



Healthy Campus Case Study



HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

The 'Period Dignity' Project

Name of institution and initiative lead

Maynooth University (MU)
The Maynooth University Healthy Campus Team in collaboration with a Project Group comprised of representatives from:
The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Office (EDI)
The Maynooth Students Union (MSU)
The Maynooth University Estates Office/Green Campus Team.

Date and timeframe

This is a 3-year pilot project that launched in Feb 2024.

What was the reach?

This project is for all staff and students of Maynooth University who menstruate.

Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of this project was to reduce period poverty and increase menstrual health literacy and dignity among students and staff.

Objectives:

Bring awareness to the topic of menstrual health, in particular the issue of period poverty.

Provide information on campus supports regarding menstrual health (Student Health Centre and Staff Wellbeing Resources), and signpost to external supports and resources (e.g. HSE).

Aims and Objectives

Provide free, eco-friendly, organic cotton, toxin free products which are kind to the body and the planet for staff and students.

Aligned frameworks, policies, or strategies

Healthy Campus Charter and Framework

Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.

National Sexual Health Strategy

The Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Athena Swan

Maynooth University Gender Equality Action Plan 2023-2026

Project Collaborators

Maynooth Students Union – building on their 'Destress' campaign which included offering free period products.

The Law Society spearheaded a 'Fighting Period Poverty' campaign where they provided free period products across campus and in student-frequented venues in Maynooth Town with the support of MSU.

Similarly, staff within the Maynooth Access Programme (MAP) launched a 'Positive Periods' campaign to provide free period products to staff and students in their building.

We were also delighted to partner with Riley as our supplier, and with the Maynooth Estates Office and Noonan's Cleaning Company to organise installation and maintenance of product dispensers.

Key Learning Points

The importance of a holistic understanding of health – as noted by the HSE, sexual health is an important part of overall health. Sexual health doesn't just refer to disease, infections, contraception, and fertility, but also to things like identity, pleasure, well-being, knowing how your body functions and the ability to enjoy safe, fulfilling relationships that are free from violence and discrimination.

The importance and value of a partnership approach to health and wellbeing – it was the collaborative work between EDI, Healthy Campus, MSU, the Law Society, MAP Representatives, Estates, Noonan's, and Riley that enabled this project to succeed. Going forward our goal for the next Academic Year (24/25) is to extend this partnership approach and have student 'Sexual Health Champions' who can assist in the promotion of this project and others under our Healthy Campus key area of 'Sexual Health & Wellbeing'.

The importance of evaluation - while we have not yet had the time to get structured feedback from students and staff, we understand that regular evaluation is key to the continued success of this project. As such, we plan to complete a yearly evaluation.

| Healthy Campus Process | Whole Campus Approach | Topic | Population Group |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------|
| Create | Campus Environment (Facilities & Services) | Sexual Health & Wellbeing | Students |
| | Campus Culture & Communications | Health & Sustainability | Staff |



Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth

