



St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London

# Admissions Policy

## 2016/20 Entry



## **Admissions Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

The Admissions Policy guides the admission of students to St Mary's University. It is designed to be an open and transparent policy that takes into account the QAA Quality Code, relevant equality legislation and other appropriate guidance.

### **2 General Principles**

In devising the Admissions Policy, note has been taken of the following general principles:

- 2.1 The Admissions Policy should reflect the nature of the University's Legal Objects and Mission as a Catholic higher educational foundation with a commitment to distinctiveness and inclusiveness;
- 2.2 In its 2011 - 2016 Corporate Plan, the University aims to extend the range of educational opportunities for all, promote diversity in terms of access, educational experience and support for students. It aims to develop a recruitment strategy which extends beyond traditional markets.
- 2.3 All admissions will be made in accordance with the University's Equality and Diversity Statement and Code of Practice which aims to ensure that University promotes equality and prevent and eliminates discrimination for staff and students on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, social or national origin in a proactive manner in line with our duties under the law and our belief in the virtues of tolerance and diversity;

### **3 Aims of the Admissions Policy**

3.1 The Policy aims to:

- Recruit students who are sympathetic to the aims and values of the Mission Statement who can make a positive contribution to the University Community;
- Recruit students who will benefit from a high quality, supportive academic environment;
- Encourage diversity by recruiting students of different ages, ethnicities, social backgrounds and of all faiths of none.

- Admit students to BA(ITT) and PGCE programmes who are sympathetic to the aim to provide teachers particularly for Roman Catholic and other Christian schools and understand its implications for their programme of study;
- Maximise applications from those who meet the entry requirements who wish to study in the particular environment offered by the University in an increasingly competitive market;
- Admit students to higher degree programmes who are suitably qualified and whose professional and/or personal interests will be furthered by the programmes and research expertise we have to offer.

#### **4 Application procedures**

- 4.1 Applications to all full-time Undergraduate Honours and Foundation degree programmes, including those made in Clearing, are made through University and Colleges Application Service (UCAS). Those to PGCE programmes, including those for part-time programmes are processed via the UCAS Teacher Training system.

University Applications to Masters programmes can be made either direct to the University, on the appropriate direct application form, or via the online UKPASS system.

Applications to part time courses should be made on the appropriate direct application form.

Applications for Research Degrees should be made on Liverpool Hope University application forms provided for this purpose.

- 4.2 All formal offers for taught degrees are made via the University Registry. Offers for Research degrees which are made by Liverpool Hope University. The admissions process is overseen by the Head of Admissions and Student Data Returns.
- 4.3 On accepting an offer, the applicant will be informed of the terms and conditions for offers made.
- 4.4 Applications and offers for Collaborative Provision programmes are made according to the arrangements outlined in the relevant contract/Memorandum of Cooperation.

#### **5 Full-time Undergraduate programme Admissions**

##### **5.1 Entrance requirements**

- 5.1.1 Applicants to full-time Honours and Foundation Degree programmes must satisfy both the general entry requirements of the University and any requirements for the particular degree programme. The general entry requirements may be satisfied as set out in Academic Regulations and the prospectus each year. Particular programme requirements and the level of the offer are also listed in the prospectus and on the University website [www.stmarys.ac.uk](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk)
- 5.1.2 Applicants who have not been in formal education for some time, who do not otherwise satisfy the general entry requirements, may be eligible for admission if they can provide satisfactory evidence of their ability to pursue successfully the programme for which they are applying. They must normally have one six unit qualification or its equivalent.
- 5.1.3 In addition to satisfying the entrance requirements, all applicants must supply a satisfactory reference on their UCAS form.

## **5.2 Admissions procedures for BA/BSc programmes**

- 5.2.1 In recognition of the University's aim to provide access to higher education, the University will, in most cases, give an offer to all those predicted to meet the offer level. These offers will be handled by the Undergraduate Admissions team. Where students' predicted grades are not at the offer level, consideration will be given to the whole application including GCSE grades and the reference. Where possible, offers will be made to these students where the rest of their application is sound, so as to not to give undue weight to predictions.
- 5.2.2 Any students who have non-standard qualifications, or mature students who do not satisfy the general entrance requirement will be scrutinised by the Head of Admissions and Student Data Returns and the programme to which the applicant has applied, where necessary, to ensure that they have they have evidence that they have the ability to undertake the programme.
- 5.2.3 The emphasis of the admissions procedures is to ensure that students positively select the University and wish to be part of it. All applicants will therefore be invited to a Visit Day which will be aimed at giving students an appreciation of University life as well as the subject(s) they wish to study.
- 5.2.4 A number of programmes at St Mary's University have an interview requirement. The purpose of the interview is to assess their suitability for the programme and may include practical sessions where appropriate. To ensure all applicants get the same information, the interview will include similar elements to the Visit Day. Full and clear information about the interview day and requirements will be sent out to applicants in advance of the interview. Where possible, alternative dates will be given to applicants who are not able to attend their original date.

