

Staff Development Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose of the Policy and Procedure

- 1.1 This document sets out the University's policy and procedure for dealing with staff development, including the eligibility and funding arrangements for qualifications, sponsorships and short courses.
- 1.2 The aim of this document is to ensure we have a skilled, knowledgeable and engaged workforce now and for the future. Effective staff development strategies will support the University to reach its strategic goals, enhance its reputation and instill a culture of continuous learning. In addition, the panel procedure for funding allocation ensures that all staff have equal access to apply for funding.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure is applicable to all staff ensuring inclusivity as set out in St Mary's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity. It applies to all staff regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time or on a fixed-term contract. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Organisational Development (OD) team

- 3.1.1 The OD team will work closely with HR Partnering colleagues to identify development needs through analysis of Faculty/Institute/Service People Plans and appraisals.
- 3.1.2 The OD team is responsible for ensuring that non-academic development activities meet the needs of the Institutes/Faculty/Service. This includes identifying suitable solutions and delivering internally or procuring support externally, dependant on the needs identified.
- 3.1.3 The OD team will prepare an end of year evaluation report for the University Executive Committee which will include metrics to show overall effectiveness and proposals for activity for the year ahead.

3.2 Centre for Teaching Excellence and Student Success (CTESS)

- 3.2.1 The Academic Development (AD) team within CTESS are responsible for developing and delivering the University's Academic Development Framework (ADF), including identifying appropriate themes and session formats, delivered internally or with the support of external contacts.
- 3.2.2 The AD team will work closely with Associate Deans for Student Experience (ADSEs), the Dean of Learning and Teaching and the OD team to identify academic development needs, in response to institutional priorities – for example those in the [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#) – and local needs. This includes analysis of Annual Programme Reviews, discussion at Faculty, Institute and University Academic Development Committees (FADC/IADC/ADC) and annual meetings.
- 3.2.3 The AD team will prepare an end of year evaluation report for the University ADC, including metrics on attendance and engagement, a reflective account of the ADF, and proposals for the year ahead.

3.3 Staff Development Funding (SDF) Panel

- 3.3.1 The SDF panel will make decisions on funding applications including funding allocations for qualifications (except PhD programmes), sponsored development activity and short courses that exceed £1,000 in costs.
- 3.3.2 The panel is diverse and consists of a number of representatives from various Institutes/Faculty and Services, the Director of HR and the Head of Organisational Development.
- 3.3.3 The panel meets twice a year in June and October to review received applications following the Staff Development Funding Application Window periods. The panel may hold extraordinary meetings during the year should the need arise.

3.4 Senior Manager (Deans/Directors)

- 3.4.1 The Senior Manager will consider the training and development implications as a result of their strategic priorities, as set out in their annual business and local People Plans or Annual Programme Reviews, sharing their plans with direct reports in a timely manner to enable line managers to consider impact within their teams.
- 3.4.2 The Senior Manager is responsible for collating their Faculty/Institute/Service development needs with the Associate Deans of Student Experience providing specific input on academic development. The needs identified must be submitted to the OD team via the HR Partners within the timescales communicated to enable effective planning of development activities ready for the next academic year.
- 3.4.3 The Senior Manager will consider the value added and impact of the training on the individual and the University before making decisions on training and development interventions.

3.5 Line Managers

- 3.5.1 Line managers have a responsibility for developing their staff, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to undertake their roles effectively.
- 3.5.2 Line managers will usually give staff permission for time away from the workplace for them to attend development activities.
- 3.5.3 Line managers should give staff time to undertake reflective writing in support of Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship applications and continuous professional development (CPD) to remain in good standing – for example via participation in ADF events – to enable achievement of the University’s target of 90% of staff holding a HE teaching qualification (Learning and Teaching Strategy 2021, Measures of Success). They will consider the impact to service delivery, ensuring cover is available to minimise disruption to service.
- 3.5.4 They will engage in regular discussions about how individuals will consolidate and share their learning, and maintain their standing with the HEA where appropriate and discuss their progress at regular 1:1 meetings and appraisals.
- 3.5.5 Line managers must consider any existing qualifications individuals hold prior to approving application forms for funding. Line managers are responsible for assessing whether there is a justified need for the individual to hold another qualification in order to deliver their role.

3.6 Staff

- 3.6.1 Staff will take responsibility for identifying their learning needs and suggesting solutions to their line manager for how these needs may be met. They will apply new learning in the workplace, support others to learn and ask for support with their learning if required.
- 3.6.2 Staff may have the right to ask for time off work for training or study so long as they are full-time, part-time or on a fixed-term contract, have worked for the University for at least 26 weeks, and the training will help them perform more effectively in their job roles. Staff should discuss this with their line when completing a funding application form.

