Disclosing your gender affirmation process

Informing people who are closest to you about your gender affirmation process is no easy task. Remember that you do not have to go through this process alone. There are many resources and support networks available for you.

The moment you tell people about your gender identity may be the first time that they are in close contact with someone who is a part of the transgender and gender diverse community. If you feel comfortable, you can clarify some of the questions they may have.

Considerations

Before disclosing this information, keep in mind the following considerations as they may impact your process and the way people respond to it:

- Consider if you have siblings or relatives at Macquarie University and how will they affect your gender affirmation. You can check TransHub for more information on handling carers and families.
- Consider what you want to say to those you are disclosing to and practice beforehand. Think about the amount of information you want to share with each person, the words you want to use and the intonation of your voice. You may find more information in this guide for transgender young people developed by Minus 18, an Australia-based charity focused on the wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ youth.

Disclosing with the help of others

- You can decide what information you wish to share and whether you would like certain people to tell others. In some cases, having someone sharing this information to others for you may be a relief, but set boundaries that you are comfortable with and clarify what information can be shared with whom.
- You may prefer to keep things slow and disclose this information to other people at a later stage, or not disclose it at all. Whatever your case is, clarify this to people you share your information with to avoid misunderstandings.
- Disclosing your gender identity is an important and delicate matter. When affirming your gender with others, you do not want to be interrupted, rushed, or distracted. You may choose to propose a time and place to meet where you feel safe and comfortable. Keep in mind that the other person(s) may need time to process their feelings and respond. In many cases, the people you are sharing this information with are hearing about this concept for the first time.
- If you wish to disclose your gender affirmation process, you can check the email sample at the end of the document for communications with your tutors, lecturers, or department administrators at Macquarie University. You can also find a sample for requesting changes to your university-provided services such as your student email.

Support

- You may wish to create a support group to help ease any mental load by making you feel supported, respected, and loved. When organising this support group, think about the people you would like to have present through your process. This group could include a Macquarie University staff member and/or peers that you trust.

- If you are struggling with your feelings, you can always reach out to the support services Macquarie University has available for you. Ensuring you have a support group with whom you can share information and your concerns is important. You do not have to go through this process alone.

Sample email for disclosing your gender affirmation process to teaching staff

Hi *<teacher's name>,*

I would like to inform you about some important news that will require your support and understanding as well as some possible changes to my study arrangements.

Currently, you know me as *<deadname>* and I am a student in your *<name of class>*. I am emailing to let you know that I am affirming my gender. Gender affirmation is a process where a transgender or gender diverse person implements changes to express the gender, they feel more identified with, rather than the one they were assigned at birth.

This process is long-term and involves many stages, one of which is using the names and pronouns we feel more comfortable with. In my case, my name is *<name>* and my pronouns are *<enter your pronouns>*. This information has already been updated in *<confirm which systems have been updated>* and will be reflected in *<confirm where will this information be updated, i.e., iLearn and class lists, official documents>*. During class and tutorials, please address me with my updated name and pronouns as it is particularly important for me and can also inform other students about my name and pronouns.

As this topic may be new to you, I want to share some information that you may find useful about what it means to be gender diverse or transgender:

- [TransHub](#) provides an extensive amount of information on topics like names and pronouns, gender dysphoria, resources for Aboriginal Australians, as well as navigating myths.
- You could also check the [resources](#) that Macquarie University has compiled for sexually and gender diverse people.

If you are interested in getting involved, you can undertake [Ally Training](#) for people to become allies.

Kind regards,
<Name>

Sample email for requesting the IT service team to update email address

Dear IT service team,

I am currently a student at Macquarie University. My student/staff ID is *<insert your student/staff ID>*. I am writing you to request an update to my email addresses *<insert your email(s)>* with my updated name *<insert your name>*.

I have already changed this information in *<include the university systems where this information has been updated>*.

Thank you in advance,

<Name>