KÄRNTEN
University of
Applied Sciences



Strategy 23+30

CARINTHIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

www.cuas.at

Imprint:
Responsibility for content: Petra Bergauer, Peter Granig, Siegfried Spanz
Photos: Adobe Stock, Fotolia, Shutterstock, FH Kärnten
Drawings: Reinhard Gussmagg | Layout: Hannes Klingberg

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword 5

1. Evaluation HEP 15/22 6

2. Context, strategic considerations and studies 8

2.1 Context 8

2.2 „Educational Landscape of the Future" study 9

2.3 Carinthian population development 10

2.4 International student development 11

2.5 UAS Development and Financing Plan until 2022/23 11

2.6 Generation COVID and tomorrow's world of work 11

2.7 University Attractiveness - Universum study 12

2.8 IHS graduate survey 2022 13

2.9 Conclusions and findings for the strategy development 14

3. Strategy 2023-30 16

3.1 Strategic positioning 16

3.2 USP of CUAS 17

3.3 Strategic differentiation 17

4. Strategic market analysis 18

5. Core strategies and strategic guard rails 19

5.1 Quality orientation (quality leadership) 19

5.2 Market orientation 19

5.3 Research orientation 19

5.4 Promotion of internationality and interculturality 19

5.5 Integration of the natural environment (Campus Carinthia) 19

5.6 Sustainability orientation 19

5.7 Growth orientation 20

5.8 Strategic guard rails 21

6. Strategic priorities 22

6.1 Future-Oriented Educational Offerings 22

6.2 Didactics and methodology 24

6.3 Research and development 26

6.4 Internationalization 28

7.Implementation and planned priorities 2023 30

7.1 Measures 2023 30

7.2 Organizational anchoring and change processes 30

7.3 Information and communication structure 30

8. The strategy development process 31

9. The strategy team 32

10. Sources 33



FOREWORD

In an increasingly volatile world, marked by multiple crises, we must address two key questions: the core question of how to prepare students for the world of tomorrow and how we as a university, with all our members and partners, can live up to our regional and global responsibilities. The foundation of our strategic considerations is therefore ecological, economic and social sustainability, and based on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The goal of a strategic process is to ensure the further development of an organization. Therefore, our strategy development emphasizes topics that have a direct impact on our university's growth, increased student numbers, and high-quality leadership, or – to be brief – on the long-term economic security of the university.

> *"The strategic focus was on new educational formats and offerings, contemporary teaching and methodology, research orientation and defined the increasing internationalization.*

Our Strategy 23/30 is based on the evaluation of our prior Higher Education Development Plan "HEP 15/22," different transformation processes in the European higher education landscape, and other influential events in recent years (i.e. the COVID pandemic, the Ukraine war, or inflation). With this new strategy, we enter a path of moderate growth and sustainable change processes at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences (CUAS).

The priorities of our new strategy will be new educational formats and offerings, contemporary didactics and methodology, an intensified research orientation, as well as increased internationalization efforts. In the coming years, we will entirely focus our attention on the further development of these four areas. Of course, these areas will be adressed within our existing core fields of study - engineering, business, and health and social work.

The strategy was developed with the participation of all university members. Furthermore, external expertise (research, experts) and perspectives of regional stakeholders have been incorporated into the strategy. The starting point and goal of all our efforts is a market and quality orientation in research and teaching.

Peter Granig,
Siegfried Spanz
and colleagues of the university management

1. EVALUATION HEP 15/22

With its successful Higher Education Development Plan „HEP 15/22", CUAS embarked on a path of continuous further development in teaching, research and continuing education from 2015 to 2022. HEP 15/22 has served as a guardrail to achieve strategic goals. CUAS has grown significantly in this period, particularly in terms of student numbers, and has positioned itself successfully as a research institution. Many projects of this last strategic period were implemented consistently and thoroughly, and these efforts were based on eight areas of development. These development areas are listed below, followed by examples of their implementation.

1. ENSURING AND EXPANDING QUALITY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING
Establishment of the Center for Teaching and Learning, including the establishment of an annual „ Day of Teaching and Learning"; the introduction of "coffee calls;" further development of digital and on-site teaching equiment (introduction of online exams, increased use of Moodle, etc.); increased course feedback and student surveys

2. FURTHER EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Establishment of "FH Kärnten Research;" introduction of internal research funding pools (i.e. ZFF_1+); establishment of four research centers and fourteen research groups; research knowledge transfer, for instance at „Research Day," through research colloquia, and research newsletters; the research volume more than doubled in this strategic period

3. INTENSIFYING KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND OFFERING CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES (SUBSEQUENTLY „CONTINUING EDUCATION")
Establishment of the Center for Continuing Education and definition of its operation as a core strategic task; collaborations with other education providers; establishment of the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Management of Conservation Areas

4. CREATING THE BEST POSSIBLE CONDITIONS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEES
Institutional agreements for sabbaticals and home office arrangements; introduction of a new salary system; new annual evaluations as a development and management tool; establishment of an internal continuing education and qualification program; development of a career path model for research and teaching

5. REACHING A HIGH LEVEL OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT
Institutionalization of regular discussions between program and department heads and students; installation of a Student Support Center, includingstudent health management; expansion of student participation on committees and other organizational bodies

6. STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONALIZATION ACTIVITIES
An internal program to further develop all employees' English competencies (English@CUAS); establishment of strategic university partnerships, including establishment of joint and double degree programs; further development of staff mobilities and Blended Intensive Programs; implementing new Erasmus programs including virtual mobility formats; increasing Erasmus funds for KA1; founding and membership in Africa Uninet

7. GROWING THROUGH QUALITY (AND QUALITY THROUGH GROWTH)
Development of an effective and consistent applicant journey); development of new markets (credits, study & work models, teaching and studying) development of several new study programs (including the professionalization of health care and nursing).