Where an offer cannot be made for an oversubscribed programme, an alternative offer on a different programme may be made if the student is interested in the University. Offers and rejections from programmes that interview will be made by the Head of Admissions and Student Data Returns to ensure that the system is monitored and there is consistency of approach.

### **5.3 BA(ITT) Primary Programme**

5.3.1 All students must meet the general entrance requirement and any requirements laid down by the Secretary of State responsible for Teacher Education, i.e. they must have passed GCSE Mathematics, English and a Science at Grade C, or have an equivalent qualification, before admission.

5.3.2 In line with the Secretary of State's requirements, all students must be interviewed. At interview candidates will be expected to:

- Communicate clearly and confidently, both orally and in writing;
- Demonstrate their commitment to a career in teaching;
- Show an understanding of the changing demands of the profession and of the teacher's role and responsibilities.

5.3.3 The School of Education is looking for:

- Suitability for a career in teaching;
- Competence in the Subject(s) a student intends to teach;
- General academic achievement and potential.

5.3.5 In addition to satisfying the academic requirements of the programme, students are required to complete a Declaration of Health form to ensure that they meet the Secretary of State's requirements Fitness to Teach and complete a Disclosure and Barring Service Check and any other checks determined by the Secretary of State from time to time to ensure that they are able to work safely with children (see section 14 on Criminal Convictions).

From 2012 entry onwards, there is a requirement for all applicants to pass National Skills Tests, set out by The National College for Teaching and Leadership, prior to registration on the programme. This is an absolute requirement and will form part of the conditional offer that will be made to all successful applicants.

### **5.4 Confirmation and Clearing**

5.4.1 The aim of the University's procedures is to give preference to students who wish to study at the University and benefit from its particular ethos. To this

end, all students who fail to achieve the required grades at A-level or other qualification, but nonetheless have satisfied the general entry requirement, will be carefully considered.

- 5.4.2 Any programme which has not recruited to target will be entered into Clearing, but all students so recruited must satisfy the general entry requirement.

## **5.5 Part-time Undergraduate students**

- 5.5.1 The University recruits part-time students to the majority of our Undergraduate programmes. In recognition of the experience such students will bring to the programmes, mature students will be admitted on an open access policy. Such students must complete the FHEQ level 4 requirements before proceeding to Honours level to ensure they have the ability to successfully complete the programme.

## **6 Foundation Degree Programmes**

- 6.1 For full-time programmes, applicants should apply through UCAS (see above). For part-time programmes, applications should use the University form.
- 6.2 Applicants to Foundation Degree programmes are normally required to have at least one six unit FHEQ Level 3 qualification. They may also need to meet particular programme requirements which may include employment or placement in a particular work setting.
- 6.3 Application forms are considered by Programme Directors who may interview before making a decision. The following factors will be taken into account when evaluating applicants' suitability:
- Awareness of, and sympathy towards, the University's identity, aims and ethos;
  - An interest in and commitment to, the programme in question;
  - Academic background and qualifications;
  - Professional interests and experience.
- 6.4 Where students will be dealing with children or vulnerable adults, applicants must also undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly the Criminal Records Bureau) check, plus any other checks which are specified from time to time.

## **7 Postgraduate Certificate in Education/Professional Certificate in Education (PGCE)**

- 7.1 Applicants for PGCE programmes must be graduates, or about to graduate from a UK University degree programme or overseas equivalent. This degree must fulfil any particular requirements of the subject or age phase applied for. In addition they will be required to have GCSE grade C or above or the equivalent in English, Mathematics and Primary and Secondary PE candidates must have a Science.
- 7.2 Other requirements for PGCE students are the same as those outlined for the BA(ITT) programmes in paragraph 4 above.