4. Identifying Learning Needs

Development needs will be identified at three levels. These are:

- 4.1 **Organisational wide Training Needs Analysis (TNA)** – Where possible University wide learning needs will be captured as part of the annual business, people planning and appraisal processes. This will ensure needs are captured to support strategic and local targets, ensuring St Mary’s has the sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to achieve Vision 2030 and work towards strategic learning and teaching priorities and targets.
- 4.2 **Faculty/Institute/Service** – during the people planning exercise Heads of Faculty/Institute/Service should identify any learning needs that have been identified through local strategic/business plans/Annual Programme Reviews. For example, the needs may be determined through changes in IT software,

new working practices/processes, obtaining HE teaching qualifications via HEA Fellowships or upskilling via engagement with CPD internally or externally (e.g. Advance HE events), and through the performance levels of teams within the Faculty/Institute/Service. It is recognised that on rare occasions these needs may be identified outside of the planning exercise window, in such instances the Senior Manager should discuss this with their HR Partner.

- 4.3 Individual** – learning needs should be identified on arrival as part of the induction process to ensure that new staff are able to operate effectively as quickly as possible. Needs will also be identified during the probation process and at appraisal. Individuals should take responsibility for their own learning where possible which can be discussed at regular 1:1 meetings with managers.

5 Staff Development Opportunities

Staff development opportunities can be seen on the OD and Academic Development Framework pages on the staff website. Opportunities for academic CPD are also disseminated through FADC/IADC/ADC and the ADF Brochure.

It is expected that all new academic staff undertake the PgCert Academic Practice (PgCAP) programme within 1 year, unless they have already been awarded a teaching qualification or have sufficient teaching experience to achieve at least FHEA status via the Continuing Professional Development Route (CPDR). It is recommended that 0.1FTE is allocated to PgCAP and teaching load of new staff adjusted accordingly, where staff resources allow (Learning and Teaching Strategy 2021, Empowering our People). The PgCAP programme is run by Academic Development in CTESS and is accredited by Advance HE, successful completion of the programme leads to the award of Fellowship of the HEA (FHEA).

- 5.1** As well as traditional courses there are many ways for staff to address their learning needs. These include:

- Attending planned events that are organised by OD
- attending events as part of the ADF
- attending externally provided short courses
- attending function-specific conferences and exhibitions
- on the job training
- coaching and mentoring
- peer observation and review
- the Peer Observation for Professional Development (POPD) scheme
- attainment of professional qualifications e.g. NVQ, HEA Fellowships (AFHEA, FHEA, SFHEA, PFHEA), CIPD, CIMA, SEDA Fellowships (FSEDA, SFSEDA), where appropriate to their post
- Application to national teaching recognition schemes, such as the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) and National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) run by Advance HE.
- Completing a degree/ higher degree applicable their role
- Acting up/shadowing

- 5.2** Staff development activities – all planned staff development activities will be promoted through the bi-weekly Staff Newsletter. This will include a range of

learning opportunities e.g. technical, personal development, wellbeing, leadership and management etc.

5.3 ADF Calendar – the calendar of academic development events offers a range of formats of sessions targeted towards developing the skills of academic and student-facing colleagues in their professional teaching and learning practices.

5.4 The level of activity in any academic year and the level of funding for development will depend on budget availability.

6 Booking development activity, cancellations and DNA (Did not attend) charges

6.1 Accessing courses

6.1.1 The Staff Newsletter and the ADF Calendar offer a range of development activities. As part of the University's commitment to inclusion and diversity all staff can apply for the courses offered. In the case of staff who have disabilities i.e. visual impairment, deafness and hard of hearing, wheelchair access reasonable adjustments will be made. Staff can indicate the reasonable adjustments they require by emailing organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk or when emailing their booking for ADF events

6.1.2 The staff member or their line manager can book a place ensuring necessary permissions to attend have been granted. Places cannot always be guaranteed and if a course or event is oversubscribed consideration will be given to repeating the event. If a course is undersubscribed St Mary's reserves the right to cancel it. Once booked on a course, joining instructions will be sent with full details of the event via the organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk or adf@stmarys.ac.uk email address if required.

