

## Access Agreement 2017/18 for St Mary's University, Twickenham

### 1. Introduction

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St Mary's is an inclusive Catholic University seeking to develop the whole person and empower our community to have a positive impact upon the world entrusted to us. St. Mary's remains faithful to its founding ethos through its continuing commitment to education, strong links to many of the Catholic secondary and primary schools across the country, and a strong commitment to social justice. This is reflected in the University being an inclusive environment, welcoming students and staff of all faiths and none. It is committed to a holistic approach to education, which forms the person in the widest possible sense. At St Mary's our friendly and inclusive culture is built on four core values, which govern all our interactions with each other:

- **Generosity of Spirit** sets St Mary's apart. It represents the friendly heart of our University and is shown by service, empathy, helpfulness, encouragement and collegiality.
- At St Mary's we aspire to **Excellence** by striving to be the best at what we do. We seek professionalism through high standards and the continuous development of our practices and people
- At St Mary's we **Respect** everybody regardless of who they are; treating others as we ourselves would wish to be treated
- At St Mary's we are **Inclusive**. We celebrate difference and create opportunities that recognise our unique identities.

From August 2016, a new Corporate Plan will set out the University's vision and objectives for the period 2016 - 2025. At its core are key objectives that focus upon the enhancement of our students' learning and personal development opportunities and which signal a commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive learning environment for our students, staff and other stakeholders. Specifically, the University remains committed to providing active encouragement and support for students from diverse backgrounds, including those with no family history of going to university, to study at St Mary's.

The University's Widening Participation Strategy (2015 - 2020), is centred around continuing to build a strategic approach to WP. It is doing this by using evidence from evaluations in order to further raise awareness of, and encourage participation in HE, to further diversify the student body, and to enhance engagement and success in under-represented groups.

The University's new Education Strategy (2016 - 2025), together with supporting strategies across Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Student Engagement and Employability also highlight the need to remove barriers to participation and to support students who are under-represented in HE through their studies and to progress to higher degrees and / or graduate employment. This strategic intent has led to the continued success of a well-established programme of widening access activities and a growing programme of targeted activity that supports individual student success at all stages of the student journey from pre-entry

through to graduation and employment. St Mary's University takes an institution-wide view of widening access and participation, and activities and interventions are embedded wherever possible into the wider student experience, both in terms of teaching and learning, and support.

## 2. Fees, student numbers and fee income

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The University will charge £9250 to fee-regulated, full-time entrants.

Part-time students who are undertaking full time programmes at a lower intensity will be charged pro rata fees. The highest rate that could be charged in cases such as this for 2017/18 would be £6000 for a student taking 80 credits. In most cases, new part-time students will be charged £4625 per year (being 50% of the full-time rate). Foundation Degree courses will be charged at a rate of up to £6750.

All fees are subject to review regarding an inflation adjustment for subsequent years.

We are committing to spend £2,769,021 on measures for Access (£382,141), Student Success (£1,105,227), Student Progress (£310,653) and Finance Support (£971,000). This will make up 23.3% of the higher fee income that we receive.

## 3. Access and student success measures

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### **The Access and Student Success Record at St Mary's**

The tables below outline the access and student success record at St Mary's since 2010/11. Our continuation rates for first degree students after the first year of entry have fallen slightly in 2014/15 and are slightly below benchmark (-0.8%). The percentage of BME students as a proportion of the St Mary's population continues to grow, rising in 2015 by 0.8% points on the previous year. The figures for participation from state schools and colleges, under-represented socio-economic groups and from low participation neighbourhoods have shown significant improvement in 2014/15. These were key areas addressed by the new Widening Participation Strategy and we hope to see continued improvement in this area.

In relation to student success and retention, we will continue to target students from low participation areas for involvement in our pre-entry programme 'Get Set for Success' and provide priority on-course support for targeted students through our Learning Advice team. During the 2015/16 academic year St Mary's has undertaken a systemic review of the ways in which it uses data to drive improvements with student engagement and retention. It is anticipated that the various activities outlined in the relevant section below will improve non-continuation rates in the future.

<b>Ethnic minority students as a proportion of St Mary's student population</b>					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
% BME	20.4%	22.1%	24%	25.5%	26.3%
% WHITE	77.5%	73.7%	73.4%	71.3%	68.9%
% INFORMATION REFUSED	2.1%	4.2%	2.6%	3.1%	1.8%

<b>% Continuation among first degree students after first year of entry</b>			
	St Mary's	Benchmark	Difference
2014/15	87.9%	88.7%	-0.8%
2013/14	92.1%	89.4%	+2.7%
2012/13	89.6%	89.8%	-0.2%
2011/12	88.6%	88.2%	+0.4%

