



SPECIALISED
TRAINING COMPANY

Student Information Handbook

2021

Document Control

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Document Author

Name:	Phil Statham
Role:	Operations Manager
Telephone:	049 049 2901

Document Approval

Name:	Phil Statham
Role:	Operations Manager
Telephone:	049 049 2901

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0.1	21 Jul 10	Initial Draft	PS
0.2	26 Mar 12	AQTF Desk Audit Review	PS

1. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been compiled in order to provide practical and useful information that you may need or find helpful in the successful completion of any training program delivered by Specialised Training Company Pty Ltd (Specialised). It includes items such as our delivery and assessment strategy, the courses available to you as well as the processes to utilize our substantial resources to assist you in achieving your training and educational needs.

Specialised operates under a Partnership Agreement with Halo Nation Training Pty Ltd (RTO 32485) (HaloNT), and as such, agrees to support and assist HaloNT in maintaining its registration and compliance obligations and responsibilities within the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards. These standards are available for review through the AQTF website. <http://www.training.com.au>

HaloNT is authorized to deliver, assess and issue nationally recognized qualifications and Statements of Attainment (SOA) under the Australian Qualifications Framework. The documents that provides detailed information pertaining to the delivery and assessment of courses and programs offered are endorsed Training Packages. These packages outline the specific skills and knowledge required to perform specific vocational roles to a published and authorized standard.

Each student will have their competency in performing as required according to evidence collected during their training and assessment(s) measured in accordance with a variety of valid evidence accumulated to demonstrate competency in relation to prescribed skills and knowledge associated with a specific, nominated role. Collated evidence provides the foundation of all assessments.

2. SPECIALISED STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission

To be recognized as an Australian leader in teaching excellence, committed to the positive impact we can have on the lives of our trainees, staff and graduates as well as the local and national communities and the industry sectors we support.

Vision

Specialised is committed to providing high quality and accessible educational opportunities to each trainee. All trainees should be able to think critically, act ethically and put the good of humanity and the safety of their workmates at the center of their concerns.

Specialised will provide advice and support services that assist trainees in achieving their goals and will ensure that trainees receive timely and appropriate information on all matters that may affect the achievement of these goals.

Specialised will be an innovative, growing, focused and financially sustainable training organization. It will be enterprising in its approach to new opportunities as they arise, and clear and consistent in its achievement of its strategic goals.

Values

Excellence in all that we do.

Specialised is committed to the highest intellectual and ethical standards in teaching and learning, in research and research training, and in the conduct of all our professional activities.

Fairness, integrity and responsibility.

Specialised supports social justice, equality of opportunity and cultural diversity, and seeks to implement

these in the conduct of its activities and relationships.

We will respect the rights and responsibilities of freedom of inquiry and expression.

Dispassionate, rigorous and honest intellectual inquiry is at the core of academic traditions, and should be reflected throughout our research, scholarship, education and management.

Innovation, creativity and breadth of vision.

Specialised supports research intensity and high-quality education, across a broad range of disciplines, and encourages a shared commitment to encourage the creation of new knowledge and to prepare trainees to make a positive impact on the community.

Industry Engagement

Specialised seeks to provide leadership and service in equal measure, pursuing common goals with government, industry and the community. Specialised will ensure that activities are responsive and relevant to needs of industry and to ensure that trainees develop critical thinking, ethical action and safe work practices. Specialised will develop a shared understanding of government, business, industry and community needs, and encourage industry participation in training services.

Robust Governance

Accountable and transparent processes that minimize risk and ensure robust systems for planning, financial management, performance management and quality assurance will underpin Specialised decision-making.

Strategic Goals

Specialised has set strategic goals in three primary areas of activity.

- Goal 1: Specialised provides quality training and assessment across all of its operations.
- Goal 2: Specialised engages clients and stakeholders in open and honest discussion to shape our approach to issues, and to strengthen our daily operations.
- Goal 3: Specialised has robust management systems in place that ensure good governance, and that are responsive to the needs of clients, staff and stakeholders, and the environment in which Specialised operates.

<i>Training & Assessment</i>	<i>Communication & Engagement</i>	<i>Governance</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collection and Analysis of Data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategies for training meet the requirements for the course <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facilities are appropriate for training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trainers have appropriate qualifications and experience <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RPL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish and meet the needs of clients <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuous improvements of clients services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provision of Client information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> External engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning meets individual needs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timely access to current and accurate records <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complaints and appeals process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RTO/client agreements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internal Audit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training feedback systems <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Records Management

4. DELIVERY MODES

4.1 FLEXIBLE DELIVERY

Flexible delivery allows the learner to study what they want, when they want, through an interactive set of learning resources designed for self paced progress. Interactive tutorials and peer support programs provide learners with personal assistance and web-based student notice boards via the Specialised website inform students of upcoming events and important notices.

