ensuring accessibility for all members of the University community and international partners.

Through this policy, Termez State University affirms its unwavering commitment to fairness, equality, and the universal right to education. Guided by the principles of the **United Nations** and the **laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, the University will continue to advance a culture of inclusion—transforming higher education into a gateway of opportunity for all, and contributing meaningfully to the nation's sustainable and equitable future.

Entry into force and review

The policy is effective from 1 January 2025.

It shall be reviewed every three years, or within six months following any relevant legislative change.

Responsible unit and contact

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Signed by the Rector:

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Agreed by:

Obidjon Shofiev

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