Idayatulla Adikhanov, PhD

Vice Dean for Academic Affairs & Associate Professor · Educational Leadership & Digital Transformation

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PROFILE

Educational leader and researcher with a **PhD in Education from Nazarbayev University** and more than 15 years of progressive experience across school leadership, higher education governance, university teaching and applied policy research. Currently **Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor at SDU University**, leading academic operations, international accreditation (ASIIN, FIBAA), curriculum reform, International Baccalaureate (IB) programme development and international partnerships.

Research focuses on **school technology leadership, digital leadership, teachers' ICT integration and AI in school improvement**, and on capacity-building for school leaders. Published in peer-reviewed international journals and a contributor to national policy analysis for the Senate of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Recognised for bridging research, policy and practice to deliver evidence-based improvement in education systems.

15+	3,500+	180+	ASIIN · FIBAA
years in education, leadership & research	students in the faculty under academic leadership	faculty staff across 3 departments	international accreditation coordinated

RESEARCH INTERESTS

AI in school improvement · School technology leadership · Digital leadership and digital transformation in education · Teachers' technology (ICT) integration · Leadership capacity-building and professional development · Education policy, reform and policy borrowing · Mixed-methods research

EDUCATION

PhD in Education — 2019 – 2025
Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Education – Astana, Kazakhstan · Degree conferred June 2025

- **Dissertation:** *School Technology Leadership Practices for Teachers' Technology Integration in Kazakhstani Secondary Schools: A Mixed-Methods Study*
- **Supervisors:** Dr Kathy Malone; Dr Janet Helmer · **External Supervisor:** Dr Elaine Wilson (University of Cambridge)
- **External Examiner:** Dr Jayson W. Richardson (University of Denver)

Visiting Research Internship (one semester, doctoral study) — 2020
University of Cambridge – Cambridge, United Kingdom

Research Internship – Bolashak International Scholarship — 2014
University of Wolverhampton – Wolverhampton, United Kingdom

Master of Pedagogical Sciences — 2012 – 2014
Suleyman Demirel University (now SDU University) – Almaty, Kazakhstan · Specialisation: Foreign Languages (Two Foreign Languages)

Bachelor of Translation Studies — 2006 – 2010
M. Auezov South Kazakhstan State University – Shymkent, Kazakhstan

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

HIGHER EDUCATION

Vice Dean for Academic Affairs / Associate Professor — 2025 – Present

SDU University, Faculty of Education and Humanities – Almaty, Kazakhstan

- Lead all academic operations of a faculty of **3 departments, 3,500+ students and 180+ faculty staff**, including curriculum reform, academic recruitment and budget allocation.
- Act as **Interim Dean** when required, representing the faculty in external meetings and institutional decision-making.
- Coordinate national and international **accreditation processes (ASIIN, FIBAA)**.
- Initiated and oversaw the introduction of the **International Baccalaureate (IB) training programme**, preparing the university for licensing to certify IB educators.
- Developed **international partnerships and MoUs**, including with The Education University of Hong Kong and Birkbeck, University of London.
- Lead the development of the faculty's **research capacity**, strengthening academic scholarship and research output.

Senior Lecturer & Graduate Program Coordinator — 2023 – 2025

SDU University, Faculty of Education and Humanities – Almaty, Kazakhstan

- Coordinated the faculty's graduate programmes, including **curriculum design, faculty mentoring and quality assurance**.
- Taught research methodology, academic writing and educational leadership courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and supervised undergraduate and master's theses (see *Teaching & Supervision*).

