



## Advanced Certificate and MSc in Conflict Resolution and Mediation Studies

These programmes are run by The Institute of Family Therapy (IFT) in collaboration with Birkbeck, University of London. IFT was founded in 1977 and since that time has established a national and international reputation for its work. In 1987, there began what has become a long and creative relationship with the psychology Department at Birkbeck, who validates many of IFT's programmes. The programmes in Conflict Resolution and mediation are part of the work of the Centre for Mediation Studies and Conflict Resolution at IFT.

The programmes provide a unique opportunity to study the development of theory, research, and practice in the field of conflict resolution and mediation. The Advanced Certificate provides a comprehensive introduction to mediation and conflict resolution theory, principles, and practice. The MSc offers an in-depth study of the theoretical aspects of the field and provides a further opportunity for reflective learning and application to practice.

Both programmes are part-time and held in central London.

### Why do it?

As conflict is part of human life and relationships, students are able to apply the learning to how they respond to and manage conflict in their personal and professional lives.

In terms of work and career opportunities, it is a changing landscape. Mediation is still a new field of work – twenty years old in the UK. There has been an expansion since the 1990's in family mediation, commercial and community with Government encouraging the use of ADR (alternative dispute resolution); the introduction of legal aid in 1996 for divorce mediation, the Woolf reforms in civil and commercial cases (court based). Restorative Justice (RJ) which includes some victim offender schemes and other CR models such as conferencing.

### What will you study?

Both programmes focus on theories relevant to understanding the nature of conflict and the many forms of conflict intervention. These include social sciences, communication and human needs perspectives. Both programmes aim to provide students with a thorough understanding of contemporary writing and research in the field. Prominent guest speakers and experienced practitioners are invited to enhance the student learning experience. In the past, these have included Bernie Mayer, Allan Barsky, Joseph Folger, Kenneth Cloke and Cheryl Picard.

Both programmes provide the opportunity to consider cultural, social, ethical, legal and philosophical issues and perspectives through group discussion as well as keeping a learning portfolio to chart your own journey of self-reflection. How issues of race, gender, sexuality, culture, class and disability effect conflict is

examined as well as how they relate to the effective use of conflict resolution and mediation skills.

The MSc provides a training in research methods which enables students to undertake an independent piece of research (either empirical or theoretical) in the second year. This is an opportunity to carry out an in-depth piece of work of your choice that is relevant to the field.

Students can if they wish complete an optional five-day skills training in mediation and conflict resolution which is accredited by IFT and approved by mediation UK.

### **When are the classes?**

The Advanced Certificate is a part-time one year programme that meets weekly for three terms (October–July) on Wednesdays from 2.00pm–5.00pm.

The MSc is a part-time 18 month programme that meets monthly for five terms (October–July and October–April) on Mondays 11am–5pm and Tuesdays 10am–4pm in year one and Mondays 10am–5pm in year two.

### **Who can apply?**

If you have very little knowledge and experience of mediation or conflict resolution, the AC provides a thorough introduction and overview of theory, opportunities to reflect on your own ways of responding to conflict, many invited speakers talking about their area of mediation practice, and the tutors and invited speakers introduce a variety of theoretical frameworks such as systemic, narrative, as well as theories about the nature of conflict and different forms of conflict resolution. For those who have not been in higher education before or for a long time, the AC can build confidence in entering academia, writing essays and the assessment is not too onerous. The course meets weekly and this allows students to get to know each other and build cohesion as a group.

The MSc requires a first degree (Hons) and some experience in conflict resolution and mediation, or a relevant professional experience and the ability to manage academic work at master's level. The MSc looks at theory in more depth; it relies on students undertaking independent learning as the course meets monthly. The research methods are taught by tutors from Birkbeck and prepare students to undertake doing a Dissertation in the second year. Dissertation proposals are submitted in June of Year 1. If a student decides not to continue into year 2 and they complete and pass all the work for year 1, they can be awarded a Diploma. Those who complete and pass year 2 will be awarded an MSc. The course meets two days a month in Year 1 and one day for 6 months in Year 2.

### **How much does it cost?**

Advanced Certificate: £1176 per annum

MSc: £1464 per annum

Optional 5-day skills training: £820

### **Further details**

Application forms from

The Institute of Family Therapy

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