

Online Mediation Skills Course

Summary

This course takes learners through all stages of the theory and practice of the mediation process. It consists of 30 hours of direct training over 10 modules plus a further 5 hours of course work and self-directed study. Learners are assessed and, if successful, receive a certificate.

The course is equivalent to SCQF level 6 and is accredited by Scottish Mediation. Sacro has been delivering this Mediation Skills course for over 20 years both in the UK and internationally, and feedback from learners has consistently been very positive.

Is Mediation for Me?

Our experience is that most people can become competent mediators – what varies is the time and effort they need to put into learning mediation skills, and the degree of change they need to make in their style of interaction with other people. If you are used to working with people in another capacity, such as counselling, advice, guidance, or housing this will help, but it is not necessary.

What Will Be Expected of Me?

We aim to provide a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Our style is highly interactive, and we use a lot of small group work, group discussion and role-play, as well as some written exercises. You will be assessed on whether you have successfully contributed to the course, but it is important to put this in context. We are looking for evidence of your ability to learn and use basic mediation techniques and theory – we do not expect you to be skilled mediators! Specific requirements are as follows:

- You attend and participate fully for all 10 online modules
- You carry out self-directed study and reading as required
- You complete the set of written exercises – self-study- within the timescales.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you can expect the following:

- to understand your own and others' responses to conflict
- to recognize that there are different models and styles of mediation
- to be aware of the ethics informing mediation practice
- to appreciate the legal context in which mediation operates
- to know how current legislation affects mediation practice
- to understand the role of the mediator at different stages of the mediation process.

Specific learning outcomes are as follows:

- LO1. Produce a reflective summary on how you will deal with conflict differently in your own life because of this course
- LO2. Demonstrate appropriate empathy with clients
- LO3. Demonstrate a range of practical skills in mediation including advanced questioning techniques
- LO4. Demonstrate your ability to autonomously manage the mediation process, demonstrating the role of the mediator at different stages of the process and evaluate your own performance
- LO5. Demonstrate an understanding of the theories underpinning the mediation process.

Self-study

Three elements make up the theory part of the course, and all are self-study. These are:

- Completion of multiple-choice questions having read the knowledge unit booklet
- Notes made from observing a DVD showing a full mediation meeting
- Reflective writing in answer to four questions – two 500-word, two 200-word.

The first two elements need to be completed during the course, with the final element to be completed at a mutually agreed date.

“Excellent course that I’d highly recommend and I look forward to taking part in some further learning in this area.” (learner, 2025)

The Programme

- Module 1 - **Handling Conflict Constructively:** Welcome, introductions and overview
- Conflict - what is it and where does it come from?

- Module 2 - Responding to Conflict
- Conflict management styles
- Effective listening, summarising, and questioning

- Module 3 - Defence mechanisms
- Positions and interests

- Module 4 - Formal or informal responses to conflict
- Mediation or restorative
- Review of knowledge learnt in modules 1-4

Self-study: Knowledge unit on key subjects informing mediation practice.

- Module 5 - **Mediation Skills:** Course aims and methods of assessment
- Feedback on knowledge unit
- The role of the mediator:
 - > Explaining mediation
 - > Getting the story
 - > Being impartial
 - > Maintaining confidentiality

- Module 6 - Helping people decide
- Preparing for a meeting
- Stages of a meeting

- Module 7 - Introducing a meeting: ground rules
- The mediator's role during the meeting
- Building agreements
- Writing agreements

- Module 8 - Practise initial visits
- Practise managing discussion stage of mediation meeting

Self-study: observing mediators running a mediation meeting (DVD)

- Module 9 - Recap of Module 7, review of learners' observations of DVD
- Practise - mediating a meeting with two clients

Self-study: written reflective questions - deadline to be negotiated on the day

- Module 10 - Assessed mediation meetings – consolidating your learning with a complete run-through with two clients
- Next steps in mediation
- Evaluation and closing

Course Structure

Modules 1 - 4 can be undertaken as a separate unit by anyone wanting to understand their own and others' responses to conflict and how and when to use conflict handling skills to defuse and re-direct conflict.

The trainers are there to help you, and the course is designed to produce opportunities for you to learn from:

- Written information: pre-course information and the handbooks
- Discussion: in pair work, small groups and large group discussions
- Practical exercises taking you through each stage of the mediation process
- Written work (self-study): the opportunity to reflect on key aspects of mediation practice
- Role-play: taking on the role of client, observer and mediator allows you to appreciate the input of all the parties, including constructive feedback
- Learners need to attend and complete the whole course.

Learners are given guidance on how to provide constructive feedback after role play sessions that is sensitive, positive and supports learning.

“..... most enjoyable and informative training course I've been on in as long as I can remember. I genuinely think I've learned a new skill and techniques for handling conflict” (learner, March 2025)

Assessment Procedure

Experienced trainers continually assess learners on this course. The course is Accredited by Scottish Mediation and designed to meet the requirements of the standards of the Scottish Community Mediation Network.

Learners need to have completed all elements of the course satisfactorily to pass, including submittance of all written work within the timescale.

Cost

£700 per learner, group discounts available. For organisations interested in commissioning this training, please contact us to discuss it.