

PROGRAMME  
"ADAPTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
TO THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE  
UNIVERSITY".

(for 2020 - 2024)

This programme was developed in pursuance of the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, approved by Presidential Decree No. 221 of 31 October 2018, as well as Decree No. 360 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Issues of Inclusive Education Development in the Kyrgyz Republic" of 19 July 2019 by an inter-university working group with the assistance of the Kyrgyz Law Clinics Association together with the UN Development Programme in the Kyrgyz Republic within the project "Promoting Harmony and Cooperation Mo

This normative document presents theses on the adaptation of foreign students from the moment of their stay in Kyrgyzstan until the moment of their departure to their home country.

The programme fulfils an informational-methodological and organizational-planning function. It consists of a mandatory and an optional part. Each HEI is given the opportunity to create their own programs and work programs in accordance with the requirements of the labor market.

Composition of the working group:

1. Muratov Bekzhan Abdizhalilovich - Deputy Dean for Educational Work at UMMU;
2. Toktonazarova Nuriza Tynychbekovna - Deputy Dean for Educational Work of UMMU;
3. Kochkonbaeva Sonaiym Ismailovna - curator IN5L-1-20D;
4. Nurlanova Nurperi Nurlanovna - curator IN5I-3-21D;
5. Botobekov Nurila Kochkoralyevna - supervisor IN6I-1-21;

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## GLOSSARY

Adaptation is a holistic phenomenon characterizing and reflecting the adaptation of an individual to the socio-cultural and natural environment, integration with the community and self-determination in it based on the most essential features of individuality.

International students (also international students) - persons entering the Kyrgyz Republic from abroad to obtain education at various levels and specializations.

Clinician - a student who is interning in a legal clinic and is engaged not only in practice but also in research.

Migration law - a branch of law regulating the movement of people and their change of residence or domicile.

Law - a set of norms and rules established and protected by the state authorities which regulate relations of people in the society.

Legal (legal) assistance - is a professional activity of lawyers aimed at assisting citizens and legal entities in resolving issues related to implementation of law norms which is expressed in the provision of legal (legal) services.

Legal (legal) services include:

- provision of legal information, consultations and clarifications on legal issues;
- Preparation of applications, complaints, procedural and other legal documents
- Representation of individuals before the courts, other State bodies and local authorities and before other persons
- Ensuring the protection of the person against accusation;
- Providing assistance in ensuring the person's access to secondary legal aid and mediation.

Social-pedagogical adaptation - connected, first of all, to the assimilation by foreign students of norms and concepts of professional environment, adaptation to the nature, content and conditions of the organization of the educational process, formation of students' skills of independent academic and scientific work.

Socio-psychological adaptation - entry of a foreign student into the system of interpersonal relations, adaptation of a personality to the group, to relations in it, manifestation of own style of behaviour.

Sociocultural adaptation - an active process of interaction between a representative of another culture and the environment of his present habitat, the process of active acquisition of necessary for life work skills and knowledge, assimilation by the student the basic norms, patterns, values of the new surrounding reality (the phenomenon of "entry" or "inclusion" in the culture).

Legal clinics are part of the free legal aid system. Legal clinics are established on the basis of higher educational institutions in order to provide legal assistance and legal education to the population and to form legal assistance skills of the students of legal specialisation.

Legal advice is the provision of professional advice on how best to proceed in a specific situation and under the prevailing law enforcement conditions.

Tolerance (from Lat. tolerantia - tolerance) is a quality characterising the attitude towards another person as an equal individual and expressed in the conscious suppression of the sense of rejection caused by all that is different in the other (appearance, manner of speech, tastes, lifestyle, beliefs, etc.). Tolerance implies an attitude of understanding and dialogue with the other, recognising and respecting their right to be different.

Inclusion - translated from English means "inclusion". It is defined here as the inclusion of every learner in the educational process and community/society in general, avoiding the exclusion of learners with special educational needs from participation in educational and socio-cultural life.

Inclusive environment - a learning environment in which all learners with different educational needs feel comfortable and fully participate in the educational process.

Inclusive education - providing equal access to education for all learners, taking into account the diversity of educational needs and individual capacities.

## INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the problem of adaptation of foreign students in Kyrgyz HEIs is determined, first of all, by the tasks of their further effective education as future specialists. Successful adaptation contributes, on the one hand, to the rapid inclusion of students in the educational process, which solves the problem of maintaining the student population, which decreases significantly during the first sessions. On the other hand, it helps to improve the quality of training of young people in higher education.

