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Foreword

On behalf of the Board of Governors, I am pleased to introduce the Annual Review for St Mary’s University.

The past 12 months have been a period of change for St Mary’s, with the reorganisation of the academic structure of the University into two faculties. The University believes that this is a more efficient structure, which will enhance the student experience and links between academic staff and students.

The Board of Governors has been pleased by St Mary’s steady rise up the higher education league tables, seeing these rises as a reward for all of the hard work done by the St Mary’s staff to improve and maintain high standards and creating a positive learning environment for all its students. Looking to the future, the University must seek to maintain these standards in order to meet the aims and objectives set out in Vision 2025, the University’s Strategic plan.

While St Mary’s was granted full university status five years ago, the history of the institution goes back much further, with it being nearly 170 years since its foundation by Cardinal Wiseman. The values and ethos that underpinned its foundation remain central and are a source of pride for the University. The attendance of our Chancellor, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, at our summer graduations in Westminster Cathedral demonstrates our continued commitment to these values.

In a time of great change within higher education generally, with there being much uncertainty in the sector as to what the future holds, I believe that St Mary’s can respond to these challenges if it continues to set and meet the high standards that it sets for itself and remains commercially aware, while not losing sight of the values and ethos that give us our unique and special identity.

Bishop Richard Moth
Chair, Board of Governors
The hard work of our staff and their continuing commitment to the student experience has allowed the University to continue its development as outlined in Vision 2025.

The past year has seen our plans for growth in both postgraduate and international student recruitment develop and mitigate what was a challenging year across the sector for UK domestic undergraduate recruitment. The University continued its commitment to broadening its network of partners both nationally and internationally. In 2018, we launched collaborative partnerships with international partners such as the Institut Catholique de Paris, which centred upon a joint masters degree in law for students in Paris and London. St Mary’s also launched SMULIC (St Mary’s University London International College) to provide a range of foundation courses tailored to the international student market and give thousands of overseas students the opportunity to study at St Mary’s. Further global partnerships are being developed as part of a comprehensive programme of work to embed our international strategy.

Throughout the year, the University launched more than 20 new degrees at foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate level. As an institution that places the student experience at the heart of all it does, it is essential that the University regularly reviews the curriculum and its overall structure. During this past year, the University undertook a significant restructure, creating two new faculties and institutes. The new structure aligns more closely with that found in other universities and allows St Mary’s to operate a more efficient and sustainable model of higher education provision and to deliver medium-term objectives.

External recognition of our efforts continued, and this year we again increased our standing in the various higher education league tables. The feedback from our own students was among the best in London and the country. The feedback in the National Student Survey (NSS) showed satisfaction rates improve by three percentage points to 88%, which is tracking 5% ahead of the average at 83%. St Mary’s is now number one in London for student satisfaction for those higher education institutions with university status. On such foundations, we remain confident of continuing success.

Finally, the University has also made significant progress on its enterprise strategy as part of our Vision 2025 strategy, which helps us to diversify the University’s income stream. Research funding has increased exponentially, and we are aligning that to real impact in areas of modern policy challenges, such as preventing modern slavery or improving access to higher education for care leavers. We also had another successful Summer School in partnership with the University of Warwick, which allowed us to develop an exciting offer for students. In addition, our First Star programme received the Best Prospective Student Engagement award at the WhatUni? Student Choice Awards for its pioneering work with children in the care system.

Professor Francis Campbell
Vice-Chancellor
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.

The University’s 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, and 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.
St Mary’s values

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.

Living our value of Inclusiveness means we strive to:
- Acknowledge difference without judgement.
- Welcome all to our community with warmth, kindness and understanding.
- Better ourselves through our contribution to society.
- Nurture the talent of those within our community.
- Embrace individual uniqueness which strengthens our community.

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.

Living our value of Generosity of Spirit means we strive to:
- Go the extra mile to serve with a smile, encourage friendships and acts of kindness.
- Build supportive relationships with our colleagues.
- Positively create a culture of support and empowerment.
- Be compassionate to those in need.
- Be the first to offer a helping hand.

Respect

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

Living our value of Respect means we strive to:
- Communicate openly, honestly and with care.
- Treat everyone with fairness.
- Move away from criticism and toward understanding.
- Listen openly, accepting that others may have different opinions.
- Cultivate an environment of empathy and understanding.

