

Approved by: _____

**Executive Vice-Rector of Western
Caspian University R.H.Baghirov**

December 24, 2025

WESTERN CASPIAN UNIVERSITY

2026-2030 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

*Adopted at the meeting of the Western Caspian University Scientific Council,
December 24, 2025 (Minutes No. 05).*

BAKU – 2025



WESTERN CASPIAN UNIVERSITY

2026-2030 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

BAKU - 2025

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
About WESTERN CASPIAN UNIVERSITY.....	6
1.1 FIELDS OF ACTIVITY	6
1.2 ABOUT THE STRATEGY.....	8
1.3 MISSION.....	9
1.4 VISION	9
1.5 CORE VALUES.....	9
STRATEGIC GOALS	10
Goal 1: Quality and innovative approach in education	10
Objective 1: Integration of outcome-based education models and competency-based training methodologies into the teaching process	10
Objective 2: Enhancing the alignment of educational programs with labor market requirements	11
Objective 3: Aligning the university's teaching and management system with international standards.....	11
Goal 2: Student success and growth in graduate employment rates	11
Objective 1: Supporting the professional development of students and implementing a career mentorship system.....	11
Objective 2: Student-oriented development and support.....	12
Objective 3: Ensuring sustainable growth dynamics in the employment rate of graduates by specialization	12
Goal 3: Strengthening and continuous advancement of scientific research potential..	12
Objective 1: Expanding the activities of the university's Scientific Centers	12
Objective 2: Formation of a creative scientific environment meeting international requirements for research and improvement of scientific-pedagogical staff training	13
Objective 3: Increasing the international visibility of scientific research activities	13
Objective 4: Establishment of specialized scientific journals and their indexing in prestigious international scientometric databases.....	14
Goal 4: Internationalization and global relations	14
Objective 1: Strengthening the university's international relations	14
Objective 2: Increasing the academic and scientific prestige of the university at the global level through international relations.....	14
Objective 3: Enhancing international competitiveness	15

Goal 5: Digital transformation and the application of innovative technologies	15
Objective 1: Wide-scale application of digital technologies	15
Objective 2: Development of digital skills and efficient use of technologies	15
Goal 6: Planned development of human resources and a competitive work environment	16
Objective 1: Formation and continuous development of competent staff potential .	16
Objective 2: Systematic strengthening of the academic staff’s teaching and research potential	16
Objective 3: Creating a safe and secure work environment	16
Objective 4: Evaluation and motivation	16
Goal 7: Strengthening infrastructure and ensuring sustainability	17
Objective 1: Strengthening the material-technical base and aligning it with modern requirements	17
Objective 2: Strengthening environmental sustainability and modernizing campus infrastructure based on sustainable development principles	17
Objective 3: Financial sustainability and diversification of revenue streams	17
Goal 8: Development of social responsibility and public relations	17
Objective 1: Strengthening social impact potential based on public values	17
Objective 2: Promoting education among the youth	18
Objective 3: Improving activities in the field of public relations	18

INTRODUCTION

We are honored to present a concise overview of the essence, operations, and the ideological and historical milestones of Western Caspian University. While our thirty-five-year history may appear brief in comparison to institutions spanning decades or even centuries, the achievements secured within this relatively short timeframe provide us with profound inspiration and confidence in the university's bright future. Western Caspian University is a modern higher education institution, and there is much to be accomplished for the future development of this seat of learning.

- We are moving progressively toward our established goals;
- We continue to expand our operations and institutional partnerships;
- We remain open and adaptable to positive changes across all domains;
- We strive to be progressive and keep pace with the evolving times;
- Maintaining an optimistic outlook on the future of Western Caspian University, we believe in the success of all new initiatives.

**Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Western Caspian University,
Professor Huseyngulu Baghirov**

About WESTERN CASPIAN UNIVERSITY

Western Caspian University has been operating as a private higher education institution in the tertiary education sector since 1991. Since its inception, the university has established modern educational approaches, academic excellence, and the training of specialists who meet the needs of society as its core operational principles. Characterized by a multicultural and inclusive academic environment, Western Caspian University offers students flexible and diverse opportunities based on a long-term perspective for the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

The university prioritizes the continuous updating of its curricula in alignment with labor market demands, as well as the implementation of innovative, student-centered educational models. Key strategic development directions of Western Caspian University include the integration of digital technologies into the teaching process, practice-oriented education, and the strengthening of research activities.

