United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education
Sharing Information on Progress Report 2014
Letter of Renewed Commitment

Dear PRME Directorate and members of the PRME Secretariat,

Almaty Management University (previously known as International Academy of Business) is delighted to present its renewed commitment to the Principles for Responsible Management Education. We are proud to be a signatory to PRME, and look forward to continuing to work with fellow members as we collectively strive to develop the next generation of globally responsible leaders.

The period 2012-2014 has been progressive and involved lots of positive changes for our institution. As a signatory to the principles, we believe that the values of social responsibility, ethics and sustainability are important in all areas of our activities.

Yours faithfully,

A. Kozhakhmetov
President
Statement of the President

In 2009, Almaty Management University (AlmaU) signed up to the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), and in accordance with our commitment, we are aligned with the principles and regard them as inspirational guidelines that help us to achieve our objective of increasingly becoming a socially responsible and sustainable institution.

The PRME complements our mission and helps us to reflect on how we might best enable students, faculty and staff and the rest of stakeholders to be responsible for their actions and for our students to become the responsible leaders.

The Progress report demonstrates our long-term commitment to the six principles of PRME; values such as ethical behavior, financial responsibility, corporate social responsibility, our commitment to excellent teaching, engagement in research and life-long learning and community service.

Being the leading university in Kazakhstan and the Eurasian Economic Union, we would continue our mission as an advocate of the PRME principles and bring comprehensive and relevant knowledge to the society.

A. Kozhakhmetov
President
Introduction

Nonprofit Educational Institution “Almaty Management University” (AlmaU), previously known as International Academy of Business (IAB), stood at the origins of the business education market in Kazakhstan and has made a significant contribution to its development.

The history of AlmaU has started with the establishment of Almaty School of Managers in 1988. The School pioneered in the young country in educating managers of a new generation. In 1996 the Almaty School of Managers has been transformed into International Academy of Business. IAB has turned out to be successful, furthermore, became the most advanced in the Kazakhstani education. The new brand name brought new outlook, vision and new opportunities for further growth. Now in 2014, the new status and rebranding to Almaty Management University demonstrates the great advancement we have achieved in the last few years in moving towards our strategic goals.

AlmaU is a nationally, AMBA- and CEEMAN-accredited institution, which has a well-developed strong network of international partnerships in 25 countries. AlmaU offers the multilevel system of education (bachelor, master, MBA, PhD, DBA and executive education programmes) according to world-class learning standards.

17 research laboratories and centers constantly improve AlmaU research capacity and faculty professional development. Since 2009 AlmaU follows the Principles for Responsible Management Education. Our mission is to foster the new generation of socially responsible business leaders with reliance on international integration and business collaboration to address the social and economic challenges of Kazakhstan and the region.

VALUES

• **High level of professionalism** – high art in professional field, high level of theoretical and practical competence, creativity and continuous learning, high professional motivation, the presence of creative aspirations and value orientations.
• **Fruitful partnership** – cooperation among the faculty and staff, with customers and partners to achieve common goals and objectives, willing to share risks, responsibilities, resources, and building a system of social relations that balance the interests and development synergy.
• **Proactivity** – awareness of the values, principles and objectives, and action taking accordingly, regardless of the conditions and circumstances. Initiate what is happening and be accountable for that.
• **Innovation** – creation of innovative environment as a medium for creating new knowledge, implementation and continuous improvement of internal systems of innovation, a willingness to undergo changes, breaking traditions and to offer the new.
• **Social responsibility** – the responsibility for the development of society in the social, cultural, economic and environmental issues related to the activities of the university. AlmaU is the example of socially responsible organization.

As we make a new step in our development in 2014, our strategic directions expand:
• Successful business model of world-class university;
• Knowledge management model in the university;
• Socially responsible university;
• Excellent IT; well-developed distance education;
• Innovation management in Kazakhstan;
• University-based Business Incubator & venture fund;

With over 25 years of history, we are proud of the rich experience and strong academic traditions and our dedication to responsible leadership and to entrepreneurship.
• Business research and management consulting services in the Eurasian Economic Union.

Principle 1 | Purpose: We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

All programme aims at AlmaU are designed in accordance with the mission and strategic objectives of the university. They offer students a solid relevant interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, ability to apply them locally and internationally and gaining personal qualities to facilitate positive development of the society and business.