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.

Living our value of Excellence means we strive to:
- Be determined in our pursuit of excellence.
- Be unwavering in aspiring to the highest standards.
- Lead, encourage and inspire others for the benefit of our community and society.
- Celebrate our accomplishments and learn from our mistakes.
- Work hard towards our shared goals, recognising that we achieve more together.
St Mary’s performance

St Mary’s remains well placed to respond to the challenges that are presented by the external operating environment, but is careful not to be complacent. The strategic plan, Vision 2025, sets out a long-term vision for the University, providing a focus for the University’s activities.

Higher education in England continues to experience significant change. The shift away from direct government funding towards tuition fees, along with the removal of the student number cap and the growing number of alternative providers, has intensified competition. In response, St Mary’s has carried out a restructuring of its schools and created two faculties, as well as a review of its academic portfolio, in support of the aim to increase student numbers each year.

Key performance indicators
In order to measure performance against the strategic plan, the University uses a range of key performance indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are used across the University to drive decision-making and to ensure that the University is making efficient use of resource. The KPIs cover the key metrics that are used externally to assess the performance of the University.

The University has made significant progress against its KPIs in 2017/18, with improvements in:
- graduate-level employment;
- entry standards;
- good honours;
- postgraduate student numbers; and
- international student numbers.

Progress against KPIs relating to student retention has been challenging and further work is under way to make the necessary improvements.

Widening access to higher education
The importance of widening access to university for students from non-traditional backgrounds remains high on the agenda for universities and policymakers alike. Although significant success in this area has been made, there continues to be a number of challenges for universities in securing access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

St Mary’s performs reasonably well on measures of participation but needs to address some of the challenges identified by the Office for Students to maximise student opportunity. Increasing emphasis is being placed not just on ensuring that students from disadvantaged groups are able to go to university, but also that they are able to achieve their full potential. St Mary’s has taken a more holistic approach to widening access and the factors that influence student success.
St Mary’s ability to meet the continuing challenges is demonstrated by notable achievements in the national league tables.

Complete University Guide
In April 2018, the 2019 Complete University Guide (CUG) saw St Mary’s University rise 16 places, ranking joint fifth in the notable climbers, and was the highest climbing London University in the 2018 ranking.

Guardian University Guide
In May 2018, the University climbed 25 places in the 2019 Guardian University Guide league table, rising to 80th place. This leap recognised St Mary’s as one of the highest climbers in the league table.

St Mary’s also showed significant advancement in a number of course-specific tables, with notable improvements in the Biosciences category (44 places to 46th), and for Business Management & Marketing (24 places to 42nd) and Drama & Dance (24 places to 44th); while the University now ranks 22nd for Religious Studies and Theology.

National Student Survey
Data released in July 2018 from the 2018 National Student Survey (NSS) has seen overall student satisfaction at St Mary’s University rise to 88%, the highest rated among institutions with university-status in London. The University climbed 56 places for overall satisfaction in this annual survey of students; a 3% year-on-year increase.

Sixty per cent of St Mary’s courses had an overall satisfaction rate of more than 90%, while Criminology and Sociology, Media Arts and Tourism Management achieved 100% overall satisfaction.

The University also achieved 88% for teaching satisfaction. In addition, there were high scores for academic support (84%), learning opportunities (87%) and learning resources (86%).

Times Good University Guide
In September 2018, the Times Good University Guide published its annual league table rankings. St Mary’s position in this table rose by 22 places from 99th to 77th out of a total of 132 institutions. This is a rise of 39 places over the past two years.

Much of the improvement was attributed to improved performance in the National Student Survey, ‘Good Honours’ (the proportion of firsts and upper seconds) and the staff-to-student ratio.
Although the academic year 2017-18 was one of considerable change, there were also many successes to celebrate, as well as notable events and collaborations across the University.

Alongside significant rises in all three of the major university league tables, the First Star Academy programme also saw national recognition, as it was awarded the best prospective student engagement award at the 2018 Whatuni? Student Choice Awards. Launched in 2017, the Academy welcomes young people in foster care to campus to help them find their routes into higher education. The award, decided by the Whatuni Student Panel, recognises innovative campaigns that engage prospective students considering higher education. During their time with St Mary’s, the young people receive academic support to achieve good GCSE and A level results, as well as preparation for higher education; life skills training, including financial management, healthy living, risk reduction and confidence building; and help with emotional resilience.

