

APPROVED  
by Decision No 33  
of the sole stakeholder (owner) of KUAS  
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# **PUBLIC INSTITUTION KOLPING UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (KUAS) STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR 2021–2023**

**Kaunas, 2021**

*‘If you seek for a better future, it is your responsibility to create it.’*  
(Blessed Adolph Kolping)

## **INTRODUCTION**

KUAS is a community-based, non-state-owned university of applied sciences. In 1996, the Kolping College was established, and in 2001 it became an institution of higher education – Public Institution Kolping University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter referred to as the KUAS). The KUAS is guided by the harmony of theoretical knowledge, practical skills and the Christian worldview, and the qualification of the graduates is marked by the professional bachelor’s degree. The KUAS is distinguished by positioning a human being at the centre of the Christian worldview. This person builds a relationship with their environment and their neighbour, who is unrestrained, thoughtful, creative, and loving of others. The KUAS pays special attention to sustainable development.

The founder of the KUAS is the Lithuanian Kolping Foundation, a Catholic charity and support organisation that unites socially responsible people acting on the principle of self-help; the stakeholder of the KUAS is Kolping Bildungswerk Wuerttemberg (KBW), Germany. The KUAS was established by implementing one of the priority activities of the Foundation – education. The KUAS is supported by the International Kolping Society ([www.kolping.net](http://www.kolping.net)), which unites about 500 thousand members in 60 countries worldwide. The society is headquartered in Cologne, Germany, where its founder, Blessed Adolph Kolping, started his activity. Blessed Adolph Kolping is one of the most famous leaders of 19th century social Catholicism and a great social educator, whose activities, having acquired a broad international scope, continue until now (more information: <http://lkd.kolping.lt/apie-draugija>).

The main challenges that the KUAS is facing today are the constant changes in laws and orders regulating education and studies, the unfavourable demographic situation, the high competition for students with Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions, and the new demands on the quality of studies. In response to the dynamic changes, the KUAS aims to implement the strategic operational objectives that are focused on improving the quality of the services, consistent with the KUAS mission, demands of the regional, national and European labour market, and based on professional practice and applied research, thus enabling lifelong learning. The KUAS also strives for management efficiency, strengthening

The development of the KUAS strategic action plan involved the entire KUAS community, which contributed to assessing the KUAS strengths, areas for improvement, identification of emerging threats and justification of proposals for the implementation of new opportunities.

The KUAS Strategic Action Plan for 2021–2023 has been prepared following the primary strategic documents of the Republic of Lithuania and the European Union, the objectives and guidelines laid down therein,<sup>1</sup> and corresponds to the development plans for the Kaunas region for 2021–2027. The KUAS Strategic Action Plan is in line with the development vision of the Kaunas region. In the vision, Kaunas is presented as a modern economic region of Lithuania and Eastern and Central Europe, the hub of research, high-tech and information technologies, and the centre of culture and tourism attraction with a well-developed infrastructure of international transport and logistics

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<sup>1</sup> The Law of the Republic of Lithuania on Higher Education and Research (<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.343430/asr>)

Lithuania’s Progress Strategy ‘Lithuania 2030’ (<https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.425517>)

Lithuania’s Vision for the Future of Higher Education and Research: Scientific Lithuania 2030  
([https://strata.gov.lt/images/documents/analize/trumprasciai/2011/moksloji\\_lietuva\\_2030.pdf](https://strata.gov.lt/images/documents/analize/trumprasciai/2011/moksloji_lietuva_2030.pdf))

State Educational Strategy for 2013–2022 ([https://www.smm.lt/uploads/lawacts/docs/687\\_e7870701e841e67d18a5377b19e7a57e.pdf](https://www.smm.lt/uploads/lawacts/docs/687_e7870701e841e67d18a5377b19e7a57e.pdf))

Europe 2030 ([https://euagenda.eu/upload/publications/rp\\_sustainable\\_europe\\_30-01\\_en\\_web.pdf.pdf](https://euagenda.eu/upload/publications/rp_sustainable_europe_30-01_en_web.pdf.pdf))

Green papers:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0169&qid=1488204560202&from=LT>

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0123&qid=1488204560202&from=LT>

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/LT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52009DC0329&qid=1488204560202&from=LT>

European Green Deal ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_lt](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_lt))

hosting a constantly learning, entrepreneurial, healthy, and safe community. The region's modernity is distinguished by the development of an advanced economy, which ensures a high quality of life and rapid rural modernisation, focusing on human and environmental sanitation, which guarantees the harmonious development of the region. In line with the introductory provisions of these strategic documents and the principles of Christian social teaching, the KUAS emphasises in its activities the importance of eco-awareness in modern society, supports and promotes the principles of sustainable entrepreneurship education, business social and ecological responsibility

Although the number of students is not too high in KUAS, it has an evident educational philosophy based on the principles of Kolping's teaching. KUAS belongs to a large international Kolping network and trains specialists who meet the needs of the labour market of Kaunas, Lithuania, and Europe. They apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies and base their activities on Christian morality. During its activity, the KUAS has developed a higher education institution culture that accepts and combines different approaches, guiding them to work in one direction, enabling internal inertia, promoting lifelong learning attitudes, and focusing on achieving clear and ambitious goals.

When implementing this strategy plan, the quality assurance is based on the KUAS's responsibility for the quality of studies and its improvement, systematic research, the involvement of all interested parties (students, lecturers, administration, graduates, employers, etc.) in the processes of improving the quality of studies, a clear and transparent division of responsibilities, and the creation of a favourable environment for quality assurance.