4.2 FACE-TO-FACE DELIVERY

For those who prefer the personal interactivity and experience sharing gained from attending a ‘public’ training program, our face-to-face delivery option may be the answer. Facilitated by the experience professionals, these sessions promise to be interactive, interesting, stimulating and exceptional value for money.

4.3 BLENDED

Our customer centered and flexible approach to learning is fundamental to our success and we encourage our learners to take ownership of their studies and allow them to choose a combination of flexible and face-to-face delivery modes – a pick and mix to suit individual circumstances and learning needs.

5. ENROLMENTS

Our friendly and experienced staff members are available to assist all students with their enrollment. From our comprehensive range of offerings, you simply need to choose your course, select a start date, give us a call, and we will take care of the rest.

If you prefer the interaction gained from participating in face-to-face training delivery:

- we can arrange a phone or personal interview to establish a individualized training plan and make all necessary course bookings for you; and
- Learning resources will be provided in a modular format during the training

For policy and process information, see *Enrollment* in Appendix A-2

How do I know if my enrolment has been successful?

Prior to the commencement of any training course, all students are forwarded an enrolment confirmation that includes:

- Course details (area of study),
- Modular enrolment details,
- Relevant units of competency, and
- Logistics – where, when, what to bring etc.

In addition to this, you will be provided with this Student Information Handbook that is designed to provide all the necessary information to ensure you are ready to start your learning journey with us.

6. PRIVACY

Subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988, and our moral responsibility, we will maintain the privacy for all employees, contractors, customers and students in relation to the personal data they may provide.

As such we will:

- Provide a safe and secure storage of personal private information;
- Provide written procedures and instructions to ensure privacy is maintained ;
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and current industry standards; and
- Train all staff members and advise all customers of their rights and obligations in relation to this policy.

Under certain circumstances, we are bound by law to disclose enrolment details for the purposes mentioned in the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000. Agencies, such as Commonwealth and State Government Departments are also granted access to enrolment details. If you have any objections to this access, we ask that you notify our Learning and Development Manager immediately. Written consent will be required from you in each instance you wish to disclose this information to a third party.

7. FEES AND CHARGES

How do I calculate fees payable? Specialised staff are on hand to provide assistance in this area. Unless stipulated, all course fees are inclusive of:

- Administration charges,
- Course refreshments,
- Training delivery,
- Training assessment, and
- Student course materials. When do I pay student fees?

All student fees are payable on or before training commencement. Corporate clients, following a successful credit reference check, will be offered an invoice or other arrangements agreed to by HaloNT.

8. REFUNDS

For policy and process information, see Refunds in Appendix A – 4 Training Course Refund Policy

9. YOUR LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT JOURNEY

9.1 INDUCTION AND ORIENTATION

To ensure you are ready to commence and completely comfortable with the journey you are about to embark on, your Course Facilitator and assessor will spend time with you, either individually or in a group to induct and orient you to the program. This is your chance to ask questions, to work with the Course Facilitator/assessor to identify specific needs you may have and to customise the program to your learning needs. You may want to choose elective units of competency specific to the workplace or industry you represent, or you may have workplace project you may want to include as part of the assessment.

All these specifics will be captured succinctly in a training plan that is developed just for you. If you are participating in a traineeship, this training plan is signed off by you, your employer and the RTO

and will reflect the skills and knowledge required by that workplace. If you are not participating in a traineeship, your training plan can be simply negotiated with your Course Facilitator directly and could represent either skills you need for work now, or skills and knowledge you believe you'll need in the future.

For policy and process information, see Students - Interviews in Appendix A-1 Student Interviews

9.2 EXAMS AND ASSESSMENT

Qualifications issued in the vocational education and training sector certify the achievement of competency. Competency based training focuses on what the individual can do, and unlike other methods of learning, competency based training is based on work-related skills and requirements, and the application and performance of the individual in the workplace.

In awarding competency, criteria are needed to measure skills and knowledge. Competency standards provide those criteria. In the context of national training packages, a competency standard is an agreed statement of skill and knowledge required to perform a specific job or job function. In order to gain competency, the student must be able to demonstrate that they have the **skills** and the **knowledge**, and that they can **apply** these to the standards of performance required.

Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making valid, reliable, and consistent judgment that is fair to all students. It can be established a number of ways, those include, but are not limited to:

- on the job assessment,
- Portfolios of Evidence,
- Assignments,
- Oral presentations,
- In class observations, and
- Role playing.

Our assessment practices:

- Are flexible and incorporate alternative approaches to suit people who may otherwise be disadvantaged by cultural background, language ability or personal disabilities – special needs in this area can be discussed directly with your assessor,
- Are flexible and encourage learning to occur in a wide variety of learning settings,
- Will be conducted in an open, accountable and transparent manner,
- Will be fair and equitable,
- Be conducted by qualified staff, and
- Will be integrated into the learning process rather than being separate from it.

9.3 PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a form of dishonesty that occurs when a person passes off someone else's work as his or her own and is a serious academic offence. This can range from failing to cite an author for ideas incorporated into a student's paper, to handing in an assessment piece downloaded from the Internet. All Plagiarized assessments will instantly be assessed as Not **Yet Competent and** students will be required to resubmit their work. These web sites will help you avoid plagiarism:

9.4 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

In accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework, results of competency assessment are indicated by either:

- **S** = Satisfactory; or
- **US** = Un-Satisfactory

9.5 REASSESSMENT

Reassessment for a module or unit of competency may be a resit of an assessment or practical exercise or a re-submission of a piece of evidence. Assessment re-submission will only be allowed within a six (6) week period from the original result of assessment date.

10. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer (CT) are formal acknowledgement of a person's current qualifications, skills and knowledge you may have already gained through life, work experiences and previous study. These are measured against your chosen area of study and if relevant, you may be granted credits or exemptions for some parts of your studies.

If you believe you may qualify for RPL/CT your Course Facilitator can provide further information and associated forms, and support you through the process.

11. NATIONAL RECOGNITION

It is our policy and a legislative requirement that we formally recognize all AQF qualifications and SOA issued by any other RTO. Please contact us should you wish to investigate and be accredited for national recognition of your prior qualifications.

12. ACADEMIC APPEALS

In the event that you are unhappy about an academic decision or result, you have the right to appeal for a re-evaluation. Specialised has a policy that defines the appeals requirements and this policy is accessible via our Internet site at www.specialisedtraining.com.au. For those without Internet access, please contact our office on 1300 45 5438 for a written version.

For policy and procedure information see *Student Complaints, Appeals and Grievances* in Appendix A.

13. AWARDS

13.1 COURSE AWARD

To be eligible for a qualification (e.g. Certificate or Diploma) a student must have completed all program work and assessment as set out in the program outline for the course.

13.2 STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT

As students progress through their learning and complete a unit of competency or module, a Statement of Attainment will be awarded, if the full certificate or Diploma level course has not been completed.

13.3 ACADEMIC HISTORY REPORTS

Students may also request an academic history report that provides a statement of current academic history with us.

13.4 STATEMENT OF ATTENDANCE

Statements of attendance are supplied to students who decide not to proceed with the assessment component of a course but still require documented evidence of attendance, or for students who attend non accredited training (e.g. skills only).

14. ACCESS TO RECORDS

All students who have received training from Specialised are entitled to access their individual training and assessment records. Access to these records is permitted after receiving a formal written request and suitable photographic proof of identity documents (i.e. passport or drivers license). Once these documents are received Specialised will provide the requested information to the applicant within a seven day period.

15. CLIENT FEEDBACK

Feedback we receive from our clients, our students and our colleagues is invaluable to us because it provides us with an opportunity to improve the products and services we offer and the level of service we provide in accordance with our commitment to the AQTF 2007 standards of continuous improvement.

As part of our commitment to continuous quality improvement, we invite you to offer any feedback or complaints directly to our Manager Learning and Development.

Postal Address: PO Box 188, ELANORA QLD 4221
Phone: 1300 45 5438
Email: feedback@specialisedtraining.com.au

16. GRIEVANCES

We have a fair and equitable process for dealing with grievances and disputes. In the event that grievances / disputes cannot be resolved internally, we will advise students of the appropriate government body where they can seek further assistance. Circumstances that may result in a grievance could include:

- Verbal abuse;
- Discriminatory behavior; and
- Unprofessional behavior.

Students, who feel they have cause to lodge a grievance, should discuss the issue in the first instance with their Course Facilitator. If resolution is not reached, an invitation is open to contact the Manager Learning and Development. For policy and procedure information see *Student Complaints, Appeals and Grievances* in Appendix A – 5.

