

FENS Graduate Student Acceptance Procedures

May 2019, version 5

Common grounds:

Acceptance to graduate students are granted by the Institute regardless of their funding source. The Institute is responsible for making sure that all students have the minimum credentials to succeed in their courses, have the basic skills to carry out the research necessary to complete their thesis work, are knowledgeable at the level of providing support in undergraduate courses and have the personal skills to function harmoniously in the research and teaching environments.

Students are offered either Full scholarship (FS) (tuition waiver + stipend + dorm) or TW (tuition waiver + dorm). If they have their own stipend in the form of a TUBITAK BIDEF scholarship, or some other source, they are also offered TW + dorm. FS students are expected to support undergraduate courses in the form of duties equaling 20 hour/week effort; this is 10 hour/week for TW students. Students can also be accepted without any scholarship. Students working at other institutions have an obligation to bring in documents signed by the Institute Director and a responsible party at their institution outlining the expectations to the Dean's Office before Enrollment (Appendix A).

FS is allocated to students based on the rules outlined in Appendix B. Any FENS faculty member or SUNUM/IMC researcher can support a TW student by stipends from their own grants, after the student is accepted to the Institute through the regular interview process.

Students are free to change advisors and as a result, funding sources for their stipends, as long as the change abides by YÖK regulations.

The Institute will check the validity of these conditions every year with the Student Resources department against any changes in regulations.

Interview Process:

In line with the regulations of the Higher Education Council, the interview process needs to be fair and quantifiable. The process has two steps:

Step-1: Initial screening

1. All applicants are scored according to the following information provided in their application package (Appendix C): ALES/GRE score + Transcript evaluation, GPA, Statement of Purpose, CV, Reference Letters). Missing items receive the minimum point. Each candidate is evaluated by at least two faculty members. If the scores do not match to

within 2 points of each other, additional evaluators are asked to re-score until results converge to a value.

2. A cut-off value is determined by the graduate program and a short list of candidates are invited for an interview.

Step-2: Interview

No candidate will be accepted without an interview. For candidates who have a valid reason for not being personally present, video interviews (using Skype etc.) are to be scheduled.

All interviews must be conducted with at least 5 jury members present in the evaluation room (3 for graduate programs with less than 8 full time faculty members). If sufficient number of jury members are not present, the interview must stop until this number is established. The jury members need not be all the same throughout the interview day. Fairness is guaranteed as the evaluation criteria (Appendix D) are based on narrowly-defined quantifiable dimensions.

For programs whose student resources are also used by outside affiliated members (SUNUM and/or IMC researchers, faculty members from other programs), affiliated members are encouraged to be present during the interview.

Interview process steps are as follows:

1. Applicants are scored by each present jury member according to the criteria outlined in the evaluation form (Appendix D). Each jury member determines his/her scores privately; these are not to be shared with the other jury members. Jury members will only evaluate those candidates whose interview they participated in.

2. Once the interviews are completed, each jury member submits his/her completed evaluation form to the Graduate Coordinator of the program. After collecting all evaluation forms, the Graduate Coordinator shares anonymized individual scores with all jury members. If there is a large discrepancy in the scoring of an applicant, the Graduate Coordinator will examine the case to recommend a final decision.

3. The Second Step Score for each applicant is calculated. The default calculation assigns 50% weight to the Overall Interview Score and %50 weight to ALES score of the applicant. The applicants are sorted based on their Second Step Score and accept/reject recommendations are made according to a threshold score determined by the program.

Evaluation weights

In accordance with YÖK regulations, a program can determine alternative weights for evaluation, and can also use written exam score and GPA as criteria, as long as ALES weight

is at least 50%. The evaluation weight distribution shall be approved by the Institute in advance.

APPENDIX A – Memorandum of Understanding signed between SU and employee of working graduate student (in Turkish)

TW holders;

Konu : Sabancı Üniversitesi _____ Programına başvuran çalışanınız Sn. _____ hakkında.

**Şirket Adı
Şirket Adresi**

Şirketiniz çalışanlarından Sn. _____'in Üniversitemizde _____ Programına yapmış olduğu başvurunun %100 öğrenim ücreti muafiyeti statüsünde değerlendirilmekte olduğunu bildirmekten memnuniyet duyar, bu vesile ile çalışanınıza akademik hayatı konusunda vermiş olduğunuz destek için teşekkür ederiz.

Takdir edeceğiniz üzere, Sn. _____'in Üniversitemizde öğrenci olarak bulunacağı süre içerisinde (programın normal öğrenim süresi dönem), gerek derslere devamı gerek de tez çalışması için yürüteceği akademik çalışmalar, programı başarıyla ve süresinde tamamlayabilmesi açısından son derece önemlidir.