Year	St Mary's	Benchmark (location adj.)	Difference
<b>Participation from state schools or colleges</b>			
2014/15	95.7%	96%	-0.3%
2013/14	93.6%	94.7%	-1.1%
2012/13	95.7%	94.4%	+1.3%
2011/12	96.5%	93.7%	+2.8%
2010/11	95.5%	94.7%	+0.8%
<b>Participation from under-represented socioeconomic groups (4,5,6,7)</b>			
2014/15	38.8%	40.1%	-1.3%
2013/14	37.5%	40.1%	-2.6%
2012/13	35.5%	38.1%	-2.6%
2011/12	37.1%	36.9%	+0.2%
2010/11	35.1%	36.6%	-1.5%
<b>Participation from low participation neighbourhoods (Young Entrants)</b>			
2014/15	7.2%	8%	-0.8%
2013/14	5.5%	8.1%	-2.6%
2012/13	9.8%	9.4%	+0.4%
2011/12	7.8%	9%	-1.2%
2010/11	6.3%	9%	-2.7%

<b>Percentage of full time first degree students in receipt of Disabled students allowance</b>			
2014/15	6.9%	7.4%	-0.5%
2013/14	7.1%	7.0%	+0.1%
2012/13	7.6%	6.7%	+0.9%
2011/12	7.0%	6.2%	+0.8%
2010/11	6.0%	5.5%	+0.5%

## **Access and Outreach**

During 2015/16 new senior appointments within the WP and Recruitment team led to a review of the Access and Outreach work being done and the development of a more strategic approach to our outreach activities. Although St Marys is placed within one of the high POLAR area boroughs, the surrounding boroughs do have large pockets of low POLAR rates, high levels of deprivation and high levels of BME learners and this is where our focus will be placed for the foreseeable future with particular targeting of the Borough of Hounslow. Initial review of our current Undergraduate cohort and data collection over the last three application cycles has clearly shown that St Marys attracts a high level of non-traditional learners from London and South East area, with high levels of applications coming from the local FE providers. As a result of this, focus will be placed on working with specific courses and academic strands that attract this type of learner for our outreach activities.

The strategic review has led the University to invest in additional resource to support outreach activity and ensure effective delivery of the WP strategy. In 2016/17 the new roles of Student Ambassador Co-ordinator, and Education Liaison Officer Pre-16 will join the recruitment team. In addition to these posts a proportion of the new Post Graduate Recruitment Officer role will have a dedicated focus upon attracting WP students to our postgraduate courses.

### Sustainable outreach

For 2017/18 there will be a particular focus on developing larger, more sustainable outreach projects. This work is already starting, with new partnerships developing with academic departments at St Mary's. For example, a successful partnership has begun with the Sports Coaching Science programme. A series of subject specific days have been developed with the WP team that focus on attracting vocational-led learners from the surrounding FE colleges. This work will be further developed into a more sustained project aimed at learners from lower years and feeder schools into these FE colleges. In addition to this other related courses within the School of Sport, Health and Applied Science have also provided opportunities for prospective learners within their subjects.

Partnership working with the Law programmes will also be developed further. Previously, the partnership was based upon a two day mini summer school; an intense Law day will be delivered this year and in addition we will be working with Law to pilot an online learning

platform in collaboration with Access HE. In addition to Law other subject strands such as Business and Tourism are being worked with within the School of Management and Social Science for targeted subject specific opportunities to our local schools and FE colleges.

A continuance of the Applied Physics mini Summer School has been agreed with additional focus on supporting this department with school visits, targeted subject specific days and specific targeting of their students to be brought into the Student Ambassador pool.

In addition to the above we regularly attend Careers/HE Fairs in schools and colleges across London as well as delivery of bespoke Talks and workshops that include 'Student Life', 'Benefits of a University Education', 'UCAS Navigation', 'Personal Statements' and 'Student Finance'. We will continue to do this for 2017/18 to enhance our existing partnerships with local schools and colleges and also to foster new ones for the future.

### Summer schools

In addition to the mini summer school offering this year planning has begun for an increased offer of summer schools for 16/17, aimed at Year 11 and Year 12. This would entail non-residential week long Summer Schools with 4-6 subject strands on each school aiming to attract 100 to 150 potential learners. The aim is to lead with a subject strand from each of St Mary's academic Schools with cross curricular opportunities within the Summer School timetable to introduce aspects of other courses within the academic School. This work will be led by the existing WP Recruitment Officer with overall support from the Education Liaison Manager. There is an aim for this to become a dedicated annual project with potential to expand in numbers and to offer a Year 10 Summer School by 2017/18. In addition to this for 2017/18 planning will begin for the Year 12 Summer School with additional sessions on offer throughout the year for learners to support with their A Level studies in specific subject areas.

### Student Ambassadors

Student Ambassadors play a key part in access and outreach activity and additional training has been introduced this year to ensure a more uniformed approach from our ambassadors. However it was felt that a dedicated resource was needed to drive the ambassador scheme forward and make it an effective scheme primarily focussing upon St Mary's Pre-entry outreach work with schools and colleges. With the introduction this year of the post of Student Ambassador Coordinator it is envisaged that the scheme will grow into a dedicated resource providing activities such as a programme of LAC Homework clubs; Student shadowing/Mentoring/Tutoring and staffing of Summer Schools.

The Coordinator will work closely with the Centre for Workplace Learning and HR to ensure that a specific and relevant package of training is provided for Student Ambassadors with a view to enhancing their own professional and personal development through being part of the scheme. In addition to this in 2016/17 and 2017/18 we will specifically target applicants who are in receipt of full scholarship and bursary to ensure reflective representation of our WP outreach cohorts.

### Pre-16 work

St Mary's recognises how essential early intervention is particularly in relation to Care Leavers, those with disabilities and learning difficulties, low achieving white males and BME students. The introduction of a dedicated Pre-16 post later this year will see the development of bespoke aspiration raising outreach activities with pupils in Years 6 through to Year 9 in addition to crossover work with the WP Recruitment Officer for Years 10 and 11. We intend to have established by 2017/18 a set of outreach projects aimed at this cohort in partnership with key academic departments and established partnerships with local Primary and Secondary schools.

### Looked After Children and Disability

During 2015/16 we have focused on creating stronger partnerships with the local Virtual schools and Care Leaver Teams for the local boroughs. Meetings and planning for partnership working has begun with the boroughs of Hounslow and Ealing and development of partnerships will continue with the boroughs of Richmond and Kingston. Planning has begun with internal staff teams including Learning Resources and Student Services to develop outreach activities and resource for these specific target groups. A dedicated Homework Club will be running for 2016/17 on a weekly basis in term time for LAC with a view to considerable expansion of activities for 2017/18.

In addition to the above St Mary's will be working with the US-based 'First Star' organisation to pilot an intensive long-term programme working with local school-aged children living in foster care, to help them consider a future in further and higher education and work towards raising their attainment levels with a view to gaining a university place.

This year the Education Liaison Manager at St Mary's took on the additional role of Chair of the Looked After Children's Forum within the collaborative Partnership of Access HE. Planning has begun to deliver a conference aimed at Care Leavers across London in University to support with transition out of HE and planning has begun on useful resources for Care Leavers and practitioners alike.

Dedicated outreach for pre-16 learners with a disability will be delivered in partnership with local SEN schools and targeted SENCOS in our local borough schools for 2016/17 and continuing into 2017/18 to encourage aspiration to University. In addition to this for 2017/18 we aspire to develop accessible after school sports outreach activities aimed at pre-entry students with disability and learning difficulties.

### Mature Learners

We will work more closely with the local Adult Community College, local borough adult careers services and Children's Centres to specifically target this learner group for 2017/18.

In addition to this the introduction of the Post Graduate Recruitment Officer will allow scope to develop in collaboration with Head of Admissions, Education Liaison Manager and Heads of Schools accessible routes and a university policy for postgraduate taught recruitment in

relation to widening participation for careers-related programmes. This will include a wider remit to target our current undergraduate cohort with a WP background to develop recruitment activities that will encourage a higher take up of postgraduate study from this group.

### Collaborative Work

We will continue to be active members of our partnership organisations Aim Higher London South and Access HE. We have continued to support the introduction of the London Higher single point of access website. The WP team attended the Network for the Education of Care Leavers first conference and will continue to support this organisation as it develops further.

We have continued this year to support the collaborative outreach work with dedicated delivery of workshops aimed at KS 3/4/5 and hosting of events and meetings; this will continue for 17/18. The focus will be upon a more sustained approach to outreach, working more closely with parents and a dedicated project to look at young male learners.

### **Student Retention, Success and Progression**

As an institution St Mary's considers that it has a moral and ethical obligation to ensure that all students are encouraged and supported in reaching their full potential, and to reduce the retention and attainment gaps experienced by students from under-represented groups. The University collects data relating to the attainment of students from under-represented groups and will develop activities and interventions which will focus on the needs of particular groups and students who are identified as needing additional support, both academically and in order to develop a sense of belonging.

### Induction

The 'Are you Ready' campaign, launched in 2015/16, provides a pre-entry website for all confirmed students during the summer and will continue to be rolled out to more programmes each year. This campaign which was developed for the HEA/Paul Hamlyn What Works? Retention and Success Project in three discipline areas provides interactive online information and activities to enable incoming students to 'meet' their cohort, ask questions and share views, and gain as much information as possible about their courses before starting university.

In 2015 the University moved its registration and induction of new students to a week before the start of term. The University acknowledges the importance of induction week both in building students' confidence and sense of belonging, and in setting and managing expectations. The introduction of this additional week gave new students time to settle in and undergo induction processes before continuing students arrived on campus. It has enabled us to give particular focus to new students and enable academic staff to concentrate solely on their induction needs. The week included discipline-level inductions as well as activities designed to help new students to find their way around campus, understand what support is available to them and meet other new starters. Feedback has been collected in

relation to induction and in 2017/18, there will be a 'two tier' approach – with the first week focussing very strongly on 'belonging', and a long thin induction process focusing on academic skills and employability which will run throughout the first semester. Both these induction initiatives will be of particular value to those who have little or no knowledge of the University system are able to settle in and gain appropriate support and advice at this crucial time.

In 2015/16, the University also piloted Careers Registration as part of the registration process for students at all levels. This process connects students to employability services provided by the University with every new or continuing student indicating their current level of career knowledge and experience. The information given is used to help plan a more personalised service for each student and to track their subsequent process through DHLE outcomes. As well as ensuring that individuals get the help and support they need, this allows the university to monitor the impact of employability interventions through each year of a student's degree.

