



St Mary's  
University  
London

# Annual Review 2020/21

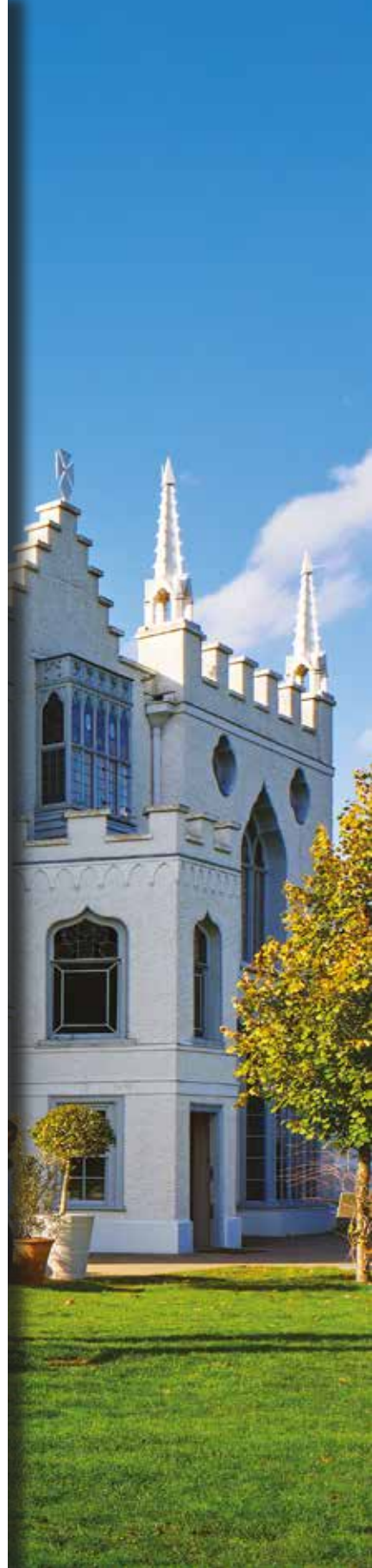
The text 'Annual Review 2020/21' is rendered in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. Several stylized illustrations are integrated with the text: two people walking with backpacks are positioned between the 'n' and 'n' of 'Annual'; a person running is positioned between the 'v' and 'i' of 'Review'; a person carrying a bag is positioned between the '0' and '2' of '2020/21'; and several stylized trees in orange and grey are scattered around the text.

## Welcome to our home

Welcome to our review of the past year at St Mary's University.

We're a friendly and welcoming community with a long history and a modern outlook. We're small enough to care – and big enough to make a difference. Our London campus is the hub of our activities, but we have an impact across the world.

Inside flap image shows Strawberry Hill House in the heart of our campus, built by Horace Walpole in 1749.



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# 1 Setting the direction for our community

**Our campus is the home of our activities. Our academics are contributing their knowledge to the world. Our students are widening their horizons and becoming responsible citizens. And behind of all of this? Our support staff and our leadership team.**

**The Vice-Chancellor is the head of our community and responsible for our strategic direction. He represents us across the world and has a big part to play in our business performance.**

**Anthony McClaran has held governance and executive roles at universities and organisations across the UK and Australia. He joined St Mary's as Vice-Chancellor in 2020.**



**As you can imagine, 2020 was not a typical year for St Mary's. Covid-19 put the whole sector under pressure to develop new ways of teaching. Communities across the country were left understandably confused and even frustrated with the situation. At St Mary's I believe we have done an incredible job of adapting to the crisis and meeting the needs of our staff and students.**

**While safety has been our number one priority, the past year has shown just how innovative we can be. We've explored new ways of delivering classes and made work flexible for many of our staff. Those changes that have increased efficiency or improved the student experience should become a permanent feature going forward.**

**The pandemic wasn't the only big change this year. After serving the university for six years, revitalising the University's mission and with great successes in the league tables, Professor Francis Campbell left St Mary's to become Vice-Chancellor of the University of Notre Dame Australia, Dave Hartnett, a senior board member, served as our interim Vice-Chancellor until I joined in April.**

**I'm looking forward to getting to know our community even more and helping us work towards our goals.**

**Anthony McClaran, Vice-Chancellor**



**We want to create the best possible conditions for our students and staff. We want our students to develop into independent problem solvers and ethical leaders of society. They'll be enthusiastic about knowledge and learning and able to get things done. Our goals include:**



Raising our profile and increasing our impact through a more active public presence and by developing solutions to key public policy concerns.



Expanding our national and international reach through the development of new partnerships with overseas universities.

