

St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London



# Vision 2025

St Mary's plan  
for the future



# Vision 2025 St Mary's plan for the future



# Introduction

Vision 2025 sets out how we will develop and invest in St Mary’s over the next nine years. This is an exciting moment in our history as we embark on a new and ambitious phase in the University’s evolution. We have consulted widely on this plan with students and staff across the institution and we look forward to working with the St Mary’s community on its delivery.

We build on firm foundations. Established in 1850 with a distinctive Catholic identity, St Mary’s is a University with a friendly, inclusive and intellectually rigorous learning community which seeks to empower all our students to lead fulfilling lives both at St Mary’s and beyond. That abiding mission underpins this plan.

It derives from the philosophy of Blessed John Henry, Cardinal Newman, the architect of the modern understanding of a university. His idea of a university was built on inter-disciplinary education, virtues and values, with an emphasis on the formation of each individual enriched by insights from the Catholic intellectual tradition. This ethos will continue to be built into our curriculum, our style of teaching and our approach to learning which will emphasise student engagement and participation more than formal lectures.

As a public University with a faith identity we work hard to strike the right balance between being faithful to our identity and ensuring openness to those who do not share it. We welcome students and staff of all faiths and none. The powerful sense of community that characterises St Mary’s is a product of our ethos and the core values that underpin it: inclusiveness, generosity of spirit, respect and excellence.

Our vision for the future is focused on people and place with the aim of creating a positive learning environment centred on our campus community in Strawberry Hill. We want to create the best possible conditions for our students and staff to develop into independent problem solvers and ethical leaders, enthusiastic about knowledge and learning, and able to get things done. Academic rigour is central to all our programmes. We intend to build on those strengths to provide wide-reaching opportunities for students to grow and make a positive impact on the world.



To meet that ambition, this plan sets out how over the next nine years we will:

- Invest £100m in our students and staff, including through the development of improved facilities for learning and research as well as new accommodation and sports grounds, to support them in reaching their full potential;
- Raise our profile and increase our impact through a more active presence in the public square and the development of solutions to key public policy concerns;
- Develop our research and enterprise capacity alongside a renewed emphasis on teaching excellence;
- Enhance our students’ learning and personal development to help them achieve the best results;
- Increase the diversity of our students and staff without undermining the powerful sense of community that characterises St Mary’s;
- Expand our national and international reach including through the development of new partnerships with overseas universities; and
- Build on our high level of student satisfaction to be the most welcoming learning community in the UK as we climb the national university league tables.

Achieving these goals will be a challenge. The intensely competitive environment for universities in the UK makes this a critical and exhilarating period in our drive to make St Mary’s a leading university. However, we start from a position of strength. We have a distinct mission and purpose, and a clear vision of the future. By working together we can realise it.

**Francis Campbell**  
Vice Chancellor



# Mission and Purpose

We are an inclusive Catholic University seeking to develop the whole person and we empower our community to have a positive impact on the world.

## Vision

Our vision is rooted in people and place. By 2025, students, staff, alumni and members of our wider circle will actively contribute to St Mary's unique identity. We will be widely known for our quality and our diverse, inclusive and enabling study and research environment. Everyone will be encouraged, empowered and supported to give, learn and belong to the St Mary's learning community.

### Students

All our students will be motivated to fulfil their potential, think critically and become global citizens who engage with the world around them. We will enhance our already strong record for our graduates swiftly entering into rewarding careers. They will stay connected to St Mary's through our vibrant alumni network, committed to our values and to lifelong learning.

### Staff

Our staff will be passionate about their contribution to St Mary's learning environment and we will support them in developing professionally, growing personally and making an impact.

### Strawberry Hill

The centre of our University will continue to be our beautiful campus in Strawberry Hill. By 2025 we will have significantly expanded and improved facilities for students and for learning while maintaining and developing our current community-based environment. We will continue to be engaged, active and responsible citizens of Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, and London.



## Values

Our four core values define St Mary's and underpin all we do as a University. They are:

### Inclusiveness

We celebrate differences, recognising that everyone is born with a unique identity. St Mary's is a place where students and staff can reach their full potential and make a positive contribution to society.

### Generosity of Spirit

Our generosity of spirit sets us apart. It can be seen in the encouragement, collegiality, empathy, helpfulness and service to be found across the University.

### Respect

We respect everybody. We treat everyone as we ourselves would want to be treated.

### Excellence

We strive to be the best at everything we do. We seek professionalism through setting high standards and continuous improvement in all our practices and work.