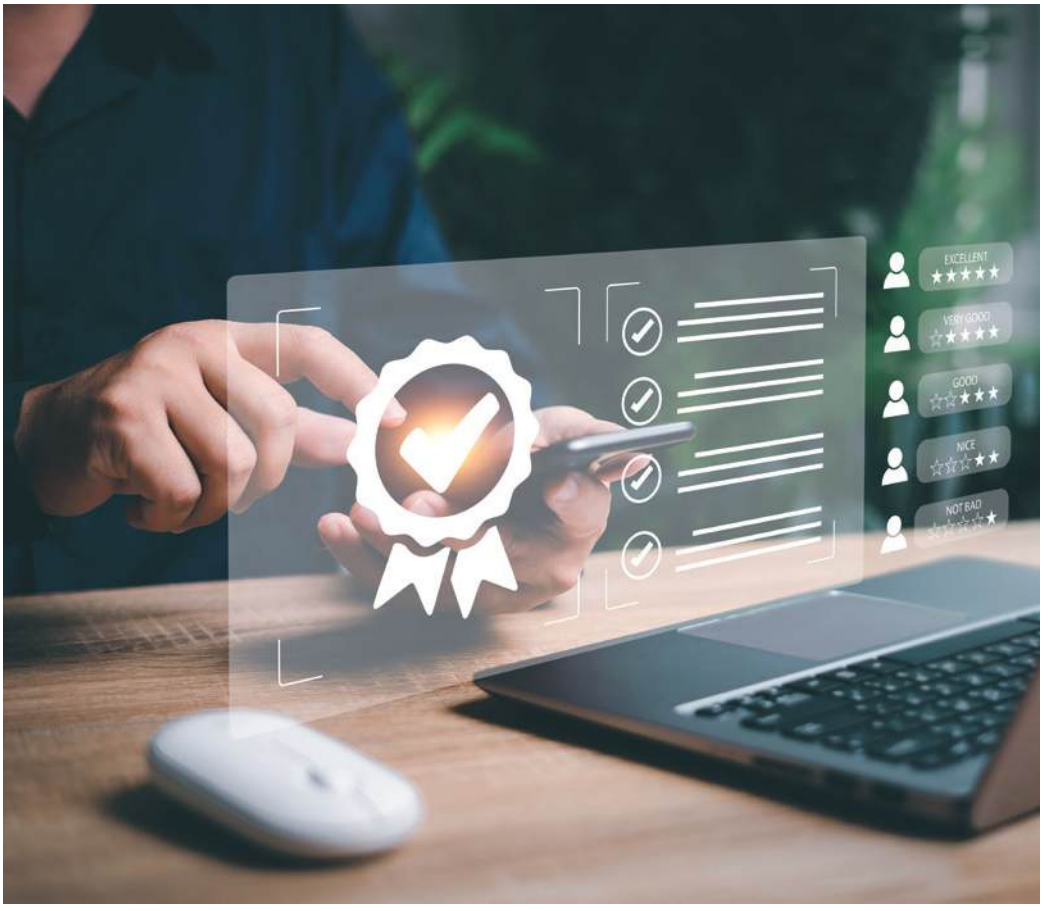
8. DEVELOPING THE CAMPUS AND THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE

Investments in room equipment for interactive teaching; expansion of technical infrastructure for online and hybrid teaching; creation of a recording studio; on the Villach campus: opening a new library, securing the nearby bank building and relocating the Info Center there, redesigning the cafeteria, and opening the study lounge. Klagenfurt, St. Veiter Straße: securing the building, ongoing adaptations, implementation of New Work spaces, preparations for the new Health Campus.

Three interdisciplinary themes were also included in the expiring strategy period:

- Start-up/entrepreneurship
  Establishment of innovation workshops; implementation of start-up garages; support for start-up projects; continuing education offerings
- Community management
  Creation of an alumni mentoring program; installation of key partner management
- Digital transformation
  Formation of a „Digital Office;" creation of a digital „FH Campus;" creation of an „Online" working group

Most of these steps will be implemented further as operational measures and will be institutionalized in the organization. Some individual topics have been reincorporated as strategic goals in the Strategy 23-30.



2. CONTEXT, STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS AND RESEARCH

Strategic considerations were shaped by current social and economic contexts, commissioned research about CUAS, as well as other research on international education trends. Furthermore, demographic and market developments were considered.



The most important findings are summarized below.

2.1 CONTEXT

Due to drastic changes in the social and economic context, mainly caused by the COVID pandemic from 2020 until 2022, and the beginning of the Ukraine war in February 2022, the Austrian and German-speaking university market experienced a massive drop in student demand in the fall of that year.

Furthermore, student numbers are projected to decrease by 2.5 per cent in this particular higher education market. In accordance with this trend, universities of applied sciences (UAS) are projected to experience less growth than in prior years - below 2 per cent - in the number of academic degrees.

Year of completion	Bachelor degrees	Master degrees	Total
2023/24	11.219	5.962	17.181
2024/25	11.390	6.013	17.403
2025/26	11.399	6.024	17.423
2026/27	11.430	6.016	17.446
2027/28	11.366	6.029	17.395
2028/29	11.441	6.055	17.496

UAS degrees. Source: higher education forecast by Statistics Austria (year 2020)

However, this low growth rate is based on forecasts from 2020, and, therefore, the negative consequences of the above-mentioned events were not yet considered.

2.2 „EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE OF THE FUTURE" STUDY

In preparation of the new strategic period, the study „Educational Landscape of the Future" (Unger, M.) was commissioned in 2021 by the Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS) and presented at the CUAS HEP 15/22 retreat in November 2021. The study's core findings are presented below.

2.2.1 Student Demographics

53 per cent of current CUAS students grew up in Carinthia. The second and third best-represented Austrian states are Styria and Upper Austria, respectively. In contrast, only 5 per cent of students at all Austrian universities are from Carinthia. This means that CUAS is meeting the demands of its „home market" very effectively.
Since the founding year of CUAS, the size of the Carinthian population aged below 20 has shrunk by 26 per cent, and a further decrease of 8 per cent is projected until 2040. The total Carinthian population is forecast to decrease by 16 per cent (see chapter 2.3, on population development in Carinthia).
Hence, the number of potential students in CUAS' regional market is falling. No significant growth can be expected from other states either, as the major cities of Vienna and Graz continue to attract much of Austria's younger population (more than 60 per cent of those who grew up in Carinthia move to one of these cities for their studies).
However, Carinthia has an above-average university enrollment rate (comparing first-year students with the resident population of the same age and estimating how many people will enroll in university programs in the course of their lifetime) at 48 per cent, as compared to the Austrian average of 46 per cent.
Further, the proportion of international students at CUAS (14 per cent) also exceeds the national average (10 per cent). Hence, English-speaking degree programs have potential for growth.

2.2.2 Study Programs

The highest rate of Carinthian emigration – connected to CUAS' core disciplines - can be seen in the fields of civil engineering and construction. 88 per cent of Carinthians who decide to study in these fields move to another federal state. In contrast, in the fields of health and social services (excluding medicine), more than 50 per cent of students who grew up in Carinthia also stay here to study.

2.2.3 International Trends

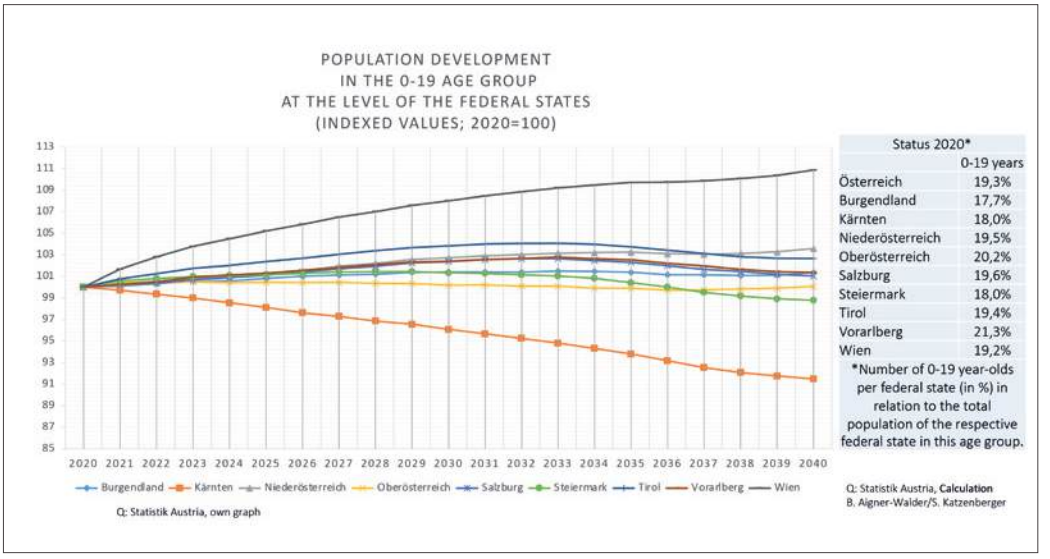
According to the IHS study (Unger, M.), the following international trends will influence the potential for growth at universities and should be considered accordingly in the Strategy 23-30:

- Flexibility in admissions and study processes, flexible learning paths, micro-credentials, dual study programs, access to modules at different universities
- Increased European cooperations, i.e. through European Universities
- Tuition-funded programs' major financial problems since the COVID pandemic.
- "Shop around the world" - prestigious universities as winners
- An increasing demand for applied research
- The labor market demands more graduates, with specifically-tailored skills
- Universities are supposed to have a positive impact on their communities and regions
- Digitalization of teaching (to address specific target groups - people who are employed, families with children, etc.) – this involves investment costs, but also offers potential savings

2.3 CARINTHIAN POPULATION DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned above, unfavorable demographic developments regarding student numbers and the regional labor market, are taking place in CUAS' "home market." These developments especially affect CUAS target groups. The absolute number of potential applicants aged 0 to 19, will decrease by 3.8 per cent until 2030. The decrease of 18- to 25-year-old potential applicants is even higher at 10.5 per cent by 2030.

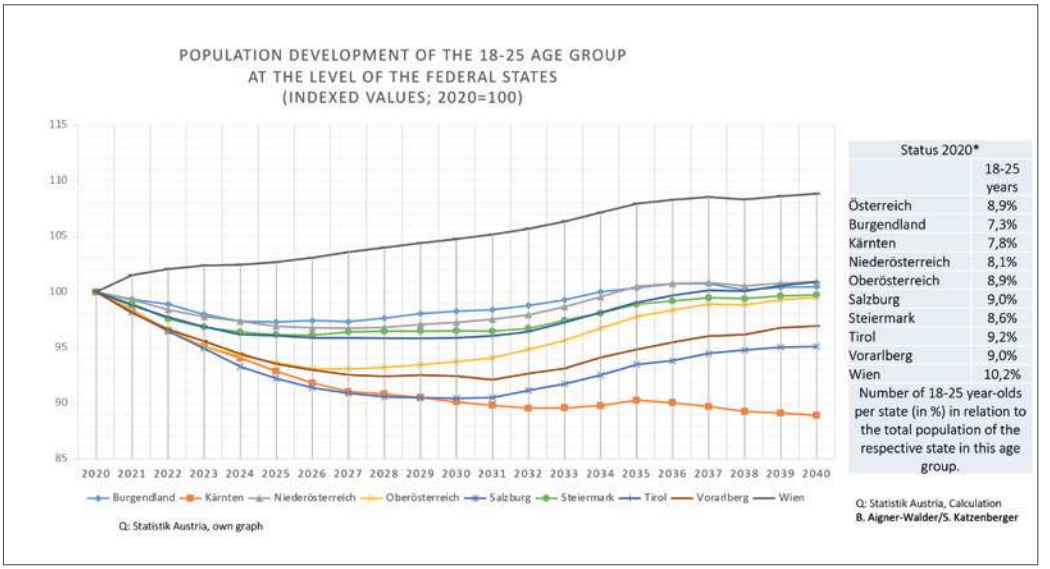
The baby boomer generation's labor market exit will generate an increased demand for labor, which will not be well met by the slightly decreased supply of labor by generations Y and Z. It follows, that the competition between universities and businesses for young people will intensify. Accordingly, the number of high school graduates who decide to enter the workforce immediately, instead of going to university will continue to rise over time (see chapter 2.7).



Status 2020*	0-19 years
Österreich	19,3%
Burgendland	17,7%
Kärnten	18,0%
Niederösterreich	19,5%
Oberösterreich	20,2%
Salzburg	19,6%
Steiermark	18,0%
Tirol	19,4%
Vorarlberg	21,3%
Wien	19,2%

*Number of 0-19 year-olds per federal state (in %) in relation to the total population of the respective federal state in this age group.

Q: Statistik Austria, **Calculation** B. Aigner-Walder/S. Katzenberger



Status 2020*	18-25 years
Österreich	8,9%
Burgendland	7,3%
Kärnten	7,8%
Niederösterreich	8,1%
Oberösterreich	8,9%
Salzburg	9,0%
Steiermark	8,6%
Tirol	9,2%
Vorarlberg	9,0%
Wien	10,2%

Number of 18-25 year-olds per state (in %) in relation to the total population of the respective state in this age group.

Q: Statistik Austria, Calculation **B. Aigner-Walder/S. Katzenberger**

2.4 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

The number of international students in Austria has continually increased recent years. Overall, the international student population has grown from 23 to 27 per cent. Universities of applied sciences have experienced an increase from approximately 18 to 21 per cent.

	2017	2022
EU	6.369	8.065
Third countries	2.723	4.143
Per cent of UAS students	17.6 per cent (of 51.522)	20.8 per cent (of 58.786)

Source: unidata

Assuming the simultaneous development of the general conditions and infrastructure in Carinthia, it is realistic to expect growth in the international market.

2.5 UAS DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCING PLAN UNTIL 2022/23

The UAS Financing Plan for the period until 2022/23, required all Austrian UAS to develop an institutional strategy for lifelong learning by the end of the period. Continuing education has been part of CUAS' strategic development since 2017, as part of the HEP 15/22. To further develop this area, an increased focus on permeability and improved access for „non-traditional" students would be beneficial. Additionally, alternative educational formats (i.e. programs within businesses, offers for alumni, or lecture series) offer potential for future growth. In their development, particular attention will have to be paid to questions of flexibility, recognition of credentials, permeability, and quality.

2.6 GENERATION COVID AND TOMORROW'S WORLD OF WORK

Institute for Youth Culture Research, 2022. Number of cases: 1,000. Participants: 16- to 29-year-olds.

In this study, member of "Generation C" (16- to 29-year-olds) were surveyed about how they inform themselves about job opportunities, their expectations of the world of work, and their willingness to perform on the job. When participants were asked which occupations they consider to have great future potential in general, they mentioned the following of CUAS' core subjects (among others): app development/ programming/ coding, healthcare and nursing, marketing, finance, geriatric care, metals technology, tax consulting, and communications.

Regarding their individual future prospects and, again, of the subjects offered at CUAS, participants mentioned marketing, banking and finance, app development/ programming/ coding, communications, tax consultancy, and health and nursing at the top of their list of professions.

2.7 UNIVERSITY ATTRACTIVENESS - UNIVERSUM STUDY

Universum Talent Research, 2022. Sample size: 9,800 students at Austrian universities.

According to the annual Universum study, the following factors (presented in four categories) are most important for university attractiveness to applicants.

