



International Mediation Institute

PROFESSIONAL MEDIATION WORLDWIDE

Promoting Consensus and Access to Justice

[www.IMImediation.org](http://www.IMImediation.org)

**MINIMUM STANDARDS**  
**FOR**  
**IMI CERTIFIED MEDIATORS**  
**AND**  
**CRITERIA**  
**FOR**  
**QUALIFYING ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS**  
**(“QAPs”)**



**QUALIFYING**  
**ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

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## I. Introduction

IMI Certification is available to any experienced mediator who gains a certificate from a Qualifying Assessment Program (hereinafter: "QAP") as a result of a performance-based assessment. IMI, via its Appraisal Committee, certifies "Qualifying Assessment Programs" (QAPs) as having the capability to assess individuals against IMI's standards. To hold QAP status, an organisation's program must meet the established Criteria for QAPs, as laid out in Section II of this document.

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*A mediator becomes 'IMI Certified' only when their profile is completed (filled out), has a current Feedback Digest, and the payment of the annual contribution is received by IMI (or waiver is otherwise approved)*

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Following the above steps, IMI includes the profile in the [IMI 'Find a Mediator' database](#), and it becomes publicly searchable. From that moment and for as long as they retain their Certification, mediators may be searchable on the IMI website and may use the **IMI Certified Mediator logo**.

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*Organisations with QAP status may use the IMI Qualifying Assessment Program logo when marketing their assessment program.*

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Note that organisations' specific programs are recognised, and that IMI's recognition of those programs does not constitute endorsement of that organisation's other activities.

The below standards have been adapted and simplified from the criteria for QAPs, for use as guidelines by users who are attempting to establish whether their experience may meet the requirements for IMI Certification. The criteria for QAPs are authoritative.

## **1. Mediator Experience**

Applicants must have a substantial level of experience as a mediator—typically, 200 hours or 20 mediations suffice.

## **2. Mediation Knowledge**

Applicants must have a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice. These may be assessed using methods such as written tests, essays, reports, theses, or interviews.

## **3. Mediator Skills**

Applicants must be effective in using the mediation process and techniques. 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.

## II. Criteria

The following are key requirements for a QAP to be approved. Further guidance is given in the next section. QAP applications may be completed [online](#).

### 1. Mediator Experience

The QAP must include a methodology for ensuring that an Applicant has 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. Mediators without 200 hours or 20 mediations are unlikely to be sufficiently experienced.

### 2. Mediation Knowledge

The QAP must include a methodology for determining that an Applicant has demonstrated a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice which may be based on written tests, essays, reports, theses, interviews and/or other testing platforms.

### 3. Mediator Skills

The QAP must include a methodology for the evaluation of an Applicant's performance in terms of the occurrence and effectiveness of mediation process and mediation techniques, against high competency benchmarks. Due to the wide variety of mediation processes and styles, and to allow for innovation and creativity in the field, Program criteria will vary. Consequently, the IMI Independent Standards Commission<sup>1</sup> has not established fixed 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The [IMI Independent Standards Commission \(ISC\)](#) has established the criteria, standards and related materials for IMI Certification. Its 70+ members, who are all thought leaders in the mediation field in their own right, contributed their time and expertise in their personal capacities.

#### 4. Program Transparency

The benchmarks and criteria applied by a QAP must be published and be openly accessible on the organization's website. Details of all approved programs are listed on the IMI web portal <https://imimmediation.org/orgs/find-program/> and include a direct link to the credentialing organizations' websites.

#### 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 organizer.

#### 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.

#### 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.

## III. Guidance

The purpose of the appraisal procedure is to ensure all IMI Certified Mediators assessed by QAPs share a minimum high standard of mediation experience, knowledge and skills. This means that IMI Certified Mediators are of consistent quality across jurisdictions, and IMI Certification gains and maintains credibility and meaning for users.

This guidance is designed to assist organisations in preparing their applications, and reflects common queries from applicants.

### 1. Mediator experience

A QAP must include a methodology for ensuring that an applicant has 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.

A QAP must explain how it establishes that an applicant is highly experienced and how it verifies that experience; for example, through use of logbooks, court records, etc.

A QAP must specify exactly what level of experience is required to be eligible for its program.

### 2. Mediation knowledge

A QAP must include a methodology for determining that an applicant has demonstrated a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice. This may be based on written tests, essays, reports, theses, interviews and/or other testing platforms. You should make sure you include what type of content is assessed.

### 3. Mediator skills

A 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. You should include the 'competency framework' that helps you assess

mediators, setting out the skills and knowledge assessed, how each item is assessed, and what 'score' is applied for each item.

#### 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 are listed on the IMI web portal (<https://imimmediation.org/orgs/find-program/>) and include a direct link to the credentialing organizations' websites.

A QAP must give the link to the website where the program submitted for appraisal is displayed; if it is not yet online, the organisation submitting the QAP must explain when it will be.

The IMI logo and references to IMI recognition should be included alongside the Program on the QAP's website.

#### 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 organisation. The QAP must describe:

- What criteria are applied in appointing the QAP's Assessors;
- Are the QAP's Assessors, or any of them, required to be independent of
  - (a) the organisation submitting the QAP and
  - (b) the training Faculty
- How is independence determined.

#### 6. Ongoing monitoring

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 organisers to maintain a sustainable quality control system. (See also [here](#).)



The QAP must explain how the performance of the QAP's Assessors are/will be monitored to ensure a consistent application of high-quality standards.

The QAP must confirm agreement to provide all necessary information and accept monitoring from IMI.

## **7. Commitment to diversity**

The QAP must explain how it is made available/promoted on an equal basis to all experienced mediators regardless of their professional affiliations, gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characterisation.

The QAP should indicate any specific diversity or inclusion measures undertaken by the organisation.

## **8. Clarify your passing criteria**

The QAP must be very specific about how applicants pass or fail assessment. This should include any assessment details not already covered above, as well as indications of passing or failing grades. IMI recommends organisations attach example exams, questionnaires, and assessment sheets to the QAP application.

## **9. Steps taken should a participant fail**

The QAP must outline what happens if an Applicant fails. The QAP must be specific about any components the Applicant may re-sit, and any applicable time delays. Particularly, the QAP should indicate how many times may an Applicant re-attempt an assessment.

## **10. Privacy policy**

The QAP should provide a link to or upload its privacy policy.

The QAP should make sure this includes how Applicant/participant data is processed and protected, with particular reference to GDPR (participants in the EU) and CCA (participants in California), as applicable.

## **11. Additional comments regarding the application**

The QAP should include any additional information. This may include a general description of other programs offered by the organisation submitting the QAP, how long they have been running in their current form, and any mediation training or assessment programs designed for experienced mediators.

## IV. Notes

- Organisations with QAP status are able to qualify mediators for IMI Certification. They should submit new eligible assessed mediators via IMI website [the form](#). This form is only accessible by organisations with QAP status.
- Organisations with QAP status may act as 'Reviewers' for mediators and mediation advocates/advisors. Reviewers prepare a summary of user feedback known as the 'Feedback Digest' for IMI Certified Mediator/Advocate profiles.
- For criteria and guidance in relation to mediation advocate/advisor QAPs, for certifying IMI Mediation Advocates, please [see here](#).