Since October 2017, St Mary’s stewardship of the Exchange – a new community venue situated in the heart of Twickenham – in partnership with Richmond upon Thames Council, has gone from strength to strength. The venue, which includes a 300-seat theatre, five studio rooms, a cafe and a bar, is a hub for teaching and community arts events. Over the past year, it has welcomed major speakers and acts including David Starkey, Germaine Greer, Michael Portillo, Robin Ince and Robert Winston.

In December, St Mary’s was delighted to host alumnus Sir Mo Farah in the Waldegrave Drawing Room, when he won BBC Sports Personality of the Year. British tennis superstar Johanna Konta, who was also nominated for the award, joined Sir Mo at St Mary’s for the evening.

Following the naming of the Sir Mo Farah Athletics Track in February 2017, and a Royal visit from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry in the same month, the athletics track has continued to receive visits from celebrities and athletes alike over the past year. Not only did we welcome back alumni Sir Mo and Joe Wicks, who visited to film a training session together; in April 2018, the track played host to an episode of E4’s reality show Made in Chelsea, with cast members Jamie Laing, Frances Boulle and Alik Alfus taking to the track.

In February, St Mary’s was honoured to welcome the Master of Magdalene College and former Archbishop of Canterbury Rt Rev and Rt Hon Lord Rowan Williams to deliver a lecture in the University Chapel.
Following the address, St Mary’s Chair of Governors Bishop Moth presented Dr Williams with the Benedict Medal, the highest honour the University can award, for services to theology.

St Mary’s staff gained national recognition in the 2018 Queen’s Birthday and New Year’s Honours lists, with two members receiving honours. Director of Student Services Sue Whitham was awarded a British Empire Medal for services to higher education; while Director of Enterprise and Innovation, Rt Hon Jenny Willott was awarded an OBE for services to political and public life. Sue, who has worked at St Mary’s for 24 years, has supported countless students and their families. “My focus has always been to provide seamless, holistic support to students to ensure they achieve their full potential and success during their time at St Mary’s and beyond university,” said Sue. Jenny has also made a big impact in her role at St Mary’s, taking leading roles in The Exchange and First Star Academy projects. Prior to joining St Mary’s, Jenny was the Member of Parliament for Cardiff Central, serving as a Minister in the Coalition Government from 2012-2014.

Over the past year, St Mary’s athletes and alumni continued to achieve success at major sports competitions. During the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in April, for example, 15 athletes (alumni and students) competed, winning one Gold and two Bronze medals for their nations.

Elsewhere in sport, St Mary’s students won the biggest event in their sporting calendar, defeating local rivals Brunel University to win the West London Varsity. The tournament came down to the final game, with the Women’s Futsal Team defeating Brunel in convincing fashion. Other successes came from nine BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) league wins, including three for the netball club. Other stand-out successes included St Mary’s retaining the BUCS Men’s Cross Country title for the second year running, and Women’s Rugby Union bringing home the trophy from the BUCS 7s. St Mary’s student coaches, volunteers, activators and duty staff were also nominated for the BUCS Workforce Programme of the Year award for the second year in a row.

St Mary’s partnership with Institut Catholique de Paris resulted in two exciting developments in the past year. The launch of the new LLM International and European Business Law will see students studying in both London and Paris from September 2019; while, in February, the two universities launched a major report on religious participation of young adults in Europe, which received global media coverage.

Meanwhile, St Mary’s was pleased to announce a three-year extension to its partnership with The Royal Ballet Company and the Royal Ballet School to deliver Sport Science and Strength and Conditioning support services to these highly prestigious and world-renowned dance organisations. The extensions includes the recruitment of a new three-year full-time PhD studentship to investigate the quantification of workload on elite ballet dancers.

It has also been an exciting year for Drama St Mary’s alumnus Tom Grennan, who released his debut album Lighting Matches in July. Tom celebrated the launch of the album by attempting to set the record for the most gigs played within 12 hours.
St Mary’s strategy

Education
St Mary’s priorities: building on the University’s established strengths and by 2025 secure the Gold standard ranking under the new Teaching Excellence Framework.

