

## Student Guide: Support person

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

### THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXTRACT FROM THE 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. Please find some information below regarding the key function of a support person, who can be a support person, and what to do next if you would like to have a support person present.

#### What does a support person do?

Before selecting a support person, it is important to consider the key function of the support person in a formal setting. 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** - the primary role of a support person is 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** - the support person can help you to understand the process and your rights and responsibilities. They will help ensure you have understood the situation.

**Note taking** - the support person can take notes during the meeting, including any key points, questions or decisions made.

**Providing advice and guidance** - depending on their expertise and relationship to you, the support person may offer advice on how to respond to questions posed during the meeting.

**Maintaining a calm and respectful atmosphere** - the presence of a support person can help maintain a civil and respectful atmosphere during the meeting.

**Ensuring due process** - the support person can help to ensure the procedure follows the college's established procedure and that your rights are protected.

**Assistance with documentation** - the support person may assist you to gather and present evidence that may support or clarify the situation.

**Support decision-making** - the support person can help 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. If it is recommended that you bring a support person to a formal meeting, we will ensure you have appropriate notice to select a suitable one.

A suitable support person could be a:

- Friend or family member
- Learner Success Coordinator
- Student Representative
- Kaiāwhina

#### Next steps

If you have decided to have a support person present and have confirmed that they are able to attend the scheduled meeting, or alternatively if you have decided not to have a support person present, please ensure you communicate this to us so that we can ensure a smooth process.