SET
ACADEMIC STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN
2021-2022

01. BACKGROUND OF THE PLAN

Science, Engineering & Technology (SET) School is the oldest School of Khulna University and aiming for achieving excellent international research reputation and building partnership with the professional and industrial world of science, engineering and technology. In this context, this plan will be the pathway for future academic enhancement and achievement of SET School. The plan will be termed as SET Academic Strategic Action Plan 2021-22 in short as SET-ASAP 2021-2022. The activities of this plan have been designed towards achieving the following strategic vision of SET School of Khulna University.

02. SET STRATEGIC VISION

SET School strives to create an inspiring academic environment towards exploring individual learner's intellectual and human potential to the fullest. The School aims to achieve this vision through nurturing innovative entrepreneurship and aspiring leadership in its graduates to empower them to lead the 4th industrial revolution.

03. OVERARCHING FOCUS

With an overarching focus on trans-disciplinary research and learning, the SET-ASAP 2021-2022 will facilitate activities in the following thematic areas: (i) research & outreach; (ii) learning performance & outcomes; and (iii) participatory & inclusive governance.

04. THEMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

Theme 01:
Research & Outreach

The main goal of research and outreach is to create an enabling environment for collaborative faculty research and publication at different degrees of academic disciplinary synthesis and interaction, i.e. interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, cross-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary as appropriate for the concerned discipline(s). This plan will facilitate common platforms for activities that would inspire faculties to collaborate and share their research works with other SET faculties in any form they feel comfortable with.

Theme 02:
Learning Performance & Outcomes

This plan aspires for a connected SET school with an aim of having all the eight disciplines informed about each other's good practices in teaching-learning and assessment. With an aim of nurturing innovative entrepreneurship and aspiring leadership, the plan will encourage students' learning performance centred programmes and events at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Theme 03:
Participatory & Inclusive Governance

To promote a practice of informed governance, this plan will be implemented through a four-tier structure of governance: Tier 1: SET Executive Committee; Tier 2: Head's Committee; Tier 3: Advisory Committee; and Tier 4: Task-based Working Committee. Rooted on the principles of engagement and collegiality, the process of governance will be participatory & inclusive in any aspect of academic intervention.

05. ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 01: Research & Outreach

Strategic Action 1: SET Lecture Series

Objective: SET Lecture Series will promote sharing and exchange of research-driven knowledge and innovations between the faculty members of SET School and distinguished researchers from home and abroad. This lecture series will help the young researcher to generate new ideas for their future research career. In addition, this lecture series will be a platform to link scholars from different scientific field for future collaboration to conduct inter-, multi-, cross- and trans-disciplinary research.

Planning Process: SET Lecture Series will be organised by a two-member committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads. The lecture series starts from March 2021. In every two months there will be one lecture by a distinguished speaker selected from a panel of speakers (internal/external). The head of each discipline will nominate the speakers (internal/external) in consultation with the faculty members in departmental meeting. Upon receiving the nomination from the discipline, the committee will schedule the lecture in consultation with the speakers. The programme schedule and the web link will be circulated among all of the faculty members of SET School.

Strategic Action 2: SET International Conference

Objective: This annual/bi-annual conference will be the platform to showcase the research works of SET School of Khulna University in presence of local and international researchers. The theme of the conference will be multi-disciplinary that will accommodate researchers from the allied fields. The conference proceedings/selected papers will be published in KU Studies/reputed journals.

Planning Process: The conference will be organised by a Conference Organising Committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads. The tentative schedule of the 1st conference will be December 2021.

Strategic Action 3: SET Talk

Objective: This bi-monthly talk will be delivered by the in-house faculty members of SET School of Khulna University. This platform will be crucial for developing cross-disciplinary collaborative research & publication and promoting mentorship in research and publication within the faculty members of SET School.

Planning Process: SET Talk will be organised by a two member committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads. The Talk starts from February 2021. One talk will take place in every two months. The presenter of the talk of each month will rotate among the disciplines. The head of each discipline will nominate the faculty in consultation with the faculty members in the departmental meeting. Upon receiving the nomination from the discipline, the committee will schedule the talk in consultation with the nominated faculty member.

Strategic Action 4: SET Online International Journal

Objective: This Online International Journal will be managed and published by SET School of Khulna University to contribute in the knowledge production and dissemination process internationally. This journal will be multi-disciplinary in nature and will ensure high visibility of the research works.

Planning Process: To launch the journal, a scientific committee will be established by the Dean by June 2021. The scientific committee will develop the structure of the editorial committee that might have a chief editor and eight managing editors from respective disciplines of SET School. Upon establishing the editorial committee, the first volume of the journal will be published by March 2022.

Strategic Action 5: International Collaboration

Objective: This plan insists for establishing Thematic International Research Network by respective disciplines along with establishing Research Centres in collaboration with national and international research organisatioans/ universities/ development partners.