6.1.3 If a member of staff can no longer attend the course, after making an initial booking, they are required to cancel their booking at least 48 hours in advance of the course taking place. In the event of failure to do so, the course provider reserves the right to levy a 'Did not attend' charge of £50, which will be recharged to the relevant Faculty/Institute/Service, unless there are extreme or unforeseen circumstances.

6.1.4 The OD and ADF teams reserve the right to cancel or postpone an event if a lack of bookings makes the session untenable. For normal purposes this is five attendees but this may vary at the OD/AD teams' discretion. In the event of cancellation or postponement, prospective attendees registered on the programme will be emailed from either the organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk or adf@stmarys.ac.uk email address

6.2 External short courses/conferences

6.2.1 If funding is sought for a short external course/event (one/two-day course), the staff member should complete the **External Funding Request Form**.

For courses costing less than £1,000 the Faculty/Institute/Service should endeavor to fund these through the local staff development budget. The Faculty/Institute/Service is responsible for booking and making payment arrangements directly with the provider. Any courses exceeding £1,000 will be subject to the SDF Panel process.

In both instances completed forms must be signed by the senior manager and the individuals line manager and returned to Organisational Development at organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk to ensure central records of training activity are kept. Any incomplete forms will be returned to the staff member and will not be processed.

Staff must wait for funding to be agreed before they make any bookings for courses. Staff are encouraged to use 'early-bird' booking offers and group booking discounts wherever possible.

6.2.2 Once a commitment has been made to an external development activity cancellation should be avoided unless there are extreme or unforeseen circumstances. If attendance at an event is cancelled without good reason the full cost of the booking will be charged to the employing Faculty/Institute/Service.

6.2.3 Where attendance at an event will require staff cover, this should be provided within local resources.

6.2.4 Bookings and funding of conferences is organised locally within the Faculty/Institutes/Service.

7. Attendance and Evaluation Data

Attendance records for all learning activity will be kept centrally within OD/AD teams. Following training and development activity, individuals will be asked to complete, normally anonymously, a form evaluating the course and its impact on performance. This will assist with an overall evaluation and justification of what is being offered, how relevant it is and whether or not it should be modified in any way. The information from these forms will be kept within OD/AD and analysed centrally for inclusion in the annual evaluation reports prepared by the OD and AD teams.

8. Professional Qualifications and Sponsored Development

To undertake development activity that requires funding staff must complete the **Qualification, Sponsorship and Course Funding Request Form**. Staff should read the criteria requirements set out at Appendix 1 before completing a form. Once completed, forms must be returned to organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk within the Staff Development Funding Application Windows. The application windows will be communicated via the University's communication channels. They take place twice a year as below. Forms that arrive outside of the application windows may be rejected subject to funding allocations at the Staff Development Funding Panel meetings.

- in June for a September commencement of study
- in October for a January commencement of study

Staff are encouraged to explore at least three different providers for the course they wish to pursue before requesting funding. These possibilities should be discussed with their line manager who will be able to advise on the most suitable course and the best value for money.

Staff are discouraged to pursue a course involving full or part-day release. However, where no other suitable alternative can be sourced, release will need to be granted by the Senior Manager who may offer a flexible working arrangement, considering impact on service delivery.

8.1 Funding support

The University may part-fund courses (up to 75% of the total fee) leading to the attainment of a professional qualification, degree/higher degree or specific skills and knowledge through sponsored development activities, where the course is relevant to the individual's role. The two categories for levels of funding awarded can be seen at Appendix 1. The activity should be identified during strategic/business planning cycles as a direct need to deliver the University's strategic objectives.

Funding will only be considered if an individual can meet the entry requirements of the course and have been successful in completing previous courses (if relevant).

Funding is paid towards the cost of all registration, tuition, course work-submission and examination fees. In exceptional cases residential costs may be paid where this is a pre-requisite of the course. No funds are available towards the cost of books or other materials. It is expected that the individual will fund the remaining percentage of the fees through two options:

1. OD pay the full fee to the course provider and the individual has their percentage deducted monthly through payroll via a **Study Loan Application Form**.
2. OD and the individual pay their percentages directly to the provider through separate invoices.

The funding received will be in the form of a loan which will have to be repaid to St Mary's in the event of the individual leaving within a two-year period following the completion of the course. Appendix 2 sets out the full Terms and Conditions for funded courses and must be read before any funding requests are made.

8.2 Decisions on funding

Decisions on funding (except PhD funding) will be made by the University SDF Panel.

The panel will review application forms against set criteria as set out in Appendix 1 and the supporting information supplied to inform decision making.