Engagement
St Mary’s priorities: raising the profile of the University at a national and global level, as an institution with an active role in the ‘public square’, and contribute to the national conversation to help to shape public policy.

International
St Mary’s priorities: increasing the number of international students so that by 2025 they make up 25% of the student population, as well as increasing the number of home students who study abroad and volunteer in less developed countries outside of term time.

Research
St Mary’s priorities: securing Research Degree Awarding Powers by the end of 2020 and expanding the University’s doctoral programmes including a strategically focused suite of fully funded studentships. Additionally, nurturing areas of internationally leading and world-class research and enhancing its public profile and impact.

Recruitment
St Mary’s priorities: increasing the University’s student numbers by an average of 5% each year to 2025, in a sustainable way that avoids undermining the strong sense of community for which St Mary’s is renowned.
St Mary’s commitment to academic excellence remains at the heart of university strategy. The University’s focus on specific disciplines and its small scale allows for a uniquely personalised approach to tuition.

The University undertook a significant restructuring exercise over the past year, moving from four schools to a two-faculty structure. This restructure was designed to give St Mary’s a contemporary approach to organising its academic affairs, enabling a constant focus on the student experience.

Having faculties allows for economies of scale, with clear links between academic staff and students. Within the faculties, the Deans operate a Faculty Executive with the help of two Associate Deans – one for the Student Experience; the other for Research and Enterprise – and Heads of Department, who have line-management responsibilities for the staff and programmes in their departments.

Sports St Mary’s has become an academic department within the new Faculty of Sport, Health and Applied Science (SHAS). The Faculty’s head sits on the Faculty Executive, along with the Heads for Sport and Exercise Science, Health Science, and Psychology and Pedagogical Sciences, with the Associate Deans for the Student Experience and for Research and Enterprise. The senior team line-up is completed by the Faculty Business Manager, who manages the administrative staff and works closely with the Dean.

What was formerly the School of Education is now the Institute of Education, and is part of the Faculty of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences (EHSS). The other members of the Faculty Executive are the Head of Humanities, Head of Business, Law and Society, and the Head of Drama. The team is completed by the Associate Dean for the Student Experience, Associate Dean for Research and Enterprise, and the Faculty Business Manager.

Theology has its own institute, which is overseen by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Strategy on academic matters, with the Vice-Chancellor responsible for any matters relating to governance.
93% of alumni are in employment or in postgraduate education within six months of graduating from St Mary’s.

At the same time as we created the faculties, we have also increased the principle of accountability through the creation of a new Centre for Teaching Excellence and Student Success (CTESS) under the Dean for Learning and Teaching. CTESS is responsible for working with the Faculty Academic Development Committees and the Academic Board for monitoring the success of our teaching programmes at all levels (see pages 14/15).

The Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Strategy is responsible for ensuring that the three Deans and their units work in co-ordination to achieve the objectives set out for us in Vision 2025.
The Centre for Teaching Excellence and Student Success (CTESS) exists to support excellent teaching and learning at St Mary’s, and to maximise student success.

CTESS was established to provide strategic oversight of both the metrics related to the University’s Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and the effective management of the University’s widening participation (WP) strategy.

The Centre will become a key driver of enhancement in relation to the student experience at St Mary’s – providing dynamic change-management leadership and a radically enhanced level of support for and collegiate partnership-working with faculties, services and the Students’ Union, with a focus on supporting the University’s key strategic education objectives as set out in Vision 2025. The aim is to transform learning and teaching at St Mary’s and to place the student experience at the heart of everything we do, helping the University to become a beacon for learning and teaching excellence, and to develop a distinctive student experience that helps St Mary’s to stand out in a competitive and crowded HE market.

CTESS will draw on the values of St Mary’s – inclusiveness, generosity of spirit, respect and excellence – to build a dynamic curriculum framework and a dynamic and progressive pedagogical approach that places active student participation and robust student engagement at the heart of the St Mary’s experience. This will ensure that we educate the ‘whole person’ and produce graduates who are fully equipped; not only with 21st-century skillsets, but also with the confidence and values that will enable them to become positive agents of change in society.