The Strategic Action Plan for 2021–2023 presents the KUAS's vision, mission and values, the principles of Kolping's teaching, the analysis of the current situation (PEST and SWOT), the priority areas of activity, the strategic goals and objectives set for their implementation, the measures to be taken, the responsibilities to be fulfilled, and the performance criteria and indicators.

## ***VISION***

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KUAS is an institution of higher education that trains highly qualified specialists by developing their personalities. KUAS implements the unity of study, science, and the Christian worldview in the teaching and learning process and enables each member's self-expression. KUAS has a solid organisational culture, is innovative, open and responsive to the environment.

## ***MISSION***

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- To train highly qualified, practice-oriented specialists, based on Christian morality, who can integrate successfully into the labour markets of the region, country and Europe. To ensure a modern study process in line with the European Higher Education Area requirements, in active cooperation with the social partners of the region, country and Europe.
- To educate the society by developing its spirituality, humanitarian, professional and information culture, solidarity, and subsidiarity, fostering Christian values, awareness of the universal good, using the soul of the International Kolping Society, competence, and connections.

## ***VALUES***

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The main cultural feature of KUAS is great attention and respect for the student's personality, fostering of community, constant assistance in the formation of Christian moral attitudes and accumulating inner potential for the humanisation of the country's social and economic environment. The KUAS is guided by the principles of Kolping's teaching, based on Christian social teaching, which shapes the Christian approach to life values and work activities. The activities of the KUAS are based on the principles of sustainable development, integral ecology,

business social responsibility, covering the main areas: social welfare, environmental sustainability, and economic well-being.

The motto of the KUAS: 'If you seek for a better future, it is your responsibility to create it' (Blessed Priest Adolph Kolping).

### ***KOLPING TEACHING AND LEARNING PRINCIPLES***

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For Blessed Priest Adolph Kolping, education and teaching/learning was a dynamic, never-ending process. People of various social abilities meet as if forming a single painting and improving and developing their identity. For Adolph Kolping, teaching and learning was the key to the development and improvement of the whole society to solve the current problems of the time.

Considering Blessed Adolph Kolping, the aim is to enable each person to develop and grow. Therefore the meaning of the Kolping training is:

- to enable people of all ages and social, ethical, and cultural groups to improve their personal and professional skills to help them in their lives and contribute to the well-being of society;
- to strengthen people's self-confidence, strength and empowerment through education and training, so that individuals themselves can more easily overcome various life situations;
- to encourage people to take responsibility in all areas of life: personal, social, and global (environmental).

***The activities and study process of the KUAS are based on ten principles of the KUAS teaching/learning<sup>2</sup>:***

**1. A HUMAN BEING IS IN THE CENTRE**

Whether a child, an adult, a student, a lecturer, a client, a partner, an employee, or a supervisor, every human being is a valuable asset. Everyone's needs, expectations and feelings are essential. The KUAS recognises that every person has the right and can study and learn. Therefore, the aim is to help each personality discover and choose their professional and personal path, to develop at their own pace and trajectory.

**2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE**

It is recognised that every human being, regardless of material, social or physical possibilities, has the right to quality higher education. No discrimination or distinction based on aptitude or social status is accepted or accepted during the study process.

**3. HOLISTIC EDUCATION**

The study process aims to balance the assimilation of specific professional competencies and holistic personality development between becoming a happy person and preparing for a professional or academic career. It is an integrally organised study process, strengthening and developing personal and professional competencies from the outset. The KUAS develops total personal abilities: mental and emotional, and spiritual needs are responded to.

**4. VALUE-ORIENTATION**

The KUAS bases its activities on Christian values. Emphasis is placed on social commitment and a socially responsible approach to all creation. A person is a social being who bears responsibility for himself, those around him and the environment. The KUAS is not a confessional Catholic higher education institution open to representatives of all religions. This emphasises shared values and respect for individuals of different cultures and religions.

**5. OPENNESS TO DIVERSITY**

Diversity in the KUAS is perceived as a value rather than just a tolerable inevitable phenomenon. Consideration shall be given to the national-cultural, socio-economic, and personality-mindedness differences of the community members.

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the teaching and education concept of Prof. Wassilios E. Fthenakis, PhD and Prof. Wolfgang Schuster, PhD of Württemberg Kolping Society, the KUAS stakeholder.

## 6. CO-CONSTRUCTION TRAINING AND LEARNING

In the study process, the emphasis is not on passive knowledge transfer but the active construction of knowledge through relationships and experience. The emphasis is on cooperation between lecturers, students, administrative staff, parents, graduates, social partners, and stakeholders. In this process, everyone learns and improves while experiencing the meaning of learning. The emotional aspects of teaching (learning), the dynamics of teaching (learning) in the group, the context, and the meaning of teaching (learning) are considered necessary. As each study process is different, much attention is paid to the individualised study process, so the KUAS conducts student-oriented studies.

## 7. INTERACTION BETWEEN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

In addition to formal training, the KUAS offers non-formal teaching and learning opportunities, believing in each person's development opportunities, allowing and providing opportunities for each person to acquire new competencies and experiences.

## 8. TARGETED USE OF ICT

Using modern information and communication technologies (ICT), the KUAS aims to expand the learning environment, enrich learning methods, and develop the skills necessary for a modern person in terms of using ICT, information management and critical evaluation thereof. Students are offered opportunities to get involved and test the distance learning process by using the opportunities offered by modern technologies.

