



CEDR Accreditation: 2002
CEDR Panel Admission: 2006
Languages: English
Location: United Kingdom

Carolyn Graham

Overview

Carolyn is an experienced and versatile mediator (CEDR accredited 2003) who applies skills learnt at the sharp end of doing business and managing people to mediate in civil and commercial, employment and workplace disputes, combining pragmatism with sensitivity and natural people skills.

She has worked full time as a mediator and conflict resolution professional since 2006 and mediates throughout the UK and abroad in public, private and charitable sector disputes.

In addition to her mediation practice, Carolyn is a qualified conflict coach and mediation supervisor and assists organisations in developing core conflict competencies amongst staff through a series of bespoke training and coaching interventions.

Professional Background

After completing a music degree at Royal Holloway College, London University, Carolyn began work as an arts administrator and within the first 18 months of her career had worked with heavy metal band Motorhead, the Royal Opera House and the Cancer Research Campaign – a formative experience from which emerged some of the future hallmarks of Carolyn’s personal and professional style: flexibility, adaptability and the ability to relate to a wide variety of people – skills which Carolyn puts to good use in her mediation practice today.

*“Calm, professional and considered
The mediator was brilliant!
Has good instincts about what matters and what is going on
between teams and parties!”*

- Client Feedback



Over the next 25 years, working in small not for profit as well as large commercial arts and entertainment environments and ultimately as Programming Director at London's Southbank Centre (14 years), Carolyn honed her skills in the management of people, of money and of resources.

She has considerable experience of financial management, contract and co-production negotiation, organisational development, change management and union/management negotiations.

Carolyn played a critical role in the 2006 Royal Festival Hall £111m refurbishment programme. Over a two year period, she managed the briefing process and negotiated with the multiple internal and external stakeholders to produce the agreed project brief, which subsequently became the key control document right through to post occupancy review.

This ability to synthesise and manage a range of diverse opinion without getting bogged down in the volume of detail; and to distil down to the core essentials and harness the collective commitment necessary to reach an agreed outcome are some of the key skills used and valued in Carolyn's mediation work today.

Expertise

- Employment & Workplace
- Team Disputes
- Partnership & Shareholder
- Media & Entertainment
- Education
- Trusts, Wills & Probate
- Charities
- NGOs
- Local & Central Government
- Commercial Contract
- Sale of Goods & Services
- Manufacturing
- NHS & Healthcare
- Property

Dispute Experience

Employment & Workplace

Carolyn is a highly experienced workplace mediator, having conducted hundreds of mediations across all sectors. She is quick to understand the complexities and nuances of an organisation's eco system and is effective in applying insights gained from a 25 year career working in organisations large and small. Mediations have taken place before, during or after formal processes. Her experience includes cases of bullying & harassment, relationship breakdown, discrimination, poor performance, breach of confidentiality, sexual assault and have featured issues relating to culture, gender, ethnicity, religion and mental health.

Carolyn specialises in mediating team conflict, where dysfunctional relationships are having a negative impact on staff morale and wellbeing as well as service delivery. She has a particular interest in mediating conflict at senior board level and between executive and non-executive personnel, where stakes and sensitivities are high and the need for a quick and confidential process to resolve differences is paramount.



Employment & Workplace – Bullying/Harassment, Disciplinary/Grievance, Sickness Absence

“Many thanks for your fine work on Thursday. In particular, when I felt that there was a possibility of no positive outcome, you helped make it happen”

- Mediation between founder Director/Trustee of International charity and CEO re: allegations of bullying
- Mediation between 2 remote team members of an International company: a senior manager based in Holland and a UK based direct line report over allegations of bullying and in order to help the line report reintegrate back into the workplace after stress related sickness absence
- Mediation between two staff members bringing mutual grievances against each other for breach of confidentiality, harassment and abuse of authority
- Mediation between technical director and company director of dance company following allegations of bullying, extended sickness absence and as a part of reintroduction to work process
- Mediation between manager and line report in NHS trust regarding issues around mutual allegations of poor performance and failure to follow due process

Employment & Workplace – Discrimination/Pre-Post Tribunal

“Thank you for the way in which you presented the case and conducted it from the outset and which, I am sure, was of help to both lay clients in this case.”

