

A Bloody Mess Project

It has come to light that within the HEMS Faculty in Young street they offer products at the reception desk in Young Street. The question I pose is - why can this not be across the whole university. Our student population is approximately 63% female and 37% male (note that this does not specify how many trans students we have, though the general population puts this at around 1%).

Several female students from the Cambridge campus have been enquiring why we do not provide sanitary products in the university especially the toilets near study spaces (Particularly outside the library, student space in first-floor helmore and the SU).

Period poverty can heavily impact a person's lives. Their health, self-esteem and wellbeing is being affected and this is devastating. There needs to be a real culture change in attitudes towards periods and we must start somewhere in being a part of that change.

The advantage of the SU providing the supplies is that SUs are able to purchase their products through the NUS purchasing consortium - which gives the advantage of purchasing products more cheaply than might otherwise be possible. We are looking into the possibility of re-usable options such as moon cups and similar - if you know of any other environmentally friendly alternatives then suggestions are welcome and we'll look into this.

Where we can implement this: In key areas of the university and within our SU space (Toilets and front desk). For the implementation in the Library (near the toilets), it would be best to have products at the help desk (both Cambridge and Chelmsford campus), Helmore building in the student space on first-floor Helmore and the SU at our front desk (Cambridge and Chelmsford campus). We can put up signage across the university that states that we as the SU are committed to ending period poverty and states where they can find the nearest supply of menstrual products on campus for all students.

I would like to ask Exec to consider the approval of allocating this amount of budget to guarantee free sanitary products for students and staff for our campuses. I appreciate this may not be a big ask, but it certainly is an impactful one and it will mean a lot to all female students and staff to see commitment and support from the Union for free sanitary products and support to ending period poverty.