### Learning Advice

The highly successful Learning Advice service continues to expand and develop its work with a wide range of programmes across the University. It offers a variety of academic development activities, using research and experience to inform delivery of those activities which can be of greatest benefit to unlock the potential of undergraduate students from under-represented groups. Whilst continuing to provide a response to students' individual needs, through one to one and group appointments, workshops, study guides, online materials, telephone and email services, the service has begun to focus increasingly on developing models of skills development which are more embedded within curriculum programmes. By providing activities which are developed collaboratively with subject staff and delivered to cohorts of students, we will be more able to offer focussed, timely and relevant services and resources which are accessible to greater number of students, address the needs of a diverse student population and facilitate independent learning, but do not rely on students self-selecting or presenting themselves for additional input, as research suggests this has limited success. Programme review boards and external examiners reports have also highlighted academic skills development work embedded within curriculum delivery to be particularly beneficial in meeting the specific needs of part-time and/or mature students who have limited time on campus (eg part-time Education programmes) and this experience will be used to inform future work.

In line with this move towards greater collaborative practice, the Learning Advisors are engaged in a programme of staff development activities focussed on enhancing the student academic experience and are becoming increasingly involved in curriculum planning and development. Learning Advisors with specific expertise in certain curriculum areas have been recruited (eg scientific disciplines) and it is envisaged that this will continue, for example recruitment to develop the offer available to international and home students for whom English is an additional language. The database for the Learning Advisor service, linked to the student record system, allows us to track students utilising the service and to monitor the effects of the various interventions on student attainment (acknowledging that this is one variable which might affect student grades). This, together with the additional data

now available through Qlikview will be used to interrogate the experience of larger numbers of students and to focus and target intervention work.

The pilot of a transition peer mentoring programme, planned for 2015/16, was delayed due to mentor recruitment issues, but is being delivered and evaluated in 2016/17, with extension planned for 2017/18. We are also examining the experiences of our BME student population, including participation in a London-wide research project led by AccessHE. The Learning Advisor service also continues to lead on our highly valued 2-day pre-entry residential course, 'Get Set for Success' (GSfS). The programme, and associated input through a designated social media group, is delivered exclusively to invited students from under-represented backgrounds, gives participants the opportunity to meet fellow students and staff, ask questions, take part in activities and challenges, and experience living on campus. The programme is also designed to enable students to become familiar with the University's teaching methods, begin to acquaint themselves with relevant terminology and think about the transition between their previous educational experience and university study. Participants are followed up by Learning Advisors during their first year and offered the opportunity for additional Learning Advisor intervention and their progress is tracked for the duration of their time at St Mary's. Feedback on the event is collected and students undertake pre and post-course questionnaires, primarily focused on determining and growing their confidence about starting University. Evaluation reports are presented to the Access Agreement Group and issues arising are discussed by the GSfS team (Learning Advisors, Widening Participation team, Student Union) in planning the next year's event.

### Student Review

The University's Student Review system is designed to support students to reflect on their progress and development, discuss their progress and areas for improvement, and review their feedback from module assessments. It helps them to link their learning in their academic programme and extra-curricular activities to their ongoing academic, career and personal development, identify skills to be developed in order to enhance their academic performance and future employability, and identify potential opportunities for work experience, internships or other employment opportunities. It provides a mechanism which enables them to set realistic, meaningful and motivating targets and goals in the areas of academic, professional and personal achievement. The Student Review system is closely linked to the Academic Tutor system and a fundamental review of the efficacy of the current system will be undertaken in 2016/17 with a view to replacing it with a Personal Tutor system. The review will focus on the way in which the new arrangements are able to offer more holistic support to students (academic, personal, social, financial etc) and to ensure they are successful in their degree studies and following graduation.

### Careers and Employability

The Careers Services contributes to skills development and employability through support for CV and application writing, interview skills and techniques, and securing employment and volunteering opportunities. It delivers one-to-one support, careers sessions in the curriculum, and employer / alumni engagement events throughout the academic year.

The Careers Service (through the University of London Careers Group) provides access to an online community (REACH) designed for students who feel they face barriers to reaching

their potential. These may include social background, disability, age, gender and sexual orientation. It provides inspiration and ideas for careers options, signposts to dedicated resources and to answer specific questions as well as information about other sources of information and support groups. In addition, the Careers Service has developed a suite of resources specifically targeted at mature students and those with disabilities at St Mary's to help them prepare for employment.

The University continues to increase the preparedness of students from under-represented groups for the world of work through the opportunity to gain valuable experience in the workplace. Work placements are an accredited part of the undergraduate programme at St Mary's through which students not only gain experience but also reflect on their learning and their personal and professional development, assessing their own readiness for work. In addition students learn to relate theory to practice through studying relevant subjects such as leadership, ethics and values in the workplace, organisational culture, emotional intelligence, legal requirements, etc. The placement modules give students the opportunity build confidence and sense of responsibility, gain specific skills relating to chosen career paths, understand what they have to offer to employers, explore career options and boost their CV's. This provision is of particular value to students who may not have the social capital or access to networks which might enable them to find their own placements or gain meaningful work experience independently.

