



## EMPOWERING TALENT VIA Innovation, Research, and Industry Collaboration

**PROF. DR. ABDUL AWAL KHAN**  
Vice Chancellor, International Standard University (ISU)



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**The Daily Star (TDS): What makes your university the ideal choice for prospective students?**

**Abdul Awal Khan (AAK):** International Standard University aims to provide social service through quality education with moral values. This university strives to achieve excellence as a seat of learning through devotion, hard work, and sincerity.

We have worked almost around the clock to ensure remarkable progress during the period of the impasse. With tremendous support and commitment from the Board of Trustees (BOT) and academic and administrative members, we have explored and created various ways to continue fostering innovation and quality in education and research. This has been achieved through collaborations with diverse industries and authorities, such as the Standard Group Ltd, University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh Accreditation Council (BAC), and associated academic institutions, as well as several corporate institutions. We have retained and developed the university's capacity to invest in students, teaching, and research activities.

**TDS: Share details about the teaching staff, programs, and courses tailored to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in today's dynamic job market. How do these approaches contribute to upholding and enhancing the quality of education at your university?**

**AAK:** We support and nurture the careers and well-being of students by creating

extensive platforms for career progression and development to maximize their capabilities. We stimulate outstanding research and innovation that fully supports the well-being of students.

Our faculty members are well-qualified, having higher degrees from top-ranked universities at home and abroad. They are innovative and understand the dynamics of changing times.

The curriculum, the backbone of the courses in each department, has been developed to promote critical thinking and openness, enabling students to learn. It provides them with the required knowledge and skills to tackle the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and gives them the confidence and skills to continue to adapt.

The university has made successful and active collaborations with a range of corporate houses. This helps our students enhance their capacity in the right direction and apply their acquired knowledge and skills for career development.

The campus is fully equipped with modern technology, enabling both students and faculty members to access the best lab facilities, libraries, and journals to stay updated.

The university has established the Center for Research, Development, and Publications (CRDP) to facilitate faculty members in producing cutting-edge scholarly research on national and global scales.

The university has founded the Center for Higher Studies and Career Development (CHSCD), which provides job opportunities for current students who are financially weak and



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may not qualify for a scholarship or fee waiver that would allow them to pursue their studies unhindered.

Students seeking admission to private universities often try to find the right one that will provide quality education in their desired discipline at a cost their guardians can bear. At ISU, we ensure both in a student-friendly environment, well cared for by the authority.

Female students prefer ISU because (i) they are ensured a safe environment on campus, and (ii) they are also offered a 10% additional waiver on their tuition fees.

Moreover, most of the programs are designed so that graduates can adapt to real-life situations in the industry. Many courses are taught by faculty members with industrial backgrounds. Additionally, the provision of lab facilities and internship programs before graduation helps familiarize ISU graduates with the industrial environment. Frequent industrial visits are also arranged for students in Business, Science, and Engineering.

**TDS: Can you tell us about the university's research facilities?**

**AAK:** ISU is currently undertaking policy-

oriented research in the spheres of business, development, literature, computing, clothing and textiles, and environmental issues. The research activities include baseline research and consultancies designed to be funded by various public and private agencies, as well as development organizations. The university collaborates with reputable agencies based in Bangladesh and other parts of the world.

In doing so, ISU maintains local and global collaborations with a wide range of scholarly academics and industries. Additionally, ISU focuses on a range of research topics, including socio-economic development, food security, sustainable development, artificial intelligence, innovative human management processes, and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

ISU motivates academic staff and students to engage in research activities beyond their academic responsibilities. Thus, the university has created platforms at both national and international levels with leading scholars, universities, and relevant industries. In doing so, it establishes a theoretical and practical foundation for a high standard of education and research.

The university has produced three scholarly journals: the Journal of Business and Development Studies (JBDS), the Journal of English Studies (JES), the Journal of Law, and the Journal of Engineering and Technology (JET). These journals facilitate faculty members and students in publishing cutting-edge research works.

## Holistic Development Through Extracurriculars

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opportunities to showcase their talents at national and international levels. Student life at IUBAT thrives with popular clubs, creating a dynamic environment for personal and professional growth.”