- The university is expanding its collaborative networks with international higher education institutions, research centers, and industry partners, while strengthening its integration into the global educational landscape through dual degree programs, academic exchanges, and joint initiatives.
- The university fosters a modern and conducive learning environment designed to deliver world-class education that aligns with contemporary standards, promotes global collaboration, and achieves international recognition.
- In its academic and administrative operations, the university monitors global higher education trends and implements best practices, striving to evolve a progressive university model based on continuous development and innovative approaches.

1.1 FIELDS OF ACTIVITY

Education

Western Caspian University offers full-time and part-time programs at the undergraduate, graduate (including MBA), doctoral, and second higher education levels, with instruction provided in Azerbaijani and English. In addition to national educational standards, the curricula are developed and regularly updated in alignment with international higher education requirements and the evolving needs of the labor market.

The university implements a student-centered educational model based on modern pedagogical approaches. Interactive methods, practical sessions, and digital learning platforms are widely utilized throughout the teaching process. Supporting the concept of

lifelong learning, Western Caspian University also offers various educational programs, certifications, and professional development opportunities.

As part of the university's internationalization strategy, in addition to the local academic staff, invited professors and specialists from other countries are involved in the teaching process each year. This serves to enrich educational programs with international experience and to foster a global mindset among students.

Western Caspian University provides students with short-term and long-term education and internship opportunities at higher education institutions through Erasmus+ and other international academic exchange programs. These programs enhance students' competitiveness in the international labor market by expanding their academic knowledge, language skills, and cultural adaptation capabilities.

Scientific activity

Alongside a high-quality educational environment, Western Caspian University has identified the development of research activities as one of its key priority areas. The university applies an approach based on the integration of teaching and research, with the primary objective of ensuring that the results of scientific activities contribute to society and economic development.

The university operates on the basis of a modern research infrastructure. Research centers, laboratories, and departments create favorable conditions for the academic staff and doctoral students to conduct scientific investigations. A sustainable research fund serves to provide the necessary resources for financing scientific projects, conducting research, and publishing scholarly works.

Western Caspian University prioritizes the continuous improvement of its research infrastructure, the expansion of international scientific collaborations, and the increase in the number of scientific publications indexed in prestigious databases. The number of scholarly works by the academic staff published in internationally indexed journals increases annually, and incentive mechanisms are implemented in this direction.

Scientific journals operating under the university serve as a platform for disseminating research findings, encouraging academic discussions, and conducting knowledge exchange with the international scientific community. These journals play a vital role in involving young researchers in scientific activity and developing scholarly potential.

Social services

Western Caspian University has established a comprehensive social services system that supports the social, cultural, and scientific development of its students. Student unions, scientific societies, and volunteer groups operate within the university, creating an environment that fosters the development of leadership, communication, and social responsibility skills.

Based on the principles of corporate social responsibility, the university pays special attention to strengthening community relations. Projects aimed at solving public issues, educational events, seminars, and social initiatives constitute the primary directions of the university's contribution to society. These activities not only reinforce the university's social mission but also enable it to build sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships with the community.

1.2 ABOUT THE STRATEGY

The Strategic Development Strategy of Western Caspian University for 2026–2030 has been developed considering global trends in higher education, national priorities, and institutional potential. The formulation of the strategy utilized international best practices in higher education management, as well as the results of surveys conducted among public and private enterprises, students, and faculty. The strategy aims to consolidate the achievements gained during the university's previous developmental stages while simultaneously targeting the formation of an innovative and sustainable university model.

The core of the strategy consists of the application of quality and innovative approaches in education, the enhancement of student success and achievements, as well as graduate employability, and the expansion of lifelong learning opportunities. Strengthening research potential and applying sustainable development principles are aimed at increasing the efficiency of the university's scientific activities.

The expansion of internationalization and global cooperation, integration into international academic networks, and the enhancement of global recognition are among the primary priorities of the strategy. Digital transformation and the application of innovative technologies serve to increase the efficiency of teaching, research, and administrative processes.

