



St Mary's
University
London

Our Vision 2030

The future of St Mary's



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Foreword by Bishop Richard Moth

St. Mary’s University was founded in 1850 by the Catholic Poor Schools Committee. This was in response to a need for more teachers to educate the growing numbers of poor children. The life of the University continues to be marked by a strong social agenda, looking to develop graduates who will contribute to their communities to the best of their abilities.

Our aims in *Vision 2030* are an expression of our Catholic ethos and, in particular, St. John Henry Newman’s idea that higher education should be about developing the whole person and that all knowledge is interconnected.

Our work in theology, bio-ethics, business ethics, human trafficking, “the art of dying well” and decarbonisation all serve the mission of the Church and benefit the world around us.

We partner with Catholic organisations and other faith groups sympathetic to our aims.

We plan to be the first choice for faith-based institutions and communities looking for a Catholic higher education provider. We are developing new programmes for Church employees and volunteers and are expanding our distance learning programmes. We are also increasing public engagement with events, CPD and debates.

Being a welcoming and supportive university, open to people of any faith and none, is a continuing expression of the nature of a Catholic university. This ethos also makes for a strong alumni community. Our inclusive atmosphere extends to all St. Mary’s University graduates, no matter how long ago they studied here or where they are in the world.

Bishop Richard Moth
Chair of the Board of Governors

***Vision 2030* outlines our approach and forms the guiding structure for our supporting strategies, operating plans, and team and individual targets.**





Introduction by the Vice Chancellor, Anthony McClaran

St Mary's is committed to providing our students with a transformational experience. Offering strong support and intellectual challenge whilst they study with us and opportunities to be part of the wider St Mary's community beyond their time here, we want our students to be highly skilled, informed and civically engaged. *Vision 2030* sets out how we will do this, building on the successes of the past and setting our direction for the coming years.

In 2015, St Mary's outlined some ambitious objectives for the next ten years. Thanks to our committed staff, we've achieved many of those goals. We've expanded our portfolio of courses, been granted the power to award research degrees, invested in new technology, grown our international student body and welcomed Mater Ecclesiae College alongside the University.

Now as we enter a new phase of the University's growth, I believe it is time to revisit our ambitions and therefore, after consultation with our staff and students, we've refreshed our strategy to guide our actions for the next decade. *Vision 2030* outlines our approach and forms the guiding structure for our supporting strategies, operating plans, and team and individual targets.

The vision comes at a decisive point in our institution's (and indeed the world's) history; the COVID-19 pandemic has been the greatest disruption we've faced in our lifetimes. However, despite the challenges, we've discovered new ways of working and teaching, and renewed our focus on living our values.

Vision 2030 reflects our optimism for the future of our institution. In 2025 we will celebrate our 175th anniversary. Our founders' vision of education as an instrument for personal achievement and social equity is still very much alive and, I believe, more relevant than ever.

Anthony McClaran
Vice Chancellor

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



Our vision

Our Vision for St Mary’s University is built around creating a transformational experience for our students as our staff support them to succeed.

Our students and staff are at the heart of everything we do. We are an inclusive university, open to those of all faiths and none, and a local institution in a global city, serving a growing and richly diverse student community in locations both real and virtual.



Our values

Rooted in our Catholic Foundation, with the value of the human person at its heart, our values set us apart, shape our behaviour and inform all our decisions in a university that responds to the demands of today.

Generosity of spirit

Across the University there’s a strong sense of encouragement, collegiality, empathy, helpfulness and service to others.

Inclusiveness

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

Respect

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

Excellence

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

The five pillars of our vision

To achieve our vision, we have identified five pillars that will support our strategy.

1.

Achieving student success

With a rich history in education, St Mary's is committed to high quality delivery in education, research and the wider student experience. We will continue to provide an outstanding academic, sporting and social experience, to ensure our students flourish while they are with us, and beyond.

2.

Developing our people

We seek to empower our staff to reach their full potential by developing a supportive, inclusive, collaborative and inspiring working environment. We want our staff and leadership to reflect and encompass the diversity of our student body and the wider community.



3.

Extending our impact through growth

Through growth we can reach more students, employers and communities, and ensure the University's sustainable future. We will expand our applied and professional programmes, and offer more flexible ways to learn.

4.

Expanding our reach through partnerships

We will identify organisations with whom we can work with to deliver shared goals. We will share our knowledge and expertise with other universities, further education colleges, and civic and sporting organisations at home and abroad.