IMAGE & REPUTATION

- Graduates in leadership positions
- Drives social change
- Drives innovation and/or entrepreneurship
- Excellence in Education
- Culture & Tradition
- International fame
- Research Excellence
- Learning with the best students
- Successful Alumni
- Unique Programs

CULTURE & STUDENT LIFE

- Financing of studies
- Attractive location
- Creative & dynamic atmosphere
- Friendly & open environment
- Good dining options / cafeteria
- Institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion
- International fellow students
- Safe campus environment
- Support for gender equality
- Wide range of recreational activities

EMPLOYABILITY & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Focus on professional development
- Good employment opportunities
- Good references for further education/career
- Opportunities to interact with employers interact
- Good relationships with employers
- Supports entrepreneurial
- Action & thinking
- Supports and develops innovation
- Target university for employers in my field
- Teaching skills that employers are looking for

TRAINING OFFER

- Appropriate faculty/student ratio
- Availability of study places
- Easy access to study materials
- Excellent professors/lecturers
- High quality programs
- Interdisciplinary courses
- Programs/opportunities to study abroad
- Stimulating learning environment
- Teaching relevant skills
- Diverse course offerings

2.8 IHS GRADUATE SURVEY 2022

IHS, 2023. Sample size: 7,900 Austrian high school graduates.

According to the IHS survey of Austrian high school graduates, 82 per cent find it difficult to decide what comes next, when asked shortly before high school graduation. Only 18 per cent name concrete future plans. Participants identified "uncertainty about their own interests" as their leading challenge (42 per cent) in this decision-making process. Their second leading problem is "gaining an overview of the many different options" (32 per cent). They cited "a lack of understanding of one's own aptitudes or abilities" (31 per cent) as their third-greatest challenge, and "questions about financing their lives during their studies" as the fourth. This last issue is of particular importance to high school graduates who have a history of migration or whose parents are not highly educated.

Approximately 72 per cent of high school graduates intend to enroll at a university in the next 2 years, which means approximately 31,000 applicants. Of these potential applicants, 14 per cent want to enroll at a university of applied sciences, while another 15 per cent are unsure about their choice of higher education institution. This can also be expressed as a potential of 4,300 to 9,000 applicants for the entire UAS sector.

Of the surveyed Carinthian high school graduates, only 36 per cent can imagine studying in their home state. As mentioned above, they usually prefer Styria (especially Graz) and Vienna.

The study also revealed that the greatest potential to attract high school graduates as applicants for Carinthian universities can be found in Styria and Burgenland.

Basically imaginable state for the study

State of origin	Burgenland	Kärnten	Niederösterreich	Oberösterreich	Salzburg	Steiermark	Tirol	Vorarlberg	Wien	Study abroad conceivable
Burgenland	36%	7%	23%	9%	13%	27%	7%	1,2%	83%	19%
Kärnten	1,7%	36%	2,1%	3%	5%	59%	5%	0,2%	43%	20%
Niederösterreich	7%	4%	44%	15%	9%	13%	4%	2%	87%	22%
Oberösterreich	2%	3%	8%	59%	32%	26%	10%	1,8%	55%	21%
Salzburg	0,7%	4%	7%	18%	60%	28%	18%	0,2%	58%	30%
Steiermark	5%	8%	6%	7%	13%	85%	6%	2%	39%	21%
Tirol	2,2%	5%	7%	10%	18%	10%	77%	5%	42%	34%
Vorarlberg	3%	4%	7%	9%	14%	12%	42%	29%	63%	35%
Wien	4%	4%	14%	7%	6%	8%	4%	2%	95%	27%
Total	5%	6%	17%	17%	16%	27%	13%	3%	69%	25%

In addition, participants who have no intention of applying to a university named the following reasons: they want to earn money themselves (61 per cent), they currently have no desire to continue studying (60 per cent), or they want to start their career or gain professional experience (42 per cent).

2.9 CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS FOR THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The above research findings – which provide insight into the higher education market, its customer needs, and the context of higher education – served as foundation for the development of the Strategy 23-30.

2.9.1 Higher Education Market

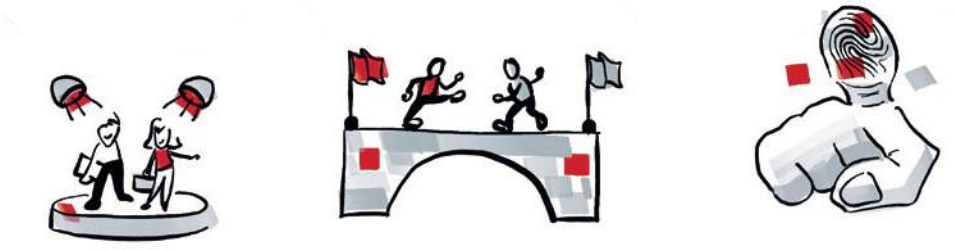
In the upcoming years, CUAS will have to face stagnating application numbers and especially negative demographic developments of its target group in Carinthia. As high school graduates are entering university later, the competition for young talent between universities and businesses continues to intensify. Still, within the UAS sector, CUAS has been able to supply its home market well, leaving little room for further development there.

2.9.2 University Attractiveness

Universities that are considered particularly "attractive" offer excellent teaching and research, implement unique programs, and teach relevant professional skills. Students also value that universities driving social change, maintaining positive relations with businesses and potential employers, and fostering a lively international community.
These factors are addressed in the strategy, for instance through the integration of sustainability in different curricula, the further development of key partner management, or the establishment of international community management.
Another important aspect of university attractiveness is campus location and infrastructure. When comparing Carinthia to Vienna or Graz, the two most popular places to study in Austria, certain shortfalls can be identified. To counteract the emigration of potential applicants, these shortfalls will need to be addressed with increased efforts.

2.9.3 Internationality

The trend toward increased European cooperations in higher education (i.e. European Universities) is clear. The primary goal is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, research and innovations between universities. Another important trend is the flexibilization of admissions and study programs, such as distance learning, or online- and blended-learning models. Furthermore, the number of micro-credentials is rising. Continued digitalization makes it possible to reach broader target groups and facilitates easier access to education. Digital teaching and learning formats or virtual classrooms are just two examples of how digitalization has changed higher education.