Graduate Teaching & Research Assistant — 2019 – 2023

Nazarbayev University, Graduate School of Education – Astana, Kazakhstan

- Contributed to **STEM education and teaching reform research projects**.
- Designed research instruments, collected survey (Qualtrics), interview and observation data, and conducted advanced analysis in **SPSS and NVivo**.
- Produced research reports and literature reviews and supported grant proposals; assisted faculty with syllabus design, assessment and grading.
- Collaborated with international supervisors and researchers on multidisciplinary research outputs.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP & TEACHING

Director — 2018 – 2019

Galaxy International School – Almaty, Kazakhstan

- Led an academic programme aligned with **Cambridge international standards**.
- Directed staff recruitment, professional development and performance evaluation; oversaw financial management, resource allocation and budgeting.
- Strengthened the school's branding and marketing strategy, **increasing student enrolment** and visibility, and deepened parent and community engagement.

Principal — 2016 – 2018

Kokshetau Bilim-Innovation Lyceum – Kokshetau, Kazakhstan

- Oversaw school-wide operations, including staff recruitment, financial management and facilities; managed relations with the regional education department and external stakeholders.
- Monitored student achievement, teacher performance and curriculum delivery.
- Strengthened Olympiad preparation and national test performance, consolidating the school's standing as **Best School in Akmola Region** and **among the Top 10 schools in Kazakhstan** (2013–2018).

Vice-Principal — 2013 – 2016

Kokshetau Bilim-Innovation Lyceum – Kokshetau, Kazakhstan

- Coordinated instructional programme design and continuous improvement; scheduled classes using the aSc TimeTables platform.
- Led full integration of the **EduPage learning management system** across the academic process and trained teachers and students, improving efficiency and access to data.

- Organised regular professional development trainings and seminars for teaching staff.
- Directed students' subject Olympiad preparation, achieving the **best Olympiad results in Akmola Region** (2013–2018), and strengthened Unified National Test (UNT) results.

Teacher of English
2010 – 2013

Astana Kazakh-Turkish Lyceum for Gifted Boys – Astana, Kazakhstan

- Taught English to grades 7–11 and prepared high-achieving students for subject Olympiads; served as homeroom teacher for grades 7–9.
- Supervised students' participation in national and international research project competitions.
- Awarded the **"Best Teacher" title** among all Kazakh-Turkish Lyceums in Kazakhstan (2012–2013).

RESEARCH PROJECTS & POLICY ENGAGEMENT

National Expert / Researcher
2023

Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan – "Taldau" Analytical Centre

- One of six national experts on the project **"Role of Business in Solving Education Problems"**.
- Authored a chapter published in the Senate's analytical book (see *Publications*).

Research Assistant – STEM Education & Teaching Reform Projects
2019 – 2023

Nazarbayev University – Astana, Kazakhstan

- Contributed to multiple projects using mixed-methods designs; analysed data and co-authored research reports.

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

Agbo, S. A., Nogaibayeva, A., Kenshinbay, T., Myrzabek, A., **Adikhanov, I.**, & Mazhen, Y. (2025). Human capital, white elephants, and global competitiveness: Predicament of distorted educational policy borrowing in Kazakhstan's universities. *International Journal of Educational Reform*. https://doi.org/10.1177/10567879251337358

Myrzakulova, G., Daripbayeva, G., **Adikhanov, I.**, & Beisembayeva, K. (2023). Сабақты бақылау парағының қазақстандық үлгісі [A Kazakhstani model of the lesson observation sheet]. *Білім – Образование*, *107*(4), 27–36. *(In Kazakh)*

Club of Young Experts of the Senate of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2023). *Qazaqstan: на пути к модели устойчивого развития. Взгляд молодых экспертов* [Qazaqstan: Towards a model of sustainable development. The view of young experts]. Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan. ISBN 978-601-11-0030-4. https://senate.parlam.kz/storage/8424665b8afe459899096c5d1e59932f.pdf *(Contributing chapter author; in Russian)*

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Adikhanov, I., & Sagyndykova, Z. (2016). The impact of blended learning on learning outcomes in Kazakhstani secondary education. In *EDULEARN16 Proceedings* (pp. 8171–8177). IATED. *(Paper presented at the 8th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies, Barcelona, Spain, 4–6 July 2016)*

TEACHING & SUPERVISION

Courses Taught
2023 – Present

SDU University · Undergraduate and postgraduate levels

- Research Methodology in Education · Academic Writing · Thesis Writing · Leadership & Management in Education

Thesis Supervision
2023 – Present

SDU University

- **9 undergraduate theses** supervised to successful defence, all with excellent results.
- **7 master's students** – empirical thesis supervision in progress.

