

Period Product Free Provision Scotland Act 2021 – Statement on Exercise of Functions

University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is committed to supporting the provision of free period products via the Scottish Government scheme to ensure students have access to free period products during term time. The method of delivery of the scheme has been designed in accordance with the guidance notes for responsible bodies issued by the Scottish Government.

Consultation

In January 2022, consultation with the student community was carried out to determine what provision of free period products was best suited to the needs of the community. The consultation included a survey and open comments. The results were used to inform both the range of period products to be made available and how products would be distributed.

Product Range

Following consultation with the student community it was clear that a wide range of period products was needed to meet the different needs and preferences of the community. Single use sanitary towels and tampons, and reusable sanitary towels and menstrual cups were all strongly supported in the survey. Period underwear was not a commonly sought option and so has not been included in the range offered. The specific brands of product offered are determined by availability and value via procurement frameworks and product feedback from the student community.

Product Distribution

The distribution of products needs to be convenient, practical, respect the dignity of the user, and take into consideration the preferences of the community.

Following our consultation, and a review of our estate, the approach taken was to install free period product dispensers, for disposable products, in all ground floor female, gender neutral, and disabled toilets in every building students can access. This was to provide a clear and consistent approach that could be accessed easily. All dispensers include Toxic Shock Syndrome information on them. Consideration was given to providing free period products in male toilets but, given the low level of demand in the survey, it was considered more appropriate to concentrate resources in female, gender neutral, and disabled toilets where demand was much stronger.

In addition, key distribution points were identified at each campus to support the distribution of bulk and reusable period products. Staff at these locations were briefed to make products easily available to anyone who needs them, without justification, and that the dignity of anyone accessing the service should be respected at all times.

Campus	Distribution Point (Bulk & Reusable)
Old Aberdeen	InfoHub
Old Aberdeen	Student Advice & Support
Old Aberdeen	Students Association
Foresterhill	Suttie Reception
Hillhead	Student Advice & Support

Promotion

Information about the scheme, including what is available and where, has been developed and organised by our Student Experience team. They have run several social media campaigns, posted information online, and have included free period product information on student information maps. A branding exercise has also been undertaken which will allow us to discreetly label all toilets on campus where free period products are available. As we get new intakes of students at different times each year, the promotion of the scheme will be part of our ongoing marketing and student engagement strategy.

Delivery and Review

Free period product dispensers were installed during summer 2022 with all dispensers fully stocked by August. Distribution points were already available from a previous trial scheme. The stock control of period products in toilets is managed by the Facilities Manager – Cleaning Services while the supply of products to the distribution points is managed by the Facilities Manager – Transport & Waste.

Annual reviews will take place to ensure the service provided is meeting the needs of the student community and will provide us an opportunity to develop and incorporate best practice from other universities. We will also use feedback from students and our cleaning staff to adjust and improve the service on an ongoing basis.