From their first days in HEI, international students are in an unfamiliar socio-cultural, linguistic and national environment, in which they have to adapt in the shortest possible time. Effective adaptation enhances the quality and level of learning of international students and provides high motivation to master knowledge, skills and abilities.

Attracting foreign students is an important component of the educational process all over the world, including Kyrgyzstan. The growing number of foreign students from different cultures coming to our country for higher education makes it urgent to constantly promote the organized and cognitive nature of the work on the formation of foreign students' system of knowledge about the rights and responsibilities in the country, culture, traditions, national characteristics of the Kyrgyz Republic. For 2018 and 2019, the top five consumers of higher education in Kyrgyzstan were Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, India and China. Uzbekistan remains the largest consumer of higher education in Kyrgyzstan. And in the 2018-2019 academic year, Uzbekistan sent more than 12,000 students to higher education institutions in Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken regions<sup>1</sup>.

In accordance with the Concept of Education Development in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2020 - involvement of foreign students in the educational process is an important and responsible task and the resolution of issues related to the adaptation of foreign students increases the prestige of educational institutions and, consequently, the prestige of Kyrgyzstan abroad. For Kyrgyzstan, human capacity development, including attracting foreign students to secondary and higher vocational education (export of education) can be the basis for regional leadership and ensure the country's competitiveness at the regional and global level. In this connection, higher education institutions should develop programmes that promote.

<sup>1</sup> According to data provided by HEIs in Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken provinces.

The number of foreign students in our universities in the future is largely dependent on how well they are now adapting to the new environment and coping with the challenges of obtaining a quality higher education.

The increase in the number of international students and their future contributions to our university depends largely on how comfortable international students feel today in the university's education system.

International students are potential partners in economy, politics, culture, technology and education of tomorrow. And it is today, on the basis of student friendship, that future business relations and contacts are established, that international students form an idea of our nation, state and university as a reliable, serious partner, ready to build relationships on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation.

In the process of study, foreign students face a new socio-cultural and linguistic environment, new methods and forms of learning, a change of work and rest mode, new natural, geographical and climatic conditions, which inevitably causes them to have new unfamiliar emotional experiences and mental states. This objectively challenges the university to effectively organise the process of adaptation of international students to the conditions of life and learning in a new socio-cultural and linguistic environment that recognises and adheres to the idea of equality, diversity and inclusiveness.

The University aims to become a model of inclusion and diversity and to spread a culture of acceptance and caring for all social groups. An environment must be created in which all international and local students can fulfil their potential.

Inclusion and diversity means accepting differences, appreciating their value and capitalising on everyone's uniqueness. We need inclusion and diversity to achieve our educational goals and strive to be a model university in our sector. Diversity gives us access to the best talents, and inclusivity enables them to reach their full potential. Our staff and students have the opportunity to fulfil their potential in an environment that is open to innovation and free communication.

We believe that an inclusive way of working and learning encourages innovation and growth, and:

- makes a great place to learn, where the uniqueness of each individual is valued;
- Produces highly skilled employees who will perform excellently;
  
- gives stakeholders the confidence that they are dealing with a socially responsible university that cares about the sustainable development of society.

In order to address and secure the above-mentioned aims and objectives, the university approves and implements this programme. It gives international students a real opportunity to participate in the social, cultural, sporting life of the HEI and will strengthen the prestige of the HEI abroad.

This program should serve to ensure adequate interaction of international students with the socio-cultural and intellectual environment of the university, its security, fundamental rights and freedoms, psycho-emotional stability, formation of new qualities of personality and favorable social status, mastering of new social roles, acquisition of new values, comprehension of significance of traditions of future profession.

The present program on adaptation of foreign students for 2020-2024 corresponds to normative-legal acts of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Charter of the University and does not contradict its other local normative acts.

## SECTION I AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME, ITS MAIN FUNCTIONS

The program defines the goals, objectives, main directions, forms and methods of work with international students at the university taking into account the characteristics, needs of students, as well as provides specific measures - mechanisms for cooperation of the university with state and other bodies. Defines the order of interaction between the international department, student council, teaching staff, legal clinic and curators of international students.