5.

Enhancing our sense of place

We treasure our historic campus and will continue to develop it as a safe space and to guard it for future generations. We will open up our work to the public and strive to have a positive impact in our local community. We will play a dynamic role in the educational, cultural, sporting and economic life of south west London.



1.

The five pillars of our vision

Achieving student success



We want our students to develop into independent problem solvers and socially responsible individuals.

We welcome students from a wide range of backgrounds, preparing them for rewarding lives and successful careers. Through excellent, research-informed teaching we provide every student with the support they need to flourish, helping them to recognise their own potential and understand how to be the best version of themselves.

We want our students to develop into independent problem solvers and socially responsible individuals. They'll be enthusiastic about knowledge and learning, and able to get things done. Our students will feel that that their degree is valuable, not only in terms of their career trajectory and earning potential, but also in providing them with fundamental skills and a greater sense of self-confidence about the contribution they can make in the world.

Objective 1: Student centred learning

Our focus is on enhancing student outcomes, improving retention, attainment and progression, increasing student satisfaction and building inclusive learning practices. The University will work to meet ambitious goals on access and participation, ensuring that each student, whatever their background, can achieve their potential.

Objective 2: Vibrant student experience

We already have an excellent reputation for student experience. We will build on that, working with our students to ensure we have a vibrant and exciting offer on campus and online. We will keep adapting our offer to match the diversity of our student body, making sure that students themselves help shape life at St Mary's.

Objective 3: Students as partners

Ensuring students are partners in all we do, we will continue to support and develop student panels, representatives and networks to engage with, and respond to, our student body. Students will be encouraged to participate fully in University life.

Objective 4: Graduate employability

We want our students to thrive, making a positive impact on society. Through the applied nature of our programmes and placement opportunities, we will ensure that our students are prepared for the world of work and helped to enter it successfully.

Objective 5: Offering flexibility

We will continue to grow and develop our student community through a range of courses and qualifications that can be accessed by learners at all stages of their learning and employment journeys, from anywhere and at any time.



2.

The five pillars of our vision

Developing our people

Our University remains the place it is because of the talent and dedication of our people working together to a common purpose. We want to create an environment which enables staff to embrace their unique talents, and grow in confidence and capability to play their part in growing and developing the University.

We seek to build a supportive, inclusive and inspiring working environment, making St Mary's a great place to work. Staff wellbeing is fundamental to our institution, as we recognise that content and resilient staff will be best placed to provide our students with a rewarding experience.

We need to work collaboratively and harness our collective strength to deliver our objectives. The University's values should guide our behaviours and ways of working. They leave no room for discrimination or exclusion.

Objective 1:
Developing, growing and nurturing our talent

Having a welcoming culture, strong leadership, and good employee engagement will help us to attract and retain the best and the brightest. We will develop the leadership capabilities within our teams to ensure that the University is able to adapt and thrive in the future.

We seek to build a supportive, inclusive and inspiring working environment, making St Mary's a great place to work.



Objective 2:
Inclusive and open

We want the diversity of our student body to be reflected in our staff and leadership. We will set clear objectives against our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. We will apply for both Athena Swan and the Race Equality Charter to ensure we are meeting demanding external benchmarks. We will also work with our staff to identify other ways to recognise the University's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Objective 3:
Staff engagement

Our staff should be engaged and motivated, with opportunities to develop their skills and enjoy a fulfilling career. We will continue to nurture our staff networks and provide other channels for staff to positively influence the future direction of the University.

Objective 4:
Staff wellbeing

We will champion a healthy work life balance, playing an active role in promoting mental health and wellbeing. We will draw on external best practice to ensure that this is incorporated into all our activities.



3.

The five pillars of our vision

Extending our impact through growth

Growth is essential for the future of the University. We need to keep growing to ensure our financial sustainability and to continue building our diverse and vibrant community. We will build on areas of strength and offer a range of delivery methods to ensure our University is accessible for all students regardless of background, location or circumstance.

- Objective 1:**
Reshaping our portfolio

We will adapt existing courses and create new ones to make sure we continue to meet the needs of our students and their future employers. We will create more capacity in our areas of strength. We will also look for other ways of opening up the St Mary's experience to more students through distance, accelerated and short courses.
- Objective 2:**
Embedding research

Securing Research Degree Awarding Powers was a significant achievement – we will build on it by embedding and growing our research activities. A new strategy will outline how we will develop our strengths and contribute to society through the impact of our work. We will also create professional doctorates to expand our provision and significantly increase the number of doctoral students.



Growth is essential for the future of the University.

- Objective 3:**
Sharing our knowledge

Enterprise activities will provide the opportunity to grow and diversify our income, as well as sharing our knowledge and expertise with the wider community. We will pursue new Enterprise opportunities, reviewing and re-focusing our activities.
- Objective 4:**
Raising our profile

Events, lectures and seminars will allow us to increase engagement with our local community and the wider world. We plan to be a distinct and unique voice, raising our profile physically and digitally in the public square.



4.

The five pillars of our vision

Expanding our reach through partnerships

Through our partnerships we will enhance the student experience and create opportunities for growth. By building our international partnerships we can offer our students and staff the chance to learn through experiencing other cultures and societies, and become truly global citizens. We will be a trusted partner both locally and internationally, forming and building upon relationships with other universities, further education colleges, the Church, other faith communities, sporting and civic organisations within south west London and beyond.

Objective 1:
Opening new routes to HE

We will open up a university education to more students and extend our reach into new areas and demographics by working with further education colleges and other organisations that share our pillars.

Objective 2:
Strong partnerships

We will develop a strategic framework for partnerships that will ensure that we have more impactful partnerships, providing more benefit for our students and our partners. We will ensure that there is an appropriate infrastructure to support and manage these partnerships.

We will be a trusted partner both locally and internationally...



Objective 3:
Sporting and civic engagement

We will build on our sporting reputation continuing to develop our growing network of partners to share our expertise more widely. We will work to reinforce our civic engagement with schools, arts and cultural bodies, faith and volunteer groups, NGOs, and government at both local and national level.

Objective 4:
Engaging our alumni

We will seek to engage our alumni more effectively to create a more connected and engaged network of Simmarians across the world. The engagement and support of the wider St Mary's community will be crucial to our success.

Objective 5:
Our Catholic network

We should be the first port of call for faith-based institutions and communities, whether they be dioceses, schools, education services, religious orders, lay communities and individuals – who are looking to meet needs to which Catholic HE could be the answer.



5.

The five pillars of our vision

Enhancing our sense of place



We will develop the campus sustainably, keeping it safe and environmentally friendly.

Our Strawberry Hill campus has a rich heritage, and we are its guardians for future generations. We will develop the campus sustainably, keeping it safe and environmentally friendly. As a university with a civic mission, we will seek to play an increasingly active role in the life of our local communities. As part of a world-wide faith-based community, we will always think globally, conscious of our interconnectedness and duty of care to each other and our planet.

Objective 1:
Campus improvements

The centre of our University will continue to be our beautiful campus in Strawberry Hill. By 2030 we will have significantly improved facilities for staff and students, while maintaining and enhancing our current community-based environment.

Objective 2:
Community engagement

We will continue to be engaged, active and responsible citizens of Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, and London, working to support the interests of the local community. We will play a key role in local growth and the economic, cultural and sporting life in south west London.

Objective 3:
Care for our common home

Inspired by Pope Francis’ call to action in *Laudato Si’*, we will work within the University towards meeting a challenging target for decarbonisation and for a sustainable campus environment. Externally, we will work in partnership to promote research and best practice for the healing of our “common home”.

Objective 4:
Open and accessible

We will enhance our digital reach so that our students and staff can connect to St Mary’s, regardless of where they are in the world. We will improve our online learning experience to reach new student audiences.



**As a university with a civic mission,
we will seek to play an increasingly
active role in the life of our local
communities.**



In order to achieve our Vision, we need to ensure that we adopt key strategies and develop new processes to provide the essential foundations for our success.

We need to work sustainably and efficiently, developing our digital infrastructure to enhance the student experience and enabling St Mary's to be an agile organisation, with processes that support, not hinder, our academic endeavours.



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

- **Financial Sustainability:** Our long-term financial plan has created, and will continue to provide a stable foundation for our strategic objectives. In order to release funds for investment we will continue to pursue this plan.
- **Integrated strategic planning:** An evidence-based planning process will bring together strategic aims, staffing plans and budget needs, in the context of a medium-term planning horizon.