## **8 Masters Degree Programmes**

- 8.1 Applicants to Masters programmes are normally required to have:
- A minimum of a second class honours degree from a UK university or equivalent qualification and/or;
  - To have professional interests and experience relevant to their chosen programme;
  - An appropriate reference.

Candidates who do not have a first degree or relevant experience, but who nonetheless are considered as having the potential to successfully undertake Masters level study, may be required to take a FHEQ Level 6 module to assess their suitability.

- 8.2 Application forms are considered by Programme Directors who may interview before making a decision. The following factors will be taken into account when evaluating applicants' suitability:
- Awareness of, and sympathy towards, the College's identity, aims and ethos;
  - Interest in and commitment to, the programme in question;
  - Academic background and qualifications;
  - Professional interests and experience.

## **9 Research Degrees**

- 9.1 Applicants for MPhil or PhD degrees are assessed on an individual basis and the suitability of available supervisory arrangements and facilities must also be considered. Students who wish to register for a higher degree should have a good first degree and research interests that coincide with the academic expertise of a member of staff at the University. All applicants are interviewed within their chosen school initially, and then considered by the Sub-Committee

for Research Students which reports to the University Research and Scholarship Committee.

- 9.2 Students will normally be registered on the University's pre-registration period during which time they will work with their proposed Supervisor on their research proposal and the application to Liverpool Hope University. Following the pre-registration period they will make their application to the University which must first be scrutinised by the Sub-Committee for Research Students' Progress. On the recommendation of the Sub-Committee, formal application will be made to Liverpool Hope University.

## **10 Interviews**

- 10.1 Where interviews are conducted, there must be clear criteria against which applicants will be assessed. These criteria will be made available to applicants prior to the interview. At least two people must be involved in the decisions about the applicants and a record maintained of how applicants were assessed against the criteria.

## **11 Deferred Entry**

- 11.1 The University is happy to consider applications for deferred entry for undergraduate students. Decisions on such applications will be made according to the usual criteria.
- 11.2 All other applicants should normally make their application in the year prior to which they wish to study. If they subsequently wish to defer they should make their request in writing to the Undergraduate Admissions Office. Applicants for Undergraduate programmes will be allowed to defer their application for one year only. If after that deferral period, the applicant wishes to postpone entry for a further year, they will be asked to reapply. Deferrals for PGCE programmes will only be approved by the relevant Programme Director.

## **12 Applicants under the age of 18**

- 12.1 The University will admit students who are under the age of 18. Under the law such applicants are considered to be children and special procedures need to be put in place to ensure that the University undertakes its duty of care. Please contact the Head of Admissions and Student Data Returns for a copy of the procedures for the admission of students under the age of 18.

## **13 Students with Additional Requirements**

- 13.1 Applicants are invited to declare any disability on the relevant application form. Such students are considered according to the Admissions Protocol for Students with Additional Requirements is attached at Appendix A.

## **14 Looked After Young People**



- 14.1 Any looked after young people who apply will be given support and made an offer provided they meet or have the potential to meet the entrance requirements for the programme. Their applications will be handled according to the Protocol for the Support of Looked After Young People attached at Appendix B.

## **15 Criminal Convictions**

- 15.1 All applicants for programmes are asked to declare whether they have any relevant criminal convictions. When considering such applicants it is important to bear in mind the policy to give all applicants who have the potential to benefit from the education an offer of a place. It is, however, important that this policy is undertaken without prejudice to the safety and well-being of other members of the University community. To this end all applicants who declare a conviction will be asked to provide details of it in writing. This will be considered by the Registrar (or nominee) and/or a Pro Vice-Chancellor who will take into account the severity of the offence. Where the offence is of a serious nature (i.e. there was a custodial sentence) more information may be required before a final decision is made.
- 15.2 Applicants for Initial Teacher Training programmes or those programmes where there is contact with children or vulnerable adults are required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check. Where they have convictions, they are considered by the above process but in consultation with the Programme Director.
- 15.3 In considering applicants with criminal records, the University follows the Policy Statement on the Offer of Places on Programmes to Ex-Offenders attached at Appendix C.

## **16 Applications for Advanced Standing or Credit Transfer**

- 16.1 Where appropriate, applicants may apply for admission to the second or third year of a programme, or for exemption from particular modules based on study undertaken at another institution. All such applications will be considered by the Head of Admissions and Student Data Returns and the Registrar, on the recommendation of the Programme Director.
- 16.2 The University will not normally accept applications for accreditation of prior experiential learning except for entry to Masters programmes, or as part of a structured programme of continual professional development (CPD).

