

# Guidelines Governing Direct Admissions into Doctoral Programs at National Central University

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Article 1 These guidelines are provided in accordance with the Ministry of Education's *Guidelines Governing Direct Admissions into Doctoral Programs*.

Article 2 Undergraduate students with exemplary academic performance and a potential for research who are in their final year of study (or applying for early graduation) as well as master's students who have been enrolled in a graduate program for at least one year (including part-time students and students enrolled in professional-development programs) may apply for direct admission into a doctoral program on condition that they have received (1) the recommendation of two associate or full professors in their current department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program, (2) the consent of the department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program to which they are applying, and (3) the approval of the president of the University.

Undergraduate students in their final year of study (or applying for early graduation) whose application for direct admission into a doctoral program has been accepted must obtain their bachelor's degree before enrolling in the doctoral program; those who fail to do so shall have their admission cancelled.

Students admitted into a doctoral program through the direct-admission channel are considered first-year doctoral students and must comply with all rules and regulations governing first-year doctoral students as set forth by the University and the student's respective department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program.

Students admitted into a doctoral program through the direct-admission channel may not apply for a deferral of their admission.

Article 3 The standards for determining whether an applicant's academic performance is exemplary are as follows:

I. Undergraduate students in their final year of study (as well as those applying for

early graduation) who meet any of the following criteria shall be deemed as having demonstrated exemplary academic performance:

- i. Rank in the top one-third of their department, class, departmental track (where tracks are approved by the Ministry of Education) or undergraduate degree program and show a potential for research;
  - ii. Have exceptional circumstances that, in the judgment of their department, graduate institute, or professional-development or degree program, demonstrates exemplary academic performance and also show a potential for research.
- II. Master's students who have completed at least 16 credit hours of required graduate courses (excluding credit hours from undergraduate-level make-up courses) and who meet any of the following criteria shall be deemed as having demonstrated exemplary academic performance:
- i. Rank in the top one-third of their department, graduate institute, class, departmental track (where tracks are approved by the Ministry of Education) or graduate degree program and show a potential for research;
  - ii. Have exceptional circumstances that, in the judgment of their department, graduate institute, or professional-development or degree program, demonstrates exemplary academic performance and also show a potential for research.

An applicant's potential for research should be fully explained in the applicant's recommendation letters.

In cases where a direct-admission doctoral degree candidate has exceptional circumstances that, in the judgment of his or her department, graduate institute, or professional-development or degree program, demonstrates exemplary academic performance (as specified in item ii of the two subparagraphs above), such circumstances must be fully explained in the minutes of the meeting in which the candidate's application was approved.

Should a department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program have stricter standards for determining an applicant's academic performance than those described here, the stricter standards shall apply.

Each department, graduate institute, and professional-development or degree program that has established their own standards for determining the academic performance of prospective direct-admission doctoral applicants must file a copy of those standards with the Office of Academic Affairs no later than March 20th each year prior to the beginning of the applicable academic year.

Article 4 Students seeking admission into a doctoral program through the direct-admission channel must present the following documentation to the department, graduate institute

or professional-development or degree program to which they are applying:

- I. An application form for direct-admission into a doctoral program;
- II. A copy of an official transcript issued within one month of their application and which must include their accumulative ranking and grade point average;
- III. Two or more letters of recommendation from an associate or full professor;
- IV. A copy of their statement of purpose;
- V. All other documents required by the department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program to which they are applying;
- VI. A copy of any on-the-job training agreements required of part-time students.

Upon the review and approval of the department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program to which they are applying in a departmental meeting, the abovementioned documents, together with the minutes of the said meeting, shall be collated and forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs for initial approval and to the president of the University for final approval.

Article 5 The number of students accepted through the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel during the first and second rounds of the admission process shall not exceed 40 percent of the total admission quotas for doctoral students permitted by the Ministry of Education for that academic year. In the case of departments permitted to enroll less than five students, the maximum number of students admitted through the direct-admission channel shall be two.

Doctoral programs must specify their admission quotas for direct-admission doctoral students on their admission guidelines; these quotas must be included in the University's total admission quotas permitted by the Ministry of Education for that academic year.

Any unfilled admission quotas from the first round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel may be reserved for the use of other doctoral degree channels with the approval of the University Admission Committee; any unfilled admission quotas remaining after the doctoral students have enrolled may be rolled over to the second round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel.

If a student admitted during the first round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel is forced by circumstances to withdraw his or application after it has been approved by the university president, the admission quota that becomes available may be rolled over to the second round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel.

Article 6 The timetables for the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel shall be left to the individual departments, graduate institutes, and professional-development and degree programs to set and announce. The names and specifics of students admitted in the first

round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel shall be sent by the respective departments, graduate institutes, and professional-development and degree programs to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than August 20th, to be collated and forwarded to the president of the University for final approval; the names and specifics of students admitted in the first round of the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel shall be sent no later than January 31st.

Students admitted through the direct-admission doctoral-degree channel in the first round shall begin study in the fall semester; students admitted in the second round shall begin study in the spring semester.

Article 7 Master's students admitted into a doctoral program through the direct-admission channel who must discontinue in that program due to unforeseen circumstances or failure to pass their qualifying exam may petition to return to their original master's program or to transfer to a master's program in another related department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program by submitting an application form to both the doctoral program in which they are enrolled and the master's program to which they seek to transfer. For the petition to be granted, the applicant must obtain the approval of both programs as well as the final approval of the president of the University. Those whose applications are approved shall return to their original master's program or transfer to a master's program in another related department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program; the time the student has been enrolled in the doctoral program, as well as any time the student may have spent during an approved suspension of studies shall not be included in the calculation of the student's maximum period of graduate study.

Returning students shall be placed at the same grade level they were at prior to their direct admission into doctoral program and must comply with the rules and regulations of the program in which they are pursuing the master's degree. If the student has been granted permission to return to his or her original master's program in the middle of a semester, that semester shall be included in the calculation of the student's period of study.

Article 7-1 Undergraduate students admitted into a doctoral program through the direct-admission channel who must discontinue in that program due to unforeseen circumstances or failure to pass their qualifying exam may petition to transfer to a master's program in a related department, graduate institute or professional-development or degree program by submitting an application form to both the doctoral program in which they are enrolled and the master's program to which they seek to transfer. For the petition to be granted, the applicant must obtain the approval of both programs as well as the final approval of the president of the University. Successful applicants shall be placed at the first-year level, and the time the student has been enrolled in the doctoral program, as well as any time the student may have spent during an approved suspension of studies shall not be included in the calculation of the student's maximum period of graduate study. All transfer students must comply with the rules and regulations of the program in which they are pursuing their master's degree. If the student has been granted

permission to transfer in the middle of a semester, that semester shall be included in the calculation of the student's period of study.

- Article 7-2 Once a student has returned to his or her original program or transferred to a master's program, he or she may not re-apply for admission into any direct-admission doctoral program.
- Article 8 Direct-admission doctoral students who pass their qualifying exam but fail to pass their doctoral thesis defense by the end of their final year of study shall be granted a master's degree in lieu of a doctoral degree, providing that their thesis is deemed by their thesis examination committee to have met a standard appropriate for a master's degree.
- Article 9 The aforementioned guidelines shall be implemented and entered into force upon approval by a meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee. The same procedure applies to any amendment of these guidelines.