Within the framework of the strategy, the continuous development of human resources, the formation of a competitive and inclusive work environment, the strengthening of modern infrastructure, and the assurance of institutional sustainability have been identified as key areas of operation. Additionally, increasing social responsibility and strengthening public relations ensure the expansion of the university's interaction with society and the creation of social value.

This strategy provides a systematic and purposeful framework for strengthening the position of Western Caspian University as a competitive, innovative, and socially responsible higher education institution within the global higher education area.

1.3 MISSION

By embracing global challenges and possessing a modern, innovative educational and research infrastructure, the University aims to train highly qualified specialists through education and research in the fields of humanities, social sciences, and engineering, thereby achieving the continuous development of the following:

- Supporting the economic, social, and political development of Azerbaijan by training specialists capable of securing the country's interests in the modern era
- Increasing career opportunities for alumni
- Ensuring a high level of foreign language skills among students
- Increasing entrepreneurial skills
- Training fully qualified and employable personnel to achieve high standards in professional fields
- Development of analytical skills
- Being an encouraging and driving force for scientific research
- Promotion of critical and solution-oriented thinking
- Striving to be progressive
- Promotion of high academic writing skills
- Sufficient specialized knowledge
- Empirical analysis skills
- Establishment of lecturer-mentor and student-mentor institutes across the entire university
- ICT proficiency
- Leadership ability and teamwork skills

1.4 VISION

To become a university that offers the most modern and high-quality education and research in the region, aligned with the demands of the labor market.

1.5 CORE VALUES

- ✓ **Academic integrity**
- ✓ **Quality**
- ✓ **Continuous development**
- ✓ **Discipline**
- ✓ **Environmental sensitivity**
- ✓ **Respect**
- ✓ **Dignity**

STRATEGIC GOALS

The Strategic Development Plan of Western Caspian University encompasses eight key strategic goals, with specific strategic objectives. While ensuring the consolidation of achievements from the previous period, the Strategic Development Plan for 2026–2030 identifies digital transformation, the application of innovative technologies, the expansion of international cooperation in education and research, as well as the development of lifelong learning opportunities as priority areas.

Aligned with global higher education trends and within a sustainable, growth-oriented framework, this plan provides a systematic and clear roadmap for enhancing the university's educational quality, strengthening its research potential, promoting a culture of innovation, and increasing its social responsibility.

Goal 1: Quality and innovative approach in education

Goal 2: Student success and growth in graduate employability rates

Goal 3: Strengthening and sustainable development of research potential

Goal 4: Internationalization and global relations

Goal 5: Digital transformation and the application of innovative technologies

Goal 6: Planned development of human resources and a competitive work environment

Goal 7: Strengthening infrastructure and ensuring sustainability

Goal 8: Development of social responsibility and public relations

Goal 1: Quality and innovative approach in education

Objective 1: Integration of outcome-based education models and competency-based training methodologies into the teaching process

- Updating curricula based on learning outcomes and aligning them with international standards;
- Widespread application of experiential and competency-based learning, and project-based approaches in education;
- Implementation of modularized and interdisciplinary learning;
- Widespread application of modern interactive teaching methods and information-communication technologies;
- Implementation of digital and analytical tools in teaching, assessment, and monitoring processes for the continuous tracking of educational outcomes;
- Formation of a student-centered educational environment and support for personal development;

- Implementation of hybrid and online education models in accordance with the legal-regulatory framework;
- Improvement of the educational quality assurance system based on results and its application in institutional decision-making;
- Updating textbooks and enriching the library with the latest educational materials and scientific literature.

Objective 2: Enhancing the alignment of educational programs with labor market requirements

- Involving employers in the process of updating curricula;
- Identifying and establishing specialties in line with modern labor market requirements and new trends, and continuously improving activities in this field;
- Increasing joint dual degree programs with higher education institutions of foreign countries;
- Implementation of a functional system aimed at increasing the competitiveness of graduates and the satisfaction level of employers;
- Aligning subject learning outcomes for specialties with leading employers;
- More active involvement of industry partners in the teaching and internship processes;
- Identification of labor market demands and needs based on regular research.