#### 4. Financial support for students

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In response to national research and advice and internal data related to student take-up of bursaries, the University will slightly reduce its scholarships and bursary offer for 2017/18 and repurpose the funds towards pre-entry outreach activity and on-course support. The overall bursary package is being reduced by £160,000 for 2017, which represents a fall in spending of 14% as compared to 2016.

The University is also mindful of the loss of maintenance grant, currently accessed by over 25% of St Mary's students and forthcoming changes to the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). Therefore we will increase our general Hardship Fund from £100k to £200k for 2017/18 in order to be able to respond appropriately to those students that most need specific financial support whilst studying with us.

In relation to financial support, we have continued to listen to student opinion and are giving our students a choice as to how they receive their scholarship, either as cash or fee waivers. The emphasis of our financial support is to provide the greatest benefit to the highest number of students whilst continuing to provide targeted support to other students e.g. Care Leavers, those identified through our outreach programme and students from Catholic schools in line with our Catholic ethos, mission and values. We will also target Young Carers through our Care Leavers' Service to offer additional support, including financial support through our St Mary's Scholarship.

It is expected that the following Scholarships and Bursaries will be offered in 2017/18.

## St Mary's Scholarships

Up to 70 Scholarships of £6,000 awarded as cash or fee waivers over 3 years to students who meet the following criteria:

Successful applicants will be awarded the following:

- Year 1: £3,000 as a cash award and/or tuition fee/accommodation fee waiver
- Year 2: £2,000 as a cash award/tuition fee waiver
- Year 3: £1,000 as a cash award/tuition fee waiver

Successful applicants studying on a part-time course will receive a cash award on a pro-rata basis calculated according to their FTE. For example students undertaking 60 credits of an undergraduate degree with a tuition fee liability of £4,500 would be eligible for an award of £1,500 at Level 4, £1,000 at Level 5 and £500 at Level 6.

To be eligible to apply for a St Mary's Scholarship students must:

- have an assessed annual household income below £25,000, and
- have been offered a place on a full-time or part-time (minimum intensity of 25% of full-time degree) undergraduate degree course or foundation degree course, and
- be ordinarily resident in the UK or the EU at the start of their course, and
- have completed an Application for Student Support through the relevant awarding authority and agree that their financial information can be shared with St Mary's University, and
- not be in receipt of full or part payment of fees through a sponsorship arrangement, and
- be entrants new to higher education in 2017, and
- make/have made St Mary's University a firm choice, and
- register on an undergraduate/foundation degree course at St Mary's University in September 2017

In addition, student applicants must fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- be a student who has completed an Access course in 2016/17
- be a student with a disability in receipt of a Disability Living Allowance
- be a looked-after child/care leaver, or be a student receiving support from the Foyer Federation, and be 25 or under at the start of the academic year 2017/18
- be a Young Carer<sup>[1]</sup> under the age of 24 at the start of the academic year 2017/18

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<sup>[1]</sup> Young carers are defined as "young people aged 14-24 who care, unpaid, for a family member or friend with an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction" (Carers Trust 2015, 'Supporting Students with Caring Responsibilities', (England version). Caring responsibilities may include practical tasks, physical care, personal care, help with medication, managing family budgets, helping with communication, support for siblings, emotional support.

- hold Refugee status
- be the first generation<sup>[2]</sup> in the family to study in higher education
- be studying in 2016/17 in a school/college in one of the London Boroughs

If the number of applications exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, priority will be given to students who fulfil the highest number of additional criteria and have the lowest assessed household income.

### **Academic Excellence Scholarships**

Up to 30 Scholarships of £1,000 cash awarded, in the first year of study only, to UK & Republic of Ireland students who achieve at least AAB at 'A' level or equivalent and:

- have an assessed annual household income of less than £42,620, and
- have completed a means-tested assessment through the relevant awarding authority and agree that their financial information can be shared with St Mary's University, and
- make/have made St Mary's University a firm choice, and
- register on a full-time undergraduate/foundation degree programme at St Mary's University in September 2017.

If the number of applications exceeds the maximum number to be awarded, these scholarships will be awarded to students who have the lowest assessed household income at the time of allocating the Scholarships.

### **Catholic Schools Scholarships**

Up to 30 Scholarships of £1,000 awarded as cash in the first year of study only to students who are studying at a Catholic School or College in the UK or EU within a 3 year period prior to the 2017/18 academic year and who:

- have an annual assessed household income of less than £42,620, and
- have completed a means-tested assessment through the appropriate awarding authority and agree that their financial information can be shared with St Mary's University, and
- make/have made St Mary's University a firm choice
- register on a full-time undergraduate/foundation degree programme at St Mary's University in September 2017

and

- are the first generation in the family to study in higher education.

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<sup>[2]</sup> neither parent studied at university or holds a higher education qualification

If the number of eligible students exceeds the maximum number to be awarded, these scholarships will be awarded to students who have the lowest assessed household income at the time of allocating the Scholarships.

### **Care Leavers Scholarships**

A cash award of £1,000 will be given to Care Leavers for each year of study and who:

- have been made an offer of a place to study on a full-time undergraduate/foundation degree programme at St Mary's University, and
- are 'looked after' by a Local Authority, or receiving support from the Foyer Federation, and
- are 25 years of age or under at the start of the academic year 2017/18, and
- make/have made St Mary's University a firm choice
- register on a full-time undergraduate/foundation degree course at St Mary's University in September 2017.