CTESS is led by the Dean of Learning and Teaching. In pursuance of the strategic roles outlined previously, the Dean will chair committees that have a responsibility for widening participation and driving improvements in key areas of the student experience. These include the Student Induction and Transitions Enhancement Board, and the Widening Participation Strategy Implementation Board. The Dean will also liaise closely with other members of the senior management team and other key University committees (eg Academic Strategy Executive) to co-ordinate the effective implementation of its enhancement strategy and cross-University initiatives focused on the improvement of TEF metrics.
CTESS workstreams

CTESS staff work collaboratively with academics, professional services staff and students to:

- Build on our culture of excellence at St Mary’s by promoting and disseminating best practice in teaching and assessment
- Support programme teams to maximise the effectiveness of their programmes, and work with students to develop their learning strategies and study skills
- Develop and deliver a large academic professional development programme for academic staff, including co-ordinating the University’s Academic Development Framework (ADF), which ensures that our staff can achieve recognition against the UK Professional Standards Framework
- Design and co-ordinate the University’s annual Learning & Teaching Festival and its annual prize for teaching excellence – the Henry Walpole Prize – along with a range of enhancement-focused projects focused on maximising the University’s performance in the TEF and university league tables
- Lead the University’s postgraduate training programme for new staff: Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, and an intensive training programme for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach
- Co-ordinate the validation, revalidation and collaborative partnerships work with our regional, national and global partners via the University’s Quality and Standards team, which is based in the Centre
- Lead the University’s strategy on widening participation (WP), working closely with all services and faculties, and our students, to co-ordinate efforts aimed at maximising the success and progression of our WP students.

“The Centre for Teaching Excellence and Student Success will become a key driver of enhancement in relation to the student experience at St Mary’s.”
St Mary’s University is a widely acknowledged hub of authority in several fields of expertise, including sports science, education and theology. The University is continuing to work towards raising awareness of the work of its faculties and the institution as a whole.

An example of the University seeking to engage with wider social issues is the Centre for Social Innovation and Global Public Service, which was launched at Lambeth Palace in October 2017. The Centre is an interdisciplinary centre of excellence focused on research, consultancy and education, specialising in understanding the pressing social challenges of our time and identifying innovations, leadership, new approaches to public service, inclusive enterprise and diplomacy to address them. The University is working with a number of different partners to develop new programmes, including Caritas Europa, a major player in the efforts to end poverty and promote dignity for all people.

In February 2018, an event was held to celebrate the launch of the book *Mad Dogs and Englishness: Popular Music and English Identities*, which was co-edited by senior lecturers at St Mary’s, Lee Brooks, Mark Donnelly and Richard Mills. The event, was chaired by Rupa Huq MP, took place in front of a packed audience that included MPs, musicians and actors. The discussion was wide-ranging, noting the different influence at varying times on the British pop music scene.

The University was also able to celebrate the success of author Christie Watson, who, at the time, was Senior Lecturer for the University’s undergraduate course in Creative and Professional Writing, by hosting the launch of her latest book *Language of Kindness* at The Exchange theatre. Christie, who won the Costa first novel award for her book *Tiny Songbirds*, turned to memoir to write *Language of Kindness*, which was inspired by her 20 years working as a nurse in the NHS. The book has already been signed to be turned into a television series by the production company Mammoth Screen, who have produced *Poldark* and *Victoria*.

In demonstration of St Mary’s value of inclusivity, the University’s Chancellor, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, and two leading Muslims, Sayed Razawi and Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra, launched a new Muslim Certificate in Religious Studies at St Mary’s. The Certificate is intended to complement the University’s Catholic Certificate in Religious studies. The launch also coincided with the opening of a multi-faith prayer room at the University.

In October 2018, St Mary’s met its objective of opening a new business school, with the launch of its innovative School of Business and Society at London’s Mansion House. The School aims to educate the whole person, not just from a business and technical perspective, but also to provide ethical formation that will serve the student throughout their career. The School will work closely with the University’s Research Centre on the Study of Modern Slavery, which recently appointed former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Israel Sir Tom Philips as director.

Engagement at a local level is equally as important in terms of spreading the St Mary’s message. Almost 600 children took part in a borough-wide sports day which was held on the University’s Sir Mo Farah Athletics Track, with the Director of Sport St Mary’s, Andrew Reid-Smith, handing out medals and trophies to the successful pupils.
St Mary’s Students’ Union (SMSU) Community Projects

SMSU’s newly opened welfare and advice room offered advice to more than 70 students relating to academic and welfare matters over the course of the year, including complex cases involving several internal and external services, such as Student Services, the Student Loans Company and the Home Office.