Planning Process: A steering committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads will initiate and coordinate the works for international collaboration. Respective disciplines will facilitate these initiatives and will inform about the activities while preparing the Annual Report of SET School of Khulna University. This plan emphasises that by March 2022, all of the disciplines will have at least one international collaboration.

Strategic Action 6: Research Grant/Fund Collection

Objective: To create more research funding opportunities for young researcher, SET School will look for more funding opportunities and will also support young researchers for launching grant applications. Emphasis will be given to motivate the young faculties to get more funding from KU Research Cell, relevant ministries and local/international agencies.

Planning Process: A steering committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads will work for collecting research grant/fund for SET researchers. In the annual conference of the SET School, the organising committee of the conference will invite representatives of different grant providers to create funding opportunities for supporting the research works of young faculty members of SET School. In addition to that an annual workshop will be organised from the School to support the young faculty members to gain knowledge about project proposal writing and launching grant applications. The first workshop will be organised by the school in August 2021. In the annual report, the Dean will notify the amount of research grant that was allocated by Khulna University to the faculty members of SET School.

06. ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 02:
Learning Performance & Outcomes

Strategic Action 7: Student Exchange and Collaboration

Objective: This plan emphasises on student exchange and collaboration. It will help students of SET School to share their experiences with other national and international students of the same discipline in an organised way.

Planning Process: This particular plan can be implemented by organising annual student's convention of respective disciplines. In this annual student's convention, students from different university of the respective discipline will be able to showcase their work and might create a platform for future collaboration. Respective discipline will be the responsible authority for organising such events. In addition, respective disciplines can organise international summer school, inter-university student's work-shop to link the students of SET School of Khulna University with other national and international universities. This plan is emphasising to implement at least one of the aforementioned activities by March 2022.

Strategic Action 8: Community Engagement Programme

Objective: The Community Engagement Programme will be the major focus of SET School of Khulna University. This programme will enable SET current students to make direct contribution to the community through addressing any issue relevant to their field of study in a participatory manner. It will also create enthusiasm and inspiration among the community people in general, and the future pupils in particular, to be interested in Science, Engineering and Technology education.

Planning Process: The Community Engagement Programme will be organised by a committee formed by the Dean in consultation with the Heads. The committee will design multidisciplinary community engagement programmes/projects/events and ensure participation of students from all the disciplines as appropriate. To showcase the outcomes of the community engagement programme an annual open day will be celebrated at SET School of Khulna University. SET School will circulate an invitation to all of the secondary schools in and around Khulna city to join the open day exhibition of student's work of respective disciplines of SET School of Khulna University. This plan expects that by February 2022, SET School of Khulna University will be able to organise its first open day for sharing outcomes of community engagement programme.

06. ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 02: Learning Performance & Outcomes

Strategic Action 9: Term Review & Sharing

Objective: To review academic performances at individual discipline level and share the outcomes with rest of the disciplines of SET school. Academic performances include - students learning performance, student's achievement in co-curricular activities, awards & achievements (internal/external) etc. At discipline level term review will be organised by the Head as a festive event while at school level the outcomes will be shared with the Heads. This will allow respective disciplines to get students feedback on academic matters and upgrade teaching-learning strategies for the next academic term.

Planning Process: The major content of term review might focus on the percentage of each grading scale of individual courses. This plan expects that the term review event will happen three weeks after completion of each academic term. The findings of the term review event will be documented by the head of the disciplines in order to share the outcomes with rest of the SET Heads.

Strategic Action 10: Increasing Foreign Student Enrolment

Objective: Understanding the recent trend of foreign student enrolment in SET School of Khulna University, this plan emphasises on increasing the number of foreign student enrolment. It is expected that enrolling foreign student will ensure more exchange and collaboration internationally.

Planning Process: To increase foreign student enrolment, this plan proposes for a comprehensive action that includes 1) publishing a brochure of SET School; 2) communicating with different foreign embassies in Bangladesh; and 3) coordinating with Office of the International Affairs of Khulna University. Respective committee for the aforementioned activities will be formulated under the Dean of SET School of Khulna University. It is expected that before the next enrolment (January, 2022), the aforementioned activities will be performed.

Strategic Action 11: Career Window

Objective: To ensure more employability of SET School graduates, series of activities will be performed.

Planning Process: To generate maximum employability of SET School graduates a career counselling committee will be formed. The committee will ensure networking with prospective employers and will enhance the ability of the students by offering different workshops and training regarding employability skills. This particular committee will maintain network with employers and alumni organisations and will give feedback to respective discipline to enhance employability for SET School graduates. Under this committee, discipline specific Career Club for the students can be introduced. This plan expects that by March 2021, career counselling committee will be formed and they will report about the performed activities to the EC committee of SET School by June 2021.

07. ACTIVITIES FOR THEME 03: Participatory & Inclusive Governance

Strategic Action 12: Research Policy

Objective:
To develop a common framework of faculty and student's research of SET School.