- Pre-tribunal race discrimination claim by employee of international IT company.
- Dispute between Employee and Company regarding alleged failure to make appropriate adjustments (on grounds of disability) to the work environment
- Pre-tribunal mediation between company and employee claiming unfair dismissal and TA reservist’s protected right to reinstatement
- Mediation between employee making claim against employer for failure to make reasonable adjustments to ongoing health issue
- Post ET claim by senior partner of international company for damages for wrongful dismissal
- Pre-tribunal claim on grounds of transgender and disability discrimination brought by staff member of national consultancy firm on long term sick leave
- Dispute between employee and company regarding lack of appropriate support/failure in duty of care during period leading up to - and during - sickness absence triggered by difficult relationship with manager at work



- Pre-tribunal dispute between employee and international Bank regarding arrangements for return to work following one year internal secondment and 6 month sickness absence

Employment & Workplace – Relationship Breakdown

“Working with Carolyn has made a vast improvement to my working life and has allowed us hopefully to flourish as a company due to good solid working relationships and open discussions.”

- Mediation between two senior partners in law firm where relationship had broken down irretrievably
- Mediation between two TV presenters where difficulties in their relationship off-screen was negatively impacting their relationship on-screen
- Mediation between two staff in retail sector following internal and police investigations into allegations of threatening behaviour and intimidation
- Mediation between 4 staff members of HR team to restore working relationships following alleged inappropriate use of social media and invasion of privacy
- Mediation between two University cleaning staff regarding allegations of bullying and victimisation
- Mediation between non-executive CEO and her secretary to help reintegrate the secretary back to her original department after relationship breakdown and subsequent 6 month secondment to another department
- Mediation between two orchestral musicians where relationship had broken down midst allegations of bullying and poor performance

Team Conflict

“Process conspicuously successful! I think all of us on the management team thought that relations would never be the same again after this episode but in fact they are fine; in fact they are now good, even very good”.

- Mediation between a charity and its sister charity regarding issues of membership and governance. Central to this mediation were issues of culture
- Team mediation to restore broken relationships between 19 staff from one department of a major UK charitable organization
- Facilitation between Head of Department and 4 senior directors of TV Broadcast and Production company during time of great organisational change



- Facilitation of 30 regional team members of non-governmental public body in order to improve individual working relationships and better ensure consistency of operation
- Facilitation between five members of international Banking Secretariat where relationships had broken down
- Mediation between 10 musicians within one section of an orchestra where relationship dysfunction was affecting performance
- Team mediation involving 10 GP's, recently amalgamated from 3 separate practices into one group practice, to agree new working practises
- Mediation between 8 country specific staff of tv broadcasting and production company regarding performance and productivity issues due to multiple breakdowns in relationships

(more examples of workplace disputes included under headings below)

Partnership & Shareholder

"Carolyn was keen to understand the issues, the parties' positions and helped in the run-up in terms of planning the day. I was hoping the issues would be narrowed. I was not confident that a full settlement could possibly be reached! A successful settlement – fantastic result."

- Dispute between two partners and friends regarding division of assets on dissolution of theatrical partnership
- Dispute between two former partners regarding alleged breach of fiduciary duty and breach of intellectual copyright
- Dispute between two partners following the joint purchase, refurbishment and sale of a property
- Dispute between two company directors and the outgoing Chairman regarding equity shares due on sale of company
- Dispute between two partners re: division of assets including intellectual property on dissolution of theatrical partnership

Media & Entertainment

After 25 years' experience as a business woman in the Media and Entertainment industry including 14 years as a Director at London's Southbank Centre, Carolyn has unparalleled hands-on knowledge of the arts, media and entertainment and cultural sectors. Her wide and varied experience includes: venue and festival management; company and tour management; theatre production and promotion (seasons at the Edinburgh Festival and in London's West End); artistic programming; co-



production and contract negotiation; union negotiations; securing and servicing sponsorship; local authority licensing and planning applications; press and media relations.

