



What is the First Star Scholars Programme at the University of Winchester?

- The First Star Scholars (FSS) programme is designed to support young people academically, personally, and socially throughout GCSE's and A-Levels (or equivalent) in order that they can get the grades needed to enter higher education and go on to obtain a good degree. The programme is flexible and can support students who wish to go on to study any university course, or those who wish to gain employment.
- In collaboration with First Star Scholars UK, the four-year scheme includes include monthly Saturday Schools and on-campus residentials.
- We offer academic support, life skills and personal development in an immersive higher education experience.

When does the FSS programme start and what is its duration?

The FSS programme at the University of Winchester launched in August 2021 and runs until July 2025. The commitment required includes one Saturday a month during term-time and two on-campus residentials in April (4 days) and August (3 weeks). Young people can join the programme straight away and be part of this existing cohort, which has a maximum capacity of 30.

The dates for the academic year 21/22

Monthly Academic Saturday sessions: 09:30-17:00

Oct-21 Saturday 9th

Nov-21 Saturday 13th

Dec-21 Saturday 11th

Jan-22 Saturday 8th

Feb-22 Saturday 12th

Mar-22 Saturday 12th

May-22 Saturday 14th

Jun-22 Saturday 11th

Jul-22 Saturday 9th

On-Campus Residentials

Apr-22 11th-14th -Four-day residential

Aug-22 1st-20th - Three-week residential (Mon-Fri)



Who is eligible to join FSS?

Pupils currently in Y10 and meet one of the following criteria, are eligible to apply:

- Have or have previously had Child Looked After status, or an edge-of-care arrangement.
- Live in or be looked after by a local authority in our catchment area.
- Appropriate refugee status.
- Be in Kin ship care, CAMHS Referral, or on a care plan.
- Identified by children services as on the edge of care

I want to refer a young person who is not sure about whether they want to go to university, can they still join the programme?

Yes. The programme is flexible to meet the needs of the individual participants and we support young people to realise their potential, help them decide what their future goals might be and provide guidance on their next steps afterschool/college. For those who are set on university as their goal, it is important to note that there is no emphasis placed on choosing the University of Winchester specifically, it is about what is most appropriate for individuals.

I have a young person who is interested, how can I/they find out more information about FSS?

If you or a young person/foster carer would like more information, we can offer online meetings to explain more and answer any questions to help them decide. They can also find further information on [First Star](#) or by contacting us directly on the details below.

What if a young person joins the programme and then their situation changes i.e., they have a placement move or they are no longer a Looked After Child?

We will be as flexible as we can to accommodate the changes experienced by the young people and can offer support to ensure they can still attend, despite any placement moves. If they leave the care system, they are still eligible to continue with the programme.

What if a young person joins the programme and then decides it not for them?

We want to encourage young people to give the programme a chance, however if after giving it a go they do not wish to continue, they can of course withdraw.

How do I make a referral?

Please email firststarscholars@winchester.ac.uk for a referral form.

Contact Details for further information

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