Planning Process:
This plan expects that by March 2021, under a scientific committee the common template of postgraduate research proposal and final thesis will be developed. It is expected that this template will be helpful for formatting thesis proposal and final thesis that includes styling and citation format. The uniformity of thesis proposal will help the EC committee to review the thesis proposal for final approval. By Mid 2021, a context-sensitive researcher policy (including necessary guidelines e.g. human subject research guidelines, guidelines to prevent plagiarism etc.) will be formulated to provide regulatory support to SET researchers.

Strategic Action 13: SET Faculty Excellence Awards

Objective:
To acknowledge the research contributions by SET School faculty members.

Planning Process:
This plan proposes for faculty research excellence awards that can be introduced by January 2022. A scientific committee will be formed to fix the criteria for awarding the excellence awards. This plan advocates for awarding the faculty members who might achieve the criteria rather than selecting the best researcher. This process will be more inclusive and will allow maximum number of faculty members to take part in this process. The scientific committee might call for annual application for the following proposed awards: (i) For Lecturer & Assistant Professors – commendation certificate for publication in impact factor journal; (ii) For Associate Professors & Professors – commendation certificate for cross disciplinary research and publication with Lecturer and/or Assistant Professor (more than one discipline) through research mentorship; (iii) Collaborative Research (SET Disciplines, Industry & Academy, KU & Local/Foreign University); (iv) Funded research (e.g. KU-Research Cell, GoB-Ministries, National and International Funding Agencies, Industries, etc.); and (v) Commendation Certificate for Grant funding.

Strategic Action 14: SET Student Awards

Objective:
To acknowledge the achievement of students of SET School.

Planning Process:
This plan proposes for student excellence awards that can be introduced by January 2022. Awards can be offered under following categories: (i) Dean's List; (ii) SET Postgraduate Thesis Excellence Award; (iii) SET Community Engagement Award; and (iv) Dean's Commendation for External Achievement. Different committees will be formed to fix the criteria for awarding the excellence awards and arranging the events.

Strategic Action 15: SET Infrastructure and Facilities

Objective:
To ensure learning/work spaces, facilities, and infrastructure for meeting the current and evolving needs of the faculty members of SET School.

Planning Process:
This plan advocates for annual review of infrastructural need by respective disciplines that includes lab facilities, class rooms, wash rooms and teacher's workstations (space, furniture & computer). In addition, this plan emphasises for creating SET Faculty Social Space (Games & Refreshment Zone, Refurbishment of Courtyard as Interaction Space) by July 2021. This plan also advocates for annual Clean SET Day (cleaning and recycling educational spaces & wastes). To develop social interaction among the faculty and staffs, this plan proposes Yearly Faculty Retreat Programme. In addition, this plan proposes for organising inter-discipline debate and cultural completion among the students of SET School.

Strategic Action 16: SET School Annual Portfolio

Objective:
To document the academic, research and governance performances and achievements of SET School.

Planning Process:
This plan proposes for publishing an annual report of SET School in relation to the activities proposed in this Academic Strategic Action Plan. This plan proposes for discipline specific annual report that could be merged in the annual report of SET School. Head of the disciplines and the Dean of SET School will finalise the Annual Report of SET School. The first report can be published in December, 2021.

08. SUMMARY OF THE PLAN

Theme 01:
Research & Outreach

Lecture Series of SET School **March 2021**
SET annual/bi-annual International Conference **December 2021**
SET Talk **February 2021**
SET Online International Journal **March 2022**
International Collaboration **March 2022**
Research Grant/Fund Collection for Young Researcher **August 2021**

Theme 02:
Learning Performance & Outcomes

Student Exchange and Collaboration **March 2022**
Multidisciplinary Community Engagement Programme **February 2022**
Term Review Sharing **July 2021**
Foreign Student Enrolment Programme **January 2022**
Career Window **June 2021**

Theme 03:
Participatory & Inclusive Governance

Research Policy of SET School **June 2021**
SET Faculty Excellence Awards **January 2022**
SET Student Awards **January 2022**
SET Infrastructure and Facilities **July 2021**
SET School Portfolio **December2021**

09. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This plan assumes that if the Covid-19 situation continues for quite long-time, then it will be difficult to attain few milestones which have been proposed in this plan. The policy option to address such situation is revising the targets of each strategic action in consultation with respective committees and head of the disciplines of SET School. This plan also assumes that cooperation from the faculty members and university administration will be crucial to achieve the targets of this plan. Therefore, trust building activities and conflict negotiation strategies should be in place to maximise the collaboration from every stakeholder. A clear and detailed financial plan is also essential to support this plan.

10. CONCLUSION

This academic strategic action plan has been designed to promote shared and connected learning and research environment in SET School. Implementation of this plan will create an inspiring atmosphere for collaboration and mutual support for the teachers and students towards a more connected, united, confident and informed SET School.