She has seen what can go wrong and what it takes to put things right and parties value and respect her ability to draw on this experience, meaning she is uniquely placed to mediate in this sector.

“The mediation was astonishingly valuable and a relief to us all.”

- Breach of contract co-production dispute between Scandinavian TV company and UK film production company
- Dispute between actor (with both union and legal representation) and agent regarding royalties due from overseas earnings
- Numerous mediations involving theatre staff (stage, front of house, administrative) in a range of disputes resulting ultimately in relationship breakdown
- Mediation between joint CEO’s of a theatre company where the relationship had broken down amidst highly emotional and mutual allegations of bullying and intimidation
- Copyright dispute between songwriter/record producer and a former band member claiming co-authorship of song (subsequently recorded by top selling artist) and entitlement to ensuing publishing and recording royalties
- Alleged breach of verbal contract between actor and theatre company
- Dispute regarding non-payment of royalties between TV personality/author and publishing company
- Mediation between members of education team of dance company to resolve differences and agree future working practises following period of huge upheaval and senior management team transformation

Education

Carolyn has mediated a variety of disputes in schools, colleges/universities and academies involving teaching, academic, administrative and support staff and students.

“I feel like a very heavy load has been lifted off me. I feel a lot happier with life at work. Mediation is something I used to frown upon. However I now feel it is the best thing I ever did”

- Post grievance mediation between a University and a senior lecturer regarding allegations of unfair treatment under the disability discrimination act
- Mediation between two staff members in a primary school where complex personal relationships and issues originating outside of the workplace (including multiple criminal investigations and prosecutions and involving

several other family members) had resulted in total relationship breakdown and mutual allegations of harassment within the workplace

- Team mediation between 12 University lecturers where relationships and trust had broken down
- Disability discrimination claim by student against university following lower than anticipated scores in final exams
- Mediation between four colleagues working in a refugee student support unit within a University.
- Mediation between two senior staff in Special Needs School
- Mediation between a University Departmental Director and his deputy to help re-establish working relationship following unsuccessful grievance taken out by the latter against the former

Trusts, Wills & Probate

Carolyn often mediates in cases where feelings are running high and the parties are feeling anxious and distressed. This is especially the case in wills and probate mediations where clients cite her calming influence and ability to keep the parties focussed on outcomes as being of significant benefit.

“she was empathetic and by keeping the situation calm and defusing the emotions, a situation that could have been very distressing for both parties was avoided. She made a huge effort to bring both parties together which was appreciated.”

- Mediation involving nine family members regarding the mutual inheritance of a property abroad where some family members wished to retain the property as a family holiday home, some to run the property as a commercial concern, and some to sell
- Mediation between mother and daughter regarding disputed division of financial assets following the death of the husband/father
- Dispute between twin brothers regarding disputed will of deceased mother
- Interpersonal dispute between trust members
- Dispute between Mother and daughter regarding the transferring of money from mother to daughter’s account and the signing over of house into daughter’s name

Charities/NGO’s

“Excellent result achieved for both parties.”

- Mediation between a charity and its sister charity regarding issues of membership and governance



- Mediation between two colleagues working for national charity, one returning from long term sick leave and where there had previously been allegations of bullying and issues of poor performance
- Mediation between executive director and Chair of Board of international medical charity regarding disputed length of fixed term contract and terms for its renewal
- Mediation in Housing Association between manager and line report returning from sickness absence
- Mediation between head of department and newly appointed line report working for animal conversation charity following disputed extension of probationary period
- Mediation between two senior Directors of International NGO where relationship breakdown was impacting on performance and delivery