ACADEMIC SERVICE & MEMBERSHIPS

2023 – Present **Reviewer**, *Pedagogical and Teaching Science Journal*, SDU University.

2023 **Member**, "Taldau" Analytical Centre, Senate of the Republic of Kazakhstan (following successful completion of the Centre's training courses).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CERTIFICATION

2018 **Effective School Leadership & Management: The UK Perspective** – North London Grammar School, London, UK (16–17 July 2018).

2017 **Education Leadership** – Professional development course for principals, Perceptum Education, Almaty (4–6 August 2017).

2014 **University Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)** – University of Wolverhampton International Academy, UK (July – September 2014).

2011 **Oxford Teachers' Academy: Extensive Reading** (18 hours) – Oxford University Department for Continuing Education & Oxford University Press.

HONOURS & AWARDS

2026 **Certificate of Appreciation** – Rector, SDU University, for outstanding contributions to the 2025 National Ranking of Educational Programmes by NCE "Atameken".

2025 **Letter of Gratitude** – Rector, SDU University, for significant professional contribution to the university's development to international standards, ASIIN accreditation and IB-level preparation.

2022 **Letter of Appreciation** – Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for contribution to peer-to-peer knowledge exchange on higher education through sharing Nazarbayev University experience.

2021 **Letter of Appreciation** – Department of Higher and Postgraduate Education, Ministry of Education and Science, for contributions to education system development through dissemination of Nazarbayev University expertise.

2017 **Certificate of Merit** – Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

2015 **Letter of Gratitude** – Vice Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for personal contribution to the national education system.

2015 **Certificate of Honour** – Republican Scientific and Practical Centre "Daryn", Ministry of Education and Science, for contribution to developing talented youth.

2015 **Letter of Gratitude** – Akim (Governor) of Akmola Region, for outstanding performance in the school's academic process and the development of gifted students.

2015 **Certificate of Honour** – Department of Education of Akmola Region, for contribution to the development of education.

2015 **Certificate of Appreciation** – Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, as research supervisor of a prizewinner at the XXII Vernadsky National Contest, Moscow.

2014 **Bolashak International Scholarship** of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for an international research internship in the United Kingdom.

2013 **1st Prize** – National Teaching Performance Contest among teaching staff of the Kazakh-Turkish Lyceums network (2012–2013).

2009 – 2010 **1st Place (three awards)** – Republican student scientific conferences: Karaganda State University (Language Studies, 2009); S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University (2010); Zhambyl Technical-Humanitarian University (New Information Technologies, 2010).

LANGUAGES

Kazakh – Native | **Russian** – Proficient | **English** – Proficient | **Turkish** – Intermediate

SKILLS & EXPERTISE

Research	Mixed-methods design, survey and instrument design, qualitative interviewing and observation, thesis supervision
Research Software	SPSS, jamovi, RStudio (R), NVivo, Qualtrics
AI Tools	AI-powered academic and research tools for literature search and review, academic writing support and data analysis
Academic Leadership	Accreditation (ASIIN, FIBAA), IB programme implementation, curriculum reform, quality assurance, recruitment, budgeting
Internationalisation	Institutional partnerships, MoUs, academic mobility agreements
Professional Development	Teacher and school-leader capacity-building; research methodology and academic writing workshops
Digital Education	Technology integration, EduPage LMS, aSc TimeTables
Communication	Academic writing, public speaking, stakeholder negotiation

REFERENCES

Available upon request.