



We are getting married on Valentine's Day. Do we need to tell the tax office about it and start lodging a joint tax return?

Maria, Botany

How exciting Maria! But why on earth are you thinking about the ATO during this exciting phase of your life? It would be the last thing on my mind.

But you don't need to worry. Unless you are in a business together, then you don't have to lodge a combined tax return. Any share of joint investments, such as interest, dividends and rental properties, is separately recorded in your respective tax returns.

You do need to show on your return that you now have a spouse and his taxable income each year. If you elect to change your name, it is simply a matter of notifying on the front cover of your next return. You won't need to provide any certified documents.

Your combined income is taken into account if you don't have private health insurance (where there is an extra 1% Medicare levy charged if you earn over \$140,000 combined). It is also taken into account for calculating Family Assistance Office benefits such as the Baby Bonus, Child Care Rebates and Family Tax Benefits.

Congratulations and I wish you many years of happiness.