Local & Central Government

“The mediator was great. She was calm, friendly, understanding and very non judgemental. She made the process much smoother and easier than I ever imagined it would be. She very quickly put me at ease and managed the day very fairly and with empathy”

- Mediation between staff members of local authority library where restructuring and relocation had contributed to the relationship difficulties within the team
- Mediations, conducted over several days, between local Authority departments and Unions to establish better working relationships
- Mediation between government department and former employee claiming compensation for alleged disclosure of confidential information
- Mediation between two 2 senior staff regarding alleged sexual assault
- Mediation between manager and caretaker in local authority housing department where relationship had broken down following alleged mishandling of tenant complaint and numerous subsequent grievances

Commercial Contracts

“Success. Very pleased that it was achieved with the mediator’s considerate interventions and communications between the parties in what otherwise had seemed like an insurmountable impasse without resort to litigation”

- Dispute between decorating company and a homeowner claiming negligent damage to property



- Dispute between a US based company and a UK based executive recruitment agency regarding disputed levels of commission monies due on an 'introduced' candidate
- Dispute between sports equipment manufacturer and PR consultancy regarding breach of contract/non-delivery of services due
- 3 way dispute between a building construction company, a garage and a construction worker regarding non-payment and poor workmanship
- Mediation between legal firm and former client regarding non-payment for services rendered
- Breach of contract dispute between owner of video business and former chairman and finance director regarding latter's entitlement to remuneration package/share of proceeds on sale of business
- Breach of contract dispute between hotelier and company responsible for refurbishment programme
- Dispute between PR consultancy and a film distribution company regarding non-payment of monies for services rendered
- Dispute between two property management companies regarding non-payment of rent, repairs and maintenance

Sale of Goods & Services

"thanks so much for your help with this. We thoroughly appreciate all that you did to ensure that there was a successful outcome"

- Dispute between home owner and design/project management consultancy regarding alleged non-payment of design and project management fees for home extension and proposed new spa/garage buildings
- Mediation between London football club's community trust and an educational trust regarding non-payment/disputed quality of services provided
- Dispute between PR consultancy and a film distribution company regarding non-payment of monies for services rendered
- Breach of contract dispute between public sector funding body and regeneration consultancy



Manufacturing

"I was expecting the mediator to be professional and very good ..Carolyn was impressive and exceeded my expectations"

- Mediation between Senior Director and Managing Director of UK/European company where relationship broken down following instigation of performance management programme
- 2 day team mediation involving management, staff and union representatives following take-over of local manufacturing organisation by global enterprise
- Mediation between union representatives and management of large scale manufacturing company to re-establish relationships following months of turbulence and strike action
- Mediation between 12 staff in Security Services Provider where team dysfunction was contributing to poor performance and increased security risk
- Time critical mediation between 3 project leads in company where negative media coverage of a high profile accident had accelerated communication and relationship breakdown

NHS & Healthcare

"Very open, and welcoming of views. Confirmed what she saw throughout the process which was very helpful. Very pragmatic approach which helped"

- Mediation between two colleagues in NHS trust hospital where relationship breakdown was seriously impacting on productivity of department and consequently, on financial stability and credibility of organisation
- Mediation between ward staff in central London hospital to improve working relationships
- Mediation between two senior Consultants at London hospital where relationship had broken down and conflict negatively impacting on service delivery
- Mediation between 15 consultants at NHS trust hospital following largescale restructuring of department and subsequent deterioration in working relationships
- Mediation between three senior consultants working across regional sites where poor relationships were threatening service delivery
- Time critical mediation between SLT and Chair/Board of National Emergency Service provider at a time when negative press coverage was placing added strain on an already struggling relationship



Property

“A very straight forward approach which never obscured the way ahead and left both parties able to decide on an acceptable resolution.”