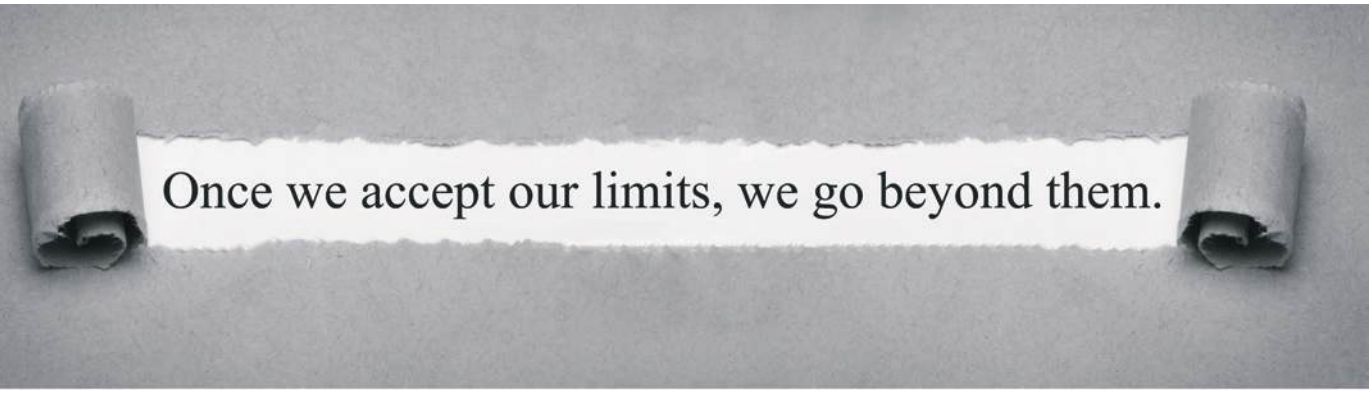
3. STRATEGY 2023-30

Since the expiration of the last strategic period, in 2022, the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences has been engaging intensively with its future development and positioning. The past years have posed significant challenges for universities, and developments in our society indicate that a larger paradigm shift is necessary for continued success in the educational landscape.

As in the previous strategy period, the Strategy 23-30 will undergo ongoing (annual) evaluations of its starting points, developments, societal challenges, and context, following a rolling planning approach. The strategic priorities will continually be adapted and optimized accordingly.
Seven perspectives (Mintzberg et al., 2005) were considered during the strategy's development.

Seven perspectives (Mintzberg et al., 2005) were considered during the strategy's development.

1. **To the back:** Where did CUAS come from? Which strategies have proven successful so far and which have not?
2. **To the side:** What are CUAS' competitors doing? What are their strategies?
3. **From above:** What is the state of the (higher education) market? In what context (economic, sociological, political, etc.) does CUAS have to operate? What are noticeable trends?
4. **From below:** What are CUAS' core markets? How balanced are budget and costs? What is the state of internal resources?
5. **Moving forward:** Which recommendations for action result from the analysis?
6. **Beyond that:** What are the possible further developments and how can CUAS prepare for them?
7. **On the implementation:** How does CUAS monitor the success of its measures? How does it ensure that changes are implemented sustainably (retrospective and ongoing evaluation)?



3.1 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

The ever-increasing competitive pressure in the education and business sectors, has required universities to identify their value proposition to distinguish themselves from other institutions.
CUAS wants to position itself in this environment of increasing competitive pressure and to regulate societal complexity internally and externally. Values are the foundation of everything that happens at CUAS, when working together, teaching, or doing research. Still, the main focus of this strategy period is sustainability.
The primary focus of CUAS' strategic positioning is its capacity for action in the future. CUAS educates people and conducts research to be prepared for any future challenges.

3.1.1 THREE DIMENSIONS OF POSITIONING

Positioning involves three dimensions:

1. **Content Positioning**
   Based on its past strengths in teaching and research content, and the forecast of future labor market developments, CUAS will continue to focus on the existing areas of study: health, engineering, social work and management.

2. **Practical Orientation**
   In its core business activities teaching, learning, and research, CUAS offers a high degree of practical orientation - KNOWLEDGE BECOMES EFFECTIVE. This is clearly manifested in study programs that are aligned with professional fields, „relevant" research that is directly applied in practice, and in simulations (including practice-based trainings), and professional development.

3. **People as the Focus of Teaching and Research**
   All CUAS activities are aimed at the people involved in its teaching and research processes. This means, teaching must include the most current and modern concepts, and the collaboration of teachers, researchers, students, and other university stakeholders must be central to all actions. Further, the development of future competencies and the active participation of all university members are guiding principles on the path toward our common goals regarding sustainability, interdisciplinarity, diversity, and internationality.

3.2 USP OF CUAS

The USP is a promise that CUAS wants to offer its students and, based on its current core competencies, a value it wants to develop by further trough the implementation of the new strategy.

> *The Carinthia University of Applied Sciences offers life-phase related, individual, and flexible educational experiences. Study Guides provide support on this path. Content and practice are connected by enthusiastic subject matter experts as teachers, innovative forms of teaching and learning, and attractive authentic, outdoor, or virtual learning environments.Embedded in a natural setting and focused on the imparting of future-oriented and sustainability competencies, CUAS is situated within an intercultural community and is part of a European University.*
>
> **CUAS - study better, live better.**

3.3 STRATEGIC DIFFERENTIATION

Strategic differentiation refers first to the definition of specific capabilities and strengths that exist within an organization or environment in meeting the needs of students and stakeholders. Further, it aims to increase competitiveness and refine the organization's profile, regarding both educational offerings at CUAS' core competencies.

CUAS' value propositions will be defined and explained in detail within the strategic focus areas. Here, great importance will be placed on the goal-oriented communication of the USPs and the differentiation potential, to various target groups and using multiple channels of communication.

4. STRATEGIC MARKET ANALYSIS

In this chapter, CUAS' potential target groups regionally, nationally, and internationally, will be analyzed.

Regional target groups

Target groups	Market situation
High school graduates: full-time	Stagnating/declining
High school graduates: Study & Work, dual degree programs	Stagnating
Second educational path: after apprenticeship, schools without higher education entrance qualification, Vocational Maturity Examination	Growing slightly
Students in other phases of life: on educational leave, parental leave, etc.	Growing slightly
Part-time students	Growing slightly
Those interested in continuing education and micro-credentials	Growing

National target groups

Target groups	Market situation
High school graduates: full-time	Stagnating/declining
High school graduates: Study & Work, dual degree programs	Stagnating
Part-time students (if study programs become more flexible)	Growing
Those interested in continuing education and micro-credentials	Growing

International target groups

Target groups	Market situation
German-speakers from abroad	Growing
Persons with a migrant background in Austria (requires increased language competence)	Growing
Students from Germany	Stagnating/declining
Students from Southeastern Europe	Growing
EU-ATHENA Alliance students	Growing
Others interested in English-language degree programs	Growing
Those interested in continuing education and micro-credentials	Growing

5. CORE STRATEGIES AND STRATEGIC GUARD RAILS

The CUAS strategy 23-30 is focused exclusively on strategic objectives that directly contribute to growth regarding the increase of demand, student numbers, or quality leadership and, thus, to the long-term, successful economic and content-related development of the university.
The following core strategies are overarching themes that are reflected in all strategic focus areas and goals.

5.1 QUALITY ORIENTATION



CUAS strives for excellence in all its activities. It aims to become Austria's leading higher education institution in research-led teaching, university didactics, and the development of new degree programs or flexible educational products by 2030. All university members commit themselves to this quality and performance orientation.

5.2 MARKET ORIENTATION



CUAS' educational offerings are modular and flexible. They further undergo continual further development in consideration of the requirements of regional qualification needs, needs of key partners and international trends (ongoing anticipation of future needs).

5.3 RESEARCH ORIENTATION



CUAS will continue the consistent expansion of applied research as necessary foundation for high-quality teaching and further education, as well as to act as a driver of change in politics, business, society, and industry.

5.4 PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONALITY AND INTERCULTURALITY



All educational offerings at CUAS (degree programs, continuing education, micro-credentials, etc.) – as far as content and legal frameworks allow - are accessible and manageable for national as well as international students. Cooperative international offerings are developed within a strong network of international partners. CUAS views cultural diversity as an asset.

