

FT STUDENT ADVOCATE PROGRAMME



FOR STUDENT ADVOCATES

Representing the voice of students, Advocates feel more confident, developing their communication, organisation and teamwork skills. It provides excellent experience to draw from in university applications.



FOR SCHOOLS

91% of students reading the FT feel more informed. Student Advocates help their friends and teachers engage with the FT, leading to a more aware, worldly sixth form.



FOR THE FT

The FT hopes to better understand how to be more relevant to young people. Student Advocates feedback ideas from their friends and teachers, helping the FT to create more useful resources for schools.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMME?

Every academic year, the Financial Times offers up to three sixth formers in each school the work experience opportunity to be a Student Advocate. Student Advocates raise awareness of the benefits of reading the FT in school and develop ideas on how the FT can better engage with young people.

Student Advocates complete their work from school, but develop their ideas with other students from across the world through regular calls and an online discussion forum. In 2020/21, we welcomed 165 students from 17 countries, from Nepal to the Czech Republic.

James has found the opportunity to meet peers from around the world through group calls and online discussions refreshing, especially at a time of social and educational disruption. "I go to a school in Las Vegas, but I've been able to interact with so many people. It's easy to live in a bubble in a virtual world, but this programme has enabled me to listen to different perspectives - it's a truly profound experience and a valuable opportunity."



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Nicole, from Hills Road Sixth Form College, believes these regular meetings help push Advocates out of their comfort zone. "Before this programme, I was scared to put my microphone on during online lessons, but now I contribute so much more," illustrating how skills developed during the programme can help Student Advocates directly in their studies.

Nicole's experience is similar to her peers: 100% of Student Advocates in previous years felt they had some or significant development in their time management, leadership, communication, creativity and public speaking skills.



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Nicole

Ellie, a Student Advocate in 2018/19, is now a Mentor for 33 Advocates and has relished passing on what she learned to the next generation. "I really enjoyed the sense of leadership as an Advocate in school. Now as a Mentor, helping Advocates grow in confidence and seeing how that spreads to other parts of their school and personal lives is really special." Thaneya Chowdhury, another Mentor, has since been offered a permanent role at the FT after graduating from university and following her brilliant work interning on this programme

Secondary school and university students from around the world form a dynamic, creative group. For example, students love our visual journalism and advocated greater physical presence of the FT in schools, leading to the creation of our 'visual vocabulary' poster which has now been sent to 6,000 schools.





Teachers love the programme too. Ben Christopher runs the Economics department at Dubai College and believes Student Advocates become more responsible. “It encourages independence - students have to be organised, professional and polite in their dealings and this is a flavour of the skills they need to develop once they’ve left school.”

Chrisopher also recognises the impact of the programme on the wider school community, saying “it’s very important for our students to be globally aware, not just for university applications, but also to become more informed young adults and the FT ticks this box many times over.” Since having a Student Advocate, more than 100 students at Dubai College now have an FT login.

As well as collaborating with their peers, Student Advocates are encouraged to be creative within their own schools too. Students from the library at Falcon School in Cyprus, where Hande persuaded teachers to install computers for FT research, helping her friends become more aware of world events. Hande added: “the FT is helping my generation become more socially aware and better informed of what is going on around us as responsible members of society.”

The soft skills, polished through tasks such as speaking in school assemblies and regularly meeting with teachers, are particularly valuable. Lauren secured a job at a Cambridge University lab during her gap year and has since been offered a place to study Natural Sciences at Cambridge.

Lauren traces back her successful application to her time as an Advocate. “The programme helped me communicate with adults - I felt I could talk with

teachers in a way I couldn’t before, and I also learned how to manage my time effectively. It was something different which made me stand out, and having a prestigious organisation like the Financial Times on my CV was really helpful.” Lauren’s employers agree. “Working in a real job environment clearly helped her communication, organisation and management skills. This was important to us as part of the job includes managing tasks so we liked the experience she had at the FT.”



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Lauren’s employers

Asked what advice she would give to a sixth former thinking of applying, Lauren said “go for it! I would recommend being a Student Advocate to anyone looking to develop transferable skills, regardless of what they are studying - it has been a confidence booster, and something I never would have done before.”

Interested students should discuss with their teachers, who can nominate their school’s Student Advocates should [click here](#)