- Dispute between UK landlord and former tenant, now resident in the US, regarding non-payment of rent
- Dispute between housing association and tenant regarding levels of compensation due following flood damage to property
- Dispute between landlord and tenant regarding a disputed rental over-payment
- Tenant/Landlord dispute with tenant seeking damages for disrepair and an order for remedial work
- Mediation between property developer and tenant seeking costs and damages for trespass following court ordered surrender of possession of property from developer to tenant

Personal Style

Carolyn is an insightful and intuitive mediator, who can quickly help parties get to the commercial and emotional heart of the matter. She readily builds rapport and strongly believes in the value of pre-mediation contact with parties and their representatives.

She is adept at reading and managing interpersonal dynamics, being equally comfortable mediating in individual and in team conflict. Not afraid to challenge, she focuses parties on identifying the key issues and supports them with an open and positive approach that encourages settlement on realistic and commercial terms.

Feedback

Frequently described as professional, calm, empathetic and focussed, clients value her friendly and straightforward style, highlighting her ability to build rapport, her calming influence when tensions are running high and her ability to keep proceedings on track and deliver positive outcomes.

- *“She didn’t shy away from the really difficult issues and truly mediated allowing us to lead the discussions where we needed them to go.”*
- *“Excellent result achieved for both parties.”*
- *“Showed real regard for everyone in the room which truly helped have a balanced discussion.”*
- *“Asked pertinent questions...really helped move us forward.” “Very fair and experienced.”*
- *“I just wanted to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for providing the mediation and support last week, I cannot express to you enough how it has helped me.”*



- *“Thank you for the way in which you presented the case and conducted it from the outset and which, I am sure, was of help to both lay clients in this case.”*
- *“Mediator was extremely professional. Encouraged confronting issues and supported the discussion to ensure it was constructive.”*
- *“Excellent at letting us talk as we needed to, but also not letting us leave a subject without some kind of resolution.”*
- *“...she was empathetic and by keeping the situation calm and diffusing the emotions, a situation that could have been very distressing for both parties was avoided.”*
- *“...achieved the right balance of control and flexibility to make us feel that we were working within a structure and yet still had enough control ourselves to take it in the direction we were comfortable to go. She also had a very calming influence on everyone there.”*
- *“...very good result for all parties...”*
- *“A very straight forward approach which never obscured the way ahead and left both parties able to decide on an acceptable resolution.”*
- *“Carolyn was very fair and experienced. She used excellent listening and reflecting skills and helped us consider the options from the perspective of the other party.”*
- *“As a means of finding common goals and moving forward, I cannot praise this process highly enough. It is amazing, it’s not a case of winning or losing, it’s a case of moving forward – something that I was previously unable to do.”*
- *“...the process was facilitated well, asking challenging questions that helped us explore the conflict in a different way.”*
- *“...did a great deal to put us at our ease throughout the process.”*
- *“...dealt with the authority problems really well.”*
- *“I was impressed by the ability of the mediator to grasp and summarise the essence (and the undertones) of what people were expressing.”*
- *“...the mediator had the ability to separate personal values from the issues under consideration to maintain neutrality. She was able to understand power imbalances.”*

Other Dispute Resolution Experience

Neutral Chairing & Facilitation

Carolyn is an experienced neutral chair and facilitator who works closely with organisations to help devise and deliver effective meetings. Her experience extends from chairing small group meetings lasting a few hours to designing and facilitating large scale interventions conducted over several days, weeks or sometimes months. Carolyn brings strong people



and process management skills and a mediator's impartiality and analytical clarity to any situation, helping make communication, participation and ultimately decision making easier.

Experienced at handling complex group dynamics, Carolyn is highly skilled in facilitating meetings where feelings are running high and where strong differences in opinion need to be surfaced, safely, in order that discussions can move forward constructively and consensus achieved.

