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**Process for St Mary’s Studentships/Fee Waiver Awards**

For candidates with an outstanding academic record, St Mary’s University offers a small number of studentships/fee waiver awards to support students to obtain PhDs/EdDs. Applications will be invited from research themes across Faculty/Institutes and may vary year on year. The process is highly competitive and the main criteria for selection are academic excellence and the quality of the applicant’s research proposal. It is essential to demonstrate good knowledge of the proposed topic as well as related experience.

In order to promote equality of opportunity, studentships/fee waiver awards should be advertised internally and on the St Mary’s website.

Studentships – this includes an annual stipend of £14,000 per year which is paid in two instalments. Programme fees are also covered in the form of a fee waiver. ***Staff are not eligible to apply for a studentship***

Fee waivers – programme fees are covered in the form of a fee waiver but no stipend is included.

**UK applicants**The award covers 100% of the current tuition fees. The award will increase annually to match institutional fees.

**International students**
Full time applicants may apply for this award but the fees paid will be at the Home/EU rate.

**Staff applicants – Fee waivers only**
Fee waivers are open to members of St Mary’s staff who adhere to the scheme’s criteria. The award covers 75% of the tuition fees only. The award will increase annually to match institutional fee increases. Staff are required to pay the remaining 25% of the fee to the University.
Staff are not eligible for a St Marys Studentship.
Funding will **not** be available for staff wishing to undertake PhD study at another institution.

The fee waiver award is renewable annually and is subject to satisfactory student progress as evidenced by Annual Reviews considered at the annual Progression Board.

**Application Criteria**

Applications should address at least one of the following criteria:

1. Research Excellence Framework (REF) – contributing to a submitting REF Unit of Assessment by enhancing the research environment through increasing research student completions;
2. Research Centres – increasing critical mass in a Research Centre which the University wishes to prioritise and support as a centre of excellence;
3. Aligning to key strategic research areas that the School has identified as one it wishes to develop.

**Application Process**

Applicants should possess a Masters Degree from a UK University, or an equivalent qualification from outside the UK. Please note that equivalency of qualifications is judged by the University, and all decisions are final.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate a high level of competence in written and spoken English.

Each applicant is expected to complete the standard online St Mary’s application form for Research Degrees which requires a 3000-4000 word research proposal, a transcript of the master’s qualification and two academic references. In addition, the applicant is expected to attach a statement outlining in no more than 500 words the likely significance and impact of the proposed research, the extent of the original contribution to knowledge it will make, and/or the potential social, economic or cultural benefits of the research to the local, national or international community. The fee waiver is neither means-tested nor intended to act as hardship or financial relief. Applications justifying the award on the grounds that this will ameliorate some financial or personal circumstances will be discounted.

All admissions decisions will involve at least three members of Academic Staff. All applicants should be interviewed in person except those based overseas or working at a distance where alternative arrangements will be made, for example Skype/Zoom/MS Teams, or telephone interview.

Applicants who are successful will be informed of this decision and sent a letter offering them a studentship/ fee waiver. The offer letter will also outline the expected period of study for which the applicant’s fees will be waived, any requirements placed on the applicant (such as additional research methods training) and opportunities to undertake teaching or any other duties and any conditions associated with these.

**Case for support from Faculty/Institute**

The case for awarding a fee waiver will be based on a number of factors including:

* Fulfilling the application criteria (above);
* The level of expertise and the supervisory capacity available in the Faculty/Institute;
* The costs associated with the research and research student support, and the Faculty’s/Institute’s ability to cover these costs and manage any other resource requirements;

**Registration and Payments**

**Registration/Enrolment** On acceptance of the award, the student will complete online registration and indicate that they have been awarded a fee waiver on the fee section of the registration papers. The Fees Office will liaise with appropriate Faculty/Institute to confirm the fee waiver and appropriate budget code and this will be done on an annual basis.