5.5 INTEGRATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (CAMPUS CARINTHIA)



Teaching and research at CUAS is embedded in its regional environment („experience nature") and the natural resources for living and leisure in the state. Units taught in nature are an integral part of the educational offerings at CUAS, in order for students to engage with topics of sustainability, climate protection, and biodiversity.

5.6 SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTATION



Underlying all of CUAS' strategic considerations is its responsibility to the future and for sustainable action. Sustainability at CUAS means that the organization analyzes its own actions, in relation to the realities of life for present and future generations, in the regional and global context, and regarding inter- and intragenerational justice, and then acts accordingly in a responsible manner.
Therefore, CUAS understands sustainability not only as an interdisciplinary theme within its core subjects, but also adopts the Sustainability Mainstreaming approach. Here, sustainability influences all decisions and processes, encompassing the perspectives and interests of all university members and stakeholders. Through Sustainability Mainstreaming, a strategic and coordinated approach is placed at the center, focusing on the ecological, social, and economic dimensions sustainability.

5. CORE STRATEGIES AND STRATEGIC GUARD RAILS

In particular, the strategy focuses on achieving the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



5.7 GROWTH ORIENTATION

The intelligent alignment of the listed strategic directions should ultimately lead to an increased number of students in the following areas:

	2023	2028	in %	in % p.a.
STANDARD NATIONAL STUDENTS OF BUSINESS	**520**	**650**	**25%**	**4,6%**
International students of business	90	180	100%	14,9%
STANDARD NATIONAL STUDENTS OF ENGINEERING	**960**	**1000**	**4%**	**0,8%**
International students of engineering	210	300	43%	7,4%
STANDARD STUDENTS OF HEALTH OR SOCIAL WORK	**1100**	**1650**	**50%**	**8,4%**
International students of health or social work	15	50	233%	27,2%
CONTINUING EDUCATION STUDENTS	**640**	**1750**	**173%**	**22,3%**
Micro-degree students	25	170	580%	46,7%
Total	**3220**	**5050**	**57%**	**9,4%**

5. CORE STRATEGIES AND STRATEGIC GUARD RAILS

5.8 STRATEGIC GUARD RAILS

For further detail in the substantive development of the strategy, CUAS has defined the following guiding principles:

A new internationally applicable branding is being implemented and established based on strategic positioning and considering new strategic options. CUAS lives an international culture and is characterized by ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

"CUAS" (use new branding) offers high-quality and flexible educational programs in its core subjects engineering, business, and health and social services. The professional management of cooperations with national and international education providers expands offerings and serves as foundation for the development of sustainable education initiatives (i.e. education hubs).

Excellence in teaching and learning is achieved through a consistent quality orientation in product development, didactics, research-led teaching, staff development, and organizational management.

The number of students will be raised significantly. This results from a flexibilization and modularization of study programs, as well as attractive continuing education and micro-credential offerings for national and international students.

We will develop a unique didactic concept (combining face-to-face and online events, time- and location-independent learning, challenge-based learning, indoor and outdoor classes, and the integration of Carinthia's natural environment), to offer studies in authentic physical and virtual learning spaces, and to thereby increase their manageability in different living and working environments.

Topics of sustainability, climate protection, and biodiversity are an integral part of our educational offerings.

We have a new Health Campus in Klagenfurt, an attractive campus in Villach for engineering and business, and education hubs in the cities where our campuses are located.

R&D professorships and research centers will be created for selected specializations, to address inter- and transdisciplinary topics. There, new modules will continually be developed and integrated into the offerings of CUAS, to address societal issues. CUAS continues to drive development as catalyst for politics, business, society, and industry.

Maintaining an overview of national and international trends and developments, the Carinthian University of Applied Sciences continually addresses the qualification needs of its stakeholders.

Internationalization efforts are rigorously expanded, to develop the corresponding competencies of students and staff and attract international students.

Through close cooperation with companies, institutions, and international partners, a particularly practice-oriented, diverse education, in an intercultural environment, becomes possible.

6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The development of the new CUAS strategy has been based on current developments and trends. Topics were already addressed preliminarily within the "Future Groups" in the HEP Workshop 2021. From there, the topics were defined in more depth and detail, leading to the definition of the following strategic priorities.

- Future-oriented educational offerings
- Didactics and methodology
- Research and development
- Internationalization



6.1 FUTURE-ORIENTED EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS



Digitalization, globalization and current societal changes have led to major changes in the higher education sector. On the one hand, more young people are striving for an academic education (or, to a lesser extent, for vocational training or apprenticeships), while on the other hand, numerous educational offerings have emerged or are available worldwide as online content. There is a seemingly endless offer of educational opportunities, and the desire for individualization is growing.

Young people and those who want to educate themselves further or reorient themselves, have to choose their best option. CUAS must therefore provide attractive educational offerings on a „higher education market with worldwide competition."

However, in Carinthia, demographic changes are a major challenge to this process. According to forecasts, the age structure in Austria is shifting toward the 65+ group. At the same time, the working-age population is declining due to the recent generations with lower birth rates. Carinthia is particularly affected by these demographic developments.

6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Furthermore, changes in the world of work, the economy, and society are creating more challenges for the education sector. Innovative new educational offerings and new forms of work are shaped by the generations Y and Z, the transformation to a knowledge society, and concepts such as New Work. Additionally, the dynamic increase in knowledge as well as digitalization require future-oriented educational offerings, which can be developed based on current needs and implemented quickly. Also, there is a rising demand for flexible and permeable educational offerings, providing individualized and scaffolded learning opportunities. Lifelong learning becomes a societal necessity.

The demand for sustainability must also be considered in the planning of educational offerings, so that future generations can be equipped with the necessary competencies and are therefore able to take conscious action. Hence, the following strategic objectives for educational offerings are deliberately pursued in the current strategic period:

Strategic objective	Measure	Start	Measured variables
Development of portfolio management for all educational offerings	• Full life-cycle management established for all educational offerings	2024	Process set up and implemented
Development of educational hub(s) in Carinthia	• Development of education cooperations • Design of new educational formats • Advancement of research and development cooperations	From 2023	Number of cooperations Number of courses Number of participants
Integrate sustainability, diversity, and future topics into new and existing study programs or alternatively create new ones	• Integrate corresponding teaching content in all curricula • Development and introduction of new educational offerings (i.e. Green Transition Engineering, or the expansion of health programs) • Introduction of SDG monitoring	From 2024	Converted y/n Number of curricula Number of courses
Offer micro-credentials and micro-degrees	• Overall concept and business plan • Continuously expand portfolio of offerings • Market launch concept (website, pricing strategy, communication plan)	2023	Number of programs with digital certificates Number of participants
Introduction of an orientation study year	• Design of overall concept and pilot • Establishment of an application	2024	Converted y/n Number of part. Part. satisfaction
Communication of new educational offerings to relevant target groups	• Target group analysis • Creation of marketing concept • Communication plan appropriate to each target groups	2023	Number of participants and students

6.2 DIDACTICS AND METHODOLOGY

Undeniably, the didactically and methodologically appealing and effective design of programs is a core task of all universities. It follows that continuous further development in this field is a strategic core task.