17. DISCIPLINE

We expect that fair and equitable treatment is a reciprocal arrangement and as such have documented guidelines for management of inappropriate student behavior. For more information see *Guidelines for Student Behavior and Discipline* in Appendix A - 6.

18. HEALTH AND SAFETY

We value the health and safety of our students, clients and employees alike and strive to provide a healthy and safe working and learning environment. Our HSMP, which outlines our commitment to ensuring the safety of all persons who work for Specialised and enter our premises, provides detailed requirements for conducting training with Specialised.

19. FIRST AID

Please inform your Course Facilitator, or the Learning and Development Manager upon enrollment or arrival of any relevant life threatening medical conditions such as allergies or conditions that will disrupt your ability to complete the program.

20. EVACUATIONS

The introductory component of every public training program begins with a review of emergency evacuation procedures. In the event of an alarm sound, please **don't panic** and follow the directions of your course Facilitator calmly. Evacuation routes are clearly outlined at all office exit points.

21. CLIENT SUPPORT

With your best interests at heart and a commitment to instilling in you a passion for life-long learning, one of our jobs, as your preferred partner in this journey, is to provide you with ongoing support and encouragement. Services offered include:

- Literacy and numeracy support. This may include referrals for:
 - Remedial classes,
 - Community English as a second language tuition programs, and
 - One-on-one coaching, tuition and support.
- Welfare and guidance services. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - Review of fee and payment structures when requested,
 - Learning pathways,
 - Identifying possible RPL opportunities, and
 - Provision for special needs be they cultural, religious or physically based.

Please be assured that any issues or concerns in this area will be treated with dignity and utmost confidentiality. Please contact our Learning and Development Manager directly for further discussions.

- Advice and guidance:
 - Selecting elective units,
 - Understanding vocational education,
 - Assessment support,
 - Understanding competency based training, and
 - Collecting evidence.

- Training and professional development planning.

Our support offerings are as unique as you are and we invite you to discuss your needs with us by calling 1300 45 5438 or discussing your needs directly with your Course Facilitator and assessor. Please note that not all services are free and fee for service charges may apply.

22. LEGISLATION

The framework we operate within is founded upon principles from the following:

Organization	· Operations Manual
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · ISO 9001:2000 · AQTF Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o AQTF - Essential Standards for Registration 2010 o AQF - implementation handbook 2007
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 · Freedom of Information Act 1982 · Privacy Act 1988, Racial Discrimination Act 1975 & Age Discrimination Act 2004 · 2005-2008 Commonwealth-State Agreement for Skilling Australia's Workforce · Copyright Act 1968 · Trade Practices Act 1974
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000 · Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 & Workplace Relations Act 1997 · Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 · Disability Services Act 2006 · Coal Mining Safety & Health Act 1999 & Regulations 2001 · Mining and Quarrying Act 1999 & Regulations 2001

APPENDIX A – SELECTIVE POLICY STATEMENTS

APPENDIX A – 2 ENROLMENTS

Policy Statement

Specialised recognizes the importance of enrollments as an induction into the learning journey. To ensure a consistent level of knowledge and understanding of student goals, this formal enrollments procedure has been designed to:

- Ensure student readiness;
- Improve student retention levels;
- Increase student completion rates; and
- Ensure high levels of student satisfaction.

Our commitment to student satisfaction levels spans both accredited and non-accredited training and as such, this procedure must be followed for every new enrolment.

Procedure

Following the receipt of student / client enquiries regarding training, the following procedure must be adhered to:

1. Prospective students should initially be provided with appropriate marketing material and a copy of the Student Information Handbook. This may be provided via facsimile, email, mail or may be picked up by, or delivered to, the student.
2. If, following receipt of marketing material and a copy of the Student Information Handbook, a student requests enrollment, complete the Enrollment Form, inform the student of the Specialised Guidelines for Student Behavior and Discipline, and enter all applicable details into the student management system.
3. Following enrollment, and prior to training commencement, the student / client should be managed in accordance with the Accounts Receivable policies and procedures.

APPENDIX A – 4 TRAINING COURSE REFUND POLICY

Our Objectives are: To ensure that when required, a fair and equitable system for the refund of training course fees is available to clients.

We will achieve this by: Confirming that any training activities undertaken by Specialised will be subject to a staged refund of course fees as per the conditions outlined below.