## 9. CREATING AN ENABLING TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The study process pays excellent attention to the teaching/learning environment: it is motivating, safe, adapted to individual learning, accessible to everyone's needs, adapted to socially interactive actions. In the study process, creating a suitable environment plays a multifunctional role: experiential, discovery and action, meetings, retreat/recreation, artistic. It is recognised that, to a large extent, learning does not take place through the arrangement of study programme subjects and learning materials but human relationships and the environment. Ergonomic, aesthetic, psychological, social, and informational aspects of the teaching/learning environment shall be assessed.

## 10. PROMOTING LIFELONG LEARNING

The KUAS develops positive attitudes towards lifelong learning and emphasises the development of learning competence. The aim is to introduce and motivate students, lecturers, administrative staff, and other persons to be interested in innovations, continuously improve in-service training, or promote a continuous process of lifelong learning.

## ***STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2021–2023***

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In 2021, the KUAS commemorates the 25th year of its activity, during which the KUAS community changed, improved, and grew. Despite constant changes in the dynamic environment, the main principles and directions of the KUAS activities remained. The strengths of KUAS :

- exclusive and timely study programmes focused on eco awareness-raising, environmentally friendly lifestyle, ecology, and sustainable development of the future economy;
- a high-quality study process ensuring a high level of trained specialists;
- professionalism and openness of lecturers to new ideas, readiness, and strong motivation to accept the challenges of the time;
- fostering partnership and community ideas and real practice, effective cooperation with social partners, other higher education institutions, vocational schools, schools of general education, and the business world.

The KUAS is currently pursuing four study programmes in three study fields:

- 1) Social work: study programmes of child welfare and social security, and social work management;
- 2) recreation and tourism: study programme of eco-tourism;
- 3) businesses: study programme of transport logistics.

Activities of the KUAS in 2021–2023 will be strengthened in the planned priority activity areas to:

1. carry out quality studies in line with the provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the needs of the labour market, integrating the latest scientific and technological achievements, promoting eco-consciousness, and the principles of Christian social training.
2. Strengthen the effectiveness of the KUAS governance, which focuses on fostering community identity.
3. Considering the study objectives, the needs of the labour market and the region's development strategy, to develop applied research, to advise local governments, non-governmental organisations, and other entities, as appropriate.
4. To develop the development of internationality by increasing the visibility of the KUAS.

***Quality assurance of the studies by developing the training of highly qualified specialists.*** During the 24 years of operation, 1460 graduates graduated from the KUAS. The KUAS is graduated by educated, socially responsible, civic, and not afraid of change individuals who successfully contribute to the Kaunas region and the welfare of the whole country. To maintain the high quality of studies, great attention will be paid and further developed to the training of highly qualified specialists capable of working in digitalisation, constantly improving, based on Christian morality, social and ecological responsibility. The focus will be on the improvement of national and international student attraction, improvement of student-oriented study organisation, updating of study content by applying digital teaching and learning tools, ensuring the quality of remote work, strengthening of the competencies of academic staff, and development of the internal study quality assurance system to meet the study quality criteria. Particular attention at the KUAS is paid to students' personal development. Therefore, the aim will continue to develop holistic education and foster communion based on Christian moral attitudes.

***They are strengthening the effectiveness of the KUAS governance, which is geared towards fostering community identity.*** Its community spirit and loyalty characterise the KUAS. This enables the constant strengthening of the focus of the KUAS community by strengthening the perception of identity as an international community of Kolping. A communal, creative, and socially responsible academic environment is constantly promoted at the KUAS. Employees strive to inspire students to achieve their goals with their example, responsibility and passion. The unity and coherence of the KUAS community are crucial for the growth of a successful and robust institution. An example of leadership and strong community for the KUAS are its graduates (Alumni), who in their professional activities remain faithful to the values of the KUAS: initiate and support implemented innovations, are not afraid to undertake complex tasks, are active citizens, innovators, scientific patrons. In the future, the aim will continue to be to increase the efficiency of the institution's management, to develop social and academic partnerships by involving graduates, organising meetings, joint events, training for the KUAS student representation and students, and sharing best practices. In developing relations with social partners and Alumni, it is planned to promote the involvement of former and current students in the activities and initiatives of the KUAS, but also in publicising of studies. It is planned to develop quality culture provisions, an open academic environment based on Christian values, and improve and upgrade the KUAS infrastructure.

***Development of applied research contributing to the sustainable development of the Kaunas region and the country.*** During its 24 years of activity, the KUAS has developed and strengthened relations with social partners. Therefore, the aim will continue to strengthen relations with business, private and public sector organisations, involving them in study processes and scientific applied activities. The aim will be to attract more partners who can offer KUAS students' internships and

new jobs for graduates. In response to market changes, the study programmes will be improved accordingly. To develop applied science activities, it is planned to seek external funding to develop R&D activities for academic staff. International networks of researchers will be developed. The Experience Learning Centre operates at the KUAS, where the qualification improvement programmes for social services employees are successfully implemented; therefore, the aim is to expand the provision of lifelong learning services, develop non-formal adult education programmes, and offer more educational events and seminars to the public, with a particular focus on raising public eco-awareness; the Families Academy will be expanded too. The aim will be to promote social participation and volunteering of the KUAS staff and students, thus contributing to the development of public welfare. All of this will be aimed at the impact of the KUAS on regional and national development.

