

ANNEX A: CRITERIA FOR ACB RECOGNIZED TRAINING INSTITUTES

1. General characteristics of specific disputes

The criteria that professional and credible mediators should meet must be reflected in the selection process of participants for a training course as well as in the curriculum.

2. Curriculum and selection of participants

The minimum requirements and criteria that the curriculum of a mediation training course should meet in order to be eligible for ACB foundation recognition are:

1. The course should consist of at least 60 hours of mediation training, including homework, compulsory reading or peer group assignments.
2. Trainees entering into the course who want to become business or legal mediators should have completed at least at a higher education or university level, and must have at least 3 years of professional experience (preferably in a legal, commercial, financial or management function).
3. The training should offer sufficient practice/role playing opportunities with specific/individual feedback on performance and include commercial cases dealing with complex substantive issues (commercial, legal, financial, international) and with several conflict components that need to be dealt with simultaneously.
4. The training should offer sufficient practice/role playing opportunities for multi-participants disputes as well as dealing with legal council or other party representatives and dealing with the parties' constituency.
For examples on how criteria 3 and 4 can work out in training practice see the "Special Chemistry" role play, materials and video debrief that ACB Foundation produced together with Professor Hal Abramson and with the support of among others Utrecht University and Hamline University. See www.toolkitcompany.com in the resource section.
5. The course should offer modules dealing with mediation advocacy and court referred or court connected mediation.
6. Next to the generally important topics that need to be dealt with in all mediation education, the training program must also contain modules that explicitly deal with: caucusing and joint session, balancing power, breaking through impasse, analyzing and deescalating conflict, dealing with emotions in commercial and family disputes, several mediator styles and approaches.
7. Continuing Professional Development as well as continuing self-assessment and peer intervention should be a part of the curriculum.
8. The course should be concluded with a performance based, written or oral exam in which the participant's understanding of the basic principles of mediation - and business mediation in particular - is tested. Only participants who attended and actively participated in the entire mediation training program, who have fulfilled the home work and peer group assignments as well as who studied the compulsory literature, shall be eligible to receive the training institutes "trained (business) mediator" certificate.
9. The Training Institute must apply systematic quality control and feedback loops for their program and must measure every training with the help of an individual questionnaire analyzing each participant's satisfaction with the training program, satisfaction with the training institute and trainers; and suggestions for improvements.