# Key commitments

## ► We will enhance our students' learning and personal development by:

- Providing a globally relevant course portfolio that equips students to be knowledgeable, critical and ambitious for themselves and for society.
- Offering vigorous student engagement through excellent teaching and personal support with learning opportunities that are stimulating, stretching and prepare them for fulfilling careers.
- Multiplying opportunities for volunteering and service.

## ► We will intensify interdisciplinary research and scholarship to create and disseminate new knowledge by:

- Encouraging all staff to work across boundaries to develop insights that support real life problem solving.
- Partnering with public, private and third sector bodies to influence public policy debate and problem solving.
- Expanding our national and distinctive international networks to provide a forum for discussion of global issues and the development of solutions.

## ► We will produce an enterprise culture by:

- Offering students the option to study a module in entrepreneurship and develop a business proposal.
- Creating a University specialism in social enterprise.
- Developing our start-up hub, working with the local community.
- Partnering with institutions from around the world to share in research and learning.



## ► We will foster a supportive learning environment for our students and staff by:

- Actively encouraging students from all backgrounds to study at St Mary's, particularly those with no family history of attending university.
- Using technology innovatively to intensify teaching and learning.

## ► We will continuously improve our operations to ensure a sustainable future by:

- Maintaining a culture of service excellence for students, staff and stakeholders.
- Delivering measures to improve St Mary's financial and environmental sustainability.
- Improving campus facilities and increasing student accommodation within easy reach of the campus.

## ► We will radically modernise our approach to learning and technology to improve student and staff experience, and better support distance learning and research by:

- Simplifying, rationalising and digitising the University's systems architecture to maximise effective use of data; expand the use of social media, lecture capture and other learning tools; and provide cutting edge mobile computing.



# Delivering our plan for 2025

This plan is supported by underpinning strategies which specify our priorities to deliver our future. These are our:

- Education strategy
- Engagement strategy
- International strategy
- Research and enterprise strategy
- Student recruitment strategy



# Our Education Strategy

## Strategic aim

**We aim to build on our established strengths and by 2025 secure the Gold standard ranking under the new Teaching Excellence Framework.**

To achieve this goal we will excel in teaching with specialist anchors in certain areas of research. We will concentrate on delivering fewer programmes to a very high standard and focusing on outcomes, notably fulfilling employment.

We aim for all St Mary's students to be knowledgeable, confident, resilient, and ambitious individuals – ambitious both for themselves and for the global society in which they will live and with which they will engage. They will demonstrate St Mary's values in their daily lives, generously caring for and contributing to the community, and bringing an ethical approach to all that they do.

We will achieve this ambition by offering exceptional student learning opportunities to maximise student engagement, retention and life-long success. We will deliver this through a distinctive St Mary's approach that develops a broad and balanced education embracing formation of the whole character through full membership of a learning community. Through the applied nature of many of our programmes and the integration of work placements into courses, we will maximise employment opportunities. This approach will enable our students to flourish and make a positive impact in a complex and demanding world.

## Key objectives

- Work towards the reduction of the staff-student ratio to no more than 1:15;
- Ensure that our core curriculum provides a common entitlement to key skills and knowledge strands related to employability, personal development and global mindedness;
- Support the alignment of teaching, scholarship, enterprise and professional activity;



- Accelerate academic feedback, reinforce its quality and intensify personal support for students, to maximise their engagement and achievement;
- Contribute to reputational advancement, increase external esteem and improve our standing in league tables;
- Support internationalisation; and
- Provide a framework for estates and information technology infrastructure developments.

We will also refine performance measurement and ensure that excellence in teaching and scholarship is nurtured, rewarded and continuously enhanced.

Supporting objectives include:

- Providing a personal support tutor for every student to encourage academic rigour and deliver pastoral care;
- Advancing towards our goal that all new, full-time undergraduates who require it will have a guarantee of accommodation within easy reach of campus;
- Developing a globally relevant course portfolio that equips our students to be knowledgeable and critical for self and society;
- Offering learning opportunities that are challenging, stimulating and stretching, and that prepare our students for fulfilling graduate opportunities; and
- Ensuring that wherever appropriate our Masters courses are professionally accredited.

