

KAUNAS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES STRATEGY FOR 2021 – 2025

Kaunas University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter referred to as University of Applied Sciences) was established on 1 September 2000 merging the schools of further education, namely the School of Technology and the school of Economics after the binary higher education system was introduced in Lithuania. These two schools had demonstrated the best performance results at the national level and obtained the right to conduct higher education studies. By 2003 a number of other further education institutions – the schools of Landscaping, Art, Medicine, Kėdainiai Jonušas Radvila School, Food technologies and other schools had joined the University of Applied Sciences. The origins of these schools date back even further - the schools of the interwar period and post-war technical schools.

The strategy 2021 - 2025 of the University of Applied Sciences is based on traditions, values, accumulated experience and competencies, national and international requirements and the needs of society. In its strategy, the University of Applied Sciences outlines its goal to become an advanced and sustainable European higher education institution in five years, nurturing Lithuanian national culture and traditions.

Mission

We provide innovation-based higher education studies focused on practical activities and promote applied science and art activities significant for the development of society.

Vision

Kaunas University of Applied Sciences is an advanced and sustainable European higher education institution that nurtures Lithuanian national culture and traditions.

Values

- **RESPONSIBILITY.** We see responsibility as a fair and transparent decision making and implementation process where the needs of students, academic staff, parents, stakeholders, employers, and other members of the society are duly respected. Responsibility is the fulfilment of commitments given to oneself and others, ensuring the quality of work and studies, academic integrity, and sustainable use of available resources. The activities of the University of Applied Sciences are based on the philosophy of sustainable development.
- **PROFESSIONALISM.** We see professionalism as cognition starting with self-awareness, the belief in our abilities and abilities of others, the necessity to implement our ideas in a high-quality manner, continuous improvement, growth, competence development. Professionalism is supported by a constant pursuit of knowledge, mutual harmony between individuals and the environmental, striving for goals and the ambition to become the leader in our field of expertise.
- **OPENNESS.** Openness helps us recognize, accept, apply, and develop innovative solutions, move forward with the dynamic world of business. Openness is our need and the driving force that encourages sharing experiences and improvement. It is only a free and democratic higher education institution where academic freedom prevails, and self-conscious and creative personalities grow. We are open to other cultures, and we support multilingualism.

- **RESPECT.** We see respect as tolerance for everyone regardless of age, gender, race, attitudes, and beliefs. Respect for everyone's work and contribution to the joint activity helps achieve the desired results. The respect for the past, the culture of the country and organization, shapes our identity and ensures the continuity of old traditions and the creation of new ones.
- **SENSE OF COMMUNITY.** We see the sense of community as an ongoing process, the outcome of which is a close and lasting relationship among community members. Our principles are communication and collaboration, sharing experience, knowledge, and ideas. The efforts of all individual community members joined together to create the success of our institution.

KUAS in 2025. General principles of activities

Kaunas University of Applied Sciences, after five years, is an internationally recognized, advanced and sustainable European higher education institution, which conducts two-cycle studies - professional bachelor's and professional master's studies - creating flexible conditions for lifelong learning, developing society and progress-oriented science and art. development, fostering the country's culture and traditions. The activities of the University are based on such values as responsibility, professionalism, openness, respect and sense of community.

The high-quality, learner- and society-oriented higher education studies offered at the University are **PRACTICAL** and **BASED ON INNOVATION**. Strong social partnership, taking into account the changing needs of the national and international labour market, ensures the practical applicability of studies; Representatives of the world of business and other stakeholders (students, graduates, employees, etc.) proactively participate in the preparation of programs, their improvement and the study process itself. Studies are characterized by a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills; combining studies in different fields and creating an environment for the acquisition of diverse competencies, thus ensuring the interdisciplinary nature of studies; using advanced teaching and learning methods that encourage creativity and analytical thinking, focusing on solutions to the challenges of the business world and its development needs. Together with the social partners and other stakeholders at a regional and national level, a lifelong learning ecosystem has been formed to meet the needs of the world of business.

Innovation focused on the needs of the individual and society, with the growing importance of internationality, is essential for the success of the University of Applied Sciences. Therefore, new technologies are integrated continuously into the studies, value-creating technological solutions are applied; the study content is based on the latest scientific and artistic results, knowledge and achievements. Competence-based teaching/learning applying intelligent technologies to individualize study content and personalize learning. E-learning (s) based on a developed digital infrastructure is treated as a quality tool to ensure the accessibility of studies. Students have the opportunity to do internships in the most advanced national and foreign organizations. At least half of the University of Applied Sciences staff are professional lecturers-practitioners, together with motivated students and social partners ensure successful the implementation of practical and innovation-based studies.