# Working towards

# our goals

# 98%

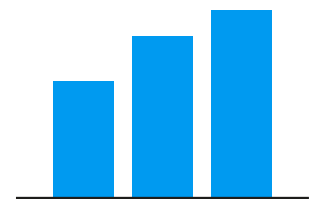
We want our students to have the best possible start after they graduate. The latest data published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency found that 98% of our graduates are in employment, vocation or further study within 15 months of graduation.



Developing our research and enterprise capacity and building on our excellent reputation for teaching.



We are building on our high levels of student satisfaction, which in the latest Good University Guide were second in London.



We are growing our number of international and postgraduate students. Overseas students now make up 9% of the total population, compared with 3% three years ago, and postgraduate students now make up 20% of the student body.

# Our financial performance in 2019/20

Our original budget for the year was set before the pandemic. As you can imagine, the last few months of the financial year had a big impact on our finances. Whilst our financial performance would have been much better in the absence of Covid-19, the out-turn was in fact marginally better than the original budget as a result of strong mitigating action.

## Adapting to an unexpected situation

Our income fell by £1.1m year-on-year: this was a result of the campus closure during the first national lockdown and the on-going implications of social distancing rules, which led to a reduction in income in areas such as accommodation, catering and conference revenues. Despite the incremental costs associated with Covid-19 and a significant increase in pension costs, our total expenditure remained broadly flat year-on-year as a result of our strong cost control.

However, we still need to build for our future. We therefore invested £2.6m in capital projects including our Student Record System, improvements in our estate to accommodate new physiotherapy programmes, and the refurbishment of areas in the main building.

## A strong position for the future

We strengthened our cash reserves during the financial year by £2.2m and bolstered our credit facilities. Our cash reserves of £10.9m represent 83 days of expenditure, well ahead of our targets. The University's financial robustness has improved over the course of the year.

We are planning for a steady improvement in operating profitability over the next five years, and we expect our operating profits (before depreciation and interest) to exceed our medium-term target of 10% by 2022/23. This will enable us to continue investing in our future.

# 10%

We expect earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization as a percentage of income to reach our target of 10% by 2022/23.

# +11%

The academic year got off to a good start in September 2019, as we saw a strong performance in student recruitment delivering an 11% increase in new students over the previous year.

For a full summary of finances, please see the annual report and financial statements.

# £3.2m

operating profits for 2019/20 were marginally better than the original budget which had been approved well before the emergence of Covid-19.



# 2019 2020

# £2.6m

£2.6m spent on projects including our Student Record System, estate improvements for our new Physiotherapy programmes and refurbishment of areas in the main building.