15:1

Student staff ratio



# Our Engagement Strategy

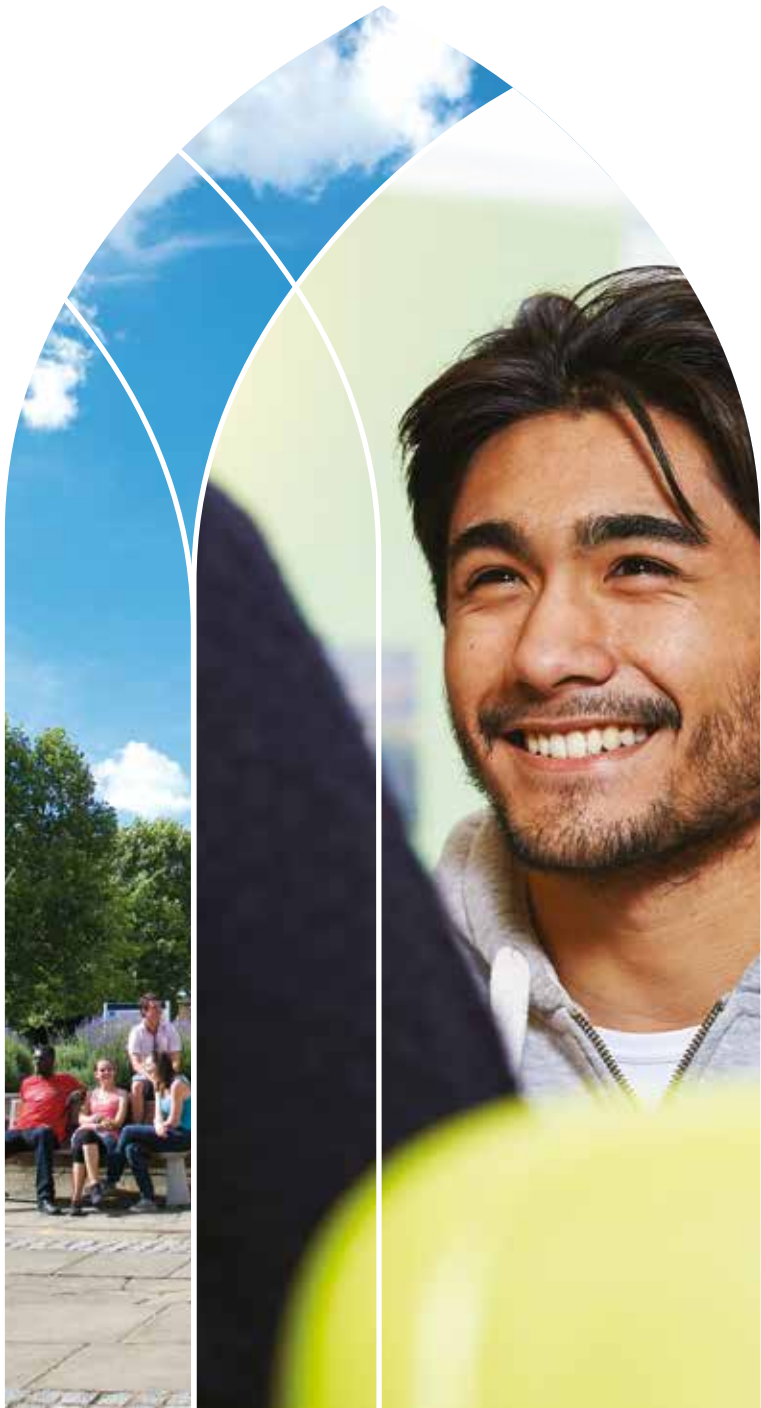
**Strategic aim**  
**We aim to raise the profile of St Mary’s at a national and global level as a University with an active role in the ‘public square’, contributing to the national conversation and helping to shape public policy.**

As a Catholic University in one of the world’s most diverse cities, we pride ourselves on being distinctive by fostering a powerful sense of community and adopting a holistic approach to public policy debate. This gives us a unique perspective to bring to national debate and to international issues. Capitalising on our fine reputation in education and sport, St Mary’s is now projecting its voice much further to become known nationally and internationally for our brand and distinctiveness.

