Ally Network
HANDBOOK AND RESOURCES

Supporting Diversity
The role of a Macquarie University Ally

WHAT IS AN ALLY?
A simple definition of an “Ally” is someone who helps and supports someone else.

The Macquarie University Ally Network aims to create a visible network of informed and compassionate people who are allies of students and staff identifying as part of the LGBTIQ+ community. An official Macquarie University Ally will have undertaken a training course exploring issues affecting LGBTIQ+ communities and how to be an effective Ally.

Allies are not expected to be experts on issues of sexuality and gender identity, but they are people who support the development of a university environment based on equality, diversity and inclusion where everyone can study and work safely, free from discrimination, harassment or vilification.

WHAT DO ALLIES DO?

- They are a point of contact on campus to provide a safe and confidential environment for anyone affected by issues related to sexuality and gender diversity.
- Role model appropriate inclusive behaviour and language for the whole university community.
- They are visible supporters of LGBTIQ+ communities by displaying inclusive cues including posters, stickers, lanyards, badges etc.
- Guide people in need to appropriate support services and information.
- Proactively address and combat prejudice (homophobic and heterosexist behaviour).
- Advocate for better, more inclusive facilities and provisions for the LGBTIQ+ communities on campus.
TOP TIPS FOR BEING A GREAT ALLY

- **Keep Learning:**
  As an Ally, it’s important to continue to learn more about the LGBTIQ+ communities and the issues that can affect them as this will be important if someone comes to you for help. There may also be times where current affairs can bring out bigotry in people and you may have the opportunity to speak up for the LGBTIQ+ communities so you will need to be informed.
  - There are great videos from 1st hand/ lived experience perspectives on youtube.
  - Check out LGBTIQ+ magazines and community newspapers such as the Star Observer and LOTL.
  - Research local LGBTIQ+ community groups and support organisations (some suggestions later)

- **Influence Others:**
  Communicate the knowledge and awareness you have gained through positive discussions with friends or peers. Just remember, it’s not our job to change people’s belief systems, but offering a different perspective can be the catalyst for great discussion.

- **Be Active:**
  This is possibly the most important part of being an Ally, and you can be active and proactive in a number of ways.
  - **Get involved!**
    There are a number of events that the Ally Network and the Queer Collective run each year to mark days of significance for the LGBTIQ+ communities. It’s always more fun to have extra people helping and being involved on the day – so when you see those notices go out, get in touch to see how you can participate.
  - **Make yourself visible.**
    One of the easiest ways to be a proactive Ally is to make yourself known as one. We’ll provide you with posters, stickers and postcards that you can put on display around your work area or on your bag/ laptop/ books so that your peers and colleagues know that you are part of the network and someone who they can talk to. You’ll also get a nice shiny badge and a lanyard to wear.
  - **Be empathetic and respectful.**
    - If someone confides in you, don’t ‘out’ them to others. If you don’t understand something or are unsure how to help them further, use these two simple questions – “What does this mean to you?” and “Do you need anything from me?”
    - It’s ok to ask people what pronouns they use, then use them consistently. If you slip up, apologise and do better next time.
o **Use inclusive examples in your work.**
Think about where you can make changes in your work to include diverse identities. This can help people to feel included if they see representations of their communities and it can also open others minds to possibilities that they hadn’t thought of. For example:
  - Use diverse identities in teaching materials.
  - Make sure the images that you use for marketing show a diverse community – we are a diverse campus after all.
  - Students – can you use diverse examples and identities in your assignments?
  - Is the language in your policies and documents inclusive?

o **Be an active bystander:** This can be awkward and uncomfortable but it is important (if you feel safe to do so) to call out discriminatory behaviour when you witness it. This could mean:
  - **Calling out the behaviour when you see it.**
    Your own safety is of the utmost importance here, so make sure you assess the situation and if you feel safe to do so challenge the person’s behaviours/ comments at the time it happens. This does not mean being aggressive, but rather pointing out what you’ve seen/ heard and why you believe it may have a negative impact on someone.
  - **Raising it later with the person involved.**
    Remember, if you’re within that first 24 hour window since you witnessed their behaviour, you could ask them to have a coffee/ a chat and explain to them what you saw/ heard and why you think it’s a problem. SBI works well here. S= Situation “Yesterday when we were at …”. B= Behaviour “I heard you say …” I= Impact “I think this can have a negative impact on …”
  - **Approach and support the individual subject to the discrimination or harassment.**
    This is a great thing to do always, but especially if you’re in a situation where you don’t feel safe to challenge the Harasser, you can go to the person receiving the harassment and take them out of the situation and make sure they’re ok and have support.
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY ALLY STATEMENT

• As an Ally I agree to be a visible supporter of students and staff at Macquarie University who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and/or questioning, and believe in combating LGBTIQ+ phobia on campus. I understand that the Ally Network reflects the University’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion of ALL staff and students.

