



Special Considerations Policy

Version 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. *Extenuating and compassionate circumstances include, but is not limited to:*

- *Serious illness, serious injury or mental health condition(s)*
- *Bereavement of close family members and loved ones*
- *Temporary disability or permanent disability*
- *A sudden need to be a carer of family members and loved ones for an indefinite period*
- *Personal Difficulties*

- *Financial hardships*
- *Loss of employment triggered by reasons, not within the control of students*

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:*

- Change of mind about the enrolment*
- Finding the course challenging, time-consuming or stressful than expected*
- Change of jobs, works hours and/or career plans*
- Termination of employment by choice*
- Relocation (including inter-state or international moves)*
- Lack of electronic devices and/ or internet failure*
- Inability to juggle between usual work commitments and studies*
- Inability to attend social events or plan vacations when studying*
- Misreading Terms and Conditions in the enrolment form or Student Handbook or requirements in the Training Plan*
- Incorrect assessment of suitable course due to incorrect information being provided to Upskilled*
- Mismatch in expectations of course structure or course content*
- 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 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.*

<i>Requests</i>	<i>Possible Outcomes</i>
<i>Free extensions of sixty (60) calendar days submitted after Course End Date</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A free extension is granted.</i> • <i>A free extension is denied, and the Student's enrolment is cancelled on the Course End Date</i> <p><i>Please refer the Course Extension Policy section in the Student Handbook for further details</i></p>
<i>Free extensions of more than sixty (60) calendar days submitted before Course End Date</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Free extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is approved.</i> • <i>Extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is approved with Extension Fee.</i> • <i>Free extension of more than sixty (60) calendar days is denied, and the Student's enrolment is cancelled on the Course End Date</i> <p><i>Please refer the Course Extension Policy section in the Student Handbook for further details</i></p>
<i>Withdrawal from the course with a refund</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Withdrawal from the course with no refund of paid fees and liability to pay full course fees.</i> • <i>Withdrawal from the course with a partial refund</i> • <i>Withdrawal from the course with a full refund of paid fees and no liability against balance payment instalments (only applicable in the Cooling-off period, Cancellation, Transfer, Withdrawal, and Refund Policy)</i>

	<i>Please note that partial refund will be done on a pro-rata basis as mentioned in the Cooling-off period, Cancellation, Transfer, Withdrawal, and Refund Policy</i>
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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.

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. Allowable supporting documents include but are not limited to the following.

<i>Reason</i>	<i>Evidence Required</i>
<i>Serious illness, serious injury, mental health condition(s), temporary disability or permanent disability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medical report(s)</i> • <i>Medical certificate(s)</i> • <i>Receipts documenting medical expenses</i> • <i>Documents issued by an insurance company for successful claiming of medical expenses</i> • <i>Letter issued by counsellors/psychologists</i>
<i>Bereavement of close family members and loved ones</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Death certificate</i> • <i>Funeral notice</i> • <i>Receipt relating to funeral expenses.</i>
<i>A sudden need to be a carer of family members and loved ones for an indefinite period</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medical report/medical certificate</i> • <i>Letter from the doctor confirming that a full-time carer is required.</i> • <i>A statutory declaration confirming that no next of kin is available to take on the role of a carer</i>
<i>Personal Difficulties</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Police Report</i> • <i>Court documents</i> • <i>Divorce or separation documents</i> • <i>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.</i> • <i>Natural disaster (with proof and details)</i>
<i>Financial Hardship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Three (3) recent payslips</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bank statements showing a reduction of income, essential spending and savings and dated within the current three (3) months.</i> • <i>Letter of redundancy/unemployment from the employer.</i> • <i>Letter from the employer for reduced working hours or change of roles resulting in the lower remuneration package.</i> • <i>Current bills from various service providers which are overdue.</i> • <i>Centre Link Statements.</i>
<p><i>Loss of employment triggered by reasons, not within the control of students</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Letter of redundancy/unemployment from employer</i> • <i>Rejection emails/letters from multiple organisations for job applications</i> • <i>Statutory declaration</i> • <i>Any documents to indicate bankruptcy/liquidation/closure of business</i>

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, 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
Special Considerations Policy	3	CEO	Head of Compliance & Risk (Education)	01.02.2021	01.02.2022
RTO	RTO 40734 Upskilled Pty. Ltd ABN 14 125 906 676				
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