### **St Mary's Bursaries**

A bursary of £1,000 paid as cash over three years, is available to all full-time undergraduate students with a household income of less than £25,000, as verified by the Student Finance assessment.

To be eligible to apply for a St Mary's Bursary students must:

- Have an assessed annual household income below £25,000 - your consent to share must be activated on your Student Finance England account before 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017, and
- Have been offered a place on a full-time or part-time (minimum intensity of 25% of full-time degree) undergraduate degree course or foundation degree course, and
- Be ordinarily resident in the UK or the EU at the start of their course, and
- Have completed an Application for Student Support through the relevant awarding authority and agree that their financial information can be shared with St Mary's University, and
- Make or have made St Mary's University a firm choice, and
- Register on an undergraduate or foundation degree course at St Mary's University starting in September 2017
- Be entering on a university-level course for the first time.

Students who register on a part-time undergraduate or foundation degree course will receive a bursary pro-rata to the percentage of full-time study at each level of the course.

If you are a UK or an EU student joining in September 2017 on full-time undergraduate course, you may be eligible for a St Mary's Bursary. You do not need to make a formal application for the bursary, but you have to have a means tested application for Student

Support through the relevant awarding authority and agree that your financial information can be shared with St Mary's University.

St Mary's will check your eligibility against the criteria listed above and based on the information you supplied during the application process to Student Loan Company. These checks will take place in early December 2016. In some cases, further verification may be required and we will write or email to notify you of this.

Appeals are judged on a case by case basis and students who are concerned about their Student Finance assessment are encouraged to contact St Mary's Student Funding Service.

The bursary is subject to progression to the next level of study and will be paid as follows:

- Year One: £500  
(Instalment of £250 paid on 7th January 2018 and 7th April 2018)
- Year Two: £300  
(Instalment of £150 paid on 7th January 2019 and 7th April 2019)
- Year Three: £200  
(Instalment of £100 paid on 7th January 2020 and 7th April 2020)

Students who register on a part-time undergraduate or foundation degree course will receive a bursary pro rata to the percentage of full-time study at each level of the course.

Working with the student body, it is apparent that there is an expectation for additional financial support, especially from students with a low household income. It is intended that the package of financial support offered by St Mary's will help meet this expectation.

## 5. Targets and milestones

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The University is setting itself challenging targets in terms of improving its widening participation and retention. It has also developed appropriate milestones for these targets. The milestones and targets are set out in tables 7a and 7b and are contextualised by the data related to our Access and Success record in section 3 of this agreement.

## 6. Monitoring and evaluation

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During 2015/16 the University put in place new structures to improve the collation and use of data to inform decision making in relation to enhancing the student experience. This included the appointment of a Head of Corporate Planning. Financial provision has been made to

expand the Planning function, which will enable a co-ordinated approach to the use of management information across the university, including collection and analysis of data relating to student experience, retention and success. This will be used in both reporting and planning, and for highlighting the success of interventions targeted at students from under-represented groups.

### **Access and Outreach**

We continue to collect data as far as possible upon all our outreach activities. This is both qualitative and quantitative in the form of the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation, looking at short term, medium and long term impact. This evaluation to date has taken the form of paper based forms for feedback and analysis. This will continue for short term one off activities, however we will be developing an e-form likely to be BOS Survey or Survey Monkey format that will capture more in depth response both pre and post evaluation for our larger more sustained projects for 2016/17/18.

2015/16 has seen the WP and Recruitment Team trialling the collection of contact data at HE Fairs, School events and UCAS Fairs through a dedicated App that has been created for St Mary's. This has allowed us to target a dedicated audience with bespoke information at these events but in addition allowed us to gather meaningful data on numbers who engage with us at these types of events. This data gathering will continue to develop in partnership with the Marketing Team for 2017/18.

Our collaborative partners in Aim Higher London South have been developing evaluation in the past year based upon the Kirkpatrick Model of evaluation in a pilot with 5 schools, Local Authorities and the HEIs in the partnership including St Mary's. They will continue to develop this evaluation for 2017/18 with a focus on the impact of activities based on pre and post activity with participants and staff.

### **Pre-entry and On-course**

As described in Section 3 above, we have systems in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the Learning Advisors and to track under-represented students in terms of attainment and retention. These are currently being further developed, to enhance their scope and effectiveness and to take account of changes to the fair access landscape, including the Prime Minister's social mobility goals; for example increasing the focus on examining the experiences and outcomes for BAME students and Young White Males. We monitor Widening Participation students in terms of their usage of employability services (Careers and Centre for Workplace Learning) and can identify those that are not engaging with the services in order to encourage them to do so, as well as to evaluate the benefits of the services to them. Long-term impact of on-course activities will ultimately be measured through improved student outcomes related to retention, achievement and graduate success, as detailed in the Corporate Plan and Education Strategy.

## **Institutional Responsibilities**

At an institutional level, the Access Agreement Group (chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Strategy), oversees the overall strategy and performance for widening participation in the institution. The group meets regularly to monitor the annual timetable of access and success activities and to receive data relevant to monitoring and evaluation (including financial updates). The Student Union General Manager and a member of the Student Union Executive Committee are members of the Access Agreement Group.