Specifically, we will ensure that: The following principles apply to refunds of course fees by Specialised:

- If the training activities are cancelled by Specialised, or if the student cancels their registration at least three days prior to the commencement of the course, Specialised will provide a full 100% refund of fees, or transfer the value to an alternate course if so desired by the client;
- If cancellation occurs in such a way that Specialised is not provided sufficient time to fill the vacated place in the course, such as:
 - The student cancels their registration less than 3 days prior to the planned commencement of the course; or
 - There is no cancellation made with Specialised and the student does not attend the course; or
 - If the student leaves the course after the course has commenced.
- Then Specialised will retain all training fees unless a valid medical certificate is produced, or severe financial hardship is demonstrated. In such cases of medical or financial hardship, up to 75% of the course fees may be refunded on a pro-rata basis. Alternatively, the student may re-enter the same course at the same point in a later course.
- In all cases a substitute may be nominated to attend the original course without penalty.
- Enrollment is accepted on the basis that Specialised will not be held liable for costs incurred due to course cancellation or rescheduling. Specialised will use all endeavours to give as early as advice as possible of any course changes.
- Course dates and fees are subject to change without prior notice.

Any issue that a student may have with the refund process or this policy may be directed to the Specialised Administration Manager.

APPENDIX A – 5 STUDENT COMPLAINTS, APPEALS AND GRIEVANCES

Policy Statement

HaloNT has a fair and equitable process for dealing with grievances, appeals and complaints. We encourage positive and negative feedback and invite staff, students and clients to provide feedback regularly using formal and informal methods.

This policy provides a road map for resolution along with an escalation path in the event it is required.

Procedure

All complaints, appeals and grievance feedback must be received within 14 days of the alleged incident and recorded on the Record of Conversation Form and managed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Where feedback is related to a complaint or grievance, these issues should be managed in accordance with the Specialised Complaints and Grievances policies and procedures. The student should be informed, in writing, of the actions taken / outcome resultant of their feedback;
2. Where feedback is related to an academic appeal, the Specialised team member must discuss the student's results with the original Assessor of the student's submission. This discussion must be used as an independent review of the basis for the result, and issues considered may include, but are not limited to, Assessor competency and currency, fairness and assessment validity;
3. If, following this independent review, it is the opinion of the Specialised team member that reassessment of the student's original submission is appropriate, this should be handled in accordance with the Specialised Assessment Tracking and Assessments policies and procedures;
4. If, following this independent review, it is the opinion of the Specialised team member that reassessment of the student's original submission is not appropriate, the student should be informed and offered the opportunity to partake in a formal appeal presentation to the Technical Support Manager and Director/s.
5. If the student declines this opportunity, the final outcome of their academic appeal should be provided to them in writing and a copy of same inserted into the student's file;
6. If the student accepts the opportunity to partake in a formal appeal presentation, an interview should be arranged at a time convenient to the student and the Learning and Development Manager and/ or Director/s.
7. This interview must be used as an independent review of the basis for the result, and issues considered may include, but are not limited to, Assessor competency and currency, fairness and assessment validity;
8. If, following this independent review, it is the opinion of the Learning and Development Manager and Director that reassessment of the student's original submission is appropriate, this should be handled in accordance with the Specialised Assessment Tracking and Assessments policies and procedures; and
9. If, following this independent review, it is the opinion of the Learning and Development Manager and Directors that reassessment of the student's original submission is not appropriate; the student should be informed of the final outcome of their academic appeal in writing and a copy of same inserted into the student's file.

Note: Any complaints, appeals or grievance feedback not received within 14 days of the alleged incident will not be considered valid or acted upon. Only one formal appeal presentation will be entered into and the decision of Learning and Development Manager and /or Director/s will be final.

APPENDIX A – 6 GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

We expect that fair and equitable treatment is a reciprocal arrangement and as such have documented guidelines for management of inappropriate student behavior.

In the first instance:

Students will be asked to cease any behavior considered inappropriate either by Course Facilitators, assessors, workplace or other students. No argument will be entered into in relation to individual perceptions about 'appropriateness' – if the behavior has offended, then it will be considered offensive and is therefore inappropriate.

In the second instance

Failure to desist will result in a second request for specific behavior to cease and may include temporary and short-term ejection to allow for reflection and cooling off and/or written advice. These interventions will be used at the Course Facilitator/assessors discretion.

In the third instance:

Failure to cease inappropriate behavior will result in ejection from class for the day (For Any training paid for/or organized by an employer or government assistance agency, they will be immediately notified of the behavior and actions taken by AGS). Specialised reserves the right to permanently eject students for ongoing inappropriate behavior without course refund. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis considering evidence at hand and level of inappropriate behavior.

Students may access our complaints; appeals and grievance process (see Student Information Handbook).