### Presidency University

Presidency University believes that education should extend beyond the classroom, emphasizing the equal importance of extracurricular activities in fostering well-rounded individuals alongside academic growth. “Our campus serves as a vibrant hub for various student clubs, offering opportunities to explore passions, develop new skills, engage in social initiatives, and build lasting connections,” said Jahid Hasan, Deputy Director & Head (Acting) Admission, Promotion & PR. He further mentioned that the business club (BIZBOX) instills entrepreneurial mentality among student, social service club reinforces community engagement, sports club promotes physical fitness and wellbeing, debating club promotes constructive dialogue and diverse perspective. Last but not least AI club, programming club, robotics and mechatronic club enable to grow student both personally and professionally

### State University Bangladesh (SUB)

“At the State University Bangladesh, we are committed to fostering the holistic development of our students. Our dynamic extracurricular ecosystem features a variety of clubs dedicated to debating, photography, robotics, cultural activities, and entrepreneurship, providing students with platforms to explore their interests and showcase their talents,” according to Mohammad Omar Faraque, Director (in-charge), Outreach & Public Relations Department of State University. Additionally, job fairs, industry visits, and competitions are regularly organized, offering invaluable networking opportunities and practical exposure to the professional world. Finally, events such as interdepartmental sports tournaments, leadership workshops, and cultural festivals promote teamwork, creativity, and resilience. Through active participation in these activities, students acquire essential soft skills such as communication, problem

solving, and leadership.

### Uttara University

At Uttara University, the holistic development of students is a top priority. The institution offers a wide range of extracurricular activities, including student organisations, competitions, and career fairs, to cater to diverse interests and talents. These initiatives focus on nurturing leadership, teamwork, and communication skills, equipping students to tackle workplace challenges effectively. Hence, VC, Dr Eaysmin Ara Lekha added,

“Students have the opportunity to explore their passions and enhance their abilities through clubs dedicated to business, technology, culture, and sports. Additionally, frequent networking events and job fairs connect students with potential employers. These programs ensure that graduates are not only academically proficient but also well-rounded individuals ready to make meaningful contributions in their fields.”

### Independent University Bangladesh (IUB)

IUB places a strong emphasis on co-curricular activities, offering students endless opportunities to develop their talents and skills. The Division of Student Activities (DoSA) oversees and coordinates 50 diverse student clubs, fostering an environment of engagement and growth. Appreciating & pointing to various social activities IUB VC, Prof. M. Tamim, said,

“Students are also actively encouraged to participate in community service initiatives, such as blood donation drives, distributing winter clothing to marginalised communities, and fundraising for natural disaster victims. These programs not only promote leadership and teamwork but also contribute significantly to personal growth and social responsibility.”

### East West University (EWU)

In today's interconnected world, globalisation has opened up countless opportunities while intensifying competition. Classroom-based learning alone is insufficient to seize sustainable opportunities. To develop interpersonal skills, intellectual ability, mental growth, and a positive attitude, students must actively engage in co-curricular

and extracurricular activities such as debates, seminars, symposiums, workshops, cultural programs, community service initiatives, and sports that align with their interests.

Participation in these activities enables students to unlock their hidden potential, fostering both academic and psychological development. About the institutional back up of the club activities EWU, VC, Prof Shams Rahman informed, “At East West University, the Students Welfare Department (DSW) is dedicated to grooming socially responsible, empathetic, intelligent, and motivated individuals. By promoting co-curricular and extracurricular activities, DSW aims to nurture well-rounded future leaders who will drive Bangladesh's progress and address global challenges.”

### International Standard University (ISU)

ISU is passionate about a holistic development of the student. Alongside with rigorous course work it pays no less to co-curricular platforms. Practical exposure is one of the key purposes of these club. In this regard ISU VC, Prof. Dr. Abdul Awal Khan said, “The University has made successful and active collaborations with a range of corporate houses. This helps our students to enhance their capacity in the right direction and to apply their achieved knowledge and skills for career development.”

Notable clubs of the ISU are following, business club, English language club, IT club, textile club, environment and sustainable development club, sports club, debating club, cultural club, social welfare club, drama club, career club, rover scout club, and law Society

Popular lore often suggests that private universities are solely concerned with profit-making and producing robotic, machine-like graduates. However, a closer look at the various extracurricular activities mentioned above reveals that these clubs nurture values aligned with the humanities and liberal arts. In fact, it can be said that extracurricular activities are not simply an addition to the regular curriculum; they are integral to completing education. Ultimately, these extracurricular activities give private universities their unique character and vibrancy.



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- To create entrepreneurs and leaders who can overcome the present challenges and promote a sustainable future.

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