

Foundation Training Programme 2017 Course and Application Guide

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TRAINING APPROVED BY



A. FOUNDATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

Family Mediation Overview

Family Mediation offers an alternative to conflict when families experience difficulties in relationships, particularly during or after separation and divorce. By managing conflict and offering an independent, privileged and impartial process, it empowers (ex) partners to negotiate solutions which meet the needs of their family, especially those of their children. Mediation addresses the parenting issues which result from couple relationship breakdown and incorporates the views of children by indirect and direct consultation. Understandings reached together are written down to form a useful working document (Mediated Agreement) - the basis for future problem solving. It reduces both the emotional and financial cost of separation and divorce.

Ethos of the Training Programme

Throughout the delivery of the Foundation Training Programme there is a strong emphasis on the fundamental underpinning principles of family mediation i.e. respect for the views and feelings of the participants, respect for the interests of the children and others involved, respect for an equitable outcome, respect for the values of equal opportunity regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or disability and above all respect for the authority of the parties to make their own decision.

Course Validation

The FMNI Foundation Training Programme is unique in that it has all island approval. Our course is approved by the College of Mediators (one of the lead bodies of the Family Mediation Council, UK) for both generic and specialist family mediation. The Mediators' Institute of Ireland has approved our course for both generic mediation training and their requirements for those seeking to offer separating couples mediation.

COST The cost of the Foundation Training Programme is **£1999** per person which includes assessment, training materials and catering. (course fees by instalment by agreement)
The MII Certified Assessment fee of €275 / £225 is a separate fee payable directly to the independent assessor.

Course Hours: 72 hours direct (9.30am - 4.30pm) + 20 hours minimum self-study including pre-course reading, completion of a Learning Journal and a drafting assignment (a Mediated Agreement).

Successful completion of the course requires full attendance and participation throughout.

The course will be assessed both through formal role play and written submissions. Attendance on all days of the course is mandatory and successful completion includes satisfactorily passing the assessed elements as well. Certificates of completion cannot be issued without full attendance.

It is important not to commence this course if you have any anticipation of difficulty in attending all of the modules. In exceptional situations, i.e. unforeseen circumstances, a trainee may be able to make up a missing unit or module at additional expense.

Programme Outline

MODULE 1	
Friday 20 October 2017	Day 1: Introduction to Course & Core Concepts Introduction to Foundation Training; Mediation Overview – Basic Concepts & Terminology; Systemic Theory
Saturday 21 October 2017	Day 2: Mediation & Communication Theory Mediation Theory, Principles & Values; Mediation Process Overview; Communication Theory; Use of Language in Mediation
MODULE 2	
Friday 10 November 2017	Day 3: Mediation as a Staged Process - Part I Pre-mediation & Intake; Mediation Process Stages 1 to 3; Capacity to Mediate
Saturday 11 November 2017	Day 4: Mediation as a Staged Process - Part II Mediation Process Stages 4 to 6; Conflict Theory
MODULE 3	
Friday 1 December 2017	Day 5: Couple Dynamics Couples in Transition; Uncoupling; Loss & Grief; Dealing with High Conflict
Saturday 2 nd December 2017	Day 6: Children & Parenting Needs of Children; Parenting Plans
MODULE 4	
Friday 12 January 2018	Day 7: Parenting (cont.) / Negotiation Negotiation Theory; Negotiating Parenting Plans; Managing the Process
Saturday 25 January 2018	Day 8: Finance & Property in Mediation Finance & Property – Orientation & Values; Drafting Skills; The Mediated Agreement* *Submission of a draft Mediated Agreement is required by TBC
MODULE 5	
Friday 2 February 2018	Day 9: Family Law Feedback on drafting assignment; Family Law – NI, UK & Ireland
Saturday 3 February 2018	Day 10: Ethics & Reflective Practice Ethics; Reflective Practice; Cultural Mediation; Managing the Unexpected; Professional Standards in Mediation
MODULE 6	
Friday 23 February 2018	Day 11: Managing the Risk Child Protection in Mediation; Domestic Abuse Screening
Saturday 24 February 2018	Day 12: Endings & Assessment Endings in Mediation; Skills Practice Assessment**; Evaluation **Submission of written Training Journal is required by (dates to be agreed)

Note: FMNI reserves the option of making alterations to the order in which the required training content is delivered.

