



International Mediation Institute

PROFESSIONAL MEDIATION WORLDWIDE

Promoting Consensus and Access to Justice

www.IMImediation.org

Beyond Conflict

IMI QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Introduction & Background

The 'nrm network' is a registered trading name of Beyond Conflict Ltd incorporated in Ireland. The 'nrm network' is a community of both experienced, qualified mediators and also newly trained but inexperienced mediators. Our members come from the larger mediation practitioner community and from mediation training providers who operate throughout Ireland. The 'nrm network' transcends certifying ADR bodies providing a forum for collaboration and skills development across the country.

The 'nrm network' specialises in development of skills and the promotion of best practice, this is done through role play events run monthly throughout Ireland. Through case study evaluation evenings overseen and directed by longstanding practitioners, new mediators can glean knowledge and understanding of the process of mediation and especially the complexities involved in getting disputants to a point of moving from their positions and identifying each other's needs. The Network provides on-going mentoring to newly trained or certified mediators. The Network has worked with and will continue to work with existing QAP's. The network's Chairman works in Ireland and across Europe promoting mediation, training professionals from both the corporate sector and NGO's. The Network is coordinated and run by a team of IMI Certified Mediators who also hold national mediation certifications and recognised qualifications in Mentoring and Coaching.

The network was established in 2012 and achieved an active membership of over 300 within its first 6 months of activity. Beyond Conflict Ltd is an established mediation and conflict resolution practice which specialises in inter-cultural conflict resolution within organisations and the greater workplace. It's CEO in addition to running Beyond Conflict's successful ADR practice develops, coordinates and delivers mediation training for some of

Ireland's leading training providers. His nationally and internationally certified training programs are delivered to a domestic, governmental and international audience.

The 'nrm network' does not directly sell training programs into the marketplace. Rather it works in conjunction with leading ADR and Corporate training providers assisting them to develop training programmes for mediators. Mediators who have successfully completed training programmes that have been approved by the Beyond Conflict Ltd and have the relevant experience will be deemed able to apply to QAP as operated by the Beyond Conflict Ltd t/a nrm network.

1. Mediator Experience

The Qualifying Assessment Program (QAP) must include a methodology for ensuring that Applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Program's Assessors a substantial level of experience as a mediator. The QAP must include clearly identified criteria on this requirement.

Beyond Conflict Ltd will require that successful application to the QAP leading to IMI certification only be granted to candidates that have satisfied the following criteria.

By way of completing a questionnaire each candidate must show that at the time of making an initial application to QAP they have mediated 6 disputes (either as a sole or a co-mediator), 2 of which must have been within the last six months. One of which must have been remunerated (i.e. not pro bono). Once this has been satisfied, a candidate can start the QAP process. Other information required on the initial questionnaire includes:

- Background and Experience of the candidate
- Total number of hours of mediation experience
- Total number of cases
- Type of mediations (e.g. Commercial, Workplace, Employment, Family, etc.)
- The length of the mediation in total (expressed in hours)
- Role the candidate played in the mediation
- Supporting evidence of evaluation and feedback for at least three cases

Although the above criteria being met will allow the mediator to begin the QAP application process, each candidate before completing QAP must commit to sign a self-declaration that they have completed 20 face-to-face mediation cases or 200 hours of mediation. This must be accompanied by a time and case log.

Our candidates should be registered with the 'National Register of Mediators' www.mediatorsireland.ie and have their profile uploaded. This profile will document their field of practice, experience and qualifications, certifications already achieved and a record of their CPD training over the past 12 months. Beyond Conflict Ltd holds that CPD is essential for a mediator to continue to develop their professional skills.

2. Mediation Knowledge

The QAP must include a methodology for determining that Applicants have demonstrated a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice which may be based on written tests, essays, reports, theses interviews and/or other testing platforms.

Beyond Conflict Ltd will use the following methodology and criteria to determine the candidate's level of knowledge in relation to; mediation theory and practice.

To be eligible for IMI certification through our QAP a candidate must show 60 hours of formal mediation training. This training must be provided by an organisation on the current 'nrm network' pre-approved training course list. The applicant should also already be listed as a YMI mediator. The level of understanding will be assessed in two ways:

Part One

The applicant must submit a 2500 word written self-analysis of their mediation abilities. This self-assessment must be written by the applicant and will outline how over 10 cases they applied mediation theory. The candidate will write from a three point perspective:

1. What mediation theory and understanding did they use well,
2. Based on their own post-review and feedback from the clients, what could they have done differently to improve their role in the mediation,
3. What action has been taken to make needed improvements and with what results.

