



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Mediation

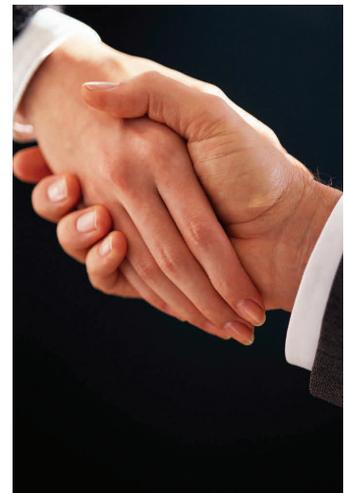
at the University of Sheffield

The University of Sheffield is committed to encouraging harmonious working relationships between colleagues and recognises that this will have a positive impact on staff and student wellbeing and performance at work. Where disputes so arise, mediation is proven to be an effective tool for resolving interpersonal conflicts. Resolution through mediation seeks to find positive solutions and may avoid recourse to formal procedures that can entrench differences and make reconciliation less likely. The focus of workplace mediation is the future working relationship between the parties; it is not a mechanism to determine who is right or wrong; it is not a mechanism for apportioning blame or the dispensing of disciplinary (or any other) sanctions against either party.

The University has a pool of ACAS qualified mediators that can be called upon to mediate in situations where this might be an effective intervention.

“Mediation is a completely voluntary and confidential form of alternative dispute resolution. It involves an independent, impartial person helping two or more individuals or groups reach a solution that's acceptable to everyone. [...] Mediators do not make judgments or determine outcomes - they ask questions that help to uncover underlying problems, assist the parties to understand the issues and help them to clarify the options for resolving their difference or dispute.”

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
definition of mediation



Key principles

- All staff members may access mediation.
- Participation in mediation is voluntary.
- The mediation process is not prescriptive and can be adapted to best fit the situation.
- Line managers may recommend mediation to any staff members experiencing conflict in a working relationship. Alternatively, staff members can request mediation directly.
- Where mediation is deemed an appropriate course of action, a neutral mediator is allocated by the scheme co-ordinator to both parties.
- Mediation meetings involve the participants engaged in the process and the mediator(s).
- The mediation process and its outcome remain confidential between the participants unless they agree to share information with appropriate parties (e.g. line managers).
- It is an independent process, sitting outside University statutes and policies. As such, participation in mediation does not preclude recourse to, and will not result in, formal procedures at any stage in the future.

For further information, email mediation@sheffield.ac.uk