Chairing

Independent Chair of Board AGMs and Board Away Days for wide variety of private, public and charitable sector organisations, including:

- Chair of AGM with 70 Shareholders of Estates Management Company where decision needed to be made regarding scheduling and funding of large scale refurbishment programme.
- Chair of extraordinary general meeting of board members of creative industries organisation where relationships between individual directors and between directors/CEO/Chair had broken down to decide future of board memberships and future direction of company.
- Chair over an 18th month period of series of meetings between 12 elected representatives of a wider trade organisation to help them prepare for, and conduct, collective union negotiations.
- Chair of departmental meeting within non-public departmental body to discuss how to improve working practises and departmental/organisational efficiency.
- Chair of round table meeting between several officers of Hackney council, two officers from the local police force and a local resident wishing to discuss an alleged mishandling of her complaint to the Council's complaints procedure.

Facilitation

- Co-Facilitator of 'think tank' away day for global renewable energy NGO to identify future strategic priorities.
- Facilitator of Away Day for Communications Cluster of International Charity designed to deliver team engagement in organisational strategic plan and communications strategy.
- Facilitator of Away Day organised by publishing arm of trade association to engage members in identifying industry requirements for future publications.

Union Experience



“...a very positive experience ... I was impressed by the way these discussions led to actual outcomes and set actions to be carried out and followed up at the next session ... Finally since the mediation there has been a marked improvement in communication between the management and workforce and their reps.”

Throughout her professional career and most notably during her 14 years at the Southbank Centre, Carolyn has been involved in union discussions at both a local and regional level, especially during times of organisational change.

She has continued her interest in this area of work and now facilitates between unions and management in a range of situations. Recent examples include

- Facilitating dialogue between the union and local authority department in order to identify and remove blockers to personal and professional working relationships.
- Facilitating discussions between union representatives and management of large scale manufacturing company following months of turbulence and strike action.
- facilitating negotiations (over an extended time period) between union and national member organisation regarding revision of core contract/terms and conditions of national collective agreement.

Carolyn has also trained numerous trades union staff in workplace mediation skills, has designed and delivered two day mediation skills training courses specifically for union representatives and has conducted both commercial and workplace mediations where union members have been present.

Conflict Coaching

Alongside her mediation and facilitation work, Carolyn works as a conflict coach. This might take the form of a one off session or be delivered through a series of sessions over an extended time frame. Carolyn aims to be flexible and responsive and although preferring to work face to face, is happy to work by phone and/or zoom if appropriate.

Mediation Supervision

In November 2017 Carolyn became one of the UK's first accredited (workplace) mediation supervisors. She is happy to work either with individual mediators on developing their professional practice or with organisations wanting to maintain the quality and consistency levels of internal mediators.

Conference Speaking includes



- 2017 Panel member at CEDR exchange Forum “Nightmare of Mediations Past”
- 2017 Speaker on “Managing Morale in the Face of Uncertainty”, Independent Theatre Council Annual Conference
- 2014 Workshop Facilitator at ACAS Symposium Employment Relations & ADR: Alternative Perspectives
- 2013 Speaker at Economic & Social Research Council conference ‘Managing Conflict and Resolving Disputes: Synthesising Research, Practice and Policy’
- 2012 Speaker at ‘Health and Wellbeing’ conference at NEC on use of mediation in managing sickness absence
- 2012 Speaker at IAPOS (International Association of Physicians for the Overseas Services) conference on use of mediation in managing sickness absence
- 2012 Contributor, as one of 2 workplace mediation experts, to Law Society’s book on mediation ‘Making mediation work for you. A practical handbook’

Training

As well as her mediation and neutral chairing/facilitation work, Carolyn delivers a wide range of training, seminar and workshop activities in mediation, dispute resolution and conflict management. A passionate advocate for the greater use of mediation skills within the workplace, she is a regular speaker on the benefits of mediating conflict and enjoys creating bespoke mediation skills training programmes for specific sectors and professions.

Skills and Interests

Carolyn has a working knowledge of French (‘A’ level and London Chamber of Commerce & Industry ‘Intermediate’ level). She is a CIPD qualified facilitator and is CMI trained in designing and delivering training.

Out of work interests include walking, music, travelling, football, food and jewellery.

