

Student Guide: Support person

The purpose of this document is to provide further guidance to ākonga on the key function of a support person and who can be a support person.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXTRACT FROM THE ĀKONGA | STUDENT HANDBOOK

There may be occasions during your study where you will be offered the opportunity to have a support person present. For example, if you have been requested to attend a formal meeting.

What does a support person do?

A support person's presence should enhance the fairness and transparency of the process, while also providing emotional support for you. The key functions of a support person include:

Emotional support – to provide emotional support. Formal meetings can be stressful and intimidating, so having a trusted individual present can help you to feel more comfortable.

Clarification and explanation – helping you to understand the process and your rights and responsibilities. They will help ensure you have understood the situation.

Note taking – taking notes during the meeting, including any key points, questions or decisions made.

Providing advice and guidance – (depending on their expertise and relationship to you) offering advice on how to respond to questions posed during the meeting.

Maintaining a calm and respectful atmosphere – helping maintain a civil and respectful atmosphere during the meeting.

Ensuring due process – helping to ensure the matter follows YooBee's established procedure and that your rights are protected.

Assistance with documentation – assisting you to gather and present evidence that may support or clarify the situation.

Support decision-making – helping you to understand the outcome, potential consequences, and any follow-up actions that are required. They can also assist you in deciding whether to appeal the decision if you do not feel a fair process was followed.

Who can be a support person?

Selecting a support person is a personal decision. You may select a support person based on their relationship to you, ability to comfort and support you, and/or their availability to attend the formal meeting. A suitable support person could be a

- Friend or whānau | family member
- Ākonga Representative
- Kaiāwhina