

Sanitary products to be provided to all of Scotland's students

New £5 million scheme to fight period poverty

Free sanitary products will be available to pupils, students and learners at schools, colleges and universities across Scotland thanks to a new £5.2 million fund.

The Scottish Government is the first Government in the world to make free sanitary products available to all pupils and students.

The scheme – which coincides with the start of the academic year – is aimed at helping banish the scourge of period poverty for Scotland's 395,000 school pupils, college students and university students.

Ardrossan Academy playing host to [@ClydesdAileen](#) and [@NAC_Leader](#) to talk about [#periodpoverty](#) where we're leading the way by offering free sanitary products in all our buildings. Some great questions from our young people pic.twitter.com/ULnhD57jPj

– North Ayrshire (@North_Ayrshire) [August 24, 2018](#)

The Scottish Government has worked closely with partners including the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), Colleges Scotland, Universities Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council to ensure the availability of products reflects the views and needs of learners.

Visiting Ardrossan Academy in North Ayrshire, Communities Secretary Aileen Campbell said: "In a country as rich as

Scotland it's unacceptable that anyone should struggle to buy basic sanitary products. I am proud that Scotland is taking this world-leading action to fight period poverty and I welcome the support of local authorities, colleges and universities in implementing this initiative.

"Our £5.2 million investment will mean these essential products will be available to those who need them in a sensitive and dignified way, which will make it easier for students to fully focus on their studies."

Councillor Alison Evison, COSLA President said: "Councils work hard to tackle barriers which can get in the way of young people fulfilling their potential in education. We are therefore pleased to be working with Scottish Government and the college and university sector to provide young people with sanitary products free in their schools.

"While the primary aim is to ensure no young person misses out on their education through lack of access to sanitary products, it will also contribute to a more open conversation and reducing the unnecessary stigma associated with periods."

Shona Struthers, Chief Executive of Colleges Scotland, said: "The college sector is extremely supportive of and has been heavily involved in this initiative to end period poverty – and the stigma surrounding menstruation – in Scotland. Nobody should be in a position where they are unable to access these essential hygiene products because they are simply unaffordable.

"All colleges have embraced this policy and will be making sanitary products freely available to those who need them. We are pleased by the Scottish Government's announcement that funding is now available for this initiative as this will support colleges in rolling out this provision in campuses the length and breadth of the country."

Susannah Lane, Head of Public Affairs at Universities

Scotland, said: "It is unacceptable that anyone should suffer the embarrassment and distress caused by period poverty so we welcome free sanitary provision being made available in universities across Scotland. Periods are a part of life but they shouldn't be a point of inequality, compromise someone's quality of life or be a distraction from making the very most of time spent at university so this is a positive step."