



SFC Announcement

Access to free sanitary products 2018-19

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Summary: Announcement of additional funding for access to sanitary products at colleges and universities in 2018-19.

FAO: Principals/Directors, Finance Directors, Chairs and Board Secretaries of Scotland's universities and colleges.

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Access to free sanitary products at colleges and universities in 2018-19

Summary

1. I am writing to announce additional funding to provide students access to free sanitary products at colleges and universities in 2018-19. This additional funding has been provided by the Scottish Government.

Policy background

2. The Scottish Government made a commitment in its 2017 'Programme for Government' to provide "*access to free sanitary products to students in schools, colleges and universities*". The Government subsequently committed to provide this access from August 2018.
3. The purpose of this commitment, and this subsequent announcement of funding, is to support equality, dignity and rights for those who menstruate and to ensure that lack of access to sanitary products does not impact on an individual's ability to fully participate in education, at all levels.
4. Through the Working Group on Access to Free Sanitary Products, Scottish Government officials and stakeholders have developed a set of Guiding Principles for this commitment which have been shared and agreed with institutions via Colleges Scotland and Universities Scotland. These Guiding Principles, along with a series of questions and answers, are attached as Annex A.
5. Institutions should develop local delivery models that take account of these Guiding Principles and the views of students.
6. The Working Group has agreed a Reporting Framework (attached as Annex B) to monitor actual uptake in the first year of delivery to inform any future funding. This information will be reviewed in February 2019 and future funding proposals will be considered following that, with a full review in Autumn 2019 after a full year of delivery.
7. The Scottish Government is funding a post within the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to support this work. Institutions are asked to ensure that monitoring information is gathered and shared with the holder of this post (which is expected to be in place in September 2018) to ensure future funding allocations can be based on actual uptake.

Funding for sanitary products

8. A total of £3.1 million is being provided by the Scottish Government for the period August 2018 to March 2019; £1.3 million for colleges and £1.8 million for universities. The approach to allocating funding for future years (beyond

31 March 2019) will be reviewed in February 2019 when more robust data on product unit costs and uptake is available. In addition, future funding will be subject to the Scottish Parliament making the necessary funds available to the Scottish Government.

9. This split of funding is broken down in the table below:

	Colleges	Universities	Total
Funding for delivery of sanitary products to students	£985,000	£1,321,000	£2,306,000
Development costs	£323,000	£460,000	£783,000
Total	£1,308,000	£1,781,000	£3,089,000

10. The above funding has been calculated by the Scottish Government to allow college and university provision of high quality sanitary products for students. It is based on the following parameters:

- Female student numbers – excluding school pupils – of 241,000 and an assumed average uptake of sanitary products of 35% of those student numbers. (For female school pupils attending colleges, an uptake figure of 10% has been used).
- A ‘per-head price’ of £40, which comprises £35 for sanitary product costs and £5 for administration and delivery costs. (The £35 product cost is based on average usage of 300 products per year; equating to just under 12p per product).
- One-off funding in 2018-19 to support the development and implementation of this policy; equating to £3.25 per head (of all female students) for both colleges and universities this year.

11. A breakdown of funding for individual colleges and universities is shown in Annexes C and D respectively.

12. Funding for universities will be paid in equal instalments until March 2019. Colleges should drawdown funding from their allocations, as required, on a monthly basis over the same period.

Conditions of grant

13. This funding must only be used for the purpose(s) for which it is being allocated. SFC retains the right to audit relevant institutional documentation to satisfy itself that this is the case and the institution undertakes that it will provide such assistance as SFC reasonably requires.

14. Institutions should meet the needs of students through a range of good quality products and brands that are recognisable and attractive to students. The

funding allocations have been calculated on a product unit price which allows institutions to do so.

15. Institutions should develop local delivery models that take account of the views and needs of their students (in both term-time and holidays) and the Guiding Principles set out in Annex A.
16. The Working Group on Access to Free Sanitary Products has agreed a Reporting Framework (attached as Annex B) to monitor actual uptake in this first year of delivery to inform future funding policy developments. Institutions should ensure that relevant monitoring information is collected and are expected to engage with any evaluative work the Working Group seeks to carry out.

Acceptance of grant

17. Institutions are invited to formally accept this offer of funding by writing to Graeme Scotland, Senior Budgeting & Reporting Officer, email: gscotland@sfc.ac.uk by **7 September 2018**.

Further information

18. Should you require any further information, please contact Kathryn O'Loan, Senior Policy/Analysis Officer, tel: 0131 313 6523, email: koloan@sfc.ac.uk.



John Kemp
Interim Chief Executive

Access to free sanitary products - Guiding Principles

Delivery models should be based on:

- **Protecting students' dignity**, avoiding anxiety, embarrassment and stigma.
- Making a range of products and different qualities available, giving students **choice** about the products they want to use.
- A response that is **reflective of students' views and experiences**.
- An efficient and dignified approach which demonstrates **value for money**.
- An offer for all eligible students **throughout the year** to include both **term-time and holidays**.
- Ensuring sanitary products are easily accessible to **meet individual needs**.
- Individuals being able to get sufficient products to **meet their needs**.
- **Gender equality**, ensuring anyone who menstruates can access products, including transgender men and non-binary individuals, and that language is gender neutral. The rollout of gender neutral toilets should also be taken account of.
- **Awareness raising and education** to both promote the 'offer' and change cultural norms.

Q and A

1. Should provision be made for students who are likely to return to a home address out with term time?

Yes, however, the response for such students should be proportionate and deliver value for money. For example, mailing products monthly outwith the UK would not be value for money, however putting in place provision for 'holiday packs' for students to take away with them would be a potential solution.

2. Are reusable products included in the definition of 'free sanitary products'?

The Scottish Government supports the principle of reusable sanitary products on both value for money and environmental grounds. We expect that as partners are developing local delivery plans that they consider how they intend to make reusable products available for those who wish to use them. This should be considered as part of wider delivery and may vary from sector to sector.

3. Are apprentices within the eligible population?

The Programme for Government commitment is for students at schools, colleges and universities, therefore apprentices registered as students at publicly-funded colleges are within the eligible population.