# £51.3m

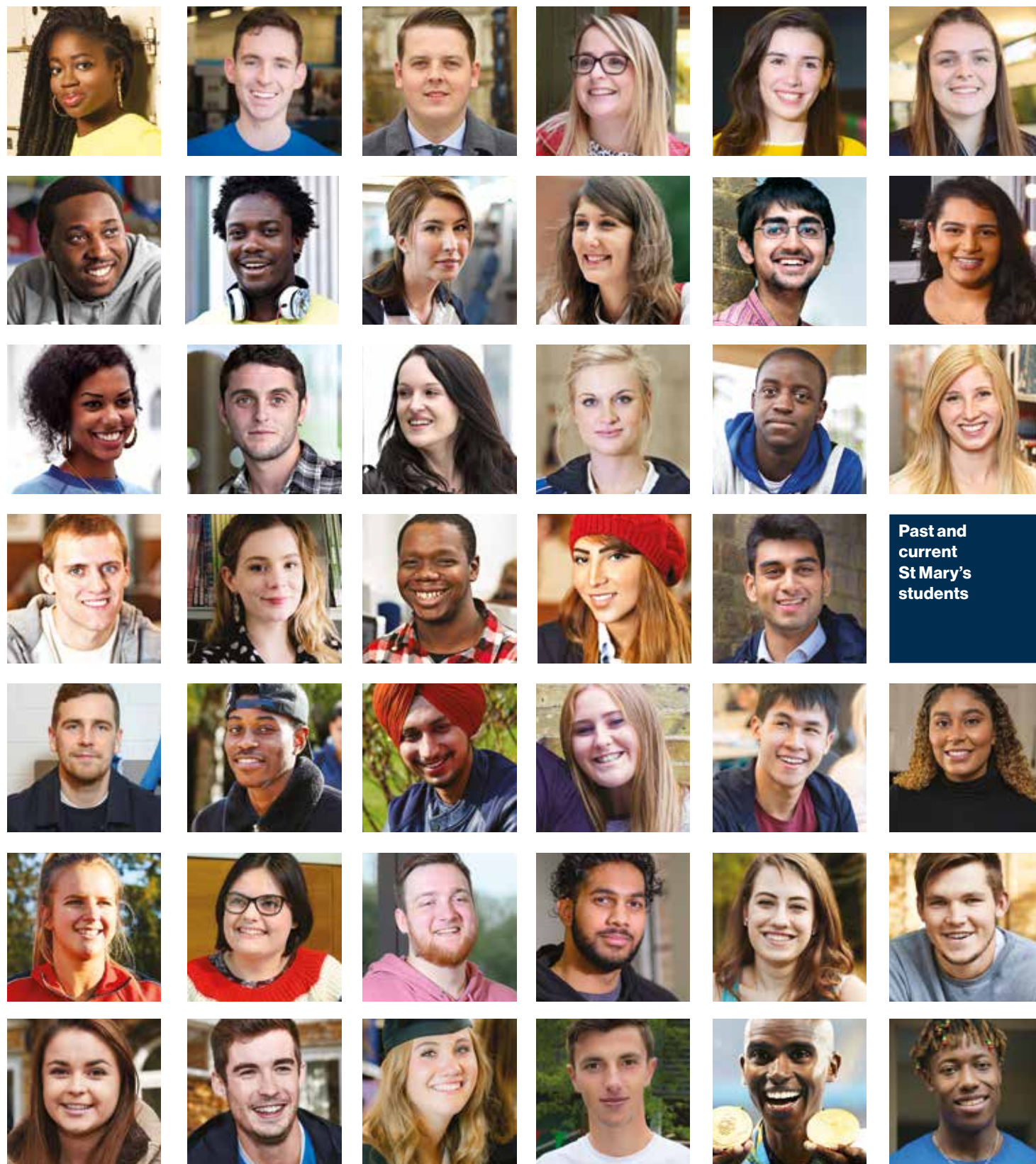
Total Income for 2019/20 was only £1.1m lower than the prior year, despite the impact of Covid-19.

# 2 Supporting every individual to achieve their best

St Mary's is about bringing out the best in people. Whether it's through our thought provoking lecturers or our excellent employability team, or through training alongside elite athletes in our Olympic standard sports facilities or even performing at our 300-seat theatre in The Exchange, we offer everything a student might need to be able to make the most of their time here and succeed when they take their first steps in their career.

Our caring community has always put others first – and that's become even more important over the past year. With remote support and our new digital equality fund, we've responded to the pandemic by making sure no student feels left behind.

Our supportive environment extends beyond the campus too. We engage with the local community and wider society. And of course, our alumni are out in the world making a difference to other people's lives.





# Welcome from Bishop Richard Moth

The vision of education at St Mary's derives from the philosophy of St John Henry Newman, whose work gave rise to the modern understanding of a university. His idea of a university was built on interdisciplinary education, virtues and values, with an emphasis on the formation of each individual enriched by the insights of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Newman's approach is increasingly being built into our curriculum, together with a style of teaching and approach to learning which emphasises student engagement, participation, excellence and service. St Mary's strives to ensure the best possible conditions for our students to develop into independent problem solvers and ethical leaders, through a distinctive approach that develops a broad and balanced education that embraced the formation of the whole person.

Part of an international community of 1,400 Catholic universities, St Mary's is very much part of the local community. It is a place in which students and staff seek to act with generosity of spirit, listening to and engaging with the diverse ideas of its members, whilst ensuring that the mission of the University is central to academic and pastoral life.

As proposed by Pope Francis, when he opened the "Global Compact on Education" in 2020, we strive to ensure that students are placed at the centre of all we do. We educate them to be of service to others so that will make their unique contribution to the common good.

**Bishop Richard Moth**  
**Chair of the Board of Governors**

**...we strive to ensure that students are placed at the centre of all we do. We educate them to be of service to others so that will make their unique contribution to the common good.**

# 170 years of excellence

In 1850, the number of Catholic children in poverty was growing. To meet the increasing demand for Catholic teachers, the Brothers of Christian Instruction started training six young men.

Over the years, the college developed into the modern and inclusive community you see today. As well as teacher training, we now offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in subjects like Sport, Drama, Theology and Business.

The college quickly outgrew its original site at Brook Green in Hammersmith and managed to purchase Strawberry Hill House. The new campus, with accommodation and teaching space for 250 students, opened in 1925.



## 1925

Strawberry Hill campus opened with accommodation and teaching space for 250 students.

## 1966

Women were welcomed to St Mary's for the first time.