The purpose of the program is to create conditions for the successful adaptation of foreign students, regardless of gender, race, nationality and citizenship, social status, age, language, culture, religion and other characteristics not only to the educational space of the university, but also access to legal protection, rights and legitimate interests in the Kyrgyz Republic by maintaining and ensuring an inclusive and diverse environment in the university.

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#### Objectives:

- To help international students adapt to life in Kyrgyzstan and study at the university;
- Creating conditions for international students to adapt to their new social environment;
- Nurturing a culture of behaviour, prevention of delinquency and negative social manifestations;
- Raising the awareness of foreign students about the mechanisms for the protection of human rights and freedoms, legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Implementation of a set of organizational, cultural and preventive measures;
- Maintaining and developing the initiative of foreign students and thereby helping them to discover their inner potential, originality and richness of personality;
- Promotion of healthy lifestyle among foreign students;
- Cohesion of local and international students;
- Introducing foreign students to Kyrgyz traditions and culture;

- To give foreign students experience in building relationships with representatives of other countries and cultures on the basis of equality, respect, fairness and cooperation.

This programme fulfils the following functions:

- developmental - creating conditions for the full social development of international students, stimulating positive changes in their personal development, supporting the processes of discovery and self-expression of abilities;
- protective - neutralization of negative influence of the environment on the personality of the student and his/her development, increase of the social security level in the conditions of their stay at the university and in the dormitory;
- regulatory - regulation of students' interpersonal relations;
- informative - increasing knowledge and awareness of foreign students about the rules of residence, legal and ethical norms of behaviour in our country;
- socialising - introduction of the missing elements into the life of international students to speed up the adaptation process.
- corrective -- correction of negative influences in students' behaviour and communication.

The system of coordinated and responsible interaction between all university structures becomes the effective mechanism to manage the process of sociocultural, educational and professional adaptation of foreign students.

## SECTION II MAIN DIRECTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ADAPTATION PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

1. organisational, methodological and informational support of the educational process provides:

- organising, coordinating the activities of all structural divisions of the university to plan the work and implementation by areas - familiarisation with the traditions of Kyrgyzstan, familiarisation with the rules of stay and residence in the Kyrgyz Republic, familiarisation with the organisation of the educational process at the university, basic information on the legislation of Kyrgyzstan and internal rules of the university necessary for foreign students.
- expanding the activities of the university legal clinics in the direction of legal education about the rights and responsibilities to ensure the protection of the rights and freedoms, safety of foreign students by providing free legal aid and resolving legal problems with the participation of relevant government and non-government institutions.
- Strengthening the work with local and international students as well as university staff to promote the idea of equality, mutual respect, tolerance, cooperation to achieve common goals, non-violence policy, inclusiveness and diversity of the educational environment.
- creating conditions to familiarise students with the specifics of the educational process at the university (meetings, individual and group discussions, counselling on the observance of internal regulations, organisation of mental work, work and rest regimes, etc.).

- Provision of access to information on the web-site, creation and distribution of information materials reflecting the content, direction and forms of life of students of university (information stands, brochures and booklets, web-sites, etc.);

2. Socio-psychological and pedagogical support of the process of adaptation of foreign students contributes to:

- provision of social guarantees to foreign students;
- developing a system of moral and material incentives;

- assistance in professional adaptation of foreign students.

This includes individual work of curator and staff of international department on providing counseling assistance to foreign students, work on social and psychological adaptation of first-year students in the university dormitory, organization of thematic meetings of foreign students living in the dormitory with specialists (psychologists, teachers, representatives of legal clinics).

3. The social and cultural area facilitates:

- opportunities for foreign students to express their own thoughts, feelings and emotions. Through participation in mass cultural events of the university they get acquainted: with the history and landmarks of the Kyrgyz Republic, learn the customs, traditions, cultural features of the Kyrgyz people.

- involvement of students in the discussion of topical issues of university life, in a variety of activities of civic-patriotic, socially useful, creative, artistic, sports and other directions.

- Development of such personal qualities as sociability, communication culture, tolerance, determination, cooperation, responsibility, independence, and creative activity;

- ensuring the development of intellectual and cognitive abilities, in particular, the ability and readiness for independent and continuous learning of a foreign language, for further self-education with its help;

- improving the experience of productive creative activities, gaining experience in research activities using the language studied;

4. The sports and health-improving direction supports:

- inculcating in students a love for sports, physical education by involving students in active participation in sports activities and regular attendance of the university gym.

SECTION III ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MAIN AREAS OF ACTIVITIES WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOR 2020-2024