



E: financialwellbeing@gov.scot

College Principals
Principals/Directors of Scottish Higher Education
Institutions

cc Scottish Funding Council
Colleges Scotland
Universities Scotland

11 September 2024

Dear Colleagues,

ACCESS TO FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS – MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND BID-IN FUND

Following discussions with the Scottish Funding Council, Colleges Scotland and Universities Scotland, I am writing to advise you that from the financial year 2025-26 the Scottish Government will no longer provide a separate ring-fenced allocation to the Scottish Funding Council to fund access to free period products in colleges and universities. Instead, this funding will be added to the core grant provided to colleges and universities for 2025-26. This change is a year earlier than planned and follows the baselining of funding for local authorities for access to free period products from financial year 2024-25.

Reference to the funding allocated to support colleges and universities to exercise their functions under the [Period Products \(Free Provision\) \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#) (the Act), will be included in the Scottish Funding Council's annual budget letter.

In addition, the Scottish Government has considered the need to carry out next year's planned independent review and impact evaluation, and the future of the Bid-In Fund, the decisions on which are set out below.

Monitoring and evaluation originally planned for 2025 and the Bid-In Fund

The full independent review and impact evaluation, originally planned for 2025, will no longer take place and the Bid-In Fund (the Fund) will not continue. In addition, the planned follow-up survey, to understand the attitudes and experiences of people accessing free period products, will also no longer go ahead.

The Fund was only envisaged to be available until funding was baselined. However, only a small number of applications have been received since the Fund was introduced, which indicates that the annual funding amount allocated to most further and higher education providers is sufficient. This is likely due to the fact that the duty on colleges and universities

under the Act, to provide access to free products during term time, is less onerous than the previous voluntary provision on which the funding was based.

Future review of costs

While there will be no formal review of the funding in 2025, future consideration will be given as to whether a 10 year review of funding to support compliance with the Act will still be required.

I hope this provides clarity on our approach in these areas. If you have any questions, please contact our Financial Wellbeing team at financialwellbeing@gov.scot who are happy to help.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Moir', written in a cursive style.

Dr Elaine Moir
Head of the Financial Wellbeing Unit