• I understand that pledging to become an Ally is a voluntary position of responsibility. I believe in the importance of providing a ‘safe space’ at our university where LGBTIQ+ staff and students can discuss experiences, concerns and current issues, and ask questions without fear of discrimination, harassment, negative reaction or betrayal of trust.

• I am aware that displaying Ally materials signifies that I am a Macquarie University Ally and someone who can be safely approached by LGBTIQ+ staff and students, or others interested in asking or learning more about LGBTIQ+ issues. I will display Ally stickers/posters in readily visible areas (workspace / pinboard/ door / on folders or tablet) in order to be easily identified as a Macquarie Ally.

• I am aware of the fear that can accompany disclosing sexual orientation or gender identity and I agree to respect the confidentiality of anyone who discloses this to me. I also understand that I am not an expert nor counsellor and will appropriately refer and offer relevant information, rather than feel I must handle complex situations myself.

• I am aware that as an Ally, I am also a role model and I agree to challenge incidents of LGBTIQ+ phobia and heterosexism on campus whenever it is safe to do so.

• As an Ally I agree to continue to learn and challenge myself on LGBTIQ+ issues, and to stay informed and up to date with regard to resources and information.
Support services for staff and students

As an Ally there may be times when someone will come to you who needs some help over and above what you can offer. As an Ally it is not your responsibility and there is no expectation for you to provide psychological care for anyone, but it is important that you know where you can take someone to find the support they need.

**STAFF**

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

- The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling, coaching and wellbeing service free for all at Macquarie University and entity staff and their immediate family members. The service can help you achieve lifestyle, work, personal and family goals and assist you with managing work and life experiences, issues or concerns that arise from time to time through:
  - Face-To-Face Counselling
  - Telephone Support
  - Live Chat Support
  - Online Training Modules and Resources
- Our 24/7 EAP service is provided by Benestar (previously known as Davidson Trahaire Corpsych). Benestar staff are all provided with LGBTIQ awareness training.
- The Benehub online resource library offers a wide range of health and wellbeing resources including learning modules, videos, podcasts, activities and toolkits.
- Call Benestar on 1300 360 364 or log in to benehub for online support
- You can find more information about the EAP here - https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/wellbeing/employee-assistance-program

**HR CLIENT MANAGERS**

- There may be times when systems or cultures need to be reviewed or when there is something happening within a specific work area that needs to be reported and/or resolved. HR Client Managers can offer advice and information, along with help for more serious matters such as inappropriate behaviour and discrimination. Find your HR representatives here - https://staff.mq.edu.au/support/other-resources/who-can-help

**WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

- The Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team can offer support or advice, and can forward your enquiry to the appropriate person, or help you to find solutions.
  Contact: Workplace Diversity & Inclusion.
  workplacediversityinclusion@mq.edu.au. (02) 9850 1975
STUDENTS:

STUDENT WELLBEING

- Macquarie University offers a range of wellbeing services that are available to students at any time during their studies. Student Wellbeing is here to support students and help them succeed, both academically and personally.
  - If students are in distress, they can call 9850 6410 to book a triage appointment with a psychologist. Student Wellbeing is here to support student's needs either during or after a crisis.
- Phone: (02) 9850 6410
- Inquiries: https://ask.mq.edu.au/
- Location: Ground Floor, 16 University Ave, Australian Hearing Hub, MQ
- Hours: Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 5.00pm

QUEERSPACE

- The QueerSpace is a service provided by Macquarie University for all staff and students who identify as LGBTIQ+ as well as their Allies. It is designed to foster a sense of community, provide vital information and resources, as well as facilitate a space for discussion and personal development.
- Location: Level 3, 18 Wally's Walk (C7A) MAZE.

QUEER COLLECTIVE

- The Macquarie University Queer Collective is an officially affiliated student group which is open to staff and students who identify as LGBTIQ+ as well as their Allies. The Queer Collective is the social group that organises events and brings people together to create a sense of community.
- Queer Collective Official Facebook Group
- Email: macqueer@gmail.com

WOMEN’S COLLECTIVE

- The Women's Collective meets in the Women's Room during semester and are able to liaise directly with the Equity and Diversity Student Representatives on the Student Representative Committee (SRC), putting forward their suggestions and ideas for how to make life better and more fun for women on campus.
- Public Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/mqwoco/
- Email: mqu.woco@gmail.com

WOMEN’S ROOM

- The Women's Room is a safe and friendly place for female-identifying students and staff to rest, reflect, socialise and study.
- Location: Level 3, 18 Wally's Walk (C7A) MAZE.
GENERAL SERVICES:

MQ HEALTH GENERAL PRACTICE
Location: Suite 305, Level 3, 2 Technology Place
          Macquarie University NSW 2109
          T: (02) 9812 3944
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm
          Saturday, 8.30am – 12.30pm

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY CAREMQ
• 24 hour information and support service for Macquarie University students and staff.
• Phone: 1800 2273 67

OFF CAMPUS SERVICES:

LIFELINE
• Phone: 131 114,
• Website: https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/online-services/crisis-chat

BEYOND BLUE
• Phone: 1300 224 636
• Website: https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support

SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE
• Phone: 1300 659 467
• Website: https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/

QLIFE
Counselling and referral service for people who are LGBTIQ+
• Phone: 1800 184 527
• Website: https://qlife.org.au

THE GENDER CENTRE
Support and services for the transgender and gender diverse community
• Phone: 9569 2366
• Website: https://gendercentre.org.au/

TWENTY10
Supporting LGBTIQ youth through case work, accommodation, drop-in services, counselling.
• Phone: 02 8594 9555
• Website: http://www.twenty10.org.au/
1800 RESPECT
For people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence or abuse.

- Phone: 1800 737 732
- Website: https://www.1800respect.org.au/

THE STAR OBSERVER
The Star Observer is a community newspaper and online forum for the local LGBTIQ+ community and lists many support organisations that specialise in different areas of support.


Lived experiences of people who identify as LGBTIQ+
It’s important to recognise that everyone has different identities and different experiences. Here are some videos that you may find interesting and can provide some advice. Remember to keep researching and let us know if you find something you think is great that we can share.

MINUS 18
Minus 18 are an Australian network for LGBTIQ+ youth and they have been creating a range of excellent and informative YouTube videos. You can find their YouTube channel here and below are links to some specific videos.

- Trans 101 - The Basics
- What Are Pronouns?
- What It’s Like to Be Intersex
- Things Not to Say to a Non-Binary Person
Relevant MQ Policies
Macquarie has a range of policies that underpin and support the work of the Ally network. MQ is committed to creating a culture of inclusion where bullying, harassment or discrimination is not tolerated.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY ETHICS STATEMENT: FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES
The University is committed to:
- Fostering a collegial community based on mutual trust
- Respecting the intrinsic dignity of all persons
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Neither initiating nor colluding in harmful acts

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION
Applies to: Students, Staff (Academic and Professional), Sub-contractors on campus, Visitors, External parties interacting with staff/students as part of work/study
Macquarie University is committed to providing an environment where staff and students are able to work and study free from unlawful discrimination, bullying and/or harassment
Covers: Unlawful discrimination, bullying and/or harassment on the basis of:
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity and Intersex Status

MQ POLICY: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
Misconduct (Breach of rights):
A student must not intentionally or recklessly:
(n) vilify another person or class of persons because of the actual or perceived gender (including the characteristics of the actual or perceived gender), gender identity, intersex status, sexual orientation, race, marital or relationship status or religious beliefs or activities, disability or age of that person or class of persons;
(o) disclose or purport to disclose to any person the sexual orientation, gender identification or intersex status of any person who is gay, lesbian, transgender or intersex, without that person’s authorisation unless it is public knowledge because of a public disclosure by or authorised by that person;
**Resource**

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Transgender (cont.)
Some transgender people seek surgery or take hormones to bring their body into alignment with their gender identity; many do not. Some transgender people change their gender expression to match their affirmed gender, many do not.

Transition
Describes both a public act and a process. It involves the permanent and public adoption of the style and presentation of the gender different to that of a person’s birth-assigned sex. It usually includes a change of name, chosen style of address and pronouns, as well as adopting the dress and style of presentation of a person’s innate gender. It may also involve gender reassignment surgery and/or hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Not all who transition undergo medically assisted gender reassignment.

Transphobia
A term used to describe the irrational fear, hatred, aversion to or discrimination against people who are transgender, or who are perceived to be transgender. Also can be termed ‘transprejudice’

The following information has not been provided as a script, but rather an idea of how to respond to any questions, oppositions or assumptions that you might hear about LGBTI inclusion in the workplace.

Won't this be offensive to people of differing religious, cultural or conservative backgrounds?

LGBTI inclusion is absolutely not about trying to change individual values or beliefs. It is about workplace behaviour and how we interact with each other in a working/professional relationship.

The very nature of diversity means that people will have cultural, religious and attitudinal differences. But there is a key point to be made here:

Diversity = difference
Inclusion = working with all differences respectfully

People's personal views, values and beliefs are their own. It's behaviour that inclusion initiatives target.

It's also against the law to discriminate against individuals because of their individual difference.

By supporting LGBTI workplace inclusion, we’re not only saying this is a workplace where all employees can thrive, but also that harmful, discriminatory or exclusive behaviour targeting those who do identify, will not be tolerated.

Sexual orientation is a personal thing; it doesn’t belong in the workplace.

You might hear something along the lines of “I don’t talk about my sex life at work, so why should they be allowed to flaunt theirs?”

Every single person has a sexual orientation, for most people it’s heterosexual. The difficulty is that for many heterosexual people, their orientation doesn’t even come into question. It’s such an incredibly innate part of who they are that it doesn’t even occur to them that their orientation is on display for others to see 24/7.

We talk about our families, we bring our partners to events, we may have a photo on our desk or on display in our wallet. Yet, if someone mentions the name of a same-sex partner or if they tell someone they’re gay, then suddenly that part of their persona takes over. From here on in they’re known as the ‘gay lawyer’ instead of the ‘great lawyer’. It’s odd isn’t it? We wouldn’t dream of talking about that ‘heterosexual woman’ that just started on Level 1.

While most of us go through daily life without giving our orientation a second thought, many lesbian, gay and bisexual people go through daily life safeguarding that part of themselves. Why? Because at the end of the day, that small piece of information can be detrimental to workplace, social and family relationships.

You cannot divorce a person from their orientation. If people are encouraged to bring their whole selves to work then sexual orientation, regardless of what it is, is very much a workplace issue.
I don't believe in preferential treatment, raising one group above another.

This is not what diversity and inclusion initiatives are about.

Academics refer to ‘heterosexual privilege’. It’s that privilege that heterosexuals enjoy that they don’t even know they have – because it’s the way it’s always been.

For example:

The majority of people can talk freely about their family – the majority of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people can’t.

The majority of people don’t hesitate when filling out forms asking for their sex or gender – the majority of transgender and intersex people do.

This is not about giving a group special treatment. It is about creating an even playing field where people are welcomed into the workplace for the skills they bring and the contributions that they make. And once they’re there, it’s about allowing everyone (without exception) the privilege of coming to work, doing their job and not worrying about how their diversity may impact their relationships, their work and their career.

We shouldn't be forcing people to come out.

LGBTI inclusion is not about forcing people to come out and it is definitely not about trying to find all the LGBTI employees and drag them in as spokespeople, advocates or insist that they have their photographs taken for diversity websites or inclusion posters.

There will be many enthusiastic employees regardless of how they personally identify who would love to get involved in inclusion initiatives but equally there will be many who just want to sit on the sidelines, enjoy the benefits and stay out of the spotlight.

Under no circumstances should we imply that it would not be ok to do otherwise.

We don't have enough LGBTI people here to warrant the time and effort.

The most probable answer to that is, yes you do.

For many people the risk of being out in the workplace is too great. There are not enough messages of inclusion to convince someone that their orientation, gender identity or intersex status wouldn’t be an issue. As a result, a significant number of people spend copious amounts of time and energy editing conversations, fictionalising personas and avoiding any real workplace relationships or conversations for fear of being found out.

The numbers are there, you just don’t know they are.

LGBTI inclusion isn’t about forcing people into the open, but it is about creating a work environment that, regardless of whether or not someone is out, they are assured that it wouldn’t be an issue if they were.
The Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Team support the university in progressing towards an inclusive, respectful and diverse workplace.

FIXING THE SYSTEM
We are tackling inequality at its core by changing the systems, processes and culture that underpin and reinforce inequality. This means working with university leaders, addressing policies and practices that may be creating or sustaining inequality.

EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH
We interrogate our own workforce and recruitment data and metrics, and we listen to staff at Macquarie to understand their experiences and perspectives.

EMPOWERING OTHERS
We work with colleagues across the university to help provide guidance and information, supporting and enabling them to work towards our shared goal of inclusion and equality.

COLLABORATIVE
We are informed by sector leaders and the research of our own academics at MQ. We also hope to contribute back to academic research as case studies - this enables us to identify what works, and to stop doing the activities that yield no results.

FIND OUT MORE
Workplace Diversity and Inclusion
HR, Level 4, Building C5C, 17 Wally’s Walk
Macquarie University
NSW, 2109
Australia

Web: https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/diversity-and-community
Email: workplacediversityinclusion@mq.edu.au

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