

## MSSA ACCREDITATION STANDARDS MEDIATORS

Title	Who is it for?	Requirements
MSSA Accredited Mediator	Mediators who have demonstrated their expertise and experience against MSSA's accreditation standards.	Completion of 40 hours of recognised training and additional required training and experience according to MSSA's accreditation standards.
MSSA Accredited Family Mediator		

### 1. Application for Accreditation

- a) The MSSA selection criteria for applicants are:
- Matric + 3 years post matric study as a minimum.
  - Mediation Knowledge. Applicants must have a strong understanding of general mediation theory and practice.
  - Mediator Experience. Applicants must have a substantial level of experience as a mediator.
  - Mediator Skills. Applicants must be effective using the mediation process and techniques.
- b) An Applicant who seeks accreditation as a Mediator must submit an application accompanied with full details and proof of having met MSSA's minimum training and practice standards, as set out in paragraph 2 and 3 below.
- c) Supply testimonials of good character from two persons with whom the applicant has a professional relationship.
- d) In writing, confirm that he / she:
- i. Has not been convicted of any criminal offence.
  - ii. Subjects himself / herself to the Code of Professional Conduct, and the complaints and disciplinary procedures of the MSSA.
- e) Pay the annual MSSA accreditation fee.
- f) Be a paid-up member in good standing of the MSSA.
- g) The MSSA will consider the application to confirm that the applicant has met MSSA's minimum accreditation requirements.

### 2. MSSA Minimum Standards for Mediators

**In order to qualify for accreditation as a Mediator with MSSA, an applicant must provide proof of having met the following training and practice requirements.**

- h) Have completed training under a MSSA recognised training programme of at least 40 hours, with assessment and certification of attendance and competence;

or

(where other training was successfully completed) apply for recognition of their prior learning, and then be assessed and certified as competent by the MSSA;

or

(in the case of experience only) apply for recognition of their prior experience, and then be assessed and certified as competent by the MSSA.

- i) Completion of MSSA prescribed additional training, or RPL equivalent, to 64 hours of training in the specialist mediation field in which the mediator wants to be accredited.
- j) Provide proof of having met the necessary practice requirements in mediation and/or co-mediation.
  - i. Participation in a minimum of at least 3 supervised mediation sessions in the presence of an accredited mediator. Each session must be a minimum of 1 hour.
    - These sessions can be a role play with accredited mediators.
    - Roleplay supervisors must be accredited mediators.
    - N.B. These roleplay sessions can only be used by prospective applicants for the purpose of meeting accreditation requirements. That is, these roleplays are in addition to the number of roleplays in foundation training as required by the MSSA Standards.
  - ii. Proof of a minimum of 3 mediation or co-mediation sessions.
  - iii. Proof of a finalized and signed Memorandum of Understanding or Mediation Settlement Agreement. The applicant must maintain confidentiality. All identifying features (names of clients, addresses, birthdates, file number) are to be removed prior to sending the copies of the documents to MSSA;

### **Recognition of Prior Learning for Mediators**

Where a mediator was trained under a training programme that is not recognized by the MSSA, the mediator may obtain accreditation through one of the following ways:

- a) Undergo training under a MSSA recognized training programme.
- b) Apply to the MSSA for recognition of prior learning.
  - i) Each such application must be accompanied with full details of training and experience.
  - ii) If deemed necessary, the MSSA will nominate a qualified assessor to assess the applicant.
  - iii) This assessment can consist of:
    - (1) a written component that tests the applicant's understanding of mediation theory, practice and law; and
    - (2) an assessment of the applicant's skills as a mediator in an actual mediation or an applicable role play.
    - (3) When assessing an applicant, the assessor must certify a trainee as being of competent standard, or if this is not the case, recommend additional training and practice and re-assessment at a later date.

Each such application for Recognition of Prior Learning will be considered on its own merits. Any decision by the MSSA that an applicant is required to undergo additional training in order to qualify for accreditation, shall be final.

### **Recognition of Prior Experience for Mediators**

In exceptional circumstances, experienced and practising mediators may be accredited on the basis of their experience in mediation practice without having to first complete an endorsed training programme.

A person wishing to qualify on this basis shall apply to the MSSA for recognition of prior experience.

- a) Each such application must be accompanied by full details of experience.

- b) The MSSA will consider the application, and if satisfied of the applicant's competency, recommend that the person qualifies for accreditation.
- c) The MSSA will consider the application, and if not satisfied of the applicant's competency, must recommend what additional training and practice needs to be undertaken to acquire accreditation.

Each such application for Recognition of Prior Experience will be considered on its own merits. Any decision by the MSSA that an applicant is required to undergo additional training and practice in order to qualify for accreditation shall be final.

### **3. MSSA Minimum Standards for Mediators specialising in Family Matters**

**In order to qualify for accreditation as a Family Mediator with MSSA, an applicant must provide proof of having met the following training and practice requirements:**

- a) Training in a MSSA endorsed Family Mediation training course of at least 40 hours, with assessment and certification of attendance and competence;

or

(where other training was successfully completed) apply for recognition of their prior learning, and then be assessed and certified as competent by the MSSA;

or

(in the case of experience only) apply for recognition of their prior experience, and then be assessed and certified as competent by the MSSA.

- b) Completion of MSSA prescribed additional training, or RPL equivalent, in the Family Mediation field.
  - Social Workers and psychologists should be required to undergo additional training sessions on Family Law (12 hours)
  - Legal professionals should be required to undergo additional training sessions in Mental Health (12 hours)
  - All other trainees should be required to undergo additional training sessions on Family Law and Mental Health (12 hours each)
- c) Provide proof of having met the following practice requirements:
  - i. Participation in a minimum of at least 3 supervised mediation sessions in the presence of an accredited mediator. Each session must be a minimum of 1 hour.
    - These sessions can be a role play with accredited mediators.
    - Roleplay supervisors must be accredited mediators.
    - N.B. These roleplay sessions can only be used by prospective applicants for the purpose of meeting accreditation requirements, that is, these roleplays are in addition to the number of roleplays in foundation training as required by the MSSA Standards.
  - ii. Proof of a minimum of 3 mediation or co-mediation sessions.
  - iii. Proof of a finalized and signed Memorandum of Understanding or Mediation Settlement Agreement.
  - iv. Proof of a finalized and signed Parenting Plan.
  - v. The applicant must maintain confidentiality. All identifying features (names of clients, addresses, birthdates, file number) are to be removed prior to sending the copies of the agreements and parenting plan to MSSA

#### **Recognition of Prior Learning for Mediators specialising in Family Matters.**

Where a Mediator has been trained through a Family Mediation training program that is not endorsed by the MSSA, the mediator may apply for accreditation in one of the following ways:

- a) Undergo training through a MSSA accredited Family Mediation training program.
- b) Apply to the MSSA for recognition of prior learning.

- i. Each such application must be accompanied with full details of training and experience.
- ii. If deemed necessary, the MSSA will nominate a qualified assessor to assess the applicant.
- iii. This assessment can consist of:
  - (1) a written component that tests the applicant's understanding of family mediation theory, practice and family law; and
  - (2) an assessment of the applicant's skills as a family mediator in an actual mediation or an applicable role play.
  - (3) When assessing an applicant, the assessor must certify a trainee as being of competent standard, or if this is not the case, recommend additional training and practice and re-assessment at a later date.

Each such application for Recognition of Prior Learning will be considered on its own merits. Any decision by the MSSA that an applicant is required to undergo additional training in order to qualify for accreditation, shall be final.

### **Recognition of Prior Experience for Mediators specialising in Family Matters**

In exceptional circumstances, experienced and practising family mediators may be accredited on the basis of their experience in family mediation practice without having to first complete an endorsed training programme.

A person wishing to qualify on this basis shall apply to the MSSA for recognition of prior experience.

- a) Each such application must be accompanied by full details of experience.
- c) If the applicant is applying as an experienced Mediator specialising in Family Matters provide proof of:
  - i. 2 years' experience as a family mediator;
  - ii. Having completed a minimum of 10 cases with clients in the context of family matters;
  - iii. Two Memoranda of Understanding or Agreements that the applicant has written for his/her clients at the conclusion of the mediation process. The applicant must maintain confidentiality. All identifying features (names of clients, addresses, birthdates, file number) are to be removed prior to sending the copies of the documents to MSSA; and
  - iv. Two letters of reference from two MSSA accredited mediators.
- b) The MSSA will consider the application, and if satisfied of the applicant's competency, recommend that the person qualifies for accreditation.
- c) The MSSA will consider such application, and if not satisfied of the applicant's competency, must recommend what additional training and practice needs to be undertaken to acquire accreditation.

Each such application for Recognition of Prior Experience will be considered on its own merits. Any decision by the MSSA that an applicant is required to undergo additional training in order to qualify for accreditation shall be final.