The following disciplines were included in the curriculum recently: "Critical Thinking", "Business Communication" and "Cultural studies". Curriculum contains on average 6% courses with international context, and syllabi include on average 10% topics that develop international expertise. With a wide partnership network with 60 universities in 22 countries, AlmaU is able to provide its students with the opportunity to have an international learning experience: exchange and double degree programmes, visiting faculty staff, guest lectures and international projects.

Curriculum also includes physical education; students participate in a range of sports offered at AlmaU. There are 13 student organizations as well as a Student Council. Average satisfaction rate is 83%, determined by online voting on their social life and activities.

During their studies, students have opportunity to try their academic knowledge and skills in the real business environment. Alma University has more than 160 agreements with corporate partners to provide two internship periods for students after Year 2 and Year 3 and joint events like guest lectures by businessmen, entrepreneurs and other successful professionals sharing their experience.

Centre for development of entrepreneurship and innovation has been created in 2014 to promote entrepreneurial spirit among students: start-up contests, master
classes and business incubators in the nearest future. Series of events take place at AlmaU jointly with corporate partners, such as Kaspi Bank, Microsoft and Chocolife.me, guest lectures and mentorships by the top and senior management, start-up camp, contest awards in the form of training sessions and internships at business incubators in Israel and Singapore.

Year 2013 has been marked by a great achievement for the MBA programmes that are the only MBA programmes in Kazakhstan and Central Asia to be accredited by AMBA. AlmaU MBA programmes offer world-class education based on the experience and philosophy of socially responsible businesses, with the notion of the country specifics. The MBA graduates already possess professional experience, after graduating MBA programmes they get the unique knowledge that they use to concentrate on sustainability in all aspects of their lives.

Launching new schools addresses the purpose of serving the society sustainably. The Law School offers degrees that help addressing legal issues for SMEs. The School of Public Policy provides expertise for management in non-business areas – the government and public sector.

Principle 2 | Values: We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

AlmaU launches new programmes in existing schools, and opens new Schools to address the need of the society and economy. The essence of the new status and name is the portrayal of global social responsibility – management is essential in all areas, be it business, education, the state governance and NGO.

During the 2013-2014 academic year Graduate School of Business introduced the following new modules on MBA programmes for its students: “Management consulting”, “Mediation and conflict management”, “Coaching as a new management style” and “Corporate and clinical ethics and deontology in healthcare”.

This initiative involves support from AlmaU side of new or existing projects (including start-ups) of current students and alumni, in attracting new customers, reaching new customer segments.

There is also an initiative popular among MBA programmes alumni – annual picnics, where former students have opportunity to network, share ideas, experiences. Some of them even get new job opportunities.

These initiatives provide strong base and prove of our commitment to social responsibility values not only within the education process, but also in our relations...
with alumni. Some of the departments have been incorporating principles of social responsibility not only in the curriculum, but also into students’ projects, dissertations. Master student of Department of Finance, for instance, has written a dissertation on “Financial aspects of socially responsible business”. Students of Economics and logistics department have implemented social projects with local corporates ("Paper recycling", “One day in JTI Kazakhstan”) as part of their social responsibility initiatives.

There is more done on promoting social responsibility within the university and beyond: in 2012 the NGO Expert Centre has been created on the basis of AlmaU with the purpose of strengthening the capacity of civil society to provide better services and to protect the interests of the population. In November 2014 the Center was called as the "Best Social Partner" in the Almaty city competition and was awarded in the nomination "Knowledge is a power".

Now it became the Centre for NGO Expertise, a learning and resource platform which offers professional development for NGO trainers and consultants, opportunities for skill-building and career advancement, and networking and coordination for NGO projects, activities, and research. Centre’s website www.ngoexpert.kz was launched on November 2012, with 8 800 visitors registered. In addition, 74 NGO leaders, staff members, and interested community members have registered on the site to receive open access to all training materials. It is updated weekly by the project team with project news, relevant information, and training materials and resources. The site hosts a free platform for interested NGOs to submit training applications, register with the site’s trainer data-base, and participate in the online forum.

The site is also designed to serve as a free professional resource centre for trainers, NGOs, and other interested members in the wider community. The library features complete training materials (training plans, hand-outs, practical activity guides) for 12 trainings and 3 webinars held by the Centre for NGO Expertise. Project participants and registered members of the website can also access relevant project management tools, strategic development materials, and legislation on non-government organizations in both Russian and Kazakh languages.