**International development.** The KUAS is a member of the international Kolping network, which unites more than 60 countries worldwide and has more than 500 000 members. The KUAS also belongs to the following international networks: UASNET – the Universities of Applied Sciences Network, FEECA – *Federation Européenne pour l'Éducation Catholique des Adults* (the European Federation for Catholic Adult Education), IFCU – the International Federation of Catholic Universities, EASSW – the European Association of Schools of Social Work, and ERIS – the European Research Institute for Social Work. The KUAS has over 20 cooperation agreements with foreign higher education institutions. Since the KUAS does not make full use of the existing international relations, the aim will be to develop the internationality and visibility of the KUAS activities in the international space, strengthening the effectiveness of publicity measures. It is envisaged to develop international cooperation by promoting mobility (including virtual and mixed mobility) of academic and non-academic staff and students, ensuring equal opportunities for participation. Partnerships with foreign higher education institutions, research networks and business organisations will be strengthened, involving them in the study and applied science research processes. The KUAS will develop the dissemination of the achieved scientific results at the international level and increase the attractiveness and accessibility of studies for international students.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION**

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### ***Political factors.***

Higher education studies in the world and Lithuania are going through a difficult period, influenced by various factors of globalisation. In Lithuania's Vision for the Future of Higher Education and Research 'Scientific Lithuania 2030', the primary trend to significantly change the development of the system of science and studies is the emerging scientific society in the country, characterised by lifelong learning, creativity and application of scientific knowledge and methods in the development of innovations. In such a society, the role of education and training in the broad sense is becoming universal. The principle of sustainable development has been identified as a significant factor for responding to global economic, social, and ecological challenges, emphasising social harmony, balance, a sustainable approach to the natural environment, and the growing link between science and studies and innovation.

Today, Lithuanian science and studies policy is focused on economic competitiveness. However, in the future, more attention will be paid to holistic human development, public analysis, and cultural dissemination, therefore, changing social, cultural, and technological milestones. The growing influence of internationality should also be considered a significant factor for determining the research and studies system changes.

The growing emphasis on the internationalisation of higher education is also one of the main objectives of the Bologna process: the creation of a single area of higher education; the guarantee of a high level of education for both European citizens and international students; the promotion of the competitiveness and attractiveness of the European education system; the training of highly qualified professionals for the European labour market; the promotion of the mobility of lecturers and students; and increasing the transparency and flexibility of the higher education system.

The National Programme for the Development of Studies, Research and Experimental (Social and Cultural) Development for 2013–2020 was established in 2012 to define the main directions for the development of studies, research and experimental (social, cultural) development that would promote the harmonious development of human and society, strengthen the country's competitiveness, and respond to the main provisions of the Lithuanian Progress Strategy 'Lithuania 2030', the National Progress Programme for 2014–2020, and the EC Communication 'Europe 2020: A strategy for innovative, sustainable and inclusive growth'. This programme will serve as a basis for training highly qualified specialists able to compete in the global labour market, create conditions for the formation of high-quality R&D and develop inter-institutional, cross-sectoral, and international cooperation.

### ***Economic factors.***

To achieve greater international cooperation, higher education institutions are financially encouraged. Lithuania lags far behind the EU average in terms of scientific publications, the number of registered patents and participation in international projects. The new funding procedure for science is being changed by orienting scientists towards the quality and applicability of scientific activities. It will guarantee the financial stability of long-term research and enable research and study institutions to plan participation in projects and other programmes.

The 'Youth on The Move' flagship initiative of the EC Communication 'Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth' states one of the Commission's key objectives at the EU level: to step up the modernisation agenda of higher education (curricula, governance, and financing) including by benchmarking university performance and educational outcomes in a global context. After Lithuania joined the EU, funding for mobility from the EU budget became stable and planned, as it is programmed according to the requirements of the EU structural funds in certain stages and according to priorities. The EU structural support funds are used to finance the following measures: 'Improvement of quality of studies, an increase of internationalisation', and 'Development of internationalisation of higher education'.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science data, the funds allocated for the participation of Lithuanian students, researchers and lecturers in mobility programmes are growing every year. The total funds allocated to the Erasmus programme have more than tripled over the decade. Additional attention is paid to the mobility of researchers and lecturers at the national level by financing scientific trips, internships, participation in scientific conferences and teaching in foreign institutions. All cycle programmes are also supported, and graduates receive high-level scholarships to participate in them.

### ***Social factors.***

Since the restoration of independence, Lithuania has witnessed a general decline in the country's population. Since 2008, the number of Lithuanian higher education institutions has decreased by more than a third. Demographic and labour market trends in the country show that the number of traditional students in higher education is decreasing and that the number of non-traditional students will increase. All this leads to competition between higher education institutions. Access to higher education should be increased by increasing access to education for under-represented groups and enabling them to complete their studies. The relatively high level of unemployment and low wages continue to encourage the emigration of the workforce and the brain drain and related phenomena.

These trends determine the attitude of the KUAS to prepare knowledgeable, demanding, and competitive specialists of the labour market. To achieve this goal, the KUAS visibility is increased, and to achieve the best results, the KUAS contributes to the development of the country's general economic and social welfare.

***Technological factors.***

The Europe 2020 strategy adopted by the European Union mainly focuses on the education system. Europe 2020 is linked to the EU growth strategy. The Strategy programmes envisage measures to improve access to all levels of education, to increase youth employment, as well as to ensure the quality requirements of education, and to promote the introduction of information technologies and innovations. In a rapidly changing world, the EU economy needs to become intelligent, sustainable, and inclusive. These three complementary priorities should help the EU Member States achieve high employment, productivity, and social inclusion.

The knowledge-based Lithuanian economy is becoming a priority objective for Lithuania. Telecommunications technologies are developing rapidly in the country. The number of people using them is increasing. Technologies change the concept of learning/training, create conditions for the development of continuous, distance, non-formal education, democratise and cheapen it by adapting it to different opportunities and needs.