> *Students should experience attractive real and virtual learning spaces that fit well with the intended acquisition of competencies and in which solid classical teaching methods with innovative digital are effectively combined with innovative digital teaching methods.*



At CUAS, teaching will be competence-focused and motivating, whether it takes place in large plenaries or small groups, online or on campus. Students are supported and challenged with commitment and expertise. They should experience attractive real-world and virtual learning spaces that are well-suited to the intended learning goals and effectively combine classical with innovative digital teaching methods. Guided and self-directed learning activities enable individuals to study as it fits into their phase in life. The natural environment and landscape of Carinthia are integrated into the teaching process.

Moreover the multiple, diverse challenges that CUAS is increasingly confronted with – at decreasing intervals – require great responsibility of higher education institutions. CUAS understands this responsibility to mean that learners are able to develop the necessary knowledge and skills for their respective fields and at their respective competency levels. We conduct research and teach to enable staff and graduates to meet future challenges. This responsibility requires the explicit and supported development of additional future skills. The practical orientation in teaching and learning is meaningfully and systematically connected to CUAS' high-quality research. Based on its own enthusiasm for CUAS' activities, the institution considers the individual learning motivations, needs, and enthusiasm of their students as important aspects of the teaching and learning process. The following strategic objectives will concretely be pursued:



6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic objective	Measure	Start	Measured variables
Comprehensive evaluation of all courses, educational offerings, or modules	• Evaluation and introduction of a traffic light system • Evaluation and exchange of results and setting of further measures (incl. further development of the evaluation system, increase of participation)	2023	Converted y/n Converted y/n Which accompanying measures (type and scope)
Modularization in all degree programs and educational offerings	• Standard 5 ECTS/module • Definition of module types and further parameters for module design (modularization guideline)	2025 2023	Number of programs that have implemented guideline
Adequate design of campuses regarding an attractive learning and working environment (physical, digital, virtual learning spaces)	• Realization of the Health Campus • Ongoing further development of the campuses • Creation of common, working, and study spaces for students and employees, which promote learning	2027 Ongoing from 2024	Reference Implemented
New didactic models (including, for instance, hybridization, digitalization, simulations, practice teaching, avatar-based learning, challenge-based learning, indoor and outdoor offerings, or integration of Carinthia's natural environment)	• Development and implementation of standards for presence /online /hybrid teaching • Development and implementation of a didactic modular principle (e.g. team teaching, job shadowing) • Re-contouring the role of teachers • Personnel development for teachers (new didactic models, learning scenarios, etc.) • Develop and implement natural environment didactics	Ongoing from 2023	Implemented Implemented Number of TT, hospitations Personnel development concept
Promotion of trans- and interdisciplinarity	• Identification and use of cross-departmental research, teaching and cooperation potentials • Joint educational offerings of these topics (in courses and modules)	From 2024	Number of topics identified
Development of a student-life-cycle management system	• Onboarding, tutorials, regular student surveys, making additional qualifications possible • Offering flexibility in the course of studies • Provide study guides	From 2023	Implemented Drop-out rates Number of additional qualifications Student Satisfaction

6.3 RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Society at large and most funding institutions expect more from research than the fulfillment its traditional task, enhancing the prosperity of society. They also demand effective solutions to the global challenges that society faces. With its pillars of teaching, continuing education, and research, CUAS contributes to the development of the necessary multifaceted resilience in each of these core areas. In this context, it is the responsibility of researchers to introduce, test, and implement new concepts, ideas, solutions, pilot activities, and implementations, which can then be integrated into educational offerings. Applied research is oriented towards future topics and closely intertwined with regional, national, and international partners. In order to remain viable, CUAS must grow in terms of its contents and organization, to address global research and development topics. We must therefore pursue the following strategic objectives:

> *„The applied research is oriented towards the future topics and closely interwoven with regional, national and international partners.*



Strategic objective	Measure	Start	Measured variables
Consistent alignment of research topics with teaching topics	• Concept for systematic connection of research and teaching, as well as implementation • Continuously present research results in teaching • Increased participation of students, faculty, and alumni in research or application projects	2023	Implemented Number of students/alumni Number/ECTS Research integrated into teaching
Participation in national and international excellence programs such as: European Universities, Horizon programs, or Josef Ressel Centers	• Expanding competences for national and international excellence programs (increasing know-how of applicants and CUAS Research) • Creation of a step-by-step plan for competence development • Further development of internal supports • Continued acquisition of cooperative doctoral programs • Increased publication and conference activity („building a research reputation“)		Number of participants in programs Competence building among employees Number of doctoral programs Evaluation scheme developed and number
Being a catalyst for politics, society, business, and industry	• Maintaining networks and exchanging experiences (i.e. key partner management) • Development of a dissemination strategy • Continuing entrepreneurship measures		Number of company contacts with research relevance Number of cooperative research projects Number of startup initiatives
Establishing alternative sources of research funding	• Identification of potential sponsors and concept development		Total funds acquired



6.4 INTERNATIONALIZATION

CUAS knows that the challenges of the future are global and can only be addressed with united international forces. Therefore, the institution focuses on international cooperations that strive for a sustainable, peaceful coexistence on this planet.



Carinthia is an attractive university location for national and international students and scientists. For some years now, alliances have increasingly been formed on the higher education market with the aim of promoting transdisciplinarity and jointly designing educational products. Therefore, CUAS strives for membership in an alliance with top universities, to bring sustainability into the services of the higher education sector and to contribute significantly to necessary social changes.

All employees will identify internationality as an essential guiding principle for their tasks and activities and will strive to promote internationalization. In addition to personal mobilities and exchanges, the critical use of digital information and communication technologies will play an important role in enabling international exchanges. In this environment, students acquire deep subject-specific and methodological knowledge, as well as international and intercultural competencies. They speak multiple languages and develop skills for independent, critical thinking and action. As future professionals, they are well-prepared for globally connected work and living environments.

At CUAs, education takes place in cooperation with local industry and businesses, to significantly increase the number of high-quality employees for its region and country. The following strategic objectives will help CUAS become more internationally active:



6. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic objective	Measure	Start	Measured variables
Membership in a European University Alliance (EUNI)	• National and international positioning and lobbying Active management of cooperations	2024	Membership
Active participation in alliance to further develop teaching and research	• Establishing joint educational offerings with EUNI partners (DD, JD, MD, etc.). • Increasing international guest lectures, experts, etc. • Intensive exchange of teachers and students • Joint external appearance, branding, communication, etc. with alliance	2024	Number of teaching and research cooperations with EUNI Number of staff exchanges Number of student exchanges
Lectures in English throughout all bachelor and master degree programs	• 30 ECTS/program • Selection of courses/ modules • Structuring of offerings by department and CUAS as a whole	2025	Number programs implemented
Development and promotion of an international mindset	• Create a welcoming culture • Design an onboarding process • Create or update infrastructure (i.e. website, intranet, guidance system, or laboratory regulations) • Bilingual communication	2024	Concept created and implemented
Increasing the number of international students	• Establishment of international student recruitment • Creating community management • Providing more course choices for international students across programs • Offering social events for international students • Cooperation with international recruiting agencies • Cooperation with Goethe-Institutes, etc. • Creating 100 per cent online offerings international markets • Further development of German course offerings, German language skills B2, etc.		Number of international students
Further development of joint- and double-degree programs	• Identifying opportunities with European University • Use EU funding programs for JD program development (Horizon, Erasmus+, etc.). • Identify topics for JD and DD programs (SDG, etc.). • Creating capacities for development	2024	Number JD, DD programs
Expansion of international research activities (especially EUNI)	• Establishment of international research cooperations in the EUNI network • Implementation of joint research projects • Identifying international cooperative doctoral programs • Joint external appearance with alliance, etc.		Number of international projects

7. IMPLEMENTATION AND PRIORITIES FOR 2023

Numerous creative ideas and measures have been developed throughout the strategic process. In the coming years, clear prioritization of and focus on core topics will be at the forefront of CUAS' efforts.

