IMI Certification in E-Mediation

Competency Criteria for e-Mediators

Background

The integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into mediation introduced a need to identify specific recognized competencies vital for mediators practicing with ICT. The term e-Mediation is used here for ease of reference and means the application of any information and communication technology (ICT) to the process of mediation online or *via* any other technology.

The IMI Independent Standards Commission (ISC) set up a special Task Force consisting of thought-leaders and outstanding practitioners in E-Mediation. The first goal of the Task Force has been to explore and design a measurable set of criteria for competency in E-Mediation for professionals. The IMI Competency Certification in E-Mediation will help users to make informed decisions while choosing and appointing e-mediators for negotiations and Dispute Resolution (DR). It will also help competent and experienced e-mediators promote their ICT advanced services.

Criteria

IMI ISC ODR Task Force has designed Criteria for programs qualifying competent e-Mediators to establish a professional and technical basis for enabling disputing parties to identify professionals competent and experienced in e-mediation. The Criteria are presented in two broad categories: General Requirements for the Qualifying Assessment Programs (QAPs) and Substantive Criteria for e-Mediator Competency:

1. General Requirements for e-Mediation QAPs

Any e-Mediation QAP must meet the following general criteria to qualify professionals for IMI Certification:

A. Methodology

An e-Mediation QAP must explain how implemented competency assessment criteria and developed performance-based assessment instruments ensure that e-Mediators meet the Substantive Criteria on an ongoing basis. The QAP should clearly explain how these competences are verified.

Comment: The assessments may be based on the most innovative technology in online assessment and measurement such as Self-Tests, Quizzes and Surveys, Assignments (Self-assessments, written reviews or summaries, problems to decipher, spreadsheet or document to complete, etc.). Assessments may be Videotaped and/or live assessments (interviews, peer reviews, dramas, role-plays).

B. Transparency

An e-Mediation QAP must be transparent regarding the Substantive Criteria assessment by publishing such information on a website and other publicly available media.

C. Integrity

Each Assessor of the e-Mediation QAP must have substantial experience in e-Mediation and/or teaching/assessing competency of e-Mediators. The e-Mediation QAP must ensure independence and describe how the assessors will maintain their independence (i.e. that their assessors are independent from the training faculty of the applicant and have no conflict of interest with the QAP in regards to the outcome of the assessment). The assessors should share objective criteria of the QAP and should be part of the on-going professional development for their assessment experience and skills.

D. Ongoing Monitoring of Program

An e-Mediation QAP must include a process for the ongoing monitoring of the performance and practice of the assessors, qualified/certified e-Mediators, and the program itself. IMI will liaise closely with all approved program organizers to maintain a sustainable quality control system.

E. Diversity

An e-Mediation QAP establishes that assessment is open to all applicants meeting substantive requirements, without discriminating based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, political views or any other personal or professional characterization. This should be stated on a website and other public available means, alongside the substantive criteria for E-Mediators.

2. Substantive Criteria for e-Mediators

Any program qualifying candidates for IMI e-Mediation Certification must meet the following minimum substantive criteria with respect to all applicants:

A. Experience of the e-Mediation

The e-Mediation QAP must include a method for ensuring that applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Program's Assessors experience of e-Mediation and have carried out in the previous 24/36 months a minimum of twenty full-scale e-Mediations. The QAP must include clearly identified criteria on this requirement.

Exemptions (minimum of five full-scale e-Mediations):
- IMI Certified Mediators
- Mediators having acted as sole mediator in at least 20 e-Mediations (or 200 hours if any of mediations lasted longer than one day) in countries where there is no Qualifying Assessment Program for IMI Certification.

B. Knowledge of the E-Mediation

The e-Mediation QAP must include a method for determining that applicants have demonstrated an understanding of e-Mediation to maximize the efficiency of mediation. Using the online and ICT advanced environment, eMediation QAP can use tests, essays, reports, theses and interviews to determine such knowledge. Applicants are expected to be tested on and exhibit a comprehensive understanding of e-Mediation theory and practice. An e-Mediation QAP may use the Core Competency Knowledge Elements (set out in detail in Annex 1).

C. Practical e-Mediation skills

An e-Mediation QAP must include a method for the performance-based assessment to demonstrate a high degree of e-Mediation competency. The IMI ISC expects that the method used by e-Mediation QAPs should address all the Core Competency Practical Skills (sections and sub-sections detailed in Annex 2).

The method should be sufficiently detailed to attest that an applicant demonstrated a high level of competency as an e-Mediator. However, it is not expected that all detailed Core Competency Practical Skills listed in Annex 2 will be assessed in the same depth, and e-Mediation QAPs will be free to assess other practical skills not listed in Annex 2.