New technologies increase the cooperation of the KUAS with foreign partners and expand the possibility of students finding much valuable information for studies. Science and study databases in the virtual space increase the availability of information for students: a virtual library functions; virtual databases are being subscribed. The KUAS focuses on the development of new technologies and electronic teaching and learning methods or tools. Distance studies have been considered promising for almost a decade. The KUAS applies diverse forms of distance learning, combining auditory time with studies and settlements in a virtual environment. Lecturers integrate the subjects they teach into the virtual learning environment Moodle and place teaching materials, tasks, ongoing interactive communication between lecturers and students.

***STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF KUAS***

<b>STRENGTHS (achievements, uniqueness, competitive advantages)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All study programmes implemented at the KUAS are oriented towards the Kaunas region strategic plan (innovative economy, inclusive tourism development, transport infrastructure, social welfare) and respond to the needs of the labour market.</li> <li>• The KUAS is based on the principles of Christian social teaching, emphasising the importance of eco-awareness in modern society, the principles of sustainable entrepreneurship education are supported and promoted, and business social and ecological responsibility.</li> <li>• Interactive and innovative teaching/learning methods are applied in the study process.</li> <li>• There are excellent opportunities for digital learning: two-thirds of the subjects are covered by distance courses (except for practices), which allows making studies more accessible; all the study subjects are in the Moodle system.</li> <li>• Study programmes in social work are accredited for the maximum period; 67% of all students are involved in them.</li> <li>• Graduation papers of most graduates are of a practical applied nature.</li> <li>• The employment rate is high at 92%.</li> <li>• The system of partial study subject crediting is ensured.</li> <li>• The KUAS has an internal quality assurance system that responds to the European Higher Education Area provisions.</li> </ul>

- The activities of the study field committees are successfully carried out.
- There is a Quality and Research Department, which coordinates the coordination and monitoring of the quality assurance system of the studies.
- The KUAS is part of the international Kolping network, which unites 60 countries around the world.
- Successfully and efficiently operates the qualification improvement/training practice organised for social service providers – the Experience Learning Centre operates.
- Lecturers' high qualifications and experience allow ensuring high-quality learning and studies in various forms of activities.
- Lecturers have many years of practical work experience in the taught subject, the number of lecturers with a doctoral degree and practical experience is increasing.
- Lecturers actively improve their qualifications in various training and seminars.
- Most lecturers are prepared and teach subjects in foreign languages (English, Russian, German).
- A business-like and warm internal atmosphere for all the KUAS community members is ensured.
- Low turnover of administrative staff.
- Solid and lasting ties with national and international partners.
- Suitable conditions for students with disabilities have been created: a lift, a climbing ladder, computer equipment, etc. have been installed.

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- Opportunities to attract foreign lecturers to teach various study programme subjects (modules) are not sufficiently exploited.
- Poor visibility of the KUAS, both nationally and internationally.
- Lack of mutual academic exchange of international students.
- Insufficient attention is paid to the planning of applied scientific and experimental activities and the dissemination of results.
- Slow development of applied research and projects.
- Low participation of students in applied research activities.
- Lack of potential for the development of transnational projects.
- Not all lecturers are ready and teach subjects in foreign languages (English, Russian, German).
- Lack of research competencies of lecturers.
- Insufficient use is made of the involvement of Alumni in the life of the KUAS, e.g. for attracting new students, joint projects, development of practice places.

#### **THREATS**

- Insufficient academic preparation of entrants: low scores of entrants.
- Demographic external threats: decrease the population (youth), which also determines the number of enrolments to the KUAS.
- Strengthening of competition in the higher education area of the country and Europe. Competitors of the KUAS (Kaunas University of Applied Sciences, St. Ignatius of Loyola University of Applied Sciences) implement similar study programmes.
- The KUAS does not receive state funding for studies.
- The threat of the COVID-19 virus may complicate the practical plans for the completion of

the graduation papers.

- The continuing situation due to the COVID-19 virus hampers the development of tourism on a national scale, thus reducing students' interest in studying in the study programme of eco-tourism.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Increasing the attractiveness and visibility of the institution in international cooperation by developing the mobility of staff and students.
- Attracting full-time students from abroad.
- Development of typical study subjects/modules together with foreign higher education institutions.
- Development of the distance learning system.
- Cooperation between the KUAS and vocational training centres, schools of general education should be strengthened in search of new forms of cooperation.
- Considering the challenges of digitalisation and technology, it is essential to attract more investments in the KUAS to improve the training infrastructure of specialists.
- Introduction of educational, information and other technologies in the study process by updating the implemented study programmes and creating new study programmes.
- Update the Quality Manual with clear process descriptions.
- Greater involvement of Alumni in the study process.
- Greater use of the international Kolping network for the development of studies and practice.
- Increasing the network of foreign partners.
- Development of non-formal adult education programmes (not only in the field of social work).
- More outstanding public education on eco-awareness: through events, training, etc.
- Involvement of Alumni in attracting new students, developing joint projects, developing internships.
- Strengthening cooperation with the social partners on outsourcing research and non-formal adult learning.
- Development of the KUAS's visibility and visibility through social partners, Alumni, knowledge, and academic and non-academic staff skills. The increasing dissemination of the information about the studies.
- Strengthening the applied scientific competencies of students in the study process, involving them in the performance of empirical research and projects. Motivating students to participate in conferences by preparing reports and articles, linking them with projects and course papers.

**STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, MEASURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR 2021–2023**

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT/CENTRE
<p><b>1. To train highly qualified specialists who constantly improve and base their activities on Christian morality.</b></p>	<p>1.1. To improve measures for attracting national and international students<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>To constantly update and supplement information about study opportunities on the KUAS and other websites and to publicise the KUAS graduates’ and students’ success stories and employers’ feedback</p>	<p>Public Relations Department International Relations Department</p>
		<p>To develop the administration of the KUAS accounts on <i>Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn</i> social networks, providing information on study opportunities</p>	<p>Public Relations Department</p>
		<p>To organise events popularising the study programmes at the KUAS (e.g. open days), competitions, exhibitions, lectures, seminars for students, publicising them on the KUAS’s social networks, websites, etc.</p>	<p>Public Relations Department</p>
		<p>Participate in national and international study fairs and exhibitions (priority countries: Latvia, Poland, Czech Republic, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia) through various forms of publicity</p>	<p>Public Relations Department International Relations Department</p>
		<p>To create conditions for persons motivated to study, but with fewer opportunities, by providing scholarships to cover a part of the tuition fee of the founder</p>	<p>Student Service Centre Finance Department</p>
		<p>To ensure conditions for persons with disabilities to study</p>	<p>Student Service Centre Household Unit</p>
		<p>To promote Alumni activities by involving graduates in publicity and student attraction activities</p>	<p>Public Relations Department Student Service Centre KOKSA</p>
	<p>1.2. To improve the organisation of student-oriented studies, ensuring the availability and flexibility of study services</p>	<p>To constantly analyse the situation of students who do not attend lectures and practical classes and have learning difficulties and to apply academic support measures accordingly to reduce the share of students’ loss</p>	<p>Studies Department Student Service Centre</p>
		<p>To constantly analyse the situation of students with financial debts and to advise on the issues of financial debt reduction</p>	<p>Studies Department Student Service Centre Finance Department</p>
		<p>To ensure psychosocial support for all students</p>	<p>Student Service Centre KOKSA</p>
		<p>To ensure opportunities to study based on an individual study schedule</p>	<p>Studies Department</p>
		<p>To encourage excellent, outstanding students and active students (by providing one-time incentive scholarships, thank-you notes, etc.)</p>	<p>Student Service Centre</p>
		<p>To provide financial support (founder’s scholarships to cover part of the tuition fee), considering the student’s need for social support</p>	<p>Student Service Centre Finance Department</p>

<sup>3</sup> The measures are planned to be carried out both in direct contact and remotely.

		To provide quality career management services	Student Service Centre
		To develop distance studies (Moodle, KUAS information system, MS Teams, and other platforms)	IT Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To develop the system of recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes at the KUAS	Studies Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To ensure holistic education by maintaining a balance in the study process between the assimilation of specific professional competencies and general personality development, responding not only to the intellectual but also emotional and spiritual needs of students	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre KOKSA
	1.3. To develop an effective internal quality assurance system for studies, responding to the quality assurance provisions of the European higher education area and the principles of Kolping teaching	To regularly monitor and evaluate the implemented study programmes, getting feedback from students, lecturers, administrative staff, internship supervisors, graduates, employers, social partners, and publishing them on the KUAS website	Quality and Research Department Public Relations Department
		To constantly update and improve the study programmes, considering the results of the surveys, recommendations of external evaluation experts, and measures provided for in the progress reports	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre Service of Academic Affairs
		To constantly update the subject descriptions (every semester), including interactive teaching/learning methods, integrating the aspects of eco-awareness and the principles of Kolping teaching/learning in the study content	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To regularly certify study subjects of all study programmes in the Certification Commissions, ensuring compliance of study subjects with the quality criteria (every three years)	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre Service of Academic Affairs
		To modernise the study content by applying digital teaching/learning tools in the study process	Chapter IT Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To develop cooperation with social stakeholders and Alumni, ensuring the quality, accessibility and publicity of the services provided	Social Welfare Centre Economics and Business Centre Service of Academic Affairs Quality and Research Department Public Relations Department KOKSA
To improve the compensation and incentive systems for lecturers, considering the results of their work	Service of Academic Affairs Human Resources Department		

		To regularly review and update the compliance of internal study quality assurance documents with international (ESG) and national regulations and the Kolping teaching/learning philosophy	Service of Academic Affairs Quality and Research Department
		To regularly monitor the internships (student and employer surveys, consultations, and training for internship mentors)	Quality and Research Department Service of Academic Affairs Experience Learning Centre
	1.4. To develop new study programmes that meet the labour market needs of the Kaunas region and the whole country	To develop new study programmes considering the needs of the Kaunas region, the country, and the European labour market	Service of Academic Affairs Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To develop joint subjects (modules) with other Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions	Service of Academic Affairs Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
<b>2. To increase the efficiency of the institution's management to achieve the performance of the KUAS</b>	2.1. To develop quality culture provisions at all management levels of the KUAS	To periodically update the KUAS management efficiency assurance documents	Service of Academic Affairs Service of Development and Communication Service of Infrastructure
		To carry out annual surveys of the KUAS staff and continuously strengthen the provision of feedback, considering the results of the survey	Quality and Research Department Human Resources Department
		To strengthen the improvement of the competencies of academic and non-academic staff	Human Resources Department International Relations Department Experience Learning Centre
		To develop the involvement of stakeholders in the management	Service of Academic Affairs Quality and Research Department
		To increase the efficiency of external communication by disseminating information to the public about the services and the operational results of the KUAS	Public Relations Department International Relations Department Quality and Research Department
	2.2. To foster an open academic environment based on Christian values	To strengthen the identity and harmony of the KUAS community by organising events for the KUAS community to ensure that each member understands the KUAS objectives and the principles of the Kolping teaching and contributes to their implementation	Human Resources Department Public Relations Department Experience Learning Centre
		To develop the KUAS community's commitment and socially responsible attitude towards the entire creation by developing eco-awareness	Human Resources Department Public Relations Department Experience Learning Centre
	To upgrade firmware	IT Department	

