



TAKEOVER FORUM: THE CAMBRIDGE PERIOD PROJECT

*Please put your initials in brackets when adding items to the agenda, and include a brief text description of content, including any relevant content notes, and actions (e.g. **approve**, **discuss**, **note**).*

Agenda Items

- **Approval of last forum's minutes**
 - Approve
- **Introductions**
 - RF - Rosie Freeman SU Women's Officer 2023-24
 - TCPP - The Cambridge Period Project
 - TCPP President
 - Secretary - Womcam 2023-24
 - NB Rep - Non-binary Representative Womcam 2023-24
 - IS Rep - International Students Rep Womcam 2023-24
 - Zine Editor - Womcam 2023-24
- **Paper to Senior Tutors Committee: (RF) Paper copy shared at forum**
 - Case for provision of free sustainable menstrual products in Colleges (Discuss)
 - Period Project: need more information.
 - RF: what would Cambridge Period Project like → do you want a paper?
 - TCPP Pres: useful if we say it in words they'll listen to. In their paper, they had very specific wording. GDPR of scheme so couldn't publish exactly what college did → lots of people saw it was going on, demand.
 - Period underwear - sizing, one case of serious medical reaction to the product. Make sure they are sustainable and are not selling products that have passed the sell by date
 - Secretary: college used heygirls for reusable period products.
 - TCPP Pres: Heygirls can do bulk orders with period products, can distribute those lists to different colleges.
 - TCPP Pres: last year's scheme → all heygirls products were used.

- RF Currently the paper doesn't recommend particular brands, but gives ideas of products. Guide to menstruation as a whole - TCPP Pres: can forward to RF for the paper, guide has been given to colleges and Endometriosis UK.
 - RF: recommend £5 per student, rather than £10. Better not to assume/ask college.
 - RF: specific pot of money for term or year?
 - TCPP Pres: university would probably want to do it termly → as students may go home for extended time, intermitted.
 - RF: budget for this would come for the college → starting conversation with evidence, intercollegiate service, has to go to senior tutor's committee. Senior tutor's committee, knowledge of individual finances.
 - RF: not J/MCR finances - TCPP Pres: MCRs primarily off-site.
 - RF: TCPP have a template email in supporting JCRs - with the terms that senior tutors agreed to.
- **Lived Experiences (RF)**
 - Sharing and opening the dialogue to discuss our lived experiences (discuss)
 - Anon - A need to raise awareness to higher ups about how menstruation affects students all the time, not just when they're actually menstruating. EG I have PCOS which makes my period really regular but I still get pre menstrual/ menstrual symptoms but not with the same regularity which makes them annoying and unpredictable. Just further supporting the point that you can never entirely predict when your period will come/ when it will affect you especially when it is more of a constant issue for some people.
 - **Menstruation and the impact on exams, study and other assessments (RF)**
 - RF: one of their campaign priorities is this topic, menstruation in general → impact of pain, related health conditions on study, exams. Included as mitigating circumstances? One worry that was raised was that with greater understanding and support people who menstruate be thought of as weaker?
 - TCPP Pres endometriosis and other conditions can get mitigating circumstances with evidence from ADRC.
 - RF: difficulties with getting a diagnosis, operations.
 - SU: looking at informal diagnoses → formal process.
 - RF: college-to-college discrepancies, is informal diagnosis enough everywhere?
 - RF: if university agrees, we can publicise it. Would have go through ADRC. Other universities, clearer on accepting informal diagnosis.
 - RF: diagnosis and menstruation, DSO and AP would work on it. Sit on committees of how this would work in the university. Mentioned in a democratic forum. Lots of work with ADRC → gender awarding gap has looked at menstruation for this.
 - Secretary: medical professionals not willing to listen sometimes, TCPP Pres: real problem, sometimes change doctors.
 - TCPP Pres: how pain is diagnosed, now done on patient experience. Pain - individually subjective, de-stigmatising menstrual pain.
 - Secretary: frustration - advocating for self, difficult to prove.
 - NB rep: don't acknowledge in pain, just get on with it. 5 hour exams, at computer.
 - RF: getting period just before first exam, another distraction. ADHD students, difficulties when getting period - senior members ignored.

- RN: even if you know your period is coming, it doesn't really help anyway.
- Student: Currently receiving medication (endometriosis), promised support of need during an exam. Sent an email but never got response for support from college. Knew there was support, but didn't get it.
- Secretary: contraceptive pill caused a lot of pain, caused more issues with regularising periods.
- RF: different experiences for everyone - pill. Not a default response to everything.
- NB rep: pill as a response to the pill - frustrating.
- Secretary: more as a consultation? Not just the pill.
- TCPP Pres: what medication will work for you - when you see a specialist. Waiting list is 24 weeks → long time. Fight to see a specialist. Different assessments, every single contraceptives. Long process - difficult to get diagnosed with menstrual health conditions. Those just with (painful) periods - get less resources.
- **RF's work and campaign commitments (Discuss)**
 - RF: Cambridge centre for teaching and learning - black awarding gap, awarding gap for people with long-term health conditions, now also looking at the gender awarding gap. Create focus groups with them about menstruation with WomCam and TCPP? Menstrual society, look out for them too.
 - TCPP Pres: can propose that at next meeting.
- **Women's Officer Accountability (RF)**
- Ask the Women's Officer any questions about their work, priorities, campaigns etc
 - NB rep: is there any summary from Cambridge centre of teaching and learning?
 - RF: Cambridge centre of teaching and learning are very pro-student voice in the university, decolonising curriculum. Awarding gap has increased → between getting a 1:1 and 2:1. Proportion for male students getting firsts is higher - this is what the awarding gap is. Currently working with specific faculties. Papers get smaller, people who do your supervisions, learn your reading style, and mark your essays - anonymity is harder. Other universities have less governance issues. Issues with misogyny in senior members of staff.
 - NB rep: senior members of staff know of you.
 - RF: student-staff relationships less professional, college system.
 - Zine Editor: experience in medicine.
 - Zine Editor: some disciplines in certain subjects - e.g. anatomy.
 - Secretary: more women and non-binary students in subject, does that affect treatment?
 - RF: HSPS - students told to write like a man, be more authoritative.
 - NB rep: imagine you're a man, told by staff member.
 - RF: SU - week-long events in Lent about the gender awarding gap, experiencing misogyny within teaching, what learning styles are more inclusive. With launch of online stakeholder map - societies for support, where to access support, campaigns on these areas, academic reps, heads of departments/faculties for equality.
 - WomCam can initiate that - member on working group. Sara Ahmed - left university because of misogyny.
 - NB rep: where this has been happening.
 - RF: SU reps, teachers, heads of faculty, pro vice chancellor - all discussing education. New access and participation plan. Access, after you leave university. Experience → do something similar with students, what works and what they'd like to say.
 - Zine Editor: people will get involved with it if it's to do with their grades.

- Student: not as women and non-binary officer, limitations.

AOB:

ACTION POINTS:

RF:

- Share minutes with TCPP President and rest of WomCam.
- Edits to paper based off meeting.

TCPP President:

- Send guide they previously shared with all colleges with RF, send list of different examples of period products.