Objective 3: Aligning the university's teaching and management system with international standards

- Implementation of programs ensuring the participation of teachers and researchers in local and international conferences, seminars, and various professional development courses;
- Full alignment of educational programs with international accreditation standards;
- Achieving program and institutional accreditation by international accreditation agencies and obtaining a quality seal;
- Ensuring the improvement of management processes and their certification in accordance with international quality standards;
- Measuring the performance of academic and administrative staff through the implementation of a Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) system;

Goal 2: Student success and growth in graduate employment rates

Objective 1: Supporting the professional development of students and implementing a career mentorship system

- Establishing a comprehensive ecosystem that supports the individual development and career readiness of students;
- Improving mechanisms aimed at increasing the competitiveness of students in the labor market;
- Direct support regarding internship programs and job opportunities;
- Stimulating the entrepreneurial ideas and startup initiatives of students;
- Developing relations and forming active partnerships with employers to align teaching and internship programs with labor market requirements.

Objective 2: Student-oriented development and support

- Creating an environment for the academic, social, and psychological development of students;
- Increasing the connection of students (as well as young lecturers) with local and international academic communities;
- Student participation in university governance and decision-making;
- Equal opportunities for students with disabilities and those with special needs;
- Preparation and implementation of the action plan for educational and developmental activities;
- Organizing sports and cultural events;
- Expanding the activities of the Student Youth Organization, Student Scientific Society, and interest-based student clubs;
- Promoting student activism and voluntary participation within the university;
- Organizing systematic knowledge competitions and ensuring the active participation of students;
- Involving students in various professional qualification programs to increase their knowledge and skills in their respective fields of specialization.

Objective 3: Ensuring sustainable growth dynamics in the employment rate of graduates by specialization

- Developing the cooperation network with graduates at an institutional level;
- Actively monitoring the employment status of graduates, as well as collecting and analyzing information regarding their career opportunities;
- Forming a database reflecting graduate success and regularly updating the information;
- Improving the operations of the student and graduate internship and development center;
- Organizing meetings between university graduates (prominent figures, businessmen) and students;
- Increasing the number of meetings with the University Alumni Association.

Goal 3: Strengthening and continuous advancement of scientific research potential**Objective 1: Expanding the activities of the university's Scientific Centers**

- Expanding local and international cooperation projects on scientific research;
- Creating and strengthening the activities of research networks connecting university lecturers;
- Increasing the potential capabilities of the university's material and technical base in the performance of scientific research work;
- Attracting financial sources for research and scientific-innovative activity and improving incentive mechanisms for publications;
- Obtaining local and international grants in the field of science and education by various faculties;
- Establishing mechanisms for the commercialization of applied research within the framework of university-industry cooperation and ensuring the transfer of innovative scientific results to the real sector;

- Promoting interdisciplinary research projects at the intersection of various fields of science to solve complex scientific and technological challenges;
- Organizing various scientific events at local and international levels that bring together the university's specialists from different fields of science;
- Implementation of a research sabbatical system to increase academic reputation and scientific productivity.

Objective 2: Formation of a creative scientific environment meeting international requirements for research and improvement of scientific-pedagogical staff training

- Establishing an Academic Writing Center to organize training and consultations aimed at developing the academic writing skills of students and young researchers;
- Actively involving students and young researchers in scientific-innovative activities across various educational levels through the integration of education and research, and the formation and improvement of research habits;
- Expanding library activities and increasing access to international information resources;
- Increasing the number of library trainings and seminars on information literacy for students and young researchers, taking modern technological opportunities into account;
- Implementing a research mentorship model under the guidance of experienced (local and foreign) researchers;
- Conducting high-level scientific specialist training in scientific fields experiencing staff shortages;
- Improving the quality of doctoral education and implementing support programs for young researchers;
- Supporting the activities of the Student Scientific Society and establishing a mechanism for the active integration of students into laboratory research.