	2.3. To upgrade and improve the infrastructure of the KUAS	To upgrade the information system	IT Department
		To increase funds of literature and e-sources in Lithuanian and foreign languages in the KUAS library	Library
		To ensure financial sustainability and rational use of resources of the KUAS	Finance Department
		To develop digitisation of operational processes	IT Department
<b>3. To broaden the influence of the KUAS on the development of the region and the country</b>	3.1. To develop the dissemination of applied science at the regional, national, and international level	To increase the dissemination of scientific activities carried out by lecturers	Service of Academic Affairs Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To carry out the publication of the peer-reviewed journal of the KUAS 'Social Responsibility and Business Challenges' and the publication of articles in the EBSCO database	Service of Academic Affairs
		To organise national and international scientific-practical conferences and to publicise them	Service of Academic Affairs Student Service Centre Public Relations Department
	3.2. To develop inter-institutional cooperation in carrying out applied science activities	To develop applied science research relevant for the Kaunas region	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To carry out on-demand research of enterprises and organisations, publishing and publicising research results	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To promote the inclusion of topics relevant for the Kaunas region and the development of the entire country into the thesis topics	Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
	3.3. To develop cooperation with business, private and public sector organisations	To strengthen cooperation with employers of the Kaunas region and Lithuania on relevant issues of specialist training	Service of Academic Affairs Public Relations Department
		To prepare joint popularising science, cultural and social projects/campaigns for the residents of the city of Kaunas and the region and to publicise them	Public Relations Department
		To increase the availability of the KUAS infrastructure to the local community	Public Relations Department
		To educate the public on the topics of eco-awareness, citizenship, community, social responsibility, and to publicise events	Experience Learning Centre Public Relations Department
		To increase social activism and volunteering of the KUAS staff	Public Relations Department Human Resources Department
	3.4. To develop the provision of lifelong learning/teaching services	To organise qualification improvement seminars, responding to the needs of regional and Lithuanian employers for specialists and professional qualification improvement	Experience Learning Centre
		To conduct on-demand seminars and courses for social partners and regional and national companies	Experience Learning Centre
		To organise and publicise non-formal education events	Experience Learning Centre Public Relations Department
		To develop new and improve the implemented non-formal education programs,	Experience Learning Centre

		considering the needs of the regional and national labour market and the orders of institutions	
<b>4. To develop the internationality and visibility of the KUAS activities in the international area</b>	4.1. To promote international mobility of students, academic and non-academic staff <sup>4</sup> by ensuring equal opportunities for participation	To provide support and information to students on international mobility opportunities by organising information events and consultations	International Relations Department Student Service Centre
		To promote the professional experience internships of the KUAS community in foreign higher education institutions and organisations	International Relations Department Human Resources Department
		To promote mobility of the KUAS lecturers for teaching and research purposes	International Relations Department Service of Academic Affairs
		To promote student mobility for studies and internship in foreign higher education institutions and organisations	International Relations Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
	4.2. To develop the internationality of the study process	To increase intercultural competencies of the KUAS staff and students	Experience Learning Centre International Relations Department Service of Academic Affairs
		To increase professional preparedness of academic staff to teach in foreign languages	Service of Academic Affairs Human Resources Department
		To provide social support to incoming students (through mentors-students, organising an integration week, etc.)	International Relations Department Student Service Centre KOKSA
		To increase the number of foreign lecturers and researchers	International Relations Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
	4.3. To develop international research cooperation	To develop cooperation opportunities with foreign universities in the fields of social work, tourism and recreation and business studies	International Relations Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To prepare and publicise joint studies and projects with members of international research networks and organisations	International Relations Department

<sup>4</sup> Including virtual mobility.

			Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre
		To increase international visibility/prominence through participation in international events	International Relations Department Public Relations Department Social Welfare Centre Economic and Business Centre

**EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN 2021–2023**

NAME OF THE EVALUATION CRITERION	Units of measurement	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OF THE CRITERION		
		2021	2022	2 023
<b>1. The strategic goal is to train highly qualified specialists who constantly improve and base their activities on Christian morality.</b>				
<b>1.1. To improve the means of attracting national and international students.</b>				
Number of admitted students (as of 1 October)	units	110	120	130
Share (%) of students admitted from the Kaunas region vs the total number of students admitted that year	(%)	50%	50%	50%
Share (in %) of international students in the total number of students enrolled in that year (for studies and internship)	(%)	3%	4%	5%
Share of study programmes taught in English (%) of all study programmes	(%)	75%	75%	100%
Share (in %) of first-year students who received founder's scholarships to cover part of the tuition fee of all admitted students	(%)	10%	12%	12%
<b>1.2. To improve the organisation of student-oriented studies, ensuring the availability and flexibility of study services.</b>				
The share (%) of the number of students' loss at the end of the academic year compared to the number of students admitted in that academic year	(%)	17%	15%	15%
The share (%) of students who received founder's scholarships (one-time incentive and tuition fees to cover a part of the tuition fee) of all students	(%)	12%	15%	20%
Share of students with academic debts (%)	(%)	15%	12%	12%
Share of students with financial debts (%)	(%)	14%	12%	10%
The proportion of students who have completed their studies in time (per cent) compared to the number of students who entered the respective year	(%)	At least 70%	At least 70%	At least 70%
Share of graduates in employment (%) 6 months after graduation	(%)	At least 80%	At least 83%	At least 85%
Level of student satisfaction with the studies (scores up to 10)	scores	At least 7	At least 8	At least 8
<b>1.3. To develop an effective internal quality assurance system for studies, responding to the quality assurance provisions of the European Higher Education Area and the principles of Kolping's teaching and learning.</b>				
Share of study fields accredited for the maximum period (%) of all study fields of the KUAS	(%)	70%	70%	70%