Major campaigns organised by the SMSU included the ‘#itsoktotalk’ mental health campaign, endorsed by Sir Mo Farah, Joe Wicks and Rt Hon Sir Vince Cable MP. Another highlight was Black History Month, which was endorsed by Olympian Christine Ohuruogu MBE. During the ‘Farewell Fortnight’ campaign, SMSU also co-ordinated a ‘Puppy Room’ to help ‘de-stress’ students during the summer exam period. In addition, SMSU’s ‘green’ campaign, ‘Student Switch Off’, aimed at saving energy usage within halls of residence, resulted in a reduction of £3.7K over the course of the year, compared with the previous year’s energy consumption.

SMSU hosted a National Union of Students (NUS) Small and Specialist conference, attended by five full-time NUS officers as well as representatives from 20 other small and specialist unions, enabling networking and sharing of best practice.

To help create connections within social groups, SMSU introduced a number of events such as Coffee Connections, an event aimed primarily, but not exclusively, at mature students. As a result, a number of attendees joined the newly formed ‘Mature Students Society’.

The annual RAG week raised money for two charities linked to clubs or societies (CALM and Stonewall) as well as two local charities (Off the Record and Me Too and Co). The Big Brother event raised more than £1k in 24 hours. Other events included ‘Run to Dublin’, 24-hour row and Simms Rugby League Old Boys raising money for various charities; the Rugby Union donated their remaining funds to a student to help fund a life-changing operation.

To take a greater role in improving community relations, entrance to the SMSU Christmas Community Festival, which included a number of stalls, rides and a Santa’s grotto, was free for all local residents.
With its foundation set by French Brothers, and the worldwide connections offered by its Catholic heritage, the international influence is strong at St Mary’s. This is something the University is eager to build upon in the coming years.

The University’s Vision 2025 strategy is to increase its international student quota by up to 25% by 2025. Over the past year the University has continued to enter into partnerships with overseas institutions, bringing overseas students to St Mary’s and opening up reciprocal opportunities for its Twickenham-based students.

In July 2018, St Mary’s signed a six-year partnership agreement to set up an on-campus pathway college, providing a range of foundation courses tailored to the international student market. Our partner in this venture is respected Australian international higher education provider, the Holmes Institute, which has a long pedigree in developing global educational outreach.

The pathway college, St Mary’s University London International College (SMULIC), has the potential to transform the University’s international recruitment, global reach and profile, and will provide a major boost to overseas student numbers.

SMULIC will operate at the University and will market, recruit, enrol, teach and assess cohorts of international students who would not previously be eligible for direct admission to Level 4 (undergraduate). SMULIC students will be full members of the University from day one, with progression onto St Mary’s degree programmes guaranteed for students who successfully complete these pathways.

SMULIC will deliver its own foundation curriculum (Level 3) across a wide range of the University’s portfolio, and may also deliver a Level 4 curriculum for business first-year degrees (based on the Holmes Institute’s existing Australian offer). It will also offer add-on and wraparound learning support for other Level 4 programmes, as well as pre-masters courses over one or two semesters. Teaching is due to commence in January 2019, with the first progressions onto St Mary’s degree programme scheduled for Autumn 2019.

Over the past year, the University has continued to enter into partnerships with overseas institutions

This is a bold new venture to deliver a step-change in international engagement, and will bring the St Mary’s offer to thousands of international students not otherwise eligible to apply. It is also consistent with the University’s values of universalism and inclusivity, and will deliver a core element of Vision 2025.
St Mary’s has also entered into a formal partnership with Assumption University, Bangkok, with areas for potential collaboration initially focusing on Assumptions’ MBA programme and the St Mary’s MSc International Business Management course, as well as undergraduate Study Abroad. The Memorandum of Understanding, setting out areas of co-operation, was signed by St Mary’s Pro-Vice Chancellor for Global Engagement Prof John Brewer and President Rev Dr Bro Bancha Saenghiran of Assumption University.

The International Department was also delighted to host two groups of MBA students from Assumption University to begin the relationship between the institutions. The students enjoyed sessions on student life in the UK, a taster lecture in MSc International Business Management and a campus tour.