**Studentship Stipend Payments**

For students receiving a stipend in addition to a fee waiver, the payment process will managed by Research Services. The stipend payment will be made in two instalments by BACs transfer directly to the student’s bank account. The first payment will be made upon completion of the registration process and from the second year of study, on satisfactory progression following the annual review (August). The second payment will be made on satisfactory completion of the interim progression review (February/March). If the student does not complete the annual review or enrolment process in October each year, the stipend may be suspended.

**Studentship/Fee Waiver Award Approval Form – submit to Research Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School / Area** |  |
| 1. Name of Faculty/Institute
 |  |
| 1. Discipline area / research theme
 |  |
| **Details of fee waivers:** |  |
| 1. Research area in which studentship is to be advertised:
 |  |
| 1. Research area in which fee waiver is to be advertised:
 |  |
| 1. Mode of study - F/T, P/T (for fee waivers only)
 |  |
| **Supervision** |  |
| 1. Proposed Supervisory Team:
 | Director of Studies:Supervisor:Advisor(s) (if appropriate): |
| **Resources:** |  |
| 1. Estimates of any additional costs that will be incurred during the course of the research with details, for example consumables, conference fee allowance etc.
 |  |
| 1. How will these additional costs be funded:
 |  |
| 1. Provide details of external match funding, if applicable
 |  |
| 1. Are there accommodation requirements?

If so, please advise on the arrangements in place. |  |
| **Recruitment:** |  |
| 1. Where will the studentships be advertised?

What is the closing date for applications? |  |
| 1. Intended start date – October or February
 |  |

**Dean of Faculty/Institute Statement:** (to provide the case for the award based on the Application Criteria and confirmation that the Faculty/Institute is agreeing to fully resource the supervisory and space requirements from its existing provision)

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|  |

**Signature of Chair of University Research Degrees Committee**

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***Office use:***

Application criteria satisfied –

1
2
3

Approved – Yes/No

Start Date – October/February

Full time/Part time

Studentship/Fee waiver

External applicant/Staff Applicant

**FULL TERMS & CONDITIONS:**

1. The studentship/fee waiver is open to applicants for PhD/EdD programmes enrolling for the first time in either Semester 1 or 2 of the academic year. Please note that enrolment can only take place once the application has been approved for registration by Liverpool Hope’s Research Degrees Committee.
2. The fee waiver is applied only to the published fee for the course of study you have applied for, regardless of your domicile status or mode of study.
3. The fee waiver is valid for three years only for full-time students and 6 years only for part-time students. The studentship is valid for three years only for full-time students. It will not be extended or renewed beyond the original term.
4. The studentship/fee waiver is not transferable or deferrable to commence outside the academic year for which you have applied. There will be an advertised deadline for the studentships.
5. Students who have applied for a studentship/fee waiver but who are unsuccessful, should they then defer the commencement of their studies, may not reapply.
6. Once a period of study has commenced, should a studentship/fee waiver-holder suspend their studies through the proper channels, their studentship/waiver is similarly suspended and will be recommenced on the resumption of studies. Should the studentship/waiver-holder withdraw from their studies, the studentship/waiver will be terminated. Please also note that on resumption of studies after a suspension, the Registry will require students to re-enrol for the entire academic year.
7. The applicant should be aware that they are liable for the full cost of their fees in the fourth year or for part time students, the seventh year and beyond.
8. There is no prescribed number of fee waivers to be awarded each year. Each Faculty is under no obligation to award all waivers in the initial round each year, or at all, should the quality of applications be insufficient to warrant it. Non-awarded waivers will not be rolled over into the following year’s allocation.

**Fee Waiver Award/Studentship Approval Process**

PhD application approved by the Liverpool Hope University

Applicant enrols

Applicant signs waiver/studentship agreement

Registration papers sent

University Research Committee Approval

Advertised

Candidate(s) interviewed by proposed Director of Studies and two other members of staff

Successful candidate made a provisional offer in writing from Research Services (subject to application being approved by the PGR Sub-Committee & Liverpool Hope

PhD application forwarded to St Mary’s PGR Sub-Committee for approval

Formal offer of waiver/studentship made in writing from the Research Office.

Faculty Complete Fee Waiver/Studentship Approval Form