## 2011

Our £8.5m Sports Centre opens, later hosting the training camp for athletes competing at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

## 2006

The college became St Mary's University College, able to award its own degrees.

## 2019

Mater Ecclesiae College joined St Mary's following the closure of Heythrop College. Mater Ecclesiae College remains the only faculty in the UK with the ability to confer ecclesiastical degrees.



## 1850

St Mary's was founded to meet the increasing demand for Catholic teachers.



## 1962-63

The building of a new Chapel, designed by Sir Albert Richardson.

## 1975

St Mary's first offered Master's and non-teaching degrees.



## 2010

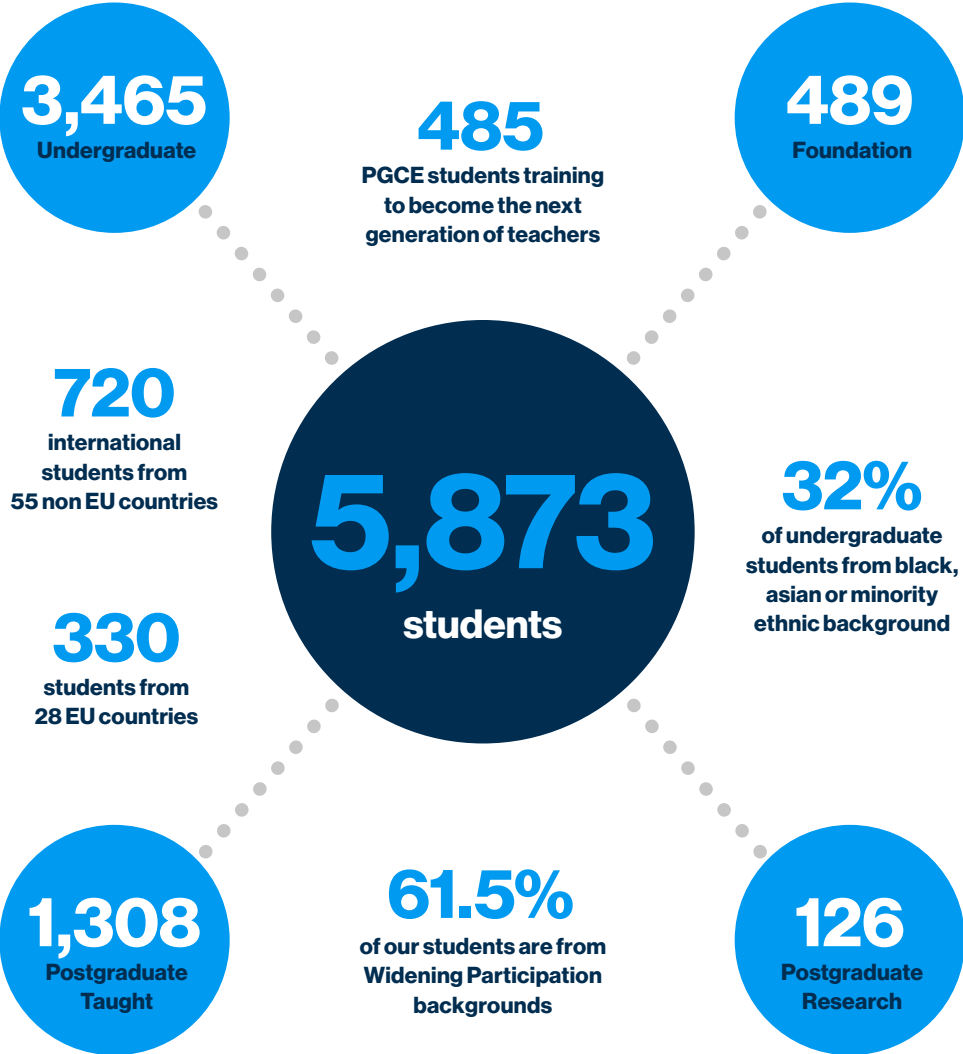
Pope Benedict XVI visited campus during the first Papal visit to the UK since 1982.

## 2014

We were awarded full university title, becoming St Mary's University, Twickenham.



# Our student body



# Tim Rogers

**It's not just our degree subjects that help students prepare for a rewarding life after university – some students really get into the St Mary's spirit and take on extra responsibilities.**

While studying Strength and Conditioning Science, Tim Rogers was our Students' Union Vice-President Community in 2017/18. That responsibility for student social life, fundraising and outreach has led him to a career fundraising for Prostate Cancer UK.

"St Mary's is an amazing space for enabling people. Whenever we went to the leadership team with ideas for how we could make a positive impact, we always had their support."