The University of Applied Sciences develops applied research, experimental development and professional art. This is another area of the University of Applied Sciences activity besides studies, but it is essential to ensure the high quality of studies, as this area serves as a basis for the integration of innovations into studies. The researchers of the University of Applied Sciences (lecturers and students) carry out applied research, projects and artistic activities and the dissemination of its results with international partners, present the research results to the international community.

As a partner of the world of business, governmental and non-governmental organizations, the University of Applied Sciences conducts applied interdisciplinary research and experimental development in the fields of technology, biomedicine, social sciences, humanities and agricultural sciences, as well as artistic activities focusing on health-friendly environments and technological progress while creating products, services and technological and artistic process innovations to address societal and the business world challenges. By integrating the entrepreneurial aspect into the content of studies and courses, an

ecosystem for start-ups has been formed based on applied scientific research, allowing the development and commercialization of solutions developed by the University of Applied Sciences researchers.

As we see the University of Applied Sciences in 2025 as a progressive European higher education institution, strategic guidelines for increasing the internationalization of the University of Applied Sciences activities are being set. Internationalization is perceived in the University of Applied Sciences community as a tool that significantly contributes to the quality of the University of Applied Sciences mission. The University of Applied Sciences successful integration into the international alliance of European universities and its active participation in international networks has consistently increased the mutual mobility of students and teachers; more study programs in a foreign language are offered every year; the share of foreign students is increasing; micro-qualification courses are recognized both in the national and international higher education area and in the labour market are provided; the best foreign lecturers from European and foreign universities of applied sciences are attracted; joint diplomas with advanced European universities of applied sciences are awarded; international-level applied research, experimental development and professional art are carried out together with foreign partners.

The University of Applied Sciences works and acts globally responsibly, in line with one of the priorities the EU: accelerating the transformation towards a climate-friendly economy. One of the key principles of the University of Applied Sciences activities is sustainability, which is emphasized both in the strategic provisions of the University of Applied Sciences and in its practice, as well as in the implementation of activities. The activities of the University of Applied Sciences include social, economic, environmental and socio-cultural issues; much attention is paid to the circular economy in terms of both studies and applied research, and to other eco-innovations. The University of Applied Sciences bases its relations with stakeholders on respect for human beings, society and the environment, academic and scientific ethics and other values. The provisions of sustainable development are integrated into the content of study programs.

As an advanced European higher education institution, the University of Applied Sciences nurtures a culture of continuous improvement, characterized by continuous learning and effective (self-)evaluation of activities, creating conditions for making appropriate decisions. The University of Applied Sciences is perceived as a constantly learning organization, which ensures purposeful improvement of the qualifications and competencies of employees (lecturers, researchers and other employees); improvement of qualifications and competencies; learning and self-development are perceived as a right and duty of every member of the community; community members share knowledge with other community members. The focus is on attracting new, talented, motivated, inspiring faculty and other staff and designing the internal careers of existing staff. An effective system for increasing the motivation of employees has been created, which encourages the achievement of the highest results of the University of Applied Sciences activities. Diversity is respected in the University of Applied Sciences community, great attention to ensuring equal opportunities and diversity is paid. The community is concentrated, where the values of the University of Applied Sciences have become a part of daily activities. The University of Applied Sciences is perceived in society as an attractive workplace, creating excellent conditions for value-adding creativity. This led to the formation of the image of the University of Applied sciences as an attractive employer. Openness to innovation, the ability to be resilient, and develop key activities in relevant strategic directions and innovative ways allow the University of Applied Sciences to respond appropriately to change, initiate and manage it. The mobilization of professional staff, the active attraction of investments and the creation of a suitable environment for their use are the basis of an advanced long-term strategy of the University of Applied Sciences, which enshrines growth.

Although the University of Applied Sciences is successful at the international level, no less attention is paid to building the country's progress. The University of Applied Sciences, not only contributes to the growth of the Kaunas region but also creates added value by providing high-quality degree programs relevant to the sustainable development of the Lithuanian economy and society, creating flexible conditions for lifelong learning based on the integration of studies, applied science and art and the world of activities for the progress of the whole of Lithuania.

