

## **Policy Proposal**

**Title:** The Union should lobby UCL to expand Project Period into a university-wide initiative, ensuring implementation across all buildings and in gender-neutral locations for inclusivity.

**Policy Zone to be discussed at:** Welfare & Community Zone, Union Executive

### **1. What would you like the Union to do?**

I would like the Union to lobby the university to extend the Project Period initiative to all UCL buildings and in gender-neutral locations. The Project Period initiative, originally spearheaded by the Union, was a groundbreaking effort to provide free and accessible menstrual products to all students across campus. It was amongst the first of its kind in the UK and positioned UCL as a leader in promoting equality and sustainability. However, despite the success of this initiative, its implementation has remained limited, with access to these essential products dependent on individual faculties deciding to allocate funds. This has led to significant disparities in access across UCL buildings. I propose that the Union advocate for a university-wide approach, where UCL centrally allocates funds to ensure equitable access to menstrual products in all buildings, regardless of faculty decisions. This should be a key focus of UCL's commitment to sustainability and student well-being, ensuring that all students benefit equally from this initiative.

### **2. Why would you like to do this?**

This is a critical issue of equality and student well-being. Since its inception, the Women's Network has worked tirelessly, meeting monthly with Sustainable UCL since July 2022 and alerting the Provost's Office about the urgent need to expand this initiative across campus. Despite these efforts, no significant progress has been made, and students continue to face unequal access depending on the buildings they frequent. This inconsistency undermines the original vision of Project Period and leaves many students, particularly those from underrepresented or financially vulnerable backgrounds, without reliable access to essential menstrual products. UCL, once a pioneer in this area, is now falling behind other institutions that have fully embraced similar initiatives. Extending the Project Period to all UCL buildings would not only align with the university's sustainability goals but also reinforce its commitment to student equality and inclusivity. The fact that this issue has persisted despite continued advocacy from the Women's Network and other student bodies is a clear signal that institutional action is urgently needed.

*\*This policy was submitted twice, with this added via second submission:*

*Given that KCL has managed to fund this policy university-wide, the costs associated with this policy are considered affordable for UCL: <https://self-service.kcl.ac.uk/article/KA-01980/en-us#:~:text=Period%20...>*

### **3. How will this affect students?**

The extension of the Project Period will have a profound and positive impact on students, particularly those who face financial or logistical barriers to accessing menstrual products. Currently, students are experiencing unequal access based solely on the faculties they belong to or the buildings they use, which creates unnecessary stress and hardship. By ensuring menstrual products are available in all UCL buildings, the university will promote equal access and remove these barriers, supporting the well-being of all students.

Moreover, this will especially benefit marginalized and financially vulnerable students, including those from low-income backgrounds or international students who may have less access to affordable menstrual products. It will also send a strong message to all students that UCL is committed to gender equality and inclusivity, addressing the specific needs of menstruating students. In turn, this will create a more supportive and caring campus environment, allowing students to focus on their education without worrying about access to basic necessities.