Tim chose St Mary's because the campus made him feel so at home. But very quickly it became the community side of the university that became most important to him. Tim worked on many fundraising initiatives,

including a collective effort to walk, jog and run the distance from London to Dublin, where a student was receiving cancer treatment. He also set other projects in motion, such as the Be Your Borough campaign to help commuting students feel more involved.

These days Tim is putting his experience to work in the professional world, helping to organise running events and raise money for a worthy cause. Throughout the pandemic he's been involved in virtual events raising thousands of pounds.

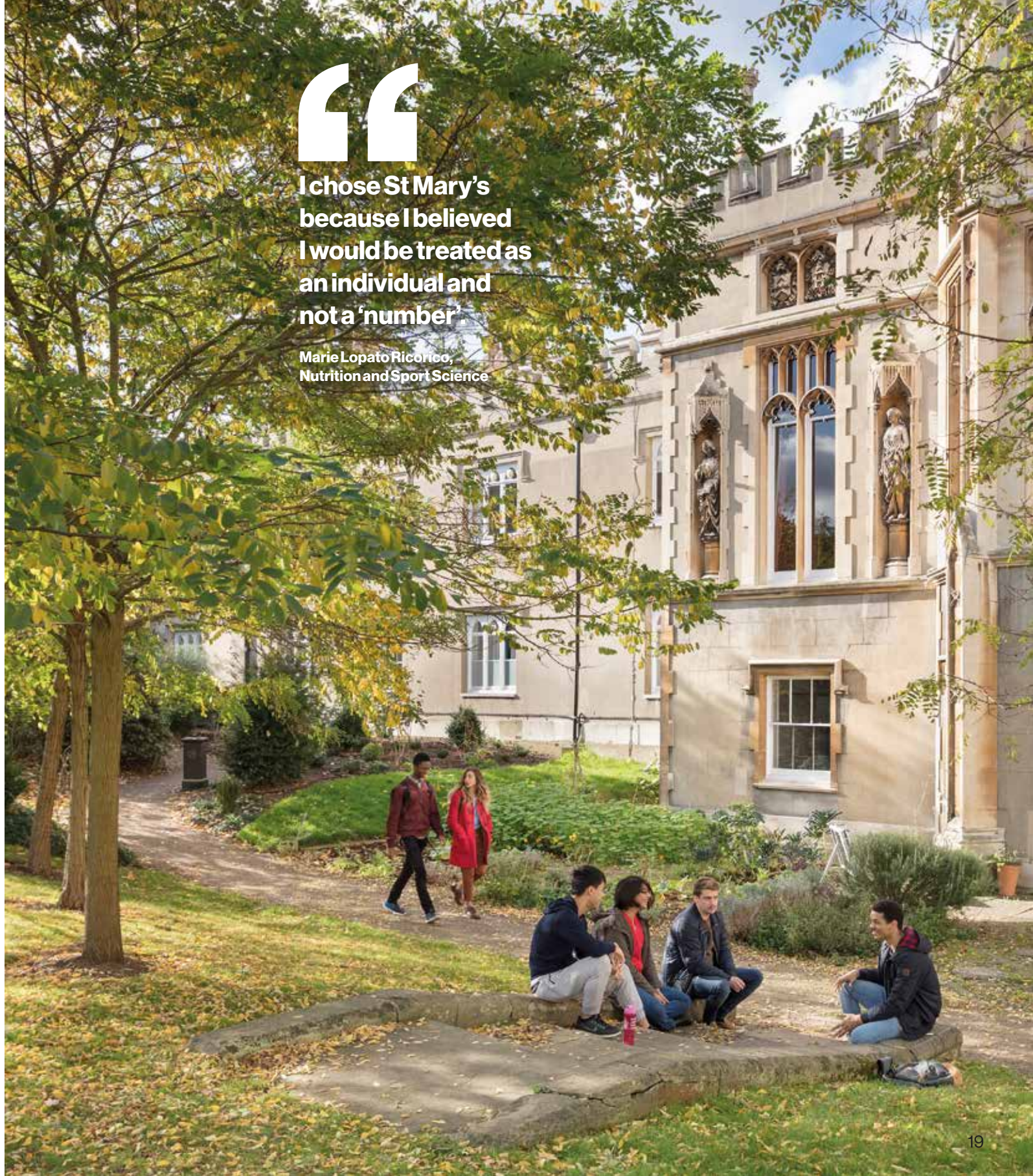


# 3 Putting our people at the heart of what we do

**Going to university is a life-changing experience. For many young people, it's their first time moving away from the family home. It can be scary in the best of times – and the pandemic only made it more so.**