Applicants will be notified of panel decisions in writing. All approved applications will be subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 2.

8.3 Funding for deferred studies

If a staff member defers their studies to a later date they must inform their line manager and Organisational Development as soon as possible via organisationaldevelopment@stmarys.ac.uk.

Where the deferral results in loss of fees the individual will be required to reimburse any funds that were paid by the University. If deferral is to another academic year individuals will be expected to make a new application for funding, which will be subject to the SDF Panel process.

8.4 Professional Membership Fees

OD will pay for professional membership fees for any staff member who is currently being sponsored for a qualification. Once this sponsorship has ceased, the individual will be responsible for paying these fees accordingly. Senior Managers can fund professional membership fees at their own discretion, bearing in mind the HMRC rule below.

The HMRC regulations state that where the organisation pays membership fees, individuals are not entitled to make a claim on their personal Income Tax Return. However, where individuals are paying, they can reclaim tax on fees or subscriptions to some approved professional organisations – but only if they must have membership to do their job or it is helpful for their work. Further guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/professional-fees-and-subscriptions>

8.5 Study Leave and Time Off to Sit Examinations – Funded by St Mary’s

Paid leave will be given to staff to sit any examinations that form part of a course funded or part-funded by St Mary’s. Additionally, consideration will be given to paid study leave prior to any such examinations. A total of 5 days may be granted in any academic year for this activity. This will normally be the day of the exam itself plus one day’s study leave for each examination day, up to five days in total. All study and examination leave is granted in addition to annual leave entitlement but must be agreed by the Senior Manager.

8.6 Study leave and Time Off to Sit Examinations – Not funded by St Mary’s

Paid leave will not normally be granted to any staff member who is undertaking examinations for courses that are not funded by St Mary’s. In exceptional circumstances the Senior Manager may agree to this based on the principles outlined in 9.3.

If study time necessitates sabbatical leave or cover in any other form the funding of such cover must be available within the Faculty/Institute/Service as there will be no central funding for such costs.

9. Studying for Degrees/Higher Degrees offered at St Mary’s University

If a member of staff wishes to undertake a course taught at St. Mary’s University and the study to be relevant to their post, no course fee will normally be charged to the staff member where the course is a requirement for the role.

If the preferred course of taught academic study is not job related or relevant to the current role the staff member will be required to pay 20% of the cost of the degree. However, St Mary's may still wish to support a staff member if mutual benefits can be established/recognised. Mutual benefits will normally include the individual staff member's opportunity for self-development, promotion of St Mary's commitment to equality of access to higher education and broader benefits relating to staff retention and increased opportunity for internal progression.

If both line manager and Senior Manager agree with the application the process at Item 8 should be followed to apply for the course. Appendix 3 sets out the considerations to be made before making an application. If approved by the SDF Panel no course fee will be charged to the individual, however sections 1 and 4 of Appendix 2 will be applied.

9.1 Payment of courses studied at St Mary's

Payment of the course will be in the form of a fee waiver, which will be administered by the relevant Faculty/Institute/Service and Registry. All other costs relating to a course will be the responsibility of the staff member, e.g. field trips, books and costs relating to any visits.

If a member of staff is required to pay 20% of the costs they can do this through two options:

1. monthly deductions through payroll via a **Study Loan Application Form**.
2. pay their 20% in full to Registry

9.2 Study leave and Time Off to Sit Examinations – courses at St Mary's

There is no provision for time off to undertake studies. Where attendance at a course would be required during the normal working week the Senior Manager advice should be sought in the first instance, prior to any application for a place on a taught degree level course at St Mary's being submitted.

10. Studying short/non-degree courses at St Mary's

Staff who wish to study or undertake a short course or a non-degree course at St Mary's are responsible for paying the fees and any additional costs themselves. However, where the course will support their learning in their job role, St Mary's may be able to offer staff a discount on the course fees at the discretion of the SDF Panel. Anyone wishing to undertake a short course at St Mary's and wants to apply for a possible discount should complete the **Qualification, Sponsorship and Course Funding Request Form** and submit it to organisational.development@stmarys.ac.uk

11. Support for PhDs

Support for PhDs undertaken at St Mary's will be made by a representative from the Research Services Office. No retrospective funding claims can be given.

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Criteria for the Staff Development Funding Panel decision making process

Pre-requisite criteria for considering applications for funding are:

1. Staff member has passed probation and performance is satisfactory
2. The qualification/sponsored programme was identified as a development need for the staff member.
3. Staff member's contractual period covers the length of the course and the two year repayment period as stated in paragraph 'Terms and Conditions/Repayment of Funds'.
4. Staff member has considered at least three different options for the course they wish to pursue before requesting funding.
5. The course of study is part-time.

