



Special Considerations Policy

Version 3.3

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A. Purpose

Upskilled is committed to providing quality training and assessment following the 'Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015'.

This Policy ensures Upskilled Special Consideration Application practices comply with the Standards for RTOs, providing Students with clear information on 'Special Consideration Application' policy, processes, and evidence requirements, ensuring that 'Special Consideration Application' requests meet Access and Equity requirements.

B. Policy Statement

As a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Upskilled strives to meet the requirements of the 'Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015' and has a responsibility to identify and comply with all additional and relevant obligations.

Students have the following relevant policies to address their specific needs:

- Student Learning Challenges and Disability policy as stated in the [Student Handbook](#)
- [Complaints and Appeals policy and process](#).
- [Cooling-off period, Cancellation, Transfer, Withdrawal, and Refund Policy](#)

There may be other instances where a student is impacted by circumstances that may affect their performance in completing assessments and/or completing a course which is addressed through special consideration policy. Upskilled will assess each application on its merits.

C. Policy Principles

1. What type of situations constitutes extenuating and compassionate circumstances?

- 1.1. Circumstances which may qualify for a partial refund subject to satisfactory information and documentation
 - Permanent disability, serious illness or serious injury which were:
 - not pre-existing conditions; and
 - were beyond the students' control; and
 - did not make their full impact on the student until after the commencement of the course; and
 - were such that it made it impracticable for the student to complete their course or unit.
- 1.2. Circumstances which may qualify for a free course extension
 - Temporary disability
 - A sudden need to be a carer of family members and loved ones for an indefinite period
 - Personal Difficulties
 - Bereavement of close family members and loved ones
 - provided these circumstances were
 - not pre-existing conditions; and

- were beyond the students' control; and
- did not make their full impact on the student until after the commencement of the course; and
- were such that it made it impracticable for the student to complete their course or unit within the stipulated course time limit.

2. What type of situations that do not fall under extenuating and compassionate circumstances?

- 2.1. A request for special consideration will not be granted for:
- a. Change of mind about the enrolment
 - b. Finding the course challenging, time-consuming or stressful than expected
 - c. Change of jobs, works hours and/or career plans
 - d. Termination of employment by choice
 - e. Relocation (including inter-state or international moves)
 - f. Lack of electronic devices and/ or internet failure
 - g. Inability to juggle between usual work commitments and studies
 - h. Inability to attend social events or plan vacations when studying
 - i. Misreading Terms and Conditions in the enrolment form or Student Handbook or requirements in the Training Plan
 - j. Incorrect assessment of suitable course due to incorrect information being provided to Upskilled
 - k. Mismatch in expectations of course structure or course content
 - l. Course changes because of regulatory change governing Upskilled

3. Temporary Financial Hardships

- 3.1. If a Student is facing temporary financial hardships, they can request for a reduction in payment instalment amounts or temporarily putting payments on hold
- 3.2. Please refer [Payment Options](#) for eligibility and process

4. Special Consideration requests and possible outcomes

- 4.1. The following requests can be made under extenuating and compassionate circumstances under the Special Consideration Policy.

| Requests | Possible Outcomes |
|--|---|
| Free extensions of sixty (60) calendar days submitted after Course End Date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A free extension is granted. • A free extension is denied, and the Student's enrolment is cancelled on the Course End Date <p>Please refer the Course Extension Policy section in the Student Handbook for further details</p> |
| Free extensions of more than sixty (60) calendar days submitted before Course End Date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is approved. • Extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is approved with Extension Fee. • Free extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is denied, and the Student's enrolment is cancelled on the Course End Date |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | Please refer the Course Extension Policy section in the Student Handbook for further details |
| Withdrawal from the course | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal from the course with no refund of paid fees and liability to pay full course fees. • Withdrawal from the course with a partial refund <p>Please note that any partial refund will be calculated on a pro-rata basis as mentioned in the Cooling-off period, Cancellation, Transfer, Withdrawal, and Refund Policy</p> |

D. Process for applying for Special Consideration.

1. Application

- 1.1. A [Special Consideration Form](#) is required to be filled by the Student along with stated supporting documentation.
- 1.2. Special Consideration form will only be deemed as received and assessed once all required/ requested supporting documentation has been received. The form will not be accepted if a student has been reported to Debt Collectors due to any overdue/ outstanding fees.