Aims of the Foundation Training Programme

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1. To equip trainees with principles, values, knowledge and skills required to practice as Mediators, in particular assisting couples following separation and divorce which includes:
 - a) Understanding of the theory and practice of family mediation;
 - b) Knowledge of conflict management strategies and family dynamics with particular emphasis on the effects of separation and divorce on children;
 - c) The ability to confidently deal with legal and financial issues in mediation;
 - d) Enhanced listening, probing and evaluation skills;
 - e) The ability to confidently and competently include the needs, wishes and feelings of children and young people in the mediation process through indirect consultation.
2. To provide those trainees who successfully complete the course with a qualification which is compliant with the standards of and recognised by The College of Mediators and The Family Mediation Council UK and The Mediators' Institute of Ireland.

Objectives of the Foundation Training Programme

Upon successful completion, the participants will:

- ✓ Meet the requirements of 60 hours training for application for MII Certified Member status PLUS the 32 hours Additional Knowledge Requirements for Approval to Practice in Family (Separating Couples) Mediation.
- ✓ Meet the requirements for the Foundation Training in both Generic and Family Mediation Conversion Training for the College of Mediators (UK) as approved by The Family Mediation Council (UK).
- ✓ Have gained the requisite knowledge, skills, role play practice experience and self-awareness to start the required co-working practice experience in separating/divorcing couples mediation.
- ✓ Have gained an understanding of the vital role of safe, reflective practice and supervision.

The Training Team

Eimear Hayden is an accredited Family Mediator with the Family Mediation Service Ireland (FMS) and a Professional Practice Consultant and Trainer with FMNI. She was accredited as a Practitioner Member of The MII in 2002. Currently Eimear is part of an all-island study group looking at Child Inclusive Practice in family mediation and other fields. Eimear previously worked as a trainer and supervisor with the FMS and in management with the FMS and with North London Relate Family Mediation Service, 2002. Eimear has also chaired The Mediators' Institute of Ireland Ethics & Standards Committee.

Janni Knox is an accredited Family Mediator and Professional Practice Consultant with FMNI. She also specialises in Workplace Mediation across the UK. She is a Practitioner Member of The MII and serves on the Board of Mediation Northern Ireland (MNI). Janni is on the Policy and Standards committee for The College of Mediators UK. Janni is an ambassador for the Edward M Kennedy Institute for Peace Building and lectures on the Masters in Mediation at NUI Maynooth.

Eimear and Janni both participated in Mediation Northern Ireland's MOST Project on Cross Cultural Facilitation & Mediation in Divided Societies (2009-2013).

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Aedin Bradley is an accredited Family Mediator and Professional Practice Consultant with FMNI. She is also a practicing Family Lawyer with over 25 years' experience and is on the Children's Order panel for Northern Ireland as well as a practicing Collaborative Law Solicitor.

Malachy Hagan is an accredited Family Mediator with FMNI. He is also a practising Family Lawyer since 1981. Malachy has experience as a Disability Conciliator and Youth Justice Conference coordinator.

Polly Rowan-Hamilton is an accredited Family Mediator with FMNI and is currently working towards Professional Practice Consultant status. Polly was formerly a teacher with some twenty years' experience. Polly is currently employed by FMNI as Mediator and is currently completing specialist training in Elder Mediation.

FMNI also wishes to acknowledge the input to the course content by Margaret Fawcett who is an independent Social Worker and Family Therapist with a long standing professional interest in work with young children and young people in families in transition. She has combined research, training and practice in this area. She was part of a new all-island study group looking at Child Inclusive Practice in family mediation and other fields.