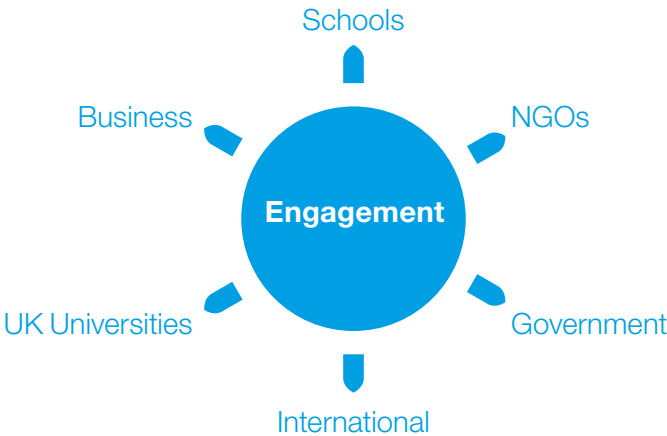
We are changing our image in the minds of opinion formers and thought leaders who have in the past had a limited awareness of St Mary’s. Making the St Mary’s brand better known will enable us to attract students, high-quality staff and discriminating employers who want to employ our graduates. By focusing our energy, we can maximise our impact on public debate. Particular areas of focus will be sport and sports science, business and management ethics, education, communications, public and social policy, drama, finance, law, theology and the arts.

We are reinforcing our engagement with schools, arts and cultural bodies, faith and volunteer groups, NGOs, and government at both local and national level. Of crucial importance to all our students, we are growing our University wide engagement with business. We aim to improve rapidly our standing among UK universities by our strategy of institutional advancement, research, education and enterprise.

Internationally our position is unique among UK universities as we sit amidst global networks which straddle faith, nationality and ethnicity. We already contribute to policy formation at the local, national and global level through public policy engagement and international diplomacy. To achieve this we will be exploiting our London location to the full.



- Key objectives**
- Set up a fully functioning Development and Alumni Office and import best practice from the leading universities in this field;
  - Secure the use of a central London location for public events, teaching, and continuous professional development;
  - Generate comment and reports to support the work of opinion formers;
  - Develop our Enterprise Hub to stimulate innovation, diversify income and engage with local government and business partners;
  - Open a new Employability Hub for workplace learning and careers;
  - Start a Business and Management School; and
  - Implement a University-wide research and scholarship strategy and programme.





# Our International Strategy

## Strategic aim

**We aim to increase the number of international students studying at St Mary’s so that by 2025 they make up 25% of the student population; increase significantly the number of home students who undertake part of their course abroad and who have the opportunity to volunteer in less developed countries outside of term time.**

To achieve this, we have established an international network to raise our profile overseas, particularly in the Americas and Asia. Opening our first international office in Chicago is increasing the number of international students coming to study here.

Our plan is to expand St Mary’s existing partnerships in a measured and selective way to ensure that all our international ties are focused on our core priorities. In selecting our partners we will:

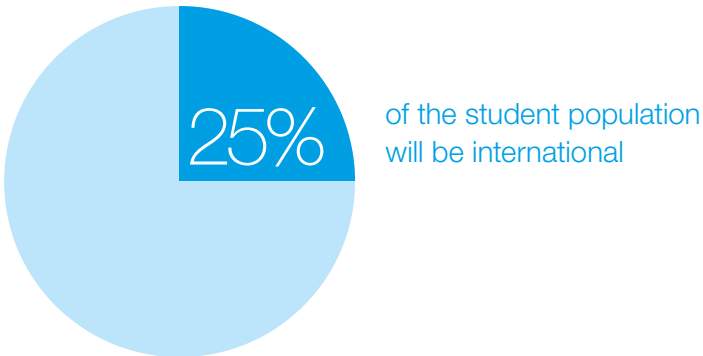
- Look for institutions that share our values and are capable of making a contribution to our priorities and global reputation;
- Enter partnerships which are built on the principles of reciprocity and compatibility and are driven by shared curriculum and research interests;
- Seek knowledge transfer, social engagement and joint enterprise that can enhance the profile and reputation of both institutions;
- Ensure that our international partners have robust systems of quality assurance and academic standards that can work well alongside those of St Mary’s, are financially sustainable, and are in a position to contract formally with us; and
- Select partners in countries with economically and politically stable environments with sound legislative and regulatory frameworks in place.



St Mary’s remains committed to the Erasmus+ programme through which we are making three or four new partnerships annually. If changes to the UK’s relationship with the European Union alter UK universities’ eligibility for the programme, we will seek an alternative framework. Through these and other partnerships St Mary’s seeks international impact in relation to bioethics, slavery and human trafficking, business and management, criminology, theology and civil society. A significant rise up the university rankings will make St Mary’s even more attractive to international partners.