The NGO Mentorship Program is designed to provide an internship experience for NGO specialists in the early stages of their careers. The program promotes exchange of experiences and best practices between NGOs working in the same fields, and skills transfer from experienced NGOs leaders to their young colleagues.

Every sphere of human activity has its own vocabulary, and the activity of non-governmental organizations is no exception. Center Director Bakhytnur Otarbayeva and her colleagues at AlmaU demonstrated a joint commitment to promoting a common language for Kazakh-language NGOs through the development of a
Kazakh-language NGO glossary. This glossary contains common terms used in NGO and non-profit management in both Russian and Kazakh, promoting the standardization of a professional language for NGOs.

Over the past couple of years, the relationships with businesses have been advanced. There is an increase in the number of representatives of businesses being involved into student assessment, curriculum development and approval, project implementation. Department of Finance, for instance, has been able to get 20 student research works to be implemented in companies within different industries. Department of Economics and Logistics is implementing a research project for The Coca Cola Company, which aims at assessing the impact of the company’s operations on socio-economic development of Kazakhstan.

New courses such as “Social responsibility of business”, “Public private partnership and institutional support of SME”, “Business legislation”, “Innovative entrepreneurship”, “Financial modelling of public-private partnership” have been introduced in “Economics” and “Finance” master’s programmes.

Sustaining leadership in Central Asia demands dialogue between the neighboring countries. AlmaU has launched its first international contest by offering 10 full scholarships for the best students from the Central Asian countries – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. AlmaU also provides social discounts for excellent students and students with financial difficulties – the amount for 2014 is 80 million Kazakhstani tenge (US$ 450 000).

Principle 3 | Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

The Consortium of the strongest universities of Kazakhstan has been cofounded by AlmaU and other 7 universities across the country. The idea is to promote universities autonomy, academic freedom, research activity, modernization of higher education, in accordance with best world practices.

Given that the education starts from the early age, the university took on responsibility over the school education. AlmaU annually organizes programme of support for rural schools. It is an initiative fully covered by AlmaU that is aimed at providing professional development training for rural school teachers and management organized on AlmaU’s behalf. This year AlmaU held its 11th stage of the programme titled “Peculiarities of the content of math education and organization of learning process in rural ungraded school”. 15 math teachers from remote areas have been trained within the programme in March, 2014. The objectives of the programmes included: to increase personal value of the teacher; to create inner motivation to develop professional competencies and organize learning process; and
to improve their participation and its effectiveness in competitions, innovative education projects. The project is overseen by the Institute of Education Development.

The Institute has conducted several initiatives, which are held annually. “Asian study seminar on strategic management in higher education: global trends and practices” was organized in May 2014 in collaboration with Singapore Management University (SMU) and China University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and with support of The Ministry of Education and Science of the RK. The main goal of the project is to deepen the knowledge of the Kazakhstan’s universities top management in modern world trends in the development of effective and innovative strategies in education leadership and management, to achieve superior results in the process of implementation of the State Education Development Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020.

The aim of the seminar is to deepen the knowledge of top management of higher education institutions of Kazakhstan based on international trends in development of efficient and innovative strategies in education leadership and education management in reaching high effectiveness while implementing state programme of education development of the RK in 2011-2020. The seminar brought together 23 participants from 22 organizations, including national, state and private HEIs.

AlmaU has launched its Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development Centre in 2014. The Centre has led the second leg of Educational Training Workshop called “Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Commercialization” at the Israel Institute of technology Technion following the first similar visit to Singapore and Hong Kong. The group involved managerial staff of Kazakh universities that toured Israel’s four leading universities, among them Israel Institute of technology Technion, the University of Haifa, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University.

The content is built on a strong base of academic and industrial expertise of Alma University’s partners. The tools and practices are derived from proven models that have succeeded in driving innovation across industries and cultures. The workshop has four key objectives: 1. Introduce the impact innovation could make on the academic institutes; 2. Teach participants tools and practices to enhance innovation at their organization; 3. Introducing a structural and cultural change at the academic institutes; 4. Review and identify domains in which innovation can be introduced to enhance the success and the economic growth of academic institutes.

The School of Pedagogical Excellence has been created at AlmaU in 2014. Its main objective is to provide professional development opportunities for faculty members to increase teaching excellence in higher education.
The School has organized the annual Business Education Teachers Academy (BETA) for educators from HEIs of Kazakhstan. The content of the programme is innovative and includes a wide range of modules, including teaching with cases, using distance learning technologies in teaching. The peculiarity of this year’s programme was in its content and trainers. Two trainers were invited from Singapore Management University (Singapore) and Federal Institute of Education Development (Ministry of Education) (Russia). The Academy was held under the aegis of United Nations Academic Impact.

The university is expanding its activities towards development of social entrepreneurship in the country. This year AlmaU has implemented a project in partnership with University of Central Asia and supported by The Coca Cola Company – competition in social entrepreneurship among youth in Almaty and Almaty region. Two students from AlmaU were able to secure grants to implement their projects – 1) Increasing employment opportunities in rural area (Daulet village) 2) Waste collection for recycling. AlmaU also sponsors the project on social entrepreneurship, which led to engagement in a thoughtful dialogue with the government, business and NGOs, and is now preparing to put out to the civic society for a general discussion of the importance of social entrepreneurship during the conference in January 2015 (jointly with the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs).

Along with this project AlmaU sponsors another four projects, which focus on development of tourism in the country in the framework of globally significant international projects ("Expo-2017" and XXVIII Winter World Universiade-2017), on the development of the national economy of Kazakhstan, Problems and prospects of transport and logistics systems integration of the Customs Union countries, the competitiveness of the Kazakhstan agricultural sector of the economy within Eurasian Economic Union as well as knowledge management and workshops and events for young scientists.

Under the memorandum of cooperation in order to implement a joint HR project between AlmaU and University of the European Business Association of Kazakhstan (EUROBAK) experts in the field of management were invited as lecturers for the course "Practical HR". These lectures were attended by the senior year Management undergraduate students.

Principle 4 | Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.
Science Department was created in 2009 to advance research activity within 12 research laboratories and 3 centres. The main idea of R&D at AlmaU is about comparative and international aspect; interdisciplinary nature of research and empirical country-specific research.

Faculty members have obtained grant by the MES of RK worth 47 000 euros for the project “Increasing competitiveness of management services in the view of upcoming globally important international projects (World EXPO-2017 and The World Universiade-2017). 11 publications are indexed in ISI Web of Knowledge and 20 publications in Scopus, as a result of consistent institutional motivation for research. Annually more than 130 thous. euros are allocated for research by AlmaU 26,9 thousands euro were granted for research to 2 AlmaU professors awarded as The Best Teacher-2011 and The Best Teacher-2013.

Also in the framework of International Scholarship program of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan “Bolashak” 24 faculty and staff members got their fellowship program in 2013 in Berkeley UC Haas Business School and Singapore Management University in the field of management, marketing, economics and finance. Now these scholars are developing new courses in innovative and social responsible management. Since then 8 faculty and staff members went to South Korea, UK, the Netherlands and Spain for under “Bolashak” scholarship.

Starting from this year experts of Science Department started the new project called “Research Wednesday”. At Wednesdays everyone who would like to make the presentation or the scientific report may come and give the presentation on the chosen subject. The main goal of this project is to determine cooperation between researchers of the University from different departments and to ensure the participation of university faculty and staff members in scientific research.

AlmaU has organized the international conference “Entrepreneurship and Business education in Emerging World” supported by the Government of the RK, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, EFMD, RABE and National Economic Chamber in October 2013 that attracted 256 participants from 21 countries.

AlmaU jointly with Russian Association of Business Education (RABE) organized the international conference “Internationalization and Integration of Business Education: principles and opportunities” in April 2014 with the purpose to consolidate business community within the international integration of education.
In November 2014 there was a joint conference with the Rating Agency “Expert 200” held on the cooperation of universities, government and businesses. Keynote speakers and distinguished professors from the USA, the UK, Israel and local businessmen shared their thoughts on entrepreneurship education development as well as the importance of the partnership of universities, government and the business.

Principle 5 | Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

From the early days, AlmaU was in close contact with business: the Board of Trustees that manages the University represents the entrepreneurship and business history of Kazakhstan – the most successful businessmen are not only the members of the Board of Trustees, but active change makers who engage in the academic process, create opportunities for students to experience the real business during internships and act as role models for young businessmen and entrepreneurs. MBA and DBA students and executive education students represent the business community of the country. It is not only the teach-and-learn process, but a great networking opportunity for faculty, students and managers.

Partnership with business is utmost at the Centre for Consulting and Management Development, which coordinates executive education within the Graduate School of Business. Corporate partners also engage in meeting with students, taking part in the examination process and evaluation of syllabus. More than 160 corporate clients come from the industries, health care, oil and gas, mining, IT and the public sector.

