DISCLOSURE SCRIPT

Have you considered creating a disclosure script?

A disclosure script is a prepared explanation that details the information you would like to share about your disability to relevant academic staff. It can be used to clarify how your disability may affect your academic performance and the reasonable adjustments and supports you require. The script can also include important information such as your strengths, academic goals and any challenges/limitations. It can be shared verbally or in writing (via an email for example).

A disclosure script is not compulsory. You only need to disclose your disability to a Disability Adviser when you register with the Inclusion and Accessibility Service. Preparing a disclosure script may help if you want to voluntarily disclose information about yourself and your disability to staff in order to explain or seek adjustments.

A disclosure script does not replace an Accessibility Plan that lists the reasonable adjustments the University will put in place, but you might find it helpful to use a disclosure script when you provide your Accessibility Plan to relevant staff. It is a way to share important information that can help your Unit Coordinator/Lecturer/Placement Officer understand your circumstances and needs.

Why might you disclose?

Disclosing details of your disability is a personal choice. You might do this to:

- introduce yourself to your lecturer when you provide a copy of your Accessibility Plan
- request and receive adjustments and/or services
- receive legal protection from discrimination
- maintain or improve relationships with lecturers or other academic staff
- reduce stress and advocate for yourself
- build your confidence to talk positively about yourself and your needs
- provide information about yourself that is not included in an Accessibility Plan (if you have one)

Self-reflection questions to guide the development of your disclosure script

- What do you want people to know about your disability and why?
- What are your strengths and abilities in relation to your current/intended study area?
- What tasks/activities may be challenging for you?
- What are your communication preferences (email, zoom or face-to-face)?
- What supports and adjustments have been useful for you in the past.
- What reasonable adjustments in your Accessibility Plan (if you have one) does your lecturer need to know about as early as possible?

How to create a disclosure script

A script doesn't have to be long and can consist of the following elements:

1. Greeting/opening – a simple statement to address the person/context. It can be helpful to include the unit code
2. A brief description of your disability in a way that people without any medical or psychological knowledge can understand. This can include the main ways your disability can affect your studies.
3. The strengths, skills and abilities that you bring to your studies
4. The supports and adjustments that may further assist you in addressing any challenges/limitations, and a
5. Finishing statement, perhaps outlining further opportunities to discuss.

Example 1

My name is <insert name> and I am in unit <insert code> this term. I wanted to let you know that I have a medical condition which sometimes impacts on my study. While I do my best to manage my condition, there are occasions where I may need to leave class early in order to manage my symptoms. I hope this is not too distracting for others. If this happens, I will contact you afterwards to find out about any work I have missed (and negotiate catch up).

I may need to ask for an extension for the essay due in week 8 if my symptoms flare up around that time, but I will let you know closer to the time. Please let me know if you have any concerns and see my Accessibility Plan attached.

Example 2

I am excited to by studying at CQUniversity and will be in your unit <insert code> this term. I wanted you to know that I have Dyslexia, which impacts on how I approach my studies. I use different kinds of software to help with literacy, so I need to check if it's OK to use a recording device at residential school. This assists my note taking as I am not great at writing quickly and often miss information.

It also takes me longer to read journal articles and write assignments. Although I use a range of software to help, I may need to ask for an extension for the written essays coming up later in the term. I will ask through the extension request form on Moodle.

When there are a lot of readings in one week, I can get behind as it takes me longer to read them. Would you be able to list which readings are the highest priority each week so I can make sure I read them first? I have also attached my Accessibility Plan for you to read.

Example 3

I am in your unit <insert code> this term. I have a medical condition which means I walk with a cane and have difficulty managing stairs. This means I may take longer to get between classes. On Tuesdays and Fridays, there is a 10 minute break between lecturers in 2 different buildings. I just want you to know that I may arrive late if the class before you doesn't finish on time. Please let me know if you have any concerns.

Find out more

If you want to learn more about preparing disclosure scripts, or your rights and responsibilities in terms of studying with a disability at CQUniversity, please contact the Inclusion and Accessibility Service here: https://www.cqu.edu.au/student-life/new-students/student-support/accessibility

You can also use the resources on the ADCET website:

Disclosure information: https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-with-disability/disclosure/

Information about reasonable adjustments at university: https://www.adcet.edu.au/students-withdisability/reasonable-adjustments-disability-specific/