## **17 Overseas students**

- 17.1 The University welcomes applications from overseas students for its degree programmes. Students from overseas are required to satisfy the entrance requirements for the University and the particular programme. They are also required to satisfy the English Language Requirement as set out on our website, in the International Students section – both at programme-level and also as laid down by the Home Office for non-EU/EEA students.
- 17.2 All overseas students are required to pay a tuition fee deposit as a condition of their offer. They are required to secure a visa according to the applicable law and students will only be supplied with the necessary documents once their tuition fee deposit has been paid and both academic and other visa – related conditions have been met. Further information is provided on our website. It is possible that from time to time, conditions of issuance of visas will change, as dictated by legislation from the UK government.
- 17.3 Overseas students who disclose a disability or additional needs will be contacted by the Dyslexia and Disability Coordinator to determine what level of support can be provided. Wherever possible, the University will consider making the necessary reasonable adjustments in order to provide for overseas students with a declared disability.

## **18 EU students including Erasmus students**

- 18.1 For the purposes of admissions, students from the EU are treated in the same way as home students although they will be required to satisfy the English Language Requirement as set out in the prospectus.
- 18.2 Students will be admitted to the Erasmus programme provided they fulfil the requirements and there are sufficient spaces under the reciprocal agreements between their institution and the University.

## **19 Feedback to unsuccessful applicants**

- 19.1 Applicants who are unsuccessful in their application will be provided with feedback on request regarding the reasons for their rejection.

## **20 Registration and Induction**

- 20.1 All students will be asked to complete registration formalities and pay their fees or satisfy the Finance Director that they will be able to do so. Enrolment and fees differ for each programme and information will be sent in advance to students explaining what is required, as well as being published in advance on the University website.
- 20.2 All students will be given an induction to the University, including the learning resources available, and to their particular programme.

## **21 Data Protection**

- 21.1 All data provided by applicants as part of the application process will be kept confidential to those involved in the admissions process according to the University's Data Protection Policy. No data, including information on offers and acceptances, will be released to a third party without the applicant's written permission.
- 21.2 References for applicants may normally be shared with the applicant unless the referee has specified otherwise.

## **22 Accuracy and availability of information**

- 22.1 The University aims to provide accurate information for prospective students to enable them to gain a realistic impression of the institution. All Honours degree students are invited to a visit day or interview where they are given a tour of the campus by University students. Open Days are provided to all potential applicants where they can discuss the programme with academic staff and see the facilities available.
- 22.2 The University reviews its publicity materials annually to ensure that they are fit for purpose and to ensure that they are providing applicants with sufficient information to make an informed decision. The University makes information available on both the University and the programme to all applicants both through printed prospectuses and through the web.
- 22.3 The University will produce information in alternative formats where requested.
- 22.4 Where the University's programmes are accredited by a professional body, the extent of any exemptions or memberships will be made clear in any promotional material.
- 22.5 The University will provide information on fees through its promotional materials.

## **23 Complaints and Appeals regarding the Admissions process**

- 23.1 Applicants who have a complaint regarding any aspect of their admissions application should address this in writing to the Registrar setting out the nature of their complaint and how they would like it to be resolved. The Registrar will ensure that the complaint is dealt with by the appropriate Head of School or Service and applicants will receive a response within four weeks of their initial letter.
- 23.2 Applicants may appeal against a decision to reject an application. Appeals will be considered by the Registrar and the Pro Vice-Chancellor and will consider the applicants qualifications for the programme, the interview record where appropriate and any further information the applicant wishes to put

forward in support of their application. Applicants will be notified of the result of their appeal within four weeks. Appeals may only be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- administrative error;
- irregularities in the conduct of the admissions process;
- prejudice or unreasonable bias.

Please note: Applicants may not appeal against the academic judgements made in the admissions process.