Objective 3: Increasing the international visibility of scientific research activities

- Increasing the number and expanding the scope of international conferences and other scientific events in various fields;
- Encouraging the publication of research results in high-impact factor journals;
- Expanding multidisciplinary and applied research in accordance with industrial needs;
- Establishing a mechanism for selecting scientific supervisors from prestigious universities;
- Systematizing the activities of Dissertation Councils;
- Ensuring the adequacy of scientific topics (dissertations, etc.) to the current problems of science;
- Developing scientific research laboratories and centers to possess modern technological capabilities;
- Protecting the intellectual property rights of the university's scientific and pedagogical publications.

Objective 4: Establishment of specialized scientific journals and their indexing in prestigious international scientometric databases

- Attracting reputable scholars to the editorial boards of journals;
- Establishing a transparent peer-review system that meets modern requirements;
- Applying international anti-plagiarism systems to articles submitted for publication;
- Preparing articles based on the requirements of the digital environment (DOI registration, etc.);
- Transitioning to an Open Access format to increase the visibility of scientific journals;
- Developing the websites of scientific publications in accordance with international standards and optimizing them with modern submission and publication mechanisms.

Goal 4: Internationalization and global relations

Objective 1: Strengthening the university's international relations

- Development of double degree and joint educational programs with foreign partner universities;
- Increasing the number of international partnerships in the fields of education and science at regional and global levels;
- Developing opportunities for students and academic staff to participate in international mobility programs;
- Creating opportunities for international students and lecturers to learn the Azerbaijani language;
- Developing opportunities for the application of the English language within the university's educational and scientific environment;
- Increasing the effectiveness of joint research collaboration projects and international relations in this direction;
- Ensuring the participation of lecturers and researchers in international exchange programs, international conferences, seminars, and various professional development courses.

Objective 2: Increasing the academic and scientific prestige of the university at the global level through international relations

- Active participation of students, lecturers, and young researchers in academic networks and global projects;
- Intensification of lectures (including online) and international webinars conducted by foreign specialists;
- Expanding student admission opportunities based on the results of international status exams;
- Strengthening the university's marketing strategy to improve the process of increasing the number of international students and attracting more students;
- Improving support services for international students;
- Organizing summer schools for international experience exchange;
- Implementing a project or system providing mentorship to international students and ensuring their interaction and integration into the local environment;

- Organizing international festivals and cultural events.

Objective 3: Enhancing international competitiveness

- Achieving higher positions in international higher education rankings (various global rankings for education, research, environmental sustainability, etc.);
- Establishing an internal evaluation system and implementing consistent quality monitoring mechanisms;
- Planned execution of efforts to increase the international student enrolment as part of the internationalization of education;
- Increasing the number of degree programs offered in English;
- Organizing promotional activities and outreach in target countries to enhance the university's brand;
- Increasing the proportion of articles co-authored with international partners and published in high-impact (Q1, Q2) journals;
- Stimulating the promotion of international patents;
- Actively involving foreign specialists in both teaching and research activities;
- Encouraging the tracking of alumni success and their employment performance in international labor markets;

Goal 5: Digital transformation and the application of innovative technologies

Objective 1: Wide-scale application of digital technologies

- Improving the electronic management system and expanding efforts toward the digitalization of the educational environment;
- Digitalization of document workflow;
- Developing and implementing a mobile application that provides students with access to their personal academic data;
- Carrying out the effective integration of artificial Intelligence tools into education, while taking usage regulations and policies into account;
- Analyzing the effectiveness of examination methods and implementing new examination techniques;
- Fully establishing an electronic library system and ensuring its accessibility;
- Conducting a digital audit of utilized technologies, existing solutions, and processes;
- Monitoring the security and quality of provided electronic services.

Objective 2: Development of digital skills and efficient use of technologies

- Preparing digital instructions or programs for administrative and academic staff;
- Establishing technological partnerships;
- Promoting the ethical use of modern technologies and increasing digital literacy;
- Protecting data security and privacy in the effective management of technological resources;

- Prioritizing the use of energy-efficient technologies;
- Management of digital technological risks.

Goal 6: Planned development of human resources and a competitive work environment

Objective 1: Formation and continuous development of competent staff potential

- Workforce planning aimed at identifying human resource needs in alignment with the university's 5-year development strategy;
- Conducting age, specialty, and competency analyses for both academic and administrative staff;
- Prioritizing and implementing the recruitment of highly qualified and professional personnel to the university
- Monitoring administrative staff performance and promoting continuous improvement;
- Developing relevant management skills among administrative staff;
- Implementing a corporate culture model based on the university's core values;
- Strengthening internal communication and the collaborative environment.