**Here at St Mary's, we're lucky enough to have a quiet location just outside of the main hustle and bustle of the city. Combined with our friendly and supportive atmosphere, we have the perfect conditions to help new students feel at home.**

**Of course, not everything felt completely normal. We had to introduce lots of new safety measures on campus and many of our classes moved online. While these are only temporary changes, they've shown that a blended learning experience will benefit everyone in future.**



**I chose St Mary's  
because I believed  
I would be treated as  
an individual and  
not a 'number'**

**Marie Lopato Ricorico,  
Nutrition and Sport Science**

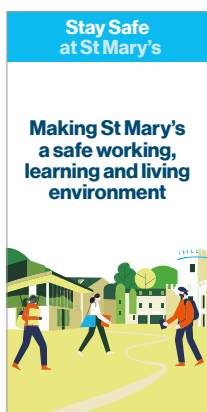
# A year like no other

**Covid-19 upended the student experience. As well as social activities being banned, there have been some more serious consequences of the pandemic.**

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds might not have had access to the technology they needed to continue their studies remotely. Some may have depended on jobs that haven't been available this year. Those struggling with mental health faced new challenges and increased anxiety. And many students have had to stay away from family, with some even losing loved ones.

That's why we made our campus a Covid-secure and supportive environment, and made sure our students studying remotely still get a great education. We've supplied technology to those who need it, to ensure that all can access online learning.

Despite the restrictions, the new academic year got off to a good start. Freshers had plenty of welcome activities and returning students still had safe ways of socialising with friends. And the new technology we've implemented in classes will help us improve the learning experience for years to come.



# Stay Safe at St Mary's

**We made some big changes to keep everyone safe:**



**Video calls and remote sessions instead of some face-to-face meetings**

**Virtual lectures**



**Hand sanitiser and hand washing stations across campus**



**Smaller groups for in-person classes**



**Screens and one-way systems**



**More outdoor seating and more space between seats inside**



**A bubble system for students living on campus**



**More car and bicycle parking**

# Joe Wicks

## MBE

**Across the country, people had a wide range of reactions to lockdown: boredom, loneliness, and even frustration. But Sport Science alumnus Joe Wicks saw it as an opportunity to help others. Every weekday, thousands of children tuned in to his free online PE lessons. The videos raised £580,000 in advertising revenue, which Joe donated to the NHS.**

Joe first realised he wanted to study at St Mary's when he visited on a school trip:

"I met some students and had a look around campus and I knew there and then that I wanted to go there. I felt inspired by people studying what I was interested in and liked the fact it was small and didn't feel intimidating."

Since graduating and setting up his business, he's sold millions of books, hosted TV shows, and helped countless numbers of people lose weight and get fit.

He says St Mary's helped him build his reputation:

"My Sport Science degree gives me a seal of approval that I dedicated three years of my life to studying a subject I now love."

Joe's success, and his generous commitment to helping others throughout the pandemic, is an inspiration to our students and our alumni community. He recently received an MBE for his work. We look forward to seeing what he comes up with next.



# 4

## Building on our strengths year on year

**Our approach to education owes a lot to St John Henry Newman, whose ideas helped define the modern university.**

**Newman believed in interdisciplinary education, with a focus on enriching the individual. His philosophy influenced the goals we've committed to, such as encouraging staff to work across boundaries, and equipping students to make a positive impact on the world.**

**And it seems to be working. We've been climbing the league tables for years – we're currently in the top 90 in the Sunday Times Good University Guide, and have seen growth in the Guardian and Complete University Guide too. And, perhaps even more importantly, our students are very happy with their experience, as shown by our results in the National Student Survey which are among the top in London.**



# 2nd

**in London for Overall Satisfaction  
(Sunday Times Good University Guide 2020)**

**and  
in the top ten safest universities  
in England and Wales  
(Complete University Guide 2020)**

# Sport and health science

**St Mary's has become renowned for sport and health science.** Our degrees cover a range of subjects like physiology, nutrition and coaching science. Many of our students also go on to a PGCE to turn their passion for sport into a career teaching PE in schools.

Our teaching team are active in research or are working professionally. Our work includes research in a diverse range of subjects from astronaut exercise to the role of sport and faith.

As well as the academic expertise, our sports facilities are one of the great attractions of the subject. They're in high demand by professional teams and athletes from rugby, tennis, and Formula One.



# Top4

**in the UK for our sports scene  
(Which? University Student Survey 2019)**

# 98%

of graduates in employment,  
vocation, or further study  
within 15 months



## Teacher training



We've been training teachers since 1850 and we've built quite a reputation in that time. **Ofsted rates our Institute of Education as 'Outstanding'.**

We run a wide range of different courses. Many of them lead to Qualified Teacher Status, while others focus on the theoretical or sociological side of education.