## **Appendix A**

### **ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPLICANTS WITH ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

The University has a well-established system set out below for identifying students who may require additional support due to disabilities, including dyslexia. This system aims to identify and support specific additional needs such students may have. We encourage all disabled students to both declare their disability on their UCAS or other form and to contact us as soon as possible in order that we can make any arrangements well in advance.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Disability Equality Scheme which can be found on the University website at [www.stmarys.ac.uk](http://www.stmarys.ac.uk)

The system for applicants works as follows:

- 1.** All application forms for Undergraduate, Foundation and Masters programmes are inspected by Registry and forms from students who have disclosed a disability are passed to the Dyslexia & Disability Coordinator. Information on disability services will be sent out by the Admissions team to all applicants who are offered a place/interview.
- 2.** The Dyslexia & Disability Coordinator (located within Student Services) assesses the application form to consider the level of support needs required. Programme Directors will be informed of potential students who have particular support needs.
- 3.** Applicants who do not report significant support needs will be made an offer according to the published academic criteria.
- 4.** Students who disclose particular support needs are made an offer according to the published academic criteria and will be invited to visit the University to meet the Programme Team and the Dyslexia & Disability Coordinator. Visits are designed to make sure that the applicant can sample the environment of the University and also have a chance to meet the programme team(s) for the programme(s) for which they have applied. The range of support needs and adjustments which may be required will be discussed at this stage and should cover:
  - Adaptations to the physical environment – mobility around the campus including access to specialist areas such as laboratories;
  - Programme specific requirements and possible adaptations to the programme;
  - General learning and teaching requirements;
  - Accommodation and catering requirements (if applicable).
- 5.** Once the visit has taken place, the University and the applicant will have a better understanding of whether St Mary's and the specific programme(s) applied for will be suitable for the study and support needs of the applicant.

**6.** Students with particular support needs would be invited to attend a further meeting with the Dyslexia & Disability Coordinator if they choose St Mary's as their firm acceptance through UCAS or, if applying for non UCAS programmes, accept an offer of a place on the programme. At this meeting, support and funding would be discussed in greater detail to prepare for admission.

**7.** All other applicants who have disclosed a disability and choose St Mary's as their firm offer will be contacted by the Dyslexia & Disability Coordinator once their choice has been made.

**8.** As a condition of any programme offer, all Teacher Training (ITT) applicants are required to complete a confidential declaration of health to assess their physical and mental fitness to teach. This is a government requirement for all ITT students and the University follows the Department of Children, Schools and Families Guidelines on Fitness to Teach when assessing students' medical fitness.

## **Appendix B**

### **PROTOCOL FOR THE SUPPORT OF LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE**

St Mary's University supports Looked After Young People during their application and transition to Higher Education. This protocol sets out how and when this support is provided.

Looked after young people seeking advice during the decision making and application process will be advised and supported by our Recruitment Team. Once they have applied, applicants will be written to advise them of the support available by the Registry.

Looked after young people will normally be given an offer of a place provided they are able to meet the general entry requirement. This may be for an alternative programme if they do not qualify for their chosen programme or do not meet the criteria.

Those who are offered a place will be able to contact the Head of Student Services who will be a single point of contact for any non-academic queries including those relating to accommodation, fees and funding.

A pre-enrolment welcome session will be offered to those who are joining the University before term starts. The Head of Student Services will continue to support students with any issues or concerns that may arise during their time studying with at St Mary's.

Students who would like to have a place in Halls will be guaranteed a place for the duration of their studies.

**For more information, please contact:**  
[studentservices@stmarys.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@stmarys.ac.uk)

## **Appendix C**

### **POLICY STATEMENT ON THE OFFER OF PLACES ON PROGRAMMES TO EX-OFFENDERS**

St Mary's University uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for entry to programmes of study, some of which involve access to young people or vulnerable adults. We comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for these programmes fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

St Mary's University is committed to the fair treatment of its students regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. We offer places or select candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

We encourage all applicants to provide details of their relevant criminal record at an early stage in the application process. This information should be declared on the UCAS or GTTR form. Those who have declared a relevant conviction should provide information concerning the conviction sent under separate, confidential cover, to the Head of Admissions & Student Data Returns. (Please note: this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process).

Applicants who did not declare a relevant conviction at the time of original application are encouraged to write to the University as soon as possible.

We ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from studying with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. If you have declared a conviction, this will be explored with you at interview, or in a separate discussion.

Consideration will be given as to whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the programme and your studies; the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed; the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred; whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters; whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or the other relevant matters; and the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the programme applied for could result in withdrawal of an offer on the programme. We would, however, undertake to



discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of a place on a programme.

The decision of the University's Registrar regarding the admission of an ex-offender is final, although an appeal against this decision can be made if the criteria in paragraph 23.2 of the Admissions Policy are met. Any such submissions should be sent directly to Dr Claire Taylor, Pro Vice-Chancellor.

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