



Departmental Guide to Menstrual Equity

Menstrual equity is a key component for gender equality, good health, and positive staff and student experience. This document is intended as a guide for your department to help appropriately support your menstruating students and staff, recognizing that menstruation can be a varied, complex and difficult experience that needs proper support and reasonable adjustments.

We hope that this can both improve the wellbeing and support available to menstruators, and act as a prompt to more open discussions about menstrual health. For more information, visit warwicksu.com/freeperiods or www.periodpositive.com

Providing free period products

Where?

We recommend providing free period products in all the bathrooms in your department. If possible, provide products in **ladies, accessible, gender neutral and men's bathrooms**, in the recognition that not only people who identify as women have periods, and that having a disability can make accessing period products harder.

What?

The SU has researched a number of sustainable and ethical period product suppliers. These include **Here We Flo, Hey Girls, NatraCare, DAME and TOTM**. All these companies provide ethical and organic period pads and applicator/non-applicator tampons, with some also making menstrual cups and period pants.

From our experience, period pads are the most popular item, followed by applicator tampons.

How?

1. Order through the SU

Currently, the SU orders products from Hey Girls in bulk. We can order products on behalf of your department and provide an invoice for your department to pay the SU directly. To do this and enquire about quantities and prices, please email reception@warwicksu.com or welfare@warwicksu.com.

2. Run a donation-based scheme

Several departments across the campus run donation-based or 'take-and-replace' schemes, where individual staff members or groups of staff/students purchase products and refill these on their own initiative. We support efforts like these, and are happy to provide boxes or signage if you need.

3. Dispensers

We are currently looking into ordering wall-mounted free-vend dispensers. We will reach out to departments once a partnership has been agreed upon – please do keep an eye out or chase us up.

Dimensions for these should be no more than 30cm x 120cm x 15cm, weighing max. 4kg (larger dispensers available on request). We are able to order these on your behalf and invoice your department, once Estates permission has been obtained for installation.

4. We can provide tailored posters, leaflets or badges for your department that are consistent with the current #EndPeriodPoverty identity. If you are interested, please send copy of the text and any other design requirements to welfare@warwicksu.com or endperiodpoverty@warwicksu.com.

How much?

We currently supply **30 pads and 15 applicator tampons per week**, placed in accessible boxes in bathrooms. If you would like a box (with branding) alongside the products you have ordered, please let us know.

Here is an approximate breakdown of our current costs:

- **Pads:** £0.09 per pad = £2.72 per week per box = £27.20 per term
- **Tampons:** £0.20 per tampon = £3.04 per week per box = £30.40 per term
- Stocking one bathroom for the entire academic year should cost **£172.80**
- We will provide products in bulk and ask that you dispense them in accordance with demand and your budget.

Often, demand outstrips supply, so if you are able to purchase more products, this is recommended. We also recommend refilling boxes twice a week if you have the budget, as otherwise products can run out by the end of the week and leave people caught short.

Who?

Currently, products are replenished by student staff, volunteers, passionate staff members or professional services staff. To ensure products are regularly refilled, consider creating a volunteer schedule or including your local cleaning/estates staff.

You can also consider creating the voluntary positions of **Menstrual Equity Champion** or **#EndPeriodPoverty Ambassador**, individuals who are the touchpoint for questions and concerns around the campaign, and who are passionate about providing for menstruating students and reducing the stigma around periods.

For general enquiries, please contact welfare@warwicksu.com or endperiodpoverty@warwicksu.com

Reasonable Adjustments for menstrual conditions

The experience of menstruation is varied and often provides challenges to those with periods. These challenges can be severe, including constant pain, headaches, vomiting, fainting etc., and may be associated with conditions such as **endometriosis** and **PCOS**.

It is important that members of your department, including personal tutors and professional services staff, are aware of these challenges and provide an open environment for students and staff to disclose such conditions.

If necessary, you should support students with debilitating conditions to seek support from **Disability Services** or provide **Reasonable Adjustments** for these conditions (including flexible deadlines, or regular rest breaks). Make sure meetings and teaching have **regular access breaks** to allow those menstruating to take the time they need to look after themselves.

Department Menstrual Equity Checklist

- ☐ Have you got free pads and tampons available in your department?
- ☐ Have you provided a variety of period products, such as pads, applicator tampons, and non-applicator tampons?
- ☐ Have you got a regular schedule to check and refill these products?
- ☐ Are period products accessible to those with disabilities, such as through providing them in accessible bathrooms and in accessible places?
- ☐ Are products available to non-binary or male-identifying people, such as in gender-neutral and male bathrooms?
- ☐ Have you communicated with your staff and students to inform them about this provision?
- ☐ Have you made it clear that students or staff can approach the department for support with menstrual conditions?
- ☐ Do you provide access breaks in meetings or teaching sessions that last more than 1 hour?
- ☐ Have you recruited volunteers, Menstrual Equity Champions, or campaign ambassadors to help spread the word and support menstruating students and staff?

Thank you for your support!

Further reading:

General

Briggs, A. (2021), ‘Period poverty’ in Stoke-on-Trent, UK: New insights into gendered poverty and the lived experiences of austerity’, *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 29 (1), 85–102

Menstrual Equity at Universities

Carter, N. (2024) Period Pain: Student Perceptions of the Ongoing Stigma Surrounding Menstruation at the University of Warwick and Potential Interventions to Counter Such Stigma. *Reinvention*, 17(1).

Munro, A., Hunter, E., Hossain, S., M. Keep (2021), ‘A systematic review of the menstrual experiences of university students and the impacts on their education: A global perspective’, *PLoS ONE*, 16 (9), 1–28.

Menstrual Equity and the Workplace

Levitt, R. B., and Barnack-Tavlaris, J. L. (2020), ‘Addressing Menstruation in the Workplace: The Menstrual Leave Debate’, in Bobel, F., Winkler, I., Fahs, B., Hasson, K., Kissling, E., T. Roberts (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies*, Singapore, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 561–575.

Sang, K., Remnant, J., Calvard, T., K. Myhill (2021), ‘Blood work: Managing menstruation, menopause and gynaecological health conditions in the workplace’, *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, 18 (95), 1–16.