Our academics work within various research clusters and centres, focusing on subjects like marginalised children, teacher wellbeing, and theological literacy.

As alumna Laura Condon, Primary School Teacher, remarked "It's a real community of people, and is close-knit in a really good way. The lecturers and staff are great, and they all want you to do really well and they care about how you are."



# Research areas

Our work is in six broad areas. Within these, researchers are organised into centres and clusters.



**Business and law**



**Communications, humanities and social policy**



**Education and teaching**



**English and creative arts**



**Human and applied sciences**



**Theology and ethics**

## How do we support victims and survivors of modern slavery?

Being a victim of slavery and human trafficking is a horror that most of us can't even begin to imagine. But this kind of exploitation happens everywhere. It's vital we have the right support in place to help people recover from their ordeal.

Last year the Centre for the Study of Modern Slavery worked with Skills for Care and the Snowdrop Project to create a new framework for people working with victims and survivors of slavery. They've been working with organisations across health and social care, law enforcement, human rights, business and education.

The framework launched in September 2020. This framework is for everyone, and it will be essential for anyone whose role involves supporting and caring for people affected by these crimes.



## Could a new exercise device be the future of space exploration?

Astronauts have to spend a quarter of their time in space exercising. Without this daily routine, their bodies lose some ability to process oxygen, and their bones and muscles lose strength. So finding more efficient ways of exercising could have a big impact on the future of space travel.

The Faculty of Sport, Health and Applied Science are working with Physical Mind London and the European Astronaut Centre to test the High Frequency Impulse for Microgravity system, a multi-exercise countermeasure designed by St Mary's visiting lecturer John Kennett.

The UK Space Agency are contributing funding to the prototype. The project began at Teddington Pilates Studio, and will soon move to parabolic test flights, with aircraft simulating microgravity.



# Amy-Louise Peach

**Amy first came to St Mary's to study English and Media Arts in 2010. But she didn't stop there. She carried on to PGCE, and then after working as a primary school teacher, came back to study MA Creative Writing, graduating in 2020.**

“Being a St Mary's student made me feel proud and I was confident that I was being given the best route into teaching. Whatever school I visited, when I mentioned the name 'St Mary's' it was greeted with the same response; the University is held in very high regard within the teaching profession. Before I had even finished the PGCE course I was offered a job teaching at the Infant school where I was completing my final placement.”

While teaching, Amy realised that a lot of parents don't know how to get more involved in their children's education. She created a YouTube channel 'Little Learners' to help parents and teachers with creative lessons for young children.

The channel came into its own during the Covid-19 pandemic. Amy started getting requests from subscribers for videos explaining Coronavirus to children. And, of course, her educational tools have been particularly useful with schools being closed and parents desperate for ideas to keep children enjoying learning.

As well as offering a vital service, perhaps the greatest thing Amy offers in her videos is her passion for education, something St Mary's had a hand in nurturing:

“Every one of my lecturers at St Mary's was passionate about teaching. They inspired me to be a better teacher and to never stop building on my own skills. My lecturers were always there if I needed a chat; when I got my job offer at the end of my PGCE, my maths lecturer was the first person I called!”



# 5 Working with our local community

**St Mary's might be a campus university, but we're very much part of a wider community. At a local level, we support residents and businesses in any way we can. Further afield, our research and leadership is making a difference to people's lives all over the world.**



## Helping in the fight against Covid-19

Working with our partners in Richmond Council, we opened an NHS Covid-19 test site at our Teddington Lock Sports Campus. Testing has been key to getting outbreaks of Covid-19 under control during the pandemic. Hosting the testing site is one of the best ways we can help contribute to the safety of Richmond-upon-Thames and help increase testing capacity in the local area to support members of the St Mary's community who live locally.



## Training Teachers

Founded to train teachers in 1850 to educate the poor, preparing the next generation of educators is our longest standing vocation. Our Ofsted Outstanding Institute of Education has trained over 6,000 teachers since 2008. We work with over 650 partner schools in London and the South East and in the most recent graduate employability data it was found that 98% of graduates from St Mary's education programmes were in employment within 15 months. Our work doesn't stop at graduation however; we welcome hundreds of teachers each year to continue their professional development on one of our education masters or doctorates.



