

Where is the service located?

The service is managed by the University's Mediation Officer, Ed Curtis, and is based in the University Secretary's Office at Senate House.

Contact details:

Telephone : (0117) 92 **88904**

or (0117) 33 **18086**

Email: Ed.Curtis@bristol.ac.uk



STAFF MEDIATION SERVICE

If you require this leaflet in alternative formats (eg large print), please email Sali.Morris@bristol.ac.uk, or telephone (0117) 331 8086.

www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/Secretary

What is staff mediation?

Mediation is a voluntary process that supports people in resolving a workplace dispute. Early, constructive discussion through mediation can assist with resolution before problems escalate and working relationships deteriorate. The mediator does not impose solutions on participants, or impart advice on how a particular difficulty might be alleviated. Parties to the dispute will be encouraged to communicate openly, in a confidential setting, and to create their own solution.

Mediation can only happen if all parties are willing to participate.

What does staff mediation involve?

The process involves a mediator seeing parties alone and then bringing them together for a facilitated meeting, where the parties will be supported by the mediator in looking for areas of agreement.

Who are the mediators?

The mediators are University of Bristol staff employed in a variety of posts who have been specially trained in the skills necessary to facilitate mediation.

Is the service confidential?

Mediators are bound by confidentiality and information will only be shared with

others with the individual's permission, or subject to other very rare exceptions. Sometimes both parties might decide that it will be useful to take notes during the process, but these would normally be destroyed at the end (notes from mediation may not be used as evidence in more formal proceedings). Although the content of mediation meetings and participant names will remain strictly confidential, it will be necessary to monitor referrals made to the service for statistical report purposes.

Are agreements reached during mediation binding?

No, agreements reached are completely voluntary and it is up to the individuals involved to stick to them. Mediation aims to produce a voluntary framework within which to rebuild relations, but ultimately, neither party is bound by the outcome of mediation. The risk of breaching an agreement is that the problem re-surfaces and this may lead to more formal procedures.

How can the service be accessed?

The service can be accessed in several ways:

- A line manager can contact the Mediation Officer if he/she feels that there is a situation in the workplace that could be mediated. Agreement to enter into the mediation process

will be sought by the manager from the members of staff concerned before making this contact.

- A Personnel Manager may wish to refer a matter to the Mediation Officer for mediation. The Personnel Manager will seek the agreement of the party(s) concerned before a case is referred.
- A Trade Union representative may wish to refer a matter to the Mediation Officer for mediation. The Trade Union Representative will seek the agreement of the party(s) concerned before a case is referred.
- A Dignity at Work Adviser may suggest that an individual contact the Staff Mediation Officer. Dignity at Work Advisers will not be able to make direct referrals due to the confidential nature of their contact with staff.
- Individuals or groups of colleagues may wish to refer themselves to the Mediation Service. In such cases, the Mediation Officer will consider whether mediation is appropriate, and if so will then contact all parties to seek their agreement to enter into the mediation process.