Share of renewed study subjects (%) of all study subjects	(%)	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of study subjects using virtual teaching (learning) environment out of the total number of study subjects	(%)	80%	80%	90%
Share (%) of the total number of the KUAS lecturers having advanced their qualification that year	(%)	80%	80%	80%
Share (%) of lecturers with over three years of practical work experience in the field of the taught subject from all lecturers of the KUAS	(%)	Over 60%	Over 60%	Over 60%
Share (%) of lecturers with a PhD degree of all the KUAS lecturers	(%)	At least 20%	At least 30%	At least 30%
The level of satisfaction of employers with the specialists trained at the KUAS (scores up to 10)	scores	At least 7	At least 7	At least 8
<b>1.4. To develop new study programmes that meet the Kaunas region's labour market needs and the whole country.</b>				
Number of new study programmes	units	-	-	1
Number of new joint subjects/modules with other Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions	units	-	1	1
<b>2. Strategic goal: To increase the efficiency of the institution's management to achieve the performance of the KUAS</b>				
<b>2.1. To develop quality culture provisions at all management levels of the KUAS</b>				
Share (%) of administrative staff satisfied with work of the total administrative staff	(%)	90%	90%	90%
Share (%) of the administrative staff who raised the qualifications in the year of the total administrative staff	(%)	70%	80%	80%
Amount of funds allocated for academic and non-academic staff qualification improvement (EUR)	EUR	2000	2100	2200
<b>2.2. To foster an open academic environment based on Christian values</b>				
Number of events that bring together the KUAS community (units)	units	24	25	25
Number of events developing eco-awareness of the KUAS community and understanding of the principles of Kolping's teaching and learning (units)	units	10	12	14

<b>2.3. To upgrade and improve the infrastructure of the KUAS</b>				
Share of updated computer software (%)	(%)	60%	75%	80%
Share of updated information systems (%)	(%)	60%	75%	80%
The volume of funds for the acquisition of literature (EUR)	EUR	1500	1600	1600
Number of database subscriptions (units)	units	6	6	7
Number of e-journals in subscribed databases (units)	units	At least 14000	At least 14000	At least 14000
Number of e-books subscribed (units)	units	3450	3500	3500
Other subscriptions of library resources	units	At least 41000	At least 41000	At least 41000
<b>3. Strategic goal: To broaden the influence of the KUAS on the development of the region and the country</b>				
<b>3.1. To develop the dissemination of applied science at the regional, national, and international level</b>				
Number of scientific publications of lecturers in peer-reviewed scientific journals, referenced in international databases (units)	units	4	5	5
Number of national and international scientific and practical conferences (units)	units	3	4	4
Number of reports read by the KUAS academic staff at national and international conferences (units)	units	4	5	5
Number of presentations given by students at national and international conferences (units)	units	8	10	12
Share of students who have published articles and presented papers in the publications of national and international conferences out of the total number of students of the KUAS (%)	(%)	10%	12%	14%
<b>3.2. To develop inter-institutional cooperation in carrying out applied science activities</b>				
Number of applied research carried out relevant to Kaunas region (units)	units	2	3	3
Number of outsourced studies performed (units)	units	4	5	6
Share of graduation papers dealing with topics relevant to the Kaunas region in the total graduation papers (%)	(%)	60%	65%	70%
<b>3.3. To develop cooperation with business, private and public sector organisations</b>				
Number of members of national associations (units)	units	4	5	6
Number of public education events (units)	units	4	6	8
Number of joint scientific popularization, cultural and social projects/actions for Kaunas region residents (units)	units	3	4	5

<b>3.4. To develop the provision of lifelong learning/teaching services</b>				
Number of qualification improvement seminars	units	20	22	24
Number of on-demand seminars and courses for social partners and enterprises of Kaunas region and Lithuania (units)	units	6	7	8
Number of persons who participated in non-formal education events in that year (units)	units	At least 1000	At least 1050	At least 1100
Number of participants in qualification improvement courses	units	At least 600	At least 620	At least 640
<b>4. Strategic goal: To develop the internationality and visibility of the KUAS activities in the international area</b>				
<b>4.1. To promote international mobility of students, academic and non-academic staff by ensuring equal opportunities for participation</b>				
Share (%) of students who went to study in foreign higher education institutions or to do an internship in the total number of students of the KUAS	(%)	4%	4%	5%
Share (%) of lecturers who went to teach or train in foreign higher education institutions and organisations of the total number of the KUAS lecturers	(%)	25%	30%	30%
Share (%) of KUAS staff who went for professional experience internships to foreign higher education institutions or organisations of the total number of KUAS staff	(%)	15%	20%	20%
<b>4.2. To develop the internationality of the study process</b>				
Share (%) of international students who entered the KUAS to study or to do an internship in the total number of students at the KUAS	(%)	1%	1%	1%
Share (%) of lecturers who came to teach or train from foreign higher education institutions of the number of the KUAS lecturers	(%)	10%	12%	12%
Share (%) of study programmes prepared for teaching in a foreign language of all study programmes	(%)	75%	75%	75%
<b>4.3. To develop international research cooperation</b>				
Number of memberships in international associations/research networks (units)	units	3	4	4
Number of cooperation agreements with international partners: foreign higher education institutions and other educational institutions (units)	units	20	21	22