Davina Clements is an accredited Family Mediator with FMNI and is currently seconded into the post of Lead Practitioner. Davina is a qualified Social Worker and has been employed by the Trust Family & Child Care services and Barnardo's to carry out therapeutic and assessment work with families. She has since managed and developed operational services, supporting the needs of families and meeting service outcomes. Davina qualified as a Family Mediator in 2008 and went on to achieve accreditation status, working as a Family Mediator and Direct Child Consultant. She continues to work in the area of restorative practice and is a member of the College of Mediators. Davina has just completed a post-graduate Diploma in Strategy & Leadership at QUB.

FMNI may from time to time introduce other mediators to the training team.

Methodology and Evaluation

Training Delivery

- 12 days of training delivery by way of didactic input, facilitated and elicitive discussion with skills practice through role plays.

Assessment and Evaluation

- Trainer, peer and self-assessment of each role-play.
- Trainers' assessment of drafting exercise and Learning Journal.
- Trainers and trainee self-assessment of overall participation.
- Option: MII Certified Role Play Assessment.

Self-Learning

- Required reading list, with recommended additional reading on specific topics.
- Completion of Learning Journal including self-reflective element.
- Completion of Draft Mediated Agreement.

B. ACCREDITATION AS A FAMILY MEDIATOR

Regulation of Mediation

The field of mediation is not yet regulated by statute. However there are professional bodies in the UK and Ireland who have established best practice standards for the training and practice of mediation. FMNI works to the Codes and standards of the College of Mediators (one of the lead bodies of The Family Mediation Council UK) and of The Mediators' Institute of Ireland (MII). Although there is differing terminology, under both organisations there are three stages to becoming a fully accredited Family Mediator.

STAGE ONE – TRAINING PROGRAMME

Successful completion of an approved course, such as FMNI's Foundation Training Programme (FTP) leading to a **Certificate of Completion** from FMNI.

Note: At this stage those wishing to work in non-family cases can undertake The MII Certified Assessment Role Play with an independent assessor (current fee €275 / £225). Successful completion of this entitles an application to the MII for **MII Certified Mediator** status.

STAGE TWO – TRAINING PLACEMENT

Becoming an effective Family Mediator takes more than a set of skills learned during training: it also necessary to gain practical experience with ongoing self-awareness and professional support.

Stage Two is an assessed and supervised Training Placement involving co-working with an experienced mediator for a minimum of 10-15 hours to take place within twelve months of completion of the FTP. Those who successfully complete this stage will be issued with a **Readiness to Practice Certificate** and can then work without a co-mediator in family cases.

FMNI offers a limited number of Stage Two Training Placements each year to those who have successfully completed Stage One. Candidates can also organise their own Training Placement with another organisation with the option of the required supervision and assessment being provided by FMNI.

STAGE THREE – PRACTICE PORTFOLIO

Stage Three involves ongoing supervised casework, Continual Professional Development and the completion of a Practice Portfolio of mediation cases which is submitted for independent assessment by either The College of Mediators UK or The Mediators' Institute of Ireland.

FMNI uses a Panel of Trained Mediators to deliver its service across Northern Ireland and from time to time invites new members to apply to join its Panel. Panel members can then use their supervised casework to complete their Portfolio.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

Anyone interested in mediation can join the professional mediation bodies as a general member. However in order to practice as a Mediator working with separating couples, candidates must have a Stage One Certificate and a Stage Two Certificate. Professional membership requires a minimum number of cases per year, attendance at Continual Professional Development training and the regular individually structured support of a Professional Practice Consultant. The benefits of membership include access to a large and varied programme of group events and conferences, discounts on professional indemnity insurance, newsletters, sharing and learning groups, standard policy documents, practice documentation and inclusion on a website as licensed to practice mediation.

C. APPLICATION GUIDE

Entry Criteria for the Foundation Training Programme

Successful applicants must demonstrate that they:

- (a) Are to work at graduate level either through possession of a degree or equivalent level professional qualification or experience in a role which requires a similar level of thinking and application;
- (b) Have at least have at least three years' experience of working with couples and/or families; and
- (c) Meet the requirements of the [Person Specification](#).

Previous mediation experience is an advantage but not an essential requirement. At shortlisting stage, applicants must provide two satisfactory independent [References](#).