The candidate will need to show their understanding of mediation theory, recognise their skills and abilities, while being able to identify areas for development. The assessors should also get a clear understanding of the candidates style/approach to the process of mediation. This written assignment must be submitted three weeks prior to the skills assessment day. It will be graded using a marking structure as set out in the 'Assessment Framework Document'.

Part Two

Assessment days will be held throughout the year and dates will be searchable on the 'nrm network' website. The assessment day will begin with all candidates being required to sit a 25 minute written test. This test will be made up of 5 multiple choice questions focusing on the process of mediation, followed by 5 open ended questions relating to mediation theory and knowledge as covered in the approved training programmes undertaken by the candidates prior to QAP application. This test will be graded as outlined in the 'Assessment Framework Document'.

3. Mediator Skills

The QAP must include a methodology for the evaluation of candidates' performance in terms of the occurrence and effectiveness of mediation process and mediation techniques, against high competency benchmarks. The Evaluations/Assessments may be based on roleplay or live action assessments, and may include videotaped and online assessments such as web dramas, self-assessments, interviews, peer reviews, user feedback and other in-practice skill evaluations.

After completing the written test, each candidate will partake of a 60 minute mediation role play. This role play will be assessed in the room by an external assessor and later verified by a second assessor from the video recording of the same role play. Upon completion of the skills demonstration role play the mediator will be interviewed by the assessor (interview to last for 15 minutes).

The candidate must successfully meet the skills demonstration and interview criteria, gaining a minimum pass mark of 80% or higher. Both skills demonstration and interview are graded as outlined in the 'Assessment Framework Document'.

The assessor will be testing the candidate's skill level and process management ability. Test criteria needing to be met by the candidate includes:

- Ability to manage the process and tailor mediation approach and methodology to the context, using specific and relevant skills as the mediator
- Demonstrated use of appropriate interventions and reframing as required
- Ability to engage with participants and manage communication throughout the process
- Professionalism shown throughout
- Demonstrate good self-reflection abilities

4. Program Transparency

The benchmarks and criteria applied by the QAP must be published and be openly accessible on the organization's website. Details of all approved programs will be listed on the IMI web portal www.IMImediation.org and will include a direct link to the credentialing organizations' websites.

Upon approval of this application by the ISC, the benchmarks and criteria will be published on the 'nrm network' website (www.nrm.ie) as well as its parent company Beyond Conflict Limited's website (www.beyondconflict.ie).

5. Program Integrity

Each Assessor must have substantial experience of assessing the performance of mediators. At least one of the Assessors on each Program must be independent of the QAP.

The 'nrm network' does not offer training; rather its purpose is to promote quality and best practices among industry professionals and trainee mediators. The network works in partnership with a range of mediation training providers and helps support their students gain experience and mentoring. The Network is a community of experienced and novice mediators working together. Beyond Conflict Ltd offers qualified and experienced assessors to training providers as independent contractors. Both assessors used by Beyond Conflict to assess candidates to the QAP will be independent from the candidates training provider and one will not be a direct employee of Beyond Conflict Ltd or the 'nrm network'. The external assessors may at times be joined by the principal mediator at Beyond Conflict as part of our on-going monitoring and Quality Management Systems (QMS).

Each assessor used must have shown documented evidence of their mediation experience, certification, current affiliations and memberships to approved mediation organisations. Assessors should also have academic qualifications in educational assessments. Each assessor will be interviewed and approved by the principal of Beyond Conflict Ltd.

Assessors will grade the candidate's application and assessment based on the criteria laid down in the 'Assessment Framework Document'.

6. Ongoing monitoring of Programs

The QAP must include a process for the ongoing monitoring of the performance and practice of the Assessors. IMI will liaise closely with all recognised program organizers to maintain a sustainable quality control system.

Beyond Conflicts 'Assessment and Appeal Team', headed by the CEO will monitor all assessors. Each assessor will undergo a minimum of 25 hours assessor training per year. Beyond Conflict Ltd welcomes input and monitoring from the IMI.

7. Commitment to Diversity

The QAP must be accessible on an equal basis to experienced mediators regardless of their professional affiliations, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characterization.

Barriers have been removed to allow any sufficiently experienced mediator to enrol in our QAP. Candidates can be trained by a pre-approved training course, or they can submit the details of their mediation education and training for it to be approved on a case-by-case basis. The 'nrm network' welcomes members from a cross-section of affiliations, certifications and other membership organisations. Our commitment is to the promotion of mediation regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characterisation.