The following two criteria will be used to assess the level of funding to be granted to individuals:

1. Qualification is essential to delivering the University's strategic objectives. The staff member needs to specifically refer to the relevant strategic objectives as part of the application process.
 - If yes, up to 75% of the course fees can be funded
 - If no, the decision-making process follows on to point 2.
2. Qualification supports the staff members career development. Mutual benefits will normally include the individual staff member's opportunity for self-development, promotion of St Mary's commitment to equality of access to higher education and broader benefits relating to staff retention and increased opportunity for internal progression.
 - a. If yes, up to 60% of the course fees can be funded

In addition to the above the following will be considered during the panel's decision-making process:

1. The number of nominations for funding received from the Faculty/Institute/Service. The panel will consider the number of applications from each Faculty/Institute/Service to ensure equity of access to development and funding across the University.
2. To ensure equality of access to development opportunities for all staff, a request for funding may be declined if it is considered that the financial support an individual has already received is such that to authorise further expenditure could have a detrimental effect on the availability of funds for others.
3. Payment will not normally be authorised for an external qualification training course when an internal alternative is available.

The following criteria are applicable to St Mary's degree courses only:

1. No more than one staff member will be allowed to participate on any one course, this is due to cost recovery purposes and to ensure the student experience is maintained.

Terms and Conditions for funded courses

The following Terms and Conditions apply to all staff who receive funding for courses:

1. The funding received will be in the form of a loan which will have to be repaid to St Mary's in the event of the staff member leaving within a two year period following the completion of the course. For clarity, completion of the course is the date at which the award is made to the staff member, not the date of the last exam or assignment. Repayments will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. 100% repayment will be expected if a staff member leaves within 6 months of completion, 75% within one year of completion, 50% within eighteen months of completion and 25% within the remaining six months. The terms of the loan cease after this two year period. Any outstanding repayment will be deducted from the staff member's final salary. In the case of redundancy/ retirement or dismissal, any repayment amounts will be at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team.
2. A staff member who receives funding will be eligible for their contribution to be paid in full by St Mary's but have this deducted from their salary in monthly installments through payroll, if preferred, or, the staff member can pay the provider in full themselves.
3. St Mary's will arrange to pay the course provider directly for its percentage of the fee.
4. Where a member of staff fails a year and has to repeat, he/she will pay their own fees for the repeat year. If the staff member is unsuccessful in the repeat year any further funding for subsequent years or funding requests will be at the discretion of the Director of HR.
5. The staff member is responsible for making their own course booking directly with the provider once they have confirmation of funding.
6. A member of staff will not normally be funded or given time off to attend a training and development activity during their notice period

Undertaking an internal course at St Mary's University

The course of study should be part-time. Staff should complete a **Qualification, Sponsorship and Course Funding Request Form** and return this to OD. Once agreed, staff can apply to the course directly through the Registry.

1. Staff should not apply for full-time courses owing to the level of teaching input and study time that will be required during working time.
2. Contracted hours will still have to be worked when undertaking a course at St Mary's. However, flexible working arrangements can be discussed and must be agreed with your line manager.
3. For any St Mary's course, no more than one staff member will be allowed to participate, this is due to cost recovery purposes and to ensure the student experience is maintained.
4. Applications for any course at St Mary's must have been identified through the appraisal process and staff must have achieved an overall rating of 'Good' or above to be eligible.
5. All applicants must have passed their probationary period.
6. All other study leave benefits apply (i.e. see Item 8.4 above)
7. This funding is only available to staff who have been at St Mary's for a minimum of 2 years and whose contractual period covers the length of the course.
8. The funding received for the course will be in the form of a fee waiver which may have to be repaid at the normal fee level for the course in the event of the individual leaving within a two year period following the completion of the course. For clarity completion of the course is the date at which the award is made to the individual, not the date of the last exam or assignment. Repayments will be calculated on a pro-rata basis. 100% repayment will be expected if an individual leaves within 3 months of completion, 75% within 6 months of completion, 50% within nine months of completion and 25% within the remaining 3 months. The terms of the fee waiver cease after this one year period. Any outstanding repayment will be deducted from the individual's final salary.
9. For any staff member who falls outside of these regulations, they will have the option to apply for a part-time course at St Mary's and self-fund. Time off for study and for study leave in this instance may be granted at the manager's discretion.