Application Process

Applicants must demonstrate that they have both the personal attributes and suitability for the training in writing and, if shortlisted, by way of telephone interview.

To apply, please submit your completed, signed [FTP 2017 Application Form](#) to FMNI by 31st August 2017

Applications by email to administration@familymediationni.org.uk are preferred, however postal applications will be accepted.

As references will be taken up at shortlisting, it is recommended that you are confident that your preferred referees are available within the required timetable (see below).

Selection Process

Initial shortlisting may be followed by a telephone interview. Successful applicants will be notified the following week.

If you are successful, this is subject to references and you must provide them the by end of September 2017.

You must confirm your acceptance of a training place, together with a £500 deposit by 1st October 2017

Pre-course material will then be sent out by e-mail on receipt of payment.

Shortlisting and selection will be carried out by the programme Trainers and their decision is final. There is a limit of 12 places available so if it is oversubscribed, applicants who meet the criteria may still not secure a place on the 2017 programme. Dates of the next training will be made available as soon as practicable.

Person Specification

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These are the skills, attributes and experience that are considered essential to the role of a Mediator and in particular one working with families. Successful applicants will have to demonstrate that they possess all of these. Please use these as a guide to decide if training as a mediator is right for you. If you are unsure, you are welcome to have an informal discussion with a member of FMNI before applying for the training.

Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to alternative dispute resolution • Energy and enthusiasm • Willingness to work towards attaining standards of professional competence • Understanding of own motivations to become a family mediator • Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take responsibility for own learning and self-development ✓ Make links between theory and practice ✓ Transfer and develop skills
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Active Listening • Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communicate at all levels (with clients, service personnel, trainees) ✓ Facilitate meetings to enable forward movement ✓ Work solo, in pairs or as part of a team ✓ Work respectfully, non-judgementally and with impartiality ✓ Show sensitivity to clients' emotional state ✓ Cope with very conflictual or distressing situations
Intellectual Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Understand the process and principles of mediation ✓ Read and assimilate new material ✓ Grasp implications and facilitate others to do so ✓ Record outcomes clearly and logically ✓ Understand theoretical and legal aspects ✓ Facilitate thinking and generate creativity ✓ Engage with and understand complex factual material
Professional Ethical Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the principals of mediation and how to reflect these in practice • Working inclusively in ways that allow equal access to mediation • Working within the codes of practice of The College of Mediators (UK) and/or The Mediators' Institute of Ireland • Understanding the role of the mediator and maintaining professional boundaries • Recognising the rights of children in separating families
Practical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong literacy and numeracy skills • IT Skills

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Attendance Policy

Successful completion of the FTP requires full attendance on all twelve days and participation throughout.

The course is assessed both through formal role play and written submissions. Attendance on all days of the course is mandatory and successful completion includes satisfactorily passing the assessed elements as well. Certificates of completion cannot be issued without full attendance.

It is important not to commence this course if you have any anticipation of difficulty in attending all of the modules. FMNI understands that changes can come about due to unforeseen circumstances. In exceptional situations, a participant may be able to make up a missing unit or module, which will be at additional expense. We will endeavour to facilitate the additional unit or module in a timely manner after the course has finished, however this cannot be guaranteed. All decisions are at the discretion of FMNI.

Foundation Training Programme

Cancellation Policy

Family Mediation NI will make all reasonable efforts to understand when training participants have to make changes due to circumstances outside their control. However, there are charges in most cases to cover costs already incurred and to ensure the course is still viable for the other participants.

Full payment for the Foundation Training Programme 2017 is due by 1st October 2017. If you have to cancel at short notice a cancellation fee of 15% will be deducted from the total fee and the remainder returned to you.

Cancellations after 10th October 2017 and withdrawals from the course are non-refundable unless in exceptional circumstances. Any refunds will be at the discretion of FMNI.

Options to transfer to a future FTP are at the discretion of FMNI: in all instances a 10% administration fee may be applicable.

FMNI reserves the right to cancel the spring training programme due to insufficient numbers or other circumstances outside our control. All successful candidates will be invited to join the next available programme and all fees returned in the interim.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR FMNI

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