## **7. Equality and diversity**

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The University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded within its Mission and Corporate Plan, and by the University's Values: Generosity of Spirit, Excellence, Respect, and Inclusivity. One of our corporate objectives is to "foster an inclusive, supportive learning environment" by "active encouragement and support for students from diverse backgrounds". These values and objectives are underpinned by the University's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement, which aims to

- promote equality
- prevent and eliminate discrimination
- foster an environment in which all staff and students can realise their full potential
- ensure that all students, staff and applicants are treated equally with respect and dignity and receive fair and equal treatment
- ensure compliance through the provision of appropriate training

The implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy is led by the Senior Management Team, reporting to the Board of Governors.

Our Equality Objectives have recently been reviewed and re-published. Some student-focussed actions have been continued from the previous Objectives including further promotion of inclusive practices to enhance the student experience, improved accessibility for disabled students in the context of the University's developing Estates and Technology strategies. The new objectives include the development of metrics to enable a clear focus in Annual Monitoring on the admission, performance, progression and achievement of students from under-represented demographics and/or with protected characteristics. These metrics will also be incorporated into the University's development of KPIs, PIs and enhanced management reporting. The University will develop clear action plans to investigate and address any issues identified by the metrics.

The Admissions Policy represents the mission and values of the University with its commitment to distinctiveness and inclusivity. The admissions process is overseen by Registry through a centralised system which enables a consistent professional and fair decision making process. Admissions and selection processes are governed by the principles of fair access set down by the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions Programme (SPA) and UCAS. All applicants are considered impartially and consistently

within the terms set for the different routes to admission, and on the basis of both merit and potential. As part of the University's enhancement of its performance monitoring capability, metrics will be developed to monitor the admission of students from under-represented groups: these will complement the existing monitoring of the pre-entry programme and other access policies.

Support for disabled students continues to be a key priority for St Mary's. There is a dedicated Disability and Dyslexia Support Team, located within Student Services. In addition, the Disability and Dyslexia Support Service recruits students as peer support workers to promote greater understanding of disability in the student body. The University is also aware of ongoing changes to the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and will ensure that corporate planning takes into account any additional financial resource needed in the light of those changes in order that the University meets its legal obligation to provide reasonable adjustments where required.

The University operates an "Article 26" scheme for Asylum Seekers which waives the fees, for the whole of their studies, of selected Asylum Seekers who meet relevant criteria.

## 8. Provision of information to prospective students

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St. Mary's ensures that it provides clear and user friendly information about its fees and financial support to existing and potential students, outlining what is available in each year of study. This information is disseminated through the University brochures and prospectus, the University website, HE Fairs, pre- and post-application Open and Visit Days. Timely information is provided to UCAS and Student Finance England and the Student Loans Company. Accessible information to existing students is provided through Student Services on the student portal, the University website (publications) and through one-to-one appointments with the Student Funding Officer. Students are able to obtain detailed advice and information about bursaries and scholarships at St Mary's and detailed information about local rent and living costs. Current and prospective students are also able to access the Brightside Student Calculator online to enable them to work out how much money they will have at university, and how much they will need.

The Access Agreements are published on the University external website under publications with a link to the OFFA website. The student portal SIMMSpace and the staff portal StaffNet also publish the Access Agreements.

As well as information to applicants which is provided at the application stage and throughout the admissions process, we have worked very hard on the information that we provide to students as preparation for the registration and induction process. Much work has gone into this, as well as the induction process itself and feedback has been very positive. Feedback gathered from the 'Are You Ready' campaign which provides pre-entry interactive online information and activities will help to inform both the content and format of information which could be made available to future applicants. Furthermore, the pre-entry programme 'Get Set for Success' targets information to under-represented groups. This process of

improving information to students generally and to targeted groups in particular is ongoing; feedback is taken into account year on year and improvements are made.

## 9. Consulting with students

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The primary mode of student consultation is through the Students' Union. St Mary's Students' Union (SMSU hereafter) is the representative organisation of students at St Mary's University. SMSU through its elected Executive Members (student officers) and Sabbatical Officers (full time officers) represent students on all University committees and many working groups and also feeds information back to the student body through many different forums such as SU Council, Programme Representatives, website and social media. The University considers this partnership approach as integral to assuring and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities and the wider student experience.

The Student Union is represented on the Access Agreement Group by the SU President, SU Welfare Officer and SU Chief Executive Officer. Students are also well represented on other related committees. The University has created opportunities for the student voice to be included at all stages of the development of this Access Agreement.

The Access Agreement Group may commission the Students Union to consult more widely with the student body about the implications of the agreement through the Students' Union President and other executive members. In addition, St. Mary's University uses its enrolment/student experience annual survey (carried out in September) to include questions on the impact of tuition fee regulations and the national and institution scholarships on their choice of university. Furthermore we gather feedback from prospective students who take part in outreach activities and open/visit days.