We will enhance the staff and student experience through digital transformation:

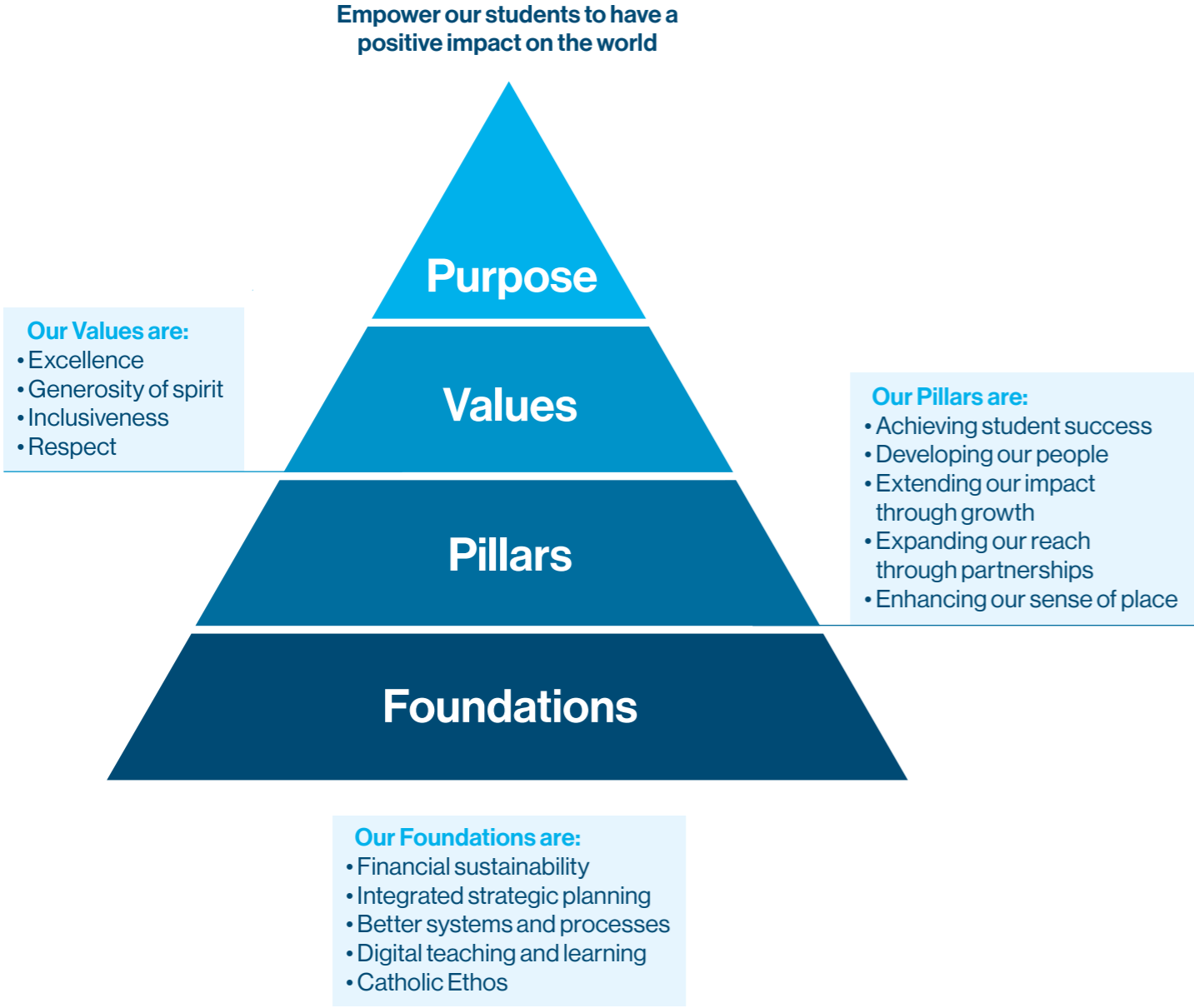
- **Better systems and processes:** Building on investment in technology we need to ensure that our data is joined up, and that we streamline processes for staff to free up time for delivering core teaching activities.
- **Digital teaching and learning:** We will continue to develop our capacity and approach, ensuring that our offer is driven by student need and preference.

We will improve efficiency across the University:

Bureaucracy is frustrating for everyone. We've made some useful changes to internal governance but we will work with staff to identify more opportunities. We will also improve communication and collaboration to enhance the staff and student experience. We'll turn to our Board of Governors, Development Board and advisory boards for insights into best practice.



Vision 2030 Summary





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