



WME Mediation Capability Pathway

**Building confidence, capability
and capacity to manage workplace
conflict constructively**

**Supporting local authorities and public sector organisations
to develop mediation skills, grow internal mediator networks
and create healthier working relationships.**



WMEmployers

In partnership with



**ESSENTIAL MEDIATION
SOLUTIONS**

Why Mediation Capability Matters

Workplace conflict is a reality in every organisation

In local government and the wider public sector, success increasingly depends on people working effectively across organisational boundaries, professional disciplines and complex partnerships. Strong relationships, constructive dialogue and the ability to navigate challenge productively have never been more important.

The reality is that people will not always agree, and difficult relationships can emerge in even the highest-performing teams. When conflict is left unresolved, the impact can be felt across wellbeing, engagement, productivity, performance and ultimately service delivery. Formal processes can be costly, time-consuming and often address symptoms rather than underlying causes.

Many organisations are therefore looking to build internal capability to address issues earlier, support constructive conversations and reduce unnecessary escalation.

The WM Employers Mediation Capability Pathway has been designed to support that ambition.

Rather than offering training in isolation, we take a broader organisational development approach, helping organisations build sustainable capability that can be applied confidently in practice.

Our focus is not simply on developing mediation knowledge. It is about building the confidence, judgement and practical skills needed to help people connect, converse and collaborate more effectively in increasingly complex environments, enabling teams and organisations to work at their best.



Awareness



Skills



**Internal
Mediators**



**Accredited
Mediators**



**CPD &
Community**



**Independent
Support**



Who Do We Support?

Our offer supports two important areas of organisational capability:



Strengthening Internal Workplace Relationships

Supporting managers, HR professionals, organisational development practitioners and internal mediators to address workplace conflict, rebuild working relationships and create healthier, more productive teams.

This includes developing the skills to manage difficult conversations, facilitate constructive dialogue, resolve issues before they escalate and rebuild relationships following formal processes.



Supporting Frontline and Community-Facing Roles

Many public sector professionals regularly work with residents, service users, community groups and partner organisations in situations where there may be competing interests, differing viewpoints or heightened emotions.

Mediation and conflict resolution skills can help staff manage challenging interactions, facilitate constructive conversations and support positive outcomes in a way that builds trust and maintains relationships. Mediation skills can provide a practical and effective approach to handling complex situations with confidence.



Why Work With **WM** Employers?

We understand the realities of local government and the wider public sector.

Our approach is built around helping organisations:

- Address conflict earlier and more constructively
- Develop practical skills and confidence
- Build sustainable internal mediation capability
- Strengthen organisational culture and relationships
- Reduce reliance on formal processes where appropriate
- Access independent mediation support when neutrality or complexity requires it

Our mediation capability offer sits alongside our wider support for team reset, coaching, mentoring, leadership development and organisational effectiveness.



Emma McAndry,
EMS Founder and Director
(and practicing mediator)

WME has partnered with **Essential Mediation Solutions (EMS)**, an award-winning mediation provider with significant experience supporting councils and public sector organisations. As practising mediators, EMS delivers mediation training that is recognised by the Civil Mediation Council (CMC), the recognised professional body for civil and workplace mediation in England and Wales.

This partnership combines WME's understanding of organisational development and workforce challenges in local government with EMS's specialist mediation expertise, giving councils access to a high-quality, professionally recognised mediation capability pathway.

CMC accreditation provides assurance that mediators have completed recognised training and assessment against nationally recognised standards. For organisations investing in internal mediation capability, this offers confidence that mediators have been trained to a recognised professional benchmark and are equipped to support the constructive resolution of workplace conflict.

A Capability Journey

Every organisation starts from a different place.

Some are looking to equip managers with better conflict resolution skills. Others want to build a network of trained mediators. Some already have mediators and want support with continuing professional development.

Our offer is designed to meet organisations wherever they are on that journey with a full mediation capability pathway:

- Dealing with conflict for Managers training (1 day)
- Facilitated Conversations in the Workplace (2 days)
- Core Workplace Mediation Skills training to Civil Mediation Council standards (3 days)
- Accredited Workplace Mediation Programme leading to nationally recognised CMC-accredited Workplace Mediator status (5 days)

Whether you are looking to brief a group of managers, develop one future mediator or an entire internal mediation service, we can provide a route that works for your organisation.

Our pathway is designed primarily for **in-house cohorts**, offering the most cost-effective approach while allowing learning to be tailored to your organisation's context and needs. Delivery can be in person, remote or a blend of both and require a minimum of 4 participants up to a maximum of 16.

We will maintain regional waiting lists and, where sufficient demand exists, will bring organisations together to create shared cohorts. This flexible approach ensures councils of all sizes can access high-quality mediation development and accreditation pathways.

Course Outlines



Dealing with Conflict for Managers training

This one-day course is designed to help participants have difficult conversations constructively. Delegates will explore the common causes of conflict, the impact of unresolved disputes and practical ways to respond productively before issues escalate.

Participants will learn how to approach difficult conversations with confidence, clarity and professionalism. Using a potential conflict scenario, delegates will learn how to prepare for and structure a difficult conversation, then put this into practice. They will also have the opportunity to apply the learning to a personal situation and prepare for a real-life conversation that may be challenging, in a constructive way.

Delegates will leave the course with greater confidence to recognise, respond to and manage workplace conflict constructively, and to approach difficult conversations in a way that supports positive outcomes.



Certificate of participation



Facilitated Conversations in the Workplace

This two day programme is particularly suitable for team leaders/line managers and will enable participants to understand whether, when and how to facilitate a constructive conversation between disputing colleagues in their teams or for other teams. This is appropriate to nip conflict in the bud and to prevent escalation.

The course explores common causes of conflict, the impact unresolved disputes can have on individuals, teams and organisational performance, and practical ways to respond constructively before issues escalate. Delegates will learn how to prepare for and structure a conversation between colleagues for low-level conflicts and to facilitate to resolution. Each stage is taught and demonstrated. The learnings are then put into practice with role play.

Delegates will leave the course with confidence to facilitate constructive workplace conversations and to resolve conflict at an early stage.



Certificate of participation

Course Outlines



Core Workplace Mediation Skills training to Civil Mediation Council standards

This three day programme course equips staff with practical mediation informed skills and is ideal for those who wish to be equipped to mediate, without wanting formal accreditation.

The course takes delegates through every stage of the workplace mediation process, from receiving an instruction to mediate through to the conclusion of a case. No prior knowledge or experience is required, as all concepts and skills are covered in depth.

Participants will gain a thorough understanding of the principles of mediation, the role of the mediator, and conflict theory, including the causes and consequences of workplace conflict. The programme also develops a wide range of valuable and transferable skills, such as active listening, effective communication, rapport building, questioning techniques, and other core mediation competencies.

The training is highly interactive, with a strong emphasis on practical learning through exercises, demonstrations, and role plays. Teaching is deliberately front-loaded during the early stages of the programme, allowing delegates to apply their learning in realistic scenarios as the course progresses. The process is studied in stages, with focus on learning, observing demonstrations, and then practising key skills, for each stage.

A booklet is provided, packed with information: mediation techniques, crib sheets for all stages, and template documents as a resource to use in future practice. Delegates will leave the course well prepared and equipped to mediate.

Delegates who wish to achieve full accreditation, at a later date after this course, have the option to complete the additional two days required.

Day	Content
1	Psychology of conflict, mediation theory and principles, mediator skills
2	Pre-mediation preparation, initial meetings and participant engagement
3	Joint meetings, agenda setting, reaching agreement and drafting



Certificate of participation

Course Outlines



Accredited Workplace Mediation Programme leading to nationally recognised CMC-accredited Workplace Mediator status

This five-day programme leads to nationally recognised Civil Mediation Council (CMC) Workplace Mediator accreditation upon successful completion.

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The first 3 days are exactly the same as the 3 day course above. Day 4 is a mock mediation day, during which all stages of the process are brought together. Thorough feedback is provided by the trainers to all individual delegates, to enable them to effectively prepare for the assessment. The course concludes on day 5 with a role play assessment. This will be independently assessed, and upon successful completion will lead to CMC accreditation, which is a nationally recognised qualification.

On passing the assessment, graduates will be fully accredited, confident, and equipped to act as workplace mediators. If they wish to become a member of the CMC, post-course information is provided in their booklet how to do so. Reassessment routes are available if accreditation standards are not met first time and there is no formal re-accreditation requirement once qualified.

There is the option to become internationally accredited, by the International Mediation Institute, at a small additional cost per person.

As the trainers are practicing workplace mediators, they bring real life anecdotes and experience to the training. In addition, because of this, all graduates are offered the opportunity to observe a real-life workplace mediation after the course, should they wish.

Day	Content
1	Psychology of conflict, mediation theory and principles, mediator skills
2	Pre-mediation preparation, initial meetings and participant engagement
3	Joint meetings, agenda setting, reaching agreement and drafting
4	Mock mediations with structured feedback and coaching
5	Independent practical assessment leading to accreditation



Accredited qualification

Supporting Mediators Beyond Accreditation

Learning does not end when the training finishes.

Learning does not end when the training finishes. It is recognised that accredited mediators are expected to complete a minimum of six hours of continuing professional development (CPD) each year to maintain and develop their practice. Our accredited offer includes this support as part of the programme.

Following qualification, participants will have access to:

- An opportunity to observe an experienced mediator in a live mediation setting, helping bridge the gap between training and practice.
- Two remote CPD sessions during the first year of practice, exploring emerging themes and development needs.
- Two facilitated remote reflective practice sessions, bringing mediators together regionally to share learning, build confidence and reflect on their experiences in practice.

The aim is not simply to develop mediators, but to support them in becoming confident, capable practitioners who can apply their skills effectively within their organisations.

Independent Mediation Service

Building internal capability is an important investment.

However, there are times when independence, complexity or organisational sensitivity mean that external support is the most appropriate option.

WME continues to provide **access to independent mediation** support for::

- Complex workplace disputes
- High-risk cases
- Senior leadership disputes
- Situations requiring neutrality
- Capacity support where internal resources are unavailable

Our mediation capability programme complements and strengthens this existing offer.





Find Out **More**

To talk through your organisation's needs, add to our regional waiting lists or request pricing information, please contact us:

Email: info@wmemployers.org.uk

Website: www.wmemployers.org.uk