## Sport for All

Helping everyone lead an active and healthy lifestyle is a core mission of St Mary's. Our sports facilities are regularly used by elite athletes as they prepare to perform at the highest levels, and we believe that members of the local community should have access to the facilities too. Whether through training in our gym or on our athletics track, playing social and competitive sport on our courts and pitches, or through consultancy work with our sport scientists, members of the public are welcome in all of our facilities. In a normal year, we also welcome over 8,000 local children to campus for sports days and afterschool and holiday classes, using the same facilities that Sir Mo Farah launched his athletics career on.



## The Exchange

The Exchange is our community building in the heart of Twickenham, which features a 300-seat theatre and a number of multi-use rooms. Aside from hosting public lectures, comedy and music events, yoga, The Exchange has also hosted pregnancy yoga, older people's dance classes, children's drama, and arts classes for adults with mental ill health or learning disabilities. It is also home to the Ideas Exchange, which is a regular event that sees St Mary's and visiting academics deliver bite-size lectures on their research to audiences of local young people.

# Our global university network

We work with universities around the world to provide study and research opportunities for students and staff, giving the St Mary's community a truly global outlook.





# Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse



St Josephine Bakhita

**Our research has an impact far beyond academic circles. One example where that's particularly true is the work being done by our Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse.**

The Centre is part of a large network working on this global problem. Our partners include law enforcement, government, and organisations like Bakhita House, a London safe-house for trafficked women.

As well as undertaking research to understand the scale of the problem, we're working hard to raise awareness through training and events like conferences. We run special projects, like our pilot course on how to identify, support and care for victims, and we teach an MA in Human Trafficking, Migration and Organised Crime. Many of our graduates are now working in the field, contributing to our mission and advocating for our cause.

# The Art of Dying Well

**In the peak of the pandemic, hospitals across the world were becoming overwhelmed. Some even had to turn patients away as they prioritised access to ventilators and beds. These events had many of us thinking of ethical questions about death and care.**

At St Mary's, the Art of Dying Well is a project designed to address these questions made all the more relevant in recent months. We're opening up the conversation about death and what it means to die peacefully, in a way that gives comfort to those we leave behind.

Inspired by our Catholic heritage, but designed for everyone, the project offers advice and practical information. Our website [artofdyingwell.org](http://artofdyingwell.org) covers everything from deathbed etiquette to how to arrange a funeral.



# First Star Academy

**Only 6% of care leavers in the UK go to university. First Star started at campuses in the USA to help young people in foster care feel like they belong there – over 90% of these young people go on to study at a university.**

St Mary's First Star Academy was opened in 2017 to address the educational inequality faced by young people in the care system, helping more young people to succeed academically at school and progress to higher and further education. The First Star Academy programme started in America in 2011, and now operates academies in fourteen US universities.

The Academy at St Mary's is the first of its kind in the UK and takes a group of thirty fourteen-year-olds, supporting them for four years. The programme consists of a session each month throughout the year and a four-week residential on the St Mary's University campus each summer. Students live on campus in the halls of residence during the summer residential and are immersed in university life. After the success of the first cohort, St Mary's recruited a second one in 2020.



# 6

## A small selection of the partners we work with

Our goal when developing partnerships is to enhance the experience of our students through research and global study exchange opportunities, to create commercial opportunities for the University, to deliver on our Catholic mission and values, and to contribute to the debate in the public square.

Some of these partnerships make use of St Mary's academic expertise and facilities. We have partnered with the Royal Ballet School to deliver Sport Science services to the dancers, which has created research opportunities for our students. Elsewhere, our partnership with the Chelsea FC Foundation has created a unique degree programme, which allows students to study both at St Mary's and at the club's world-famous Stamford Bridge stadium and training facilities in Cobham.

Other partnerships focus on developing opportunities for students around the world to come and study at St Mary's, and for our students to experience studying in another country. These study abroad opportunities help to develop the character of our students and help bring different cultures on to campus, giving our students a global outlook.



# What our students say



**There is something about St Mary's that you don't get in many other places. As soon as I walked through the door, my fears and scary expectations disappeared.**

Christian Anderson, Drama graduate

**St Mary's is fantastic for students who thrive in smaller groups, where their voices and ideas can be heard in the classroom, as well as across the campus.**

Meg Griessel, History graduate

**You get great support at St Mary's, and, with all the visiting lecturers from different disciplines, you really broaden your knowledge.**

Steph Twell, Strength and Conditioning graduate



## **Stay Safe at St Mary's**

The images in this document were captured either before the Covid-19 pandemic or in accordance with all UK government guidelines during the pandemic. The safety and wellbeing of our students and staff is our top priority and we continue to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure everyone's safety. You can find out more about our response to Covid-19 – including the latest details of how we are protecting students – at [www.stmarys.ac.uk/staysafe](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk/staysafe).





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