## Key objectives

- Forge strategic alliances with at least two international universities by 2018 and with five global high-profile university partners by 2025;
- Advance towards our goal that all international students who require it will have a guarantee of accommodation within easy reach of campus;
- Have in place by early 2017 a centralised admissions system for assessing undergraduate and post graduate applications with a commitment to processing these within three days; and
- From 2017/18 make available from the Access Agreement funds to enable St Mary’s students to study abroad.



# Our Research and Enterprise Strategy

## Strategic aim

**We aim to secure Research Degree Awarding Powers by the end of 2020 and expand our doctoral programmes including a strategically focused suite of fully-funded studentships; nurture carefully selected areas of internationally leading and world class research, reflected in much improved assessment in the next REF; and enhance our public profile and impact, attracting research funding and talent and deepening our interdisciplinary focus.**

Our place as Britain's leading global Catholic University and its most improving higher educational institution depends in large part on advancing our research and enterprise. Building our research standing will enhance the reputation of St Mary's among prospective students and staff. Rapidly expanding our enterprise activity will allow us to diversify our income streams. That will enable us to seize new opportunities to engage with local, national and international partners from industry, the public sector and civil society, and enhance the educational, social and public value we contribute within London and beyond.

To propel our simultaneous ambitions in teaching, research and enterprise we will broaden our academic career structure. The purpose is to ensure parity of esteem between teaching and highly specialised research and to encourage, recruit and reward excellence in broader scholarship, enterprise and professional practice which are critical to enriching the learning environment at St Mary's. In each of our schools we will reinforce a culture that delivers research informed study at undergraduate and postgraduate level alike. We will also look at the impact and success of each of our existing research centres to determine those deserving further investment.

Our enterprise strategy will enable us to enhance our reputation, reach and public benefit; enrich our educational offer; deepen our impact; attract dynamic staff and talent; and raise our profile in the public square. Going forward we will focus on securing growth in our specialisms of education, drama, and sport and allied health issues as well as reinforcing the opportunities afforded by developing a new business and management school. Communications, public and social, politics, religion and the arts will soon also become a focus.



## Key objectives

- Raise funds from our network of alumni, foundations, corporations and those sharing our values and ambitions;
- Forge further long-term strategic partnerships to extend St Mary's research and influence as well as to position the University for joint ventures and contract research;
- Develop an institutional capacity to scope and deliver new initiatives;
- Establish ourselves at the heart of our local community, partnering with local authorities;
- Engage with local, national and international business and industry through services provided by St Mary's specialist staff thereby increasing knowledge exchange, building research impact, and diversifying the University's income streams;
- Grow world leading research centres in line with the University's core mission;
- Grow the number of our visiting professors and make full use of them to increase global interest in St Mary's;
- Introduce two new career tracks – Teaching & Scholarship and Enterprise; and
- Expand the University's research culture.

2020

Secure Research Degree  
Awarding powers



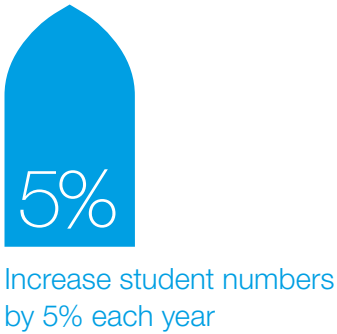
# Our Student Recruitment Strategy

**Strategic aim**  
**We aim to increase our student numbers by an average of 5% each year to 2025.**

The continued success of our University relies on our ability to attract students in the context of a complex and highly competitive environment for higher education. To ensure St Mary's remains a vibrant place to learn, we will ensure that the University continues to grow. Growth will be pursued in a sustainable way that avoids undermining the strong sense of community for which St Mary's is renowned.



- Key objectives**
- Provide new courses and qualifications for new age groups with innovative methods of delivery and accelerated routes to degrees;
  - Build work experience and/or volunteering into all our programmes;
  - Ensure that all our programmes are relevant in a rapidly changing world;
  - Strengthen our relations with schools and institutions that have traditionally sent students to St Mary's and extend the number of schools and institutions with which we have a close relationship, particularly in our local area;
  - Expand our recruitment strategy internationally;
  - Increase our taught postgraduate programmes and research, ensuring that they are linked to professional standards where possible;
  - Develop apprenticeship degrees with industry; and
  - Grow business sponsorship of our postgraduate programmes.







St Mary's University  
Waldegrave Road  
Twickenham  
London  
TW1 4SX

T +44 (0) 20 8240 4000  
F +44 (0) 20 8240 4255

[www.stmarys.ac.uk](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk)