

Frequently asked questions

What kinds of issues are suitable for mediation?

Mediation can help you resolve a disagreement or conflict, with a colleague in the work place or a fellow student. It examines the relationship and communication between two parties and aims to identify blockages to resolving the situation.

Do I have to agree to mediation?

You do not have to agree to mediation, the choice is yours. However, mediation empowers both parties to raise issues, working through any problems and has been proven to be very successful at resolving disagreements.

Can I bring someone with me to mediation?

The mediators are there to ensure a safe and supportive environment is provided for those involved to express their views. The mediation session is usually kept to those involved in the dispute, and the mediators. The mediation co-ordinator can talk through this in more detail.

What happens if I decide I don't want to carry on with the mediation?

You are free to withdraw from the mediation process at any time and you do not have to give the reasons for your decision.

Can I still make a formal complaint if mediation doesn't work?

Yes. Mediation can help to restore communication, reduce tension and identify how best to work, study or live together in the future. However, agreeing to take part in mediation does not affect your right to raise a formal grievance or complaint in accordance with University policies.

Further Information

For more information about mediation or to arrange a mediation session, for yourself or a member of staff or student you are supporting, please contact the mediation co-ordinator.

This leaflet is available in a variety of alternative formats upon request.

Mediation Service

The University of Manchester

Email: mediation@manchester.ac.uk

Website: www.manchester.ac.uk/mediation

MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester

Mediation Service

If you are finding it difficult to resolve a disagreement or conflict the University's Mediation Service might be able to help.

How can the Mediation Service help you?

The service is open to both staff and students, who may wish to address an issue or concern they have at work or study. The mediation co-ordinator is the first point of contact for all enquiries and can:

- Offer advice to staff, students, managers and tutors on ways to approach a difficult situation.
- Organise a mediation session, with one of the University's nationally accredited mediators.
- Provide information, training and guidance on conflict resolution skills to managers and tutors.

What is Mediation?

Mediation aims to offer a safe environment where people can talk through any issues or concerns they have and jointly agree how they might resolve their differences and move forward. Mediation is not intended as a substitute for resolving issues through informal discussions. However, if this is not possible or the situation is not improving then mediation may be able to help.

A Mediation session is:

- **Confidential:** No personal records will be kept or passed to Human Resources or Student Support. Participants and mediators both agree not to discuss what takes place during mediation sessions with anyone else without prior consent;
- **Voluntary:** It's your choice if you wish to take part in mediation;
- **Facilitated:** The process is facilitated by an independent trained mediator or a pair of trained mediators;
- **Informal:** Taking part in mediation will not affect your right to raise a formal complaint if you wish to do so;
- **Impartial:** Mediators do not take sides, make decisions or recommendations; the power to make decisions is with the individuals involved.



The Mediation Process

There are number of steps that are usually followed when facilitating a mediation session, these include:

- 1 Both parties will be contacted to arrange separate meetings with a mediator(s), these will give each party the opportunity to explore the issues that are causing the conflict and discuss what they want from the mediation.
- 2 If both parties agree, a joint meeting will be facilitated by the mediator(s). This session will bring both parties together to talk through their issues and work on a mutually agreed agenda. These discussions will take place in a confidential environment with ground-rules created and agreed by both parties.
- 3 The mediator(s) will ensure that both parties are given plenty of opportunity to clarify how they feel and what they would like to change, working towards a joint agreement which focuses on improving their relationship.
- 4 A mediator will contact both parties, at an agreed time, to follow up and see how things are going following the mediation session.