The mission of Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development is to promote entrepreneurship creating values and bringing promising results. The Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development regularly invites specialists in the area of entrepreneurship. It is now engaged in the project of building AlmaU as entrepreneurial university. This Centre
provides information and academic consulting support to undergraduate and master degree students, faculty and staff members of the University, promotes an entrepreneurial culture and support entrepreneurial ideas within the University.

AlmaU is an active member of the civic society and the local community. Trees have been planted on campus, as a part of the city Green campaign “Alma Kala”. The University invests time, effort and money in the charity activities to support the people with difficulties, disabilities and to protect the environment: over the last two years AlmaU has spent approximately US$ 640 000 on social discounts, US$ 26 000 on students activities and is the first private HEI with disabled access to the premises and the green disposals for paper recycle. Student activities include organization of student clubs, cultural events, concerts and shows, as well as charity events usually aimed at children seeking for medical treatment and supporting senior citizens. The university provides these funds also with the purpose of promoting entrepreneurial spirit and motivation for young businessmen: students use the given money for their start-ups and raise money for further development of their projects.

Promoting social entrepreneurship in the minds of young people and other stakeholders, AlmaU facilitates effective solving problems related to society and environment. In 2013 AlmaU has organized and hosted the student contest on social entrepreneurship co-organized with University of Central Asia, Coca Cola Company, Coca Cola Foundation and Aga Khan Foundation). The winning projects have received US$3800 and have been already implemented: one was the bottles recycling enterprise and the other is the breeding worms as a part of employment of the local population in the Daulet settlement (village). The new contest is planned for 2015.

Principle 6 | Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.
AlmaU’s development strategy aims to make the University a socially responsible organization that fosters positive and sustainable relationships in society. Stakeholders recognize constant and continuous contribution of AlmaU to the development of social responsibility in several ways.

The Triple Helix model (the partnership of universities, government and the business) discussed at the recent conference (jointly with the Rating Agency “Expert 200”) is now applied at AlmaU. The triple cooperation is a key to close interaction with the corporate world, taking into account the state interest and educators’ aspirations.

In the framework of the international conference held in October 2013, the Central Asian Foundation for Management Development has repeatedly launched its work or has launched its work again. CAMAN’s main objective is the overall promotion of formation and development of the effective system of business-education in Central Asian region.

The Consortium of the strongest universities in Kazakhstan regularly cooperates aiming at making recommendations to the MES of RK. The idea is to promote universities’ autonomy, academic freedom, and research activity, modernization of higher education, in accordance with best world practices.

AlmaU regularly communicates with its partners all over the world: partnership with 60 universities and more than 15 partner associations is fruitful and long-lasting in terms of international perspective for students, faculty and management.

The great list of awards proves the excellence of AlmaU as the best education service provider and research generator, the best employer, the most active member of civil society of Kazakhstan and to corporate social responsibility.

Moreover, every year AlmaU organizes innovative social projects as “Ulytau”, the Kazakh language study camp in eco-friendly areas of rural Kazakhstan, and BETA Business Education Teachers Academy, the annual series of workshops for business educators. In 2014, BETA was organized in the frame of AlmaU’s collaboration with United Nations’ Academic Impact (UNAI) initiative. AlmaU actively supports ten universally recognized principles initiated by UNAI in the field of human rights, literacy, sustainability and conflict resolution.

**CONCLUSION**

AlmaU will constantly develop itself as a socially responsible organization. Designated by the United Nations, the global values, and other initiatives for socially responsible business are included in the plans of AlmaU. The academic process of all departments (undergraduate, postgraduate, MBA and doctoral) involves the study of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.

Moreover, AlmaU fosters the creation of effective dialogue between government, business and education by introducing the expert opinions to the content of academic disciplines (e.g. Social dialogue, Business ethics, Social entrepreneurship, Business and environment, and other courses).
Furthermore, AlmaU sets ambitious and strategic goals, as, for instance, becoming the leader among the education institutions of the Eurasian Economic Union by developing the number of models and initiatives. AlmaU is striving for success, taking into account all stakeholders’ interests and providing the best services.

Furthermore, AlmaU intends to participate actively in the improvement of the system of economic and social policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and cooperate with civil society and NGOs by developing strategic partnership with the socio-entrepreneurial corporations and national companies. The strategy of AlmaU development until 2020 includes forming key decision-making processes, multi-stakeholders, multi-disciplinary approaches that involves administrators, faculty, and students in line with the PRME principles.
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