7.1 MEASURES 2023

In the current year, CUAS prioritizes the implementation of the following essential projects:

1. Creation of a goal system for the implementation of strategic priorities
2. Establishing itself as EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY (EUNI)
3. Market launch of micro-degrees
4. Evaluation of ALL courses and educational offerings
5. Implementation and promotion of rigorous modularization

7.2 ORGANIZATIONAL ANCHORING AND CHANGE PROCESSES

For the individual bundles of measures that cannot be clearly assigned within the institution's current organization, clear project assignments will be issued and responsibilities will be defined, following a project management approach. The university management will serve not only as the client (executive management and rectorate) but also as the decision-making body. A „sounding board," consisting of university staff and students, will serve as an advisory committee.

To ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the strategy process with the available resources, a designated project manager will assume responsibility for overseeing the interfaces and progress of each project. The tasks involved are as follows:

- Identifying and managing interfaces and ensuring an effective exchange of information
- Avoidance of redundancies
- Steering the strategy process: All activities within projects are aligned with the achievement of the strategic objectives
- Evaluating the progress of the projects

7.3 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE

The current committee structure is being questioned, evaluated, and adjusted to align with the strategic goals. A concrete elaboration will be completed by summer 2023.

The university management conducts quarterly monitoring of the progress of individual projects. The project teams work at their own pace. To facilitate successful implementation, annual workshops involving the entire university, as well as strategy team retreats are planned.

The review of the past year will answer the following questions:

- What has been implemented?
- What could not be achieved and why?
- What implications arise from this retrospective for CUAS' future?

The evaluation of the current strategy will be guided by the following questions:

- What changes have occurred in the overall conditions?
- What new societal challenges, scientific developments, and practical issues does CUAS face?
- Is there a need to adapt the strategy?
- What specific changes and adjustments need to be made?

The detailed planning of the action packages will relate to the question:

- Which measures need to be specifically targeted in the next one to two years?

8. THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The process of developing the strategy 2023-30 began with initial strategic considerations during the HEP 15-22 retreat in November 2021. The process intensified in March 2022 and continued until the completion of Strategy 23-30.

Ablauf des Strategieprozesses

Timing	Activity	Participants/invitation
November 2021	HEP 15/22 Retreat Future-Groups: • Future learning experiences • Future teachers and researchers • Future educational landscapes • Project: Education Hubs and micro-degrees	All retreat participants
March 2022	Strategy kick-off	University Management (UM)/ Strategy Team
May 2022	Strategy Retreat	UM/ Strategy Team
June 2022	Strategy workshop	UM/ Strategy Team
June 2022	Coffee-call to share current state of strategy development	All CUAS employees
June-August 2022	Digital market place	All CUAS employees
August 2022	Expert feedback workshops	Board of Trustees, Supervisory Board, Strategy Team, external experts
September 2022	Presentation at Supervisory Board meetings	Supervisory Board
September 2022	Strategic workshop on sustainability	Working group "Sustainability," members of the Strategy Team
September 2022	Formation of a core team for process control	Core team
October 2022	Strategy workshop	UM/ Strategy Team
October 2022	Reflexion collegium	Collegium
October 2022	Report from digital marketplace and reflection workshops for employees	All CUAS employees
November 2022	Strategy workshop	UM/ Strategy Team
December 2022	Strategy Retreat	All CUAS employees
February 2022	Workshop to finalize the strategy	Expanded core team
February 2023	Reflection of the strategy with campus leadership and development of measures	Leadership
March 2023	Presentation to the Supervisory Board	Supervisory Board
March 2023	University management retreat to finalize and define bundled of measures	UM/ Strategy Team
March 2023	Finalization, final editing and communication to all staff members	Core team

9. THE STRATEGY TEAM

THE STRATEGY TEAM

The strategy team is responsible for the substantive development of future strategic focus areas and consists of members of the university management (always listed in alphabetical order):



- Bauer Hermine (not in the photo)
- Bergauer Petra
- Brodel Dietmar
- Granig Peter
- Kotschnig Herbert
- Liegl Alexandra
- Menard Christian
- Mitterbacher Angelika
- Pacher Claudia
- Penz Holger
- Schneider Martin
- Spanz Siegfried

THE CORE TEAM STEERS THE STRATEGIC PROCESS:

- Bergauer Petra
- Granig Peter
- Haid Claudia
- Keuschnig Martina
- Spanz Siegfried
- External support: Gerald Hackl, Trigon

THE EXPANDED CORE TEAM FOR FINALIZING THE CONTENT:

- Bergauer Petra
- Granig Peter
- Kotschnig Herbert
- Mitterbacher Angelika
- Sternad Dietmar
- External support: Michael Schulte-Derne, Conecta

EDITING:

- Bergauer Petra
- Granig Peter
- Spanz Siegfried

We want to express our gratitude to all internal and external contributors for their participation in the numerous formats and for their creative ideas, inputs and critical reflections.

10. SOURCES

- Hochschulentwicklungsplan. Evaluierungsbericht 2015–2022, FH Kärnten
- Hochschulprognose, Statistik Austria, 2020
- Bildungslandschaft der Zukunft, IHS, Martin Unger, Oktober 2021
- Bevölkerungsentwicklung Kärnten, Statistik Austria + Berechnung Birgit Aigner-Walder und Sabrina Katzenberger, 2022
- Internationale Studierendenentwicklung, unidata, www.unidata.gv.at
- Fachhochschul-Entwicklungs- und Finanzierungsplan bis 2022/23, BMBWF
- Generation Corona & die Arbeitswelt von morgen, Institut für Jugendkulturforschung, 2022
- Universum Talent Research, Universum, 2022
- Maturierendenbefragung 2022. Informationssituation sowie Bildungs- und Berufswahl von Maturierenden in Österreich, IHS – Anna Dibiasi, Judith Engleder, Kathrin Fenz, Chiara Valentin, 2022
- Strategy Safari. Eine Reise durch die Wildnis des strategischen Managements, Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, Joseph Lampel, 2005



Scan for german Version

Carinthia University of Applied Sciences
gemeinnützige Gesellschaft mbH
Europastraße 4
A-9524 Villach

Phone: +43 5 90500-0
Email: geschaeftsfuehrung@cuas.at
www.cuas.at