Bu kapsamda Sn. _____'in ders alacağı akademik dönemlerde hafta içi 2 (iki) tam çalışma gününden, derslerini tamamladıktan sonraki tez dönemlerinde ise haftada bir 1 (bir) tam çalışma gününden az olmamak üzere izinli sayılarak, zamanını eğitim ve araştırma gibi akademik faaliyetler için Sabancı Üniversitesi'nde geçirmesi konusunda gerekli anlayış ve kolaylığın sağlanmasını rica ederiz.

Yukarıda belirtmiş olduğumuz hususların Şirketiniz tarafından da uygun bulunması halinde iki nüsha olarak tarafınıza iletilen işbu yazının bir nüshasının Şirketiniz yetkilerince kaşe ve imza edilerek tarafımıza gönderilmesini rica ederiz.

**Prof. Dr. Canan Atılgan
Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürü**

Yukarıda belirtilen hususlar Şirketimiz tarafından da uygun bulunmuştur.

**Şirket Adı
İmza/Kaşe**

2/3 TW holders;

Konu : Sabancı Üniversitesi _____ Programına başvuran çalışmanız Sn. _____ hakkında.

Şirket Adı
Şirket Adresi

Şirketiniz çalışanlarından Sn. _____'in Üniversitemizde _____ Programına yapmış olduğu başvurunun 2/3 öğrenim ücreti muafiyeti statüsünde değerlendirilmekte olduğunu bildirmekten memnuniyet duyar, bu vesile ile çalışınıza akademik hayatı konusunda vermiş olduğunuz destek için teşekkür ederiz.

Programın öğrenim ücreti ve ödeme tarihleri her dönem başında www.sabanciuniv.edu resmi web sayfası üzerinden duyurulacaktır. Sn. _____ ile ilgili olarak, çalışmanız olmaya devam ettiği sürece tarafınızca karşılanacak olan öğrenim ücretinin, Üniversitemizin Akbank Sabancı Üniversitesi Şubesi nezdindeki 48754 hesap numarası ve TR07 0004 6007 1388 8000 0487 54 IBAN numaralı hesabına yapılmasını rica ederiz.

Takdir edeceğimiz üzere, Sn. _____'in Üniversitemizde öğrenci olarak bulunacağı süre içerisinde (programın normal öğrenim süresi dönem), gerek derslere devamı gerek de tez çalışması için yürüteceği akademik çalışmalar, programı başarıyla ve süresinde tamamlayabilmesi açısından son derece önemlidir.

Bu kapsamda Sn. _____'in ders alacağı akademik dönemlerde haftada 1 (bir) günden az olmamak üzere tercihen hafta içi 2 (iki) tam çalışma gününden, derslerini tamamladıktan sonraki tez dönemlerinde ise haftada bir 1 (bir) tam çalışma gününden az olmamak üzere izinli sayılarak, zamanını eğitim ve araştırma gibi akademik faaliyetler için Sabancı Üniversitesi'nde geçirmesi konusunda gerekli anlayış ve kolaylığın sağlanmasını rica ederiz.

Yukarıda belirtmiş olduğumuz hususların Şirketiniz tarafından da uygun bulunması halinde iki nüsha olarak tarafınıza iletilen işbu yazının bir nüshasının Şirketiniz yetkilerince kaşe ve imza edilerek tarafımıza gönderilmesini rica ederiz.

Prof. Dr. Canan Atılğan
Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürü

Yukarıda belirtilen hususlar Şirketimiz tarafından da uygun bulunmuştur.

Şirket Adı
İmza/Kaşe

APPENDIX B – Scholarship allocation guidelines

Based on the Institute Board decision dated Nov. 1, 2018, the graduate scholarships are to be allocated according to the following guidelines:

General allocation

Graduate programs are grouped into two according to the supply and demand equilibrium for the services expected of the students in return for the scholarships. Currently,

Group 1: CS, CYSEC, IE, MATH, PHYS

Group 2: BIO, EE, ETM, MAT, ME, MFG

These groups are re-evaluated at the beginning of each academic year.

Scholarships are allocated according to the following priorities:

1. Within the limits of the budget allocated, full scholarships (FS) are assigned to students accepted to Group 1 programs.
2. Students accepted to Group 2 are primarily allocated tuition waiver scholarship (TW).
3. If there is any remaining FS budget, these are allocated to the programs in Group 2 in proportion to the number of the graduate students enrolled in the respective program. If there are no students available to allocate the FS in a program, those slots are distributed to the remaining Group 2 program students following the same procedure.

Special cases

- a) Faculty members who have limitations on their project allocations for various reasons (e.g. due to TÜBİTAK Auditing Council membership) may have additional FS graduate students assigned.
- b) New faculty members may be assigned up to two FS until they can bring in scholarships through external funding. It is expected that the faculty member will primarily assign these students to their project scholarships once their budgets are approved. There is a two-year limit for MS and four-year limit for PhD students.
- c) Faculty members whose projects are approved but are in the contract signing stage are allocated bridge funds equivalent to the number of students in the budget until their project's effective starting date.

6) Recommendation Letters **1** **2** **3** **4**

In case there are more than two recommenders, please consider the better two in evaluating this item.

- 1: Letters have not been submitted; or they are unfavorable
- 2: Both letters have been submitted and the recommendations are mediocre in that the recommender only filled out the standard form not giving any additional insight on the student; or, only one – above average – letter has been submitted, but the recommender took the time to fill out the form and gave a detailed account of the strengths and weaknesses of the student.
- 3: Both letters have been submitted and the recommendations for the student are above average, in that the recommenders took the time to fill out the form in detail and gave a detailed account of the strengths and weaknesses of the students; or, there is only one excellent recommendation.
- 4: Two excellent recommendations

7) Previous Research Experience **1** **2** **3** **4**

- 1: No previous research experience
- 2: Some previous research experience (substantiated by at least a detailed report like that from the graduation project or poster presentation at a local conference)
- 3: Extensive research experience (substantiated by poster presentation at a non-local conference, or oral presentation at any conference, or a proceedings paper in a non-ISI journal)
- 4: Advanced research experience (at least one paper in an ISI ranked journal)

8) Motivation for graduate studies **1** **2** **3** **4**

Please base the following on what is written in SOP/CV and data on transcript, counting every item as a point. *If the total of points in this item is 0, the student is automatically disqualified:*

- Has prepared an excellent application package
- States definitive goals for graduate study in the field of materials science and engineering
- Is aware of the sub-fields in materials science and engineering and states one or two particular areas of interest
- The transcript displays match between stated areas of interest and the student's grades in the related courses.

9) Motivation to study at SU **1** **2** **3** **4**

Please base the following on what is written in SOP/CV and data on transcript, counting every item as a point.

- Clearly states why s/he wants to continue her/his career at SU
- Interests of the student matches what we do in MAT program at SU
- Has explored the programs of SU in detail (any indication that s/he has surveyed our web or has been in contact with researchers here)
- Does not apply to any other Programs/Universities, or in case of applying elsewhere, clearly indicates that ours is the priority

10) (For PhD applicants only) Potential to succeed in PhD courses and qualifying exams **1** **2**
3 **4**

- Based on the BS/MS transcripts: Student has successfully completed the courses in the areas that we offer qualifiers on. **1 pt** if such courses are in the range (B, B+), **2 pts** if they are in the range A, A-
- Based on the SOP/CV: Student seems to be able to spontaneously handle classroom situations, pursue their research projects, and prepare for the qualifying exams. **1 pt** if you think this is possible, **2 pts** if you think this is probable

APPENDIX D – Graduate Applicant Evaluation Form (Interview Stage)

Please recall that students are accepted into a program and not a particular group, as they may change advisors during their studentship due to many reasons. The evaluation thus takes into account the suitability of the student to the program as a whole, accounting for many dimensions required to succeed in our research and teaching environment. The scholarship is allocated to the student, and the score may be used in later years for allocating FS to TW students.

Each jury member in the interview will complete the following evaluation form, and hand it to the Graduate Coordinator of the Program at the end of the interview. Grading in each dimension is 0-1-2 (no half-scores):

- 0: applicant does not show any promise in this dimension
- 1: applicant has some tendency for success in this dimension
- 2: applicant displays proof of potential to be successful in this dimension

Criteria Descriptions:

Research aptitude: The applicant will be able to do research in the fields of this program.

Academic success: The applicant shows the tendency to succeed in passing courses and (in the case of PhD applicants) the qualification exam.

Assist undergraduates: The applicant may be able to aid the undergraduate students – oral communication skills are an important indicator for this dimension, as is previous teaching experience.

Team work: The applicant will fit into the laboratory environments and would be able to effectively work in a team. Recall that most graduate students are also held responsible for lab work, so their functioning in the lab environment while effectively communicating with others sharing the environment is a must.

Attitude: Students are expected to value the degree they are aspiring towards to make the most of their graduate education at SU. The applicant’s attitude towards why they choose SU for graduate studies, how much time they have invested to research the groups, how seriously they approach the interview process, etc. all contribute to this dimension.

Calculation of the Overall Interview Score

Each criteria has equal weight by default. Thus, the criteria scores for each applicant can be summed up to determine the Overall Interview Score of the applicant by the particular jury member.

Customization by Programs

A program may choose to use a different set of criteria, or apply different criteria weights in Overall Interview Score calculations. These shall be approved by the Institute in advance.

EVALUATION FORM TO BE USED BY EACH JURY MEMBER

<i>Name/ Surname</i>	<i>Research aptitude</i>	<i>Academic success</i>	<i>Assist undergraduates</i>	<i>Team work</i>	<i>Attitude</i>	<i>OVERALL INTERVIEW SCORE</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Applicant 1							
Applicant 2							
Applicant 3							
Applicant 4							
.....							