Students recommend the University of Applied Sciences as an institution that prepares competent, civic, socially responsible, creative, entrepreneurial professionals with lifelong learning conditions.

Competence-based modules/courses, combined with the needs of the world of business, can be studied flexibly by combining studies with work. Professional competencies that are important for the workplace are developed and students' citizenship, entrepreneurship, etc.

To implement the following strategic goals that increase the value created by the University of Applied Science, the following strategic priorities for 2025 are set:

- *Advanced European higher education institution.*
- *Institution of higher education focused on the progress of Lithuania.*
- *Institution of higher education facilitating community and the culture of a learning organization.*

To implement these strategic priorities of the University of Applied Sciences 4 strategic directions of activity have been formed:

1. *Practical and innovation-based higher education studies.*
2. *Applied science and art activities focused on the development of society.*
3. *A sustainable community that nurtures the culture of the learning organization.*
4. *Efficient management and optimized infrastructure.*

Strategic priorities, goals, activity programs and objectives of the KUAS 2021-2025

| Strategic priorities, goals, activity programs and objectives of the University of Applied Sciences | | | |
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| Strategic priorities | Strategic goals | Strategic activity programs | Objectives |
| Advanced European higher education institution | 1. To conduct practical and innovation-based higher education studies. | <i>Practical and innovation-based higher education studies</i> | 1. To conduct studies and other educational services relevant to the progress of the state and regional development. 2. To develop learner-centred studies and training services. 3. To develop the international openness of studies. |
| | 2. To develop applied science and art activities at the national and international level focused on the development of society. | <i>Applied science and art activities focused on the development of society</i> | 1. To conduct applied science and art activities with Lithuanian and foreign social partners and disseminate its results. 2. To develop innovative and sustainable products, services and technological process innovations in cooperation with social partners. 3. To strengthen the interaction between applied science and art activities and studies. |
| Institution of higher education focused on the progress of Lithuania | 3. To build a sustainable community that nurtures the culture of the learning organization. | <i>A sustainable community that nurtures the culture of the learning organization</i> | 1. Mobilize and retain professional staff. 2. Nurture the culture of the learning organization. 3. Strengthen community sustainability and employee well-being. |
| Institution of higher education facilitating community and the culture of a learning organization | 4. To increase the efficiency of management and optimize the infrastructure in the University of Applied Sciences. | <i>Efficient management and optimized infrastructure</i> | 1. To optimize the management of the University of Applied Sciences by strengthening the integration of different areas of activity. 2. To develop the provision of services based on smart technologies, increasing the efficiency of the digitized activity processes of the University of Applied Sciences. 3. To optimize the infrastructure of the University of Applied Sciences. 4. To ensure the financial sustainability of the University of Applied Sciences. |

This strategic five-year period focuses on the quality of the implementation of the University of Applied Sciences mission through the strengthening of the international dimension. It should be emphasized that a qualitative impact on the progress of society is possible by the whole community of the University of Applied Sciences working and acting together and by basing activities on sustainable funding of studies and applied research. Creating high-quality added value will increase the visibility of the University of Applied Sciences and strengthen its reputation.

Key indicators (effect assessment indicators) by 2025

1. Number of graduates - the percentage of the students who graduated from Kaunas University of Applied Sciences out of the total number of the students admitted – **75 per cent.**
2. The percentage of the students of Kaunas University of Applied Sciences from the total number of students in the Universities of Applied Sciences in Lithuania – **20 per cent.**
3. Change in the proportion of the gain per one full-time equivalent of the academic staff from contracted applied science and art activities – **3.6 times.**
4. Change in the level of the quality of scientific publications – **50 per cent.**
5. The percentage of the students of Kaunas University of Applied Sciences participating in international mobility – **50 per cent.**

Financial perspectives of the strategy

Each strategic activity program has a budget for the implementation of the University of Applied Sciences strategic activities. Part of the activities foreseen in the strategy is planned to be financed from the main financial sources of the University of Applied Sciences (84 %), i. e. from state budget appropriations and funding received from Erasmus + programs. The remaining part of the activities is planned to be funded by project activities (16 %).

The Council of University of Applied Sciences annually reviews and evaluates the operational priorities and approves the annual funding program after evaluating the University of Applied Sciences performance, the number of students and the economic situation in the country and the proposals of the Academic Council.