Objective 2: Systematic strengthening of the academic staff's teaching and research potential

- Refining recruitment criteria based on academic degrees and research performance indicators;
- Implementing an assessment mechanism focused on measuring academic performance and promoting professional growth;
- Implementing or expanding professional development programs for junior faculty members;
- Strengthening the recruitment of international faculty for teaching processes and as scientific advisors.

Objective 3: Creating a safe and secure work environment

- Establishing and implementing safety standards in accordance with work environment requirements;
- Conducting regular audits in the field of occupational safety;
- Organizing periodic practical training sessions to ensure compliance with safe work environment certification requirements.

Objective 4: Evaluation and motivation

- Strengthening initiatives aimed at supporting an inclusive work environment with equal opportunities;
- Refining the competitive incentive-based compensation model;
- Evaluating the performance of academic and administrative staff (across teaching, research, and community service) and improving the motivation system;
- Providing an additional incentive system for scientific activities and research projects.

Goal 7: Strengthening infrastructure and ensuring sustainability

Objective 1: Strengthening the material-technical base and aligning it with modern requirements

- Increasing the efficiency of teaching and practical infrastructure by strengthening the material-technical base;
- Upgrading laboratories and equipment based on modern requirements, including the implementation of software solutions and continuous technical improvements;
- Strengthening the university's IT infrastructure and network security;
- Developing technoparks, business incubators, and startup initiatives to foster an innovation ecosystem within the university;
- Developing infrastructure to ensure seamless accessibility and mobility for individuals with physical disabilities within campus buildings;
- Establishing student residential infrastructure;
- Developing systems for the efficient operation and technical maintenance of equipment and infrastructure.

Objective 2: Strengthening environmental sustainability and modernizing campus infrastructure based on sustainable development principles

- Development and implementation of the "Green Campus" concept;
- Phased implementation of solar panels and other alternative energy sources, and increasing their share in the energy balance;
- Improving energy efficiency (LED lighting, thermal insulation, etc.);
- Enhancing water and waste management and monitoring the recycling system;
- Establishing a monitoring and reporting mechanism for carbon footprint reduction;
- Organizing environmental initiatives and volunteer programs.

Objective 3: Financial sustainability and diversification of revenue streams

- Strengthening the financial planning and risk management system to ensure economic stability;
- Expanding alternative funding sources;
- Increasing the commercialization potential of scientific research and innovation projects;
- Establishing a mechanism for the transfer of research results to the business sector;
- Developing fee-based professional qualification and certification programs;
- Implementing resource monitoring and audit mechanisms.

Goal 8: Development of social responsibility and public relations

Objective 1: Strengthening social impact potential based on public values

- Supporting the implementation of public projects that contribute to the socio-economic and cultural development of the region;

- Supporting social responsibility initiatives within the framework of cooperation with industry partners and increasing the number of projects in this direction;
- Supporting student volunteerism and social responsibility initiatives;
- Strengthening relations with alumni.

Objective 2: Promoting education among the youth

- Organizing communication campaigns to promote higher education and the university's educational programs among youth;
- Organizing Open House days and ensuring the participation of secondary school students in these events;
- Conducting training, seminars, and meetings in schools, providing support to students in career choice, and promoting new specialties;
- Preparing relevant publications for the promotion of the university and its specialties;
- Organizing various events with the participation of the public, including parents and prospective students.

Objective 3: Improving activities in the field of public relations

- Conducting relevant educational research and surveys within the framework of the university's marketing strategy, including the study and implementation of international best practices;
- Developing a communication strategy for media, the public, and partner organizations;
- Ensuring broad public outreach regarding university activities, highlighting new projects and achievements, and raising awareness among parents and prospective students;
- Expanding the university's presence on social media (daily updates of university pages on platforms, and effectively utilizing these networks to inform a larger audience);
- Maintaining daily updates to the university website and continuously improving content, with planned execution of comprehensive information sharing to expand outreach and awareness.