This partnership is a first for St Mary’s in Thailand, and is an important step for the University in developing its global Catholic partnership network.

In November 2017, St Mary’s University’s Centre for Social Innovation and Global Public Service and Washington DC’s Georgetown University McDonough School of Business announced a new transatlantic partnership.

The news of this significant partnership came weeks after the Centre’s Harvard-backed launch and news of its groundbreaking masters courses in Social Innovation and Global Enterprise Policy, and Social Innovation and Global Public Service.

The partnership will see St Mary’s postgraduate students following the Centre’s courses and benefitting from teaching and learning opportunities on Georgetown’s US and Doha campuses.

Meanwhile, the two partners will jointly develop new leadership executive programmes for those in senior positions across the UK and wider EU public, private, and civic sectors.

This collaboration is in addition to the University’s well-established office in Chicago, which has already resulted in growing numbers of students from North America.

The International Team has also been representing the University across the globe, including in China, Malaysia, and Brazil.
Research and enterprise

St Mary’s is continuing to prioritise research and enterprise over the coming years, to match the standard already set by its exceptional teaching.

The University’s pledge to improving its research offering was cemented by the launch of the new Doctoral College, which was officially opened in December 2017 by Liberal Democrat leader and local MP Sir Vince Cable, a visiting professor at the University. The ceremony, hosted in the Doctoral College at 99 Waldegrave Road, was attended by research students, guests and research-active academics, who were able to network while visiting the new facility. The event also included a presentation competition with a twist, with the work and presentation skills of the professors being judged by the PhD students.

All St Mary’s research degree students automatically become part of the Doctoral College, which, as well as providing dedicated study facilities, aims to provide students with the opportunity to collaborate, work together and share best practice across disciplines. The Doctoral College therefore provides a core part of the research student experience at St Mary’s.

St Mary’s commitment to promoting research is also demonstrated by the University’s application for Research Degree Awarding Powers (RDAP) from the Office for Students. Throughout the academic year 2018/2019, the University will be visited by the RDAP Scrutiny team, who will be observing meetings and events and assessing the University’s suitability to award research degrees.

The past year also saw St Mary’s announce plans to launch a new Centre for Research into the Education of Marginalised Children and Young Adults. The centre will focus on the education of children and young adults not served by existing education systems, including young offenders and young people with severe behavioural and educational needs, who are in conflict zones or where civil society has broken down, and care leavers.

St Mary’s already has strong links working with marginalised children and young adults through its work with the First Star Academy, which helps young people in foster care from local authorities across London gain access to and flourish in higher education, and its research into the provision of education for children and young adults in refugee camps.
Enterprise and Innovation at St Mary’s continues to go from strength to strength. Its objectives include:

- Generating income to support investment.
- Overseeing knowledge exchange
- Extending the University’s public reach through events
- Provision of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Commercialisation of Research

The teams within Enterprise and Innovation support the enterprise and knowledge exchange work of academics in the schools and faculties. Short Courses works with academics to identify and establish opportunities to run both accredited and non-accredited courses for an external audience; the Conferences & Events team supports the organisation and delivery of public lectures and conferences, The Exchange hosts a range of short courses, lectures, tuition and other University outreach activity; and the Enterprise team helps academics bid for contracts, submit research grants, and develop enterprise and knowledge exchange projects.

Key developments and initiatives over the year include the Aspiring Head Teachers programme, established by the Enterprise team and delivered by Sir Michael Wilshaw, former Chief Inspector of Schools and head of Ofsted. The team also worked with Sir Michael to establish a schools standards service, with the Enterprise team helping academics bid for contracts, submit research grants, and develop enterprise and knowledge exchange projects.

In partnership with Warwick University, both the Enterprise and Conferences and Events teams continued to develop the joint Summer School, which is held on St Mary’s campus, with courses delivered by academics from both Warwick and St Mary’s universities. In 2017, 160 students attended, which grew to 250 in Summer 2018. The plan is to increase attendance to 400 students in Summer 2019.

As the team responsible for St Mary’s Knowledge Exchange strategy, Enterprise is also developing increased capacity to commercialise academics’ research, ensure enterprise-activity is research-informed, and expand the work of the institution with schools, particularly in the Catholic sector.

