



Mediationcenter a/s

IMI Qualifying Assessment Program

Introduction & Background

Mediationcenter a/s (www.mediationcenter.eu and www.mediationcenter.dk) was established in Copenhagen in 2000 and has grown to become a leading training organisation for mediators. Mediationcenter additionally provides experienced mediators, and consultation services in conflict avoidance, conflict management and leadership coaching.

In addition to basic and intermediate training courses for mediators, Mediationcenter offers a dedicated top level advanced competency assessment programme for established and experienced practicing mediators. Successful candidates on this programme are certified as "Master Mediators" by Mediationcenter. The Master Mediator programme is designed to assess the performance of practicing mediators against established benchmarks at high levels of professional competency, linked to ongoing professional development and support.

Mediationcenter shares IMI's ethos that the practice of mediation needs to be forged into a recognised profession on a worldwide scale by the transparent exposure of high standards of competency and conduct. Mediationcenter fully shares IMI's Criteria for establishing those standards of competency, and the Master Mediation programme has been evolved to meet and exceed those standards. Mediationcenter will share with IMI, and with all others in the field, the beneficial results of its ongoing experience of mediation delivery, training techniques, standards and benchmarks as a direct contribution to the progressive enhancement of the mediation profession both in the countries in which we operate, and internationally.

Each Master Mediator programme applicant must already have passed Mediationcenter's Mediator Practitioner assessment, or equivalent basic level training offered by another leading mediation training institution. The Mediator Practitioner programme, like the Master Mediator programme, is based on 40 hours training. Accordingly, to become a Master Mediator entails at least 80 hours of training in total (40 hours basic + 40 hours advanced) before the candidate is invited to undergo the Master Mediator assessment.

I. 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.

In order for a candidate to be accepted on the Master Mediator programme, Mediationcenter requires documentary evidence of the candidate's level of experience as a mediator. This normally entails submission of a non-confidential log specifying prior experience as a mediator, including dates and duration of mediations, capacity (eg sole or co-mediator) and supporting evidence such as references and feedback forms. Mediationcenter establishes prior to admission onto the programme that each candidate's experience as a mediator exceeds the 200 hours spread over at least 20 mediators, as recommended by IMI, in the 2 years preceding the application to join the programme.

2. Mediator 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, these interviews and/or other testing platforms.

Mediationcenter's Master Mediator assessment methodology tests mediators' knowledge of dispute settlement paradigms and techniques, including negotiation theory, to reflect the most updated knowledge levels available. The program uses a blend of tools including: a written test followed by self-assessments and interviews to establish each candidate's familiarity and understanding. The programme's focus is primarily on facilitative mediation but is also designed to assess a refined knowledge of evaluative and transformative mediation techniques and styles as well as hybrids.

The knowledge/theory element is based in part upon two books written by Tina Monberg "Mediation – one conflict two winners" and "The Toolbox of Conflicts" which in turn require extensive knowledge of many other mediation skills. The programme's materials also include a folder with articles and instructions consisting of 200 pages from the Mediator Practitioner course, plus a further 200 pages for Mediator Master assessment. It is expected that all participants have read and understood all this material to qualify for the written and oral exam.

The Master Mediator certification consists of a written assignment and an oral/practice exam. In order to progress to the oral/practice element of the assessment, each candidate must first pass the one-hour knowledge/theory test.

The knowledge/theory test categories are "passed" or "not passed". Assessors provide a verbal evaluation, followed by a written evaluation, of each criterion. These comments do not appear on the certificate, but can be used by Mediators for continuing professional development purposes. The knowledge assessment is categorised into three groups:

1. General knowledge on mediation and negotiation
2. Appreciation of the candidate's own strengths and challenges
3. Theories for identifying areas of agreement between the parties.

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.

Once a candidate on the Master Mediator programme has passed the knowledge/theory test, the next step is the oral/practice test which is also configured on a "pass/not passed" basis. The assessment is based on advanced, complex roleplays designed to test a wide range of advanced skills as a mediator. The program uses a blend of assessment tools in addition to the roleplays, including self-assessments and interviews, peer reviews and user feedback. Each roleplay assessment is categorised into groups: The ability to create relationships; Ability to facilitate the process; and Ability to support content. The Assessment benchmarks are provided below. In order

to obtain a high competency benchmark, participants in the Master Mediator program are evaluated not only by the Mediationcenter's Assessors but also by direct peer reviews.

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.

The benchmarks and criteria used for Mediationcenter's Master Mediator programme are published and openly accessible on our organization's website at: <http://www.mediationcenter.dk>

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 participants' ability to serve as a competent mediator are evaluated by two experienced external Assessors – one using mediation on a daily basis in an organizational context and one mediation expert, who may or may not be a currently-practicing mediator, having an advanced qualification from an academic institution in mediation. The purpose of this is to ensure a rounded assessment from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Both must be experienced assessors. Neither of these two assessors may have a business relationship with mediationcenter other than serving as assessor. They may also be joined in assessment sessions by an internal Mediationcenter trainer and/or assessor for the reasons stated below.

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.

The performance of our Mediationcenter's Assessors are constantly monitored by an observer from Mediationcenter who ensure the application of consistently high quality standards. This observer will also participate in some of the oral exams. The Assessors meet regularly to ensure application of consistent standards and expectations.

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.

Participation on the Mediationcenter Master Mediator programme is based on a commitment to welcome experienced mediators regardless of their professional affiliations, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characterization.