27 April 2016

**Table 7 - Targets and milestones**

Institution name: St Mary's University, Twickenham

Institution UKPRN: 10007843

**Table 7a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body**

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
							2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
T16a_01	Access	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Target for the percentage of young first degree starters who come from state schools	No	2013-14	93.6	95	95	95.5	95.5	96	Our original target for the percentage of state schools, as set out in our original access agreement was 94%. Our performance in this area has fluctuated year on year, but we are setting ourselves a more stretching target.
T16a_02	Access	HESA T1a - NS-SEC classes 4-7 (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Target for the number of young first degree starters who come from Social Class 4 - 7	No	2013-14	37.5	39	39.5	40	40.5	41	After consultation with OFFA, it has been decided that we should make our target more stretching and therefore the baseline has been changed and the target rises incrementally.
T16a_03	Access	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	Based on young first degree entrants	No	2013-14	5.5	9.5	10.5	11.5	12	12.5	After consultation with OFFA, we have reviewed our milestones in this area in order to make them more stretching. Our benchmark recently rise disproportionately and we feel that the progress plotted in this area would represent a significant improvement and a significant achievement.
T16a_04	Student success	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	This is based on young first degree applicants who progress or qualify.	No	2013-14	94	94.5	95	95	95	95	Good progress has been made in this area in recent years. We are keen to consolidate this progress and to stretch ourselves to do better, although we feel that a higher target than this would be unrealistic.
T16a_05	Student success	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (Mature, full-time, first degree entrants)	This is based on mature first degree applicants who progress or qualify.	No	2013-14	89.4	90	90.3	90.6	91	91	We are looking to consolidate recent gains and steadily improve our performance against this indicator.
T16a_06	Student success	HESA T5 - Projected degree (full-time, first degree entrants)	Based on all first time first degree entrants, regardless of age on entry	No	2012-13	81.2	82.5	83	83.5	84	84.5	Progress in this area has been slight but steady in recent years. We are looking to maintain this progress.
T16a_07	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Low-income backgrounds (please give details in the next column)	This is seen as a percentage of all of our full time undergraduate student population whose family earnings come into the bottom two categories of earnings £0 - 25,000 and who would qualify for full support under the old system. (This can adjusted if the range of the categories changes in future.)	No	2012-13	39	40	40.5	41	41.5	42	The original target (38%) in this area has been exceeded, so we have set ourselves a more ambitious target.
T16a_08	Other/Multiple stages	HESA T7 - Students in receipt of DSA (full-time, first degree entrants)	Based on all first time first degree entrants, regardless of age on entry	No	2013-14	7.2	7.5	7.7	7.8	7.9	8	This is an area in which we have consistently performed well and have exceeded both our benchmark and also the original milestone target. We have increased our target slightly, in order to be more ambitious, but we feel that we should firstly be looking to maintain our good performance in this area and consolidate progress.
T16a_09	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Gender (please give details in the next column)	The percentage of male students recruited to our undergraduate ITT Primary Teaching programme.	No	2013-14	8.3	16	16	16	16	16	We originally set ourselves a target in this area that has proven to be over ambitious. However, we have decided to retain this milestone at the level that we previously specified and to continue to work hard towards attaining this level.

T16a_10	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Gender (please give details in the next column)	The percentage of male students recruited to our PGCE Primary course	No	2013-14	16.1	25	25	25	25	25	The target as originally set in this area was very stretching. Although a dip was experienced based on the figures from the 13/14 cohort, strong progress has been made towards this ambitious target, so it has been retained in its original form.
T16a_11	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	The percentage of BME students recruited to our ITT Primary Teaching programme	No	2013-14	10.2	13	14	14	15	15	A stretching target was set for this area and significant progress has been made in this area. We consider the original target to be ambitious and still valid.
T16a_12	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	The percentage of BME students recruited to our PGCE Primary course	No	2013-14	13.7	13	14	15	15	15	The original target that was set for this category was considered to be ambitious. We made solid progress towards achieving this, from a base of 6%. The last set of figures saw this indicator rise by around 50% on the previous year. We consider this to be anomalous but have revised our original targets (originally 11% for 2015) upwards in order to allow for consolidation and further improvement in this area
T16a_13	Access	<b>Other statistic</b> - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	The percentage of BME students recruited to our Secondary PGCE course	No	2013-14	23	26	26.5	27	27.5	28	Our 23% performance in this area represented an excellent progression from the original 11% that was shown when looking at our 2009/10 figures. Performance has fluctuated somewhat in the meantime. We believe that maintaining the 25% target is realistic and suitably stretching.

**Table 7b** - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
							2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
T16b_01	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Taster Days, campus visits, work in schools and colleges that will be co-ordinated in conjunction with our collaborative partners across London Numbers of Year 9 to 13 students to be reached.	Yes	2013-14	1600	2000	2000	2000	2000		We believe that this level of activity will represent a stretching target, which will align well with our current strategic priorities
T16b_02	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Outreach work initiated by St Mary's (non - collaborative)	No	2014-15	700	700	700	700	700		Our commitment to this area will be maintained and rather than trying to expand on this area in terms of numbers, we will try and expand the quality of the interventions with these students (please see below.)
T16b_03	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	The percentage of students involved in the outreach work initiated	No	2014-15	10	20	30	40	50		This is a new target.