The Conferences and Events team provides significant support for academic conferences and events, as well as managing the campus during the Summer, and supporting a range of summer schools, commercial activities and conferences. These include a number of high-profile public lectures, ensuring St Mary’s growing reputation as a successful location for commercial and academic events. The team has built new external relationships to increase income generated throughout the year, reducing dependency on summer activity.

Since The Exchange venue opened last October, it has become closely involved with the academic life of the University, with it being used to host classes and St Mary’s drama students being able to use the theatre for 30 hours a week. Alongside this, the number of public events taking place has grown significantly. A diverse programme of events have taken place with sell out talks by historian David Starkey and writer and campaigner Germaine Greer. There is also a regular comedy club established by popular comedian Jason Manford. Footfall has been higher than expected with half of the programmed live shows were sold out. One thousand local young people have taken part in performing arts showcases, and significant numbers of local residents have been able to attend performances, classes and other community events at the venue.

Short course provision has continued to grow, with high levels of student satisfaction maintained. The team ran an extensive programme of courses throughout Personal Development Week to enable students to increase their employability and to develop life skills. Participant numbers doubled from the previous year, and the plan is to grow this further in future years. New courses in creative writing and history have been introduced, and new areas are being developed, including theatrical make-up, drawing and painting, and an increased range of wellbeing courses.
With many higher education institutions vying for students’ attention, when it comes to recruitment, a university must stand out from the crowd. But, for all the time and money spent, one of the major decision-making factors for students is the experience of those who have gone before them. In the case of St Mary’s, this is a good thing.

In the 2018 Sunday Times Good University Guide, the University achieved its second successive large climb in the rankings. The guide reported that St Mary’s University’s “impressive student satisfaction rating” is one of the key reasons for its rise in the rankings, describing it as “the best in London by a distance”.

This is the fourth consecutive major ranking in which the University has seen significant growth: it rose 25 places in the Guardian University Guide; 17 places in the Complete University Guide, and was recognised as a notable climber; and 17 places in last year’s Good University Guide. The recent National Student Survey also reported that St Mary’s University was ranked as number 1 for ‘Student Experience’ in London.

Under the Vision 2025 strategy covering the years building up to the University’s 175th birthday in 2025, St Mary’s is keen to expand, aiming for a rise in student numbers each year, while at the same time retaining the uniquely personal and individual attractions that make its student experience distinctive.

With factors such as league tables influencing how potential students perceive universities, St Mary’s encourages campus visits whenever possible, due to the impression its environment makes. Additionally, since January 2018, the University has revised its approach to Schools and Colleges, seeing a positive increase in engagement and collaboration across its feeder school network. This work is currently being built upon with the faculties to further tailor approaches.

Postgraduate and European Union students are two markets identified as having great potential for growth. The University’s postgraduate approaches are being aligned with the new faculty system to aid with tailoring towards their individual needs, creating
bespoke postgraduate events at key points within the academic year. With the impact of Brexit still unclear, EU recruitment efforts are continuing with an increase in event attendance. In this 2018-19 cycle, St Mary’s will be represented at 20 events in Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain. University connections with the British Council can also help raise awareness of the Twickenham student experience.

"St Mary’s “impressive student satisfaction rating” was cited as one of the key reasons for the second successive rise in the ‘Sunday Times Good University Guide’ rankings"
Facts and figures

Income summary 2017/18
£52.5m

- Tuition fees and education contracts 38.9
- Funding body grants 4.3
- Residences, catering and conferences 6.8
- Other income 2.6

Expenditure summary 2017/18
£58.5m

- Staff costs 39.3
- Academic departments 5.46
- Administration Services 3.18
- Premises 3.85
- Other operating expenses 1.99
- Depreciation, Interest and other finance costs 4.76

Income summary 2016/17
£52.3m

- Tuition fees and education contracts 39.8
- Funding body grants 3.9
- Residences, catering and conferences 6.6
- Other income 2.0

Expenditure summary 2016/17
£56.9m

- Staff costs 36.63
- Academic departments 5.65
- Administration Services 4.42
- Premises 4.04
- Other operating expenses 1.69
- Depreciation, Interest and other finance costs 4.50
The University’s assets and liabilities

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Graduate employability rate (HESA, 2016) 93%

Students 4,841

Sports scholarships awarded to students 44

League and cup titles won by our sports teams 11

Places higher in The Times and Sunday Times University Guide 2018 22