2. Supporting Documentation

- 2.1. The supporting documents provided must demonstrate that the circumstances are continuing and severe, materially affecting the student's ability to complete assessments or continue with the course.
- 2.2. Students are responsible for ensuring the authenticity of any supporting documents that they provide to Upskilled.
- 2.3. Upskilled may take steps to verify any supporting documents provided with the completed [Special Consideration Form](#). The steps may include but are not limited to seeking further information from persons mentioned in the supporting documents and/or Special Consideration Form. Students are responsible for notifying the persons mentioned in the supporting documents of possible contact from Upskilled.
- 2.4. All supporting documents must be dated after the enrolment start date, and students must provide more than one supporting document. Upskilled reserves the right to reject supporting documents and/or request for more supporting documents.
- 2.5. The type of supporting documents required depends on several factors, including the duration of needed hardship assistance and support options requested.
- 2.6. Provision of false information and/or falsified supporting documents will result in the immediate rejection of the Special Consideration Application and/or cancellation of any offering of support options. It may also result in disciplinary action, including expulsion from the course with the full liability to pay the Total Course Fees.
- 2.7. All supporting documents must clearly display the Student's first and last name and the issue date.
- 2.8. Failure to provide relevant supporting documents within ten (10) business days after submitting the Special Consideration Form will cancel your request
- 2.9. Allowable supporting documents include the following.

| Reason | Evidence Required |
|---|---|
| Permanent disability, serious illness, serious injury | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical report(s) from a specialist medical expert • Medical certificate(s) from a Specialist medical expert • Receipts documenting medical expenses • Documents issued by an insurance company for successful claiming of medical expenses |
| Temporary disability (only applicable for course extension) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical report(s) from a specialist medical expert • Medical certificate(s) from a Specialist medical expert • Receipts documenting medical expenses • Documents issued by an insurance company for successful claiming of medical expenses |
| Bereavement of close family members and loved ones (only applicable for course extension) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death certificate • Funeral notice • Receipt relating to funeral expenses. |
| A sudden need to be a carer of family members and loved ones for an indefinite period (only applicable for course extension) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical report/medical certificate from specialist medical expert • Letter from the doctor confirming that a full-time carer is required. • A statutory declaration confirming that no next of kin is available to take on the role of a carer |
| Personal Difficulties (only applicable for course extension) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Report • Court documents • Divorce or separation documents • ADVO or APVO - An ADVO relates to protecting a person/s where a domestic relationship exists between the parties. An APVO relates to protecting a person/s where there is no domestic relationship between the parties, e.g. co-workers and neighbours. • Natural disaster (with proof and details) |

3. Procedure for Special Consideration

- 3.1. On receiving the Special Consideration Form and supporting documents, the Student Support Officer will review and refer the application to the Student Relations Specialist and inform the student of the timelines.
- 3.2. The Student Support Officer and Student Relations Specialist may ask for any additional information and/or supporting documents if required regarding the application.
- 3.3. Student Relations Specialist will conduct the necessary investigation and present the findings to the Executive Committee.
- 3.4. Decision made by the Student Relations Specialist and Executive Committee as the outcome of the Special Consideration Application will be communicated to the Student in writing within ten (10) business days from the date that the Student Relations Specialists acknowledge application.
- 3.5. During the assessment of a Special Consideration application for partial refund, Upskilled will place all payment schedules on hold, temporarily cease collection activity and sending of default notices and not refer the student's account to a 3rd party debt collection agent.

- 3.6. If the student wants to appeal against the outcome, they can appeal by completing the [Appeal Form](#) within ten (10) business days from the date of receiving the outcome from Upskilled.
- 3.7. Student can submit the Appeal Form by replying to the email that was received by the student as an outcome of the Special Consideration Application.
- 3.8. Upskilled reserves the right to reject the appeal if no evidence or documents in addition to those provided with Special Consideration Application are submitted or if any appeal is submitted after ten (10) business days of receiving the special consideration outcome.
- 3.9. If the Appeal Form is accepted, Upskilled will endeavour to review and provide an outcome within ten (10) business days from the date of acceptance of the Appeal Form. Refer the [Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure](#) for further details.

4. Payment of arrears related to a Special Consideration application

- 4.1. Upskilled is committed to reviewing each application and supporting documents thoroughly and provide an outcome in writing. However, Upskilled shall not be liable for changes in personal or business circumstances that prevent the student from attending and/or completing the course.
- 4.2. Students who submitted Special Consideration Application remain liable for the Total Course Fees as per the Terms and Conditions in the signed Enrolment Form, unless stated otherwise by Upskilled in the Special Consideration Application outcome.
- 4.3. For any default in payment after the outcome of the Special Consideration Application is shared with the Students in writing, and reactivation of payment instalments, Upskilled will resume its usual collection activity. Please refer section "Default in payment of Instalments" in [Payment Options](#) for more information.

5. Changes to this Policy

We may amend this Policy from time to time. The current version of this Policy will be posted on our website.

| Document Name | Version | Approved | Policy Owner | Effective | Review |
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| Special Considerations Policy | 3.3 | COO | Head of Compliance & Risk (Education) | 01.07.2023 | 31.07.2024 |
| RTO | RTO 40734 Upskilled Pty. Ltd ABN 14 125 906 676 | | | | |
| Version History | V1- original Policy part of Student Handbook V2- Changes to the applicability of special consideration V3 – Special Consideration made into a separate policy 01.02.2021 V3.1 Added clauses 1.2 and 2.8 in Section D V3.2- Amendment to situations constituting financial hardship V3.3- Clarifications on situations qualifying for a refund vs free course extension | | | | |