



Queen Margaret University
CONSUMER DISPUTE RESOLUTION
CENTRE

Are you a
problem solver?

MSc Dispute Resolution

AN ONLINE COURSE





What is dispute resolution?

Dispute resolution is the process of helping people resolve their problems.

It is a crucial activity, which is vital to the smooth functioning of society.

It oils the wheels of business, heals broken relationships, helps our modern economies flourish, and allows people to hold government to account.

Disputes arise at many levels and in many different contexts. At Queen Margaret University, our particular expertise relates to a special type of dispute: those between ordinary people on one side and powerful organisations on the other.

These disputes affect people's everyday lives and include complaints from citizens about government services such as healthcare and local government, and consumer complaints about services such as banking and utilities.

Dispute resolvers working in this area make a huge difference to people's lives by helping them to resolve their problems and by providing access to justice.

Will the MSc Dispute Resolution help my career?

The programme is aimed at professionals who are already employed in dispute resolution, career changers, and recent graduates. Whether you want to become a leader within your current role and organisation or develop a new career, the programme will give you the skills and knowledge to succeed.

Queen Margaret University's existing CPD programmes are extremely well regarded by employers in the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) sector and we have trained over 2,000 individuals across the UK and beyond.

Dispute resolution is a growth industry – the UK's central government alone spends an estimated £1.5 billion a year on resolving disputes with citizens. At the same time, mediation and other forms of ADR are increasingly being encouraged in what is part of a global trend towards reforming traditional justice systems.

The mediation aspects of the programme are accredited by the Scottish Mediation Network and completion of the MSc Dispute Resolution will allow you to kick start your career as a professional mediator.



With more and more people employed in dispute resolution roles and more and more opportunities available for dispute resolvers, the MSc Dispute Resolution will help you to stand out and become a leader in the field.



What will I be studying?

Modules available on the MSc include:

- > **Fundamentals of Dispute Resolution**
- > **Negotiation**
- > **Mediation Theory and Practice**
- > **Complaints and Ombuds Techniques**
- > **Communication in Dispute Settings**

“I’ve learnt a lot about how people react to situations where they feel they are in dispute, how the other party’s reaction can help or hinder the communication process, and techniques for acknowledging these things while moving forward towards a mutually acceptable solution. Not only is this helping me to deal with situations professionally, but I’ve also found it to be helpful in understanding my own reactions in dealing with conflict in day to day life.”

Claire Doherty, MSc Dispute Resolution Student



Why study with Queen Margaret University?

The MSc Dispute Resolution covers the whole spectrum of dispute resolution, from adjudicative forms (such as arbitration) to non-adjudicative forms (such as mediation). Our particular emphasis is on more consensual approaches such as negotiation, mediation, and complaints and ombuds techniques.

Students are taught by lecturers who are experts in this field, and who combine professional expertise with academic insight. They are active researchers and their teaching draws on the latest developments in dispute resolution research, policy and practice.

The MSc is available full time or part time. The full time option makes it particularly attractive to recent graduates looking for a specialist second degree and international students. The part time options is ideal for busy professionals already working in the dispute resolution field.

The programme is also open to experienced dispute resolution professionals who do not hold an undergraduate degree.

Our international focus

The MSc is available online, throughout the world, and has been designed to provide a global perspective on dispute resolution. It will appeal to students based in the UK and overseas who are seeking to broaden their understanding of dispute resolution in an international context. All of the modules draw on the latest comparative insights from across the world, to provide a truly global learning experience.

Will the MSc Dispute Resolution benefit my current and future employers?

The programme has been specifically designed to deliver tangible benefits that will make you more attractive to current and prospective employers. Specific skills you will develop include using:

- > **advanced communication skills to de-escalate conflict**
- > **negotiation and mediation skills to achieve quick, consensual outcomes**
- > **research methods to evaluate and develop best practice**

Knowledge you will gain includes understanding:

- > **how to design, develop and review dispute systems**
- > **how to enhance the experience of those involved in disputes**
- > **how regulation and public policy affect dispute resolution**

You will also complete a dissertation which allows you to develop your specialist knowledge and conduct relevant, business-focused research.



Why study dispute resolution now?

The world of dispute resolution is changing fast. For many years, across the world, courts were the dominant forum for settling disputes. Recent years have seen a dramatic shift, with alternative forms of dispute resolution now becoming mainstream.

With the role of legal institutions in problem-solving increasingly reduced, a new breed of dispute professionals has emerged: mediators, conciliators, arbitrators, adjudicators, complaint handlers, and ombuds. These professionals are now the first port of call for many everyday disputes.

As consumers and citizens become more vocal in pursuing their rights, and as public policy seeks to mainstream alternative dispute resolution within justice systems, there has never been a better time to study dispute resolution.

“The course gave me a real understanding of the multiple roles that a dispute resolution professional can fill, and the importance of developing a broad range of skills to be deployed according to the problems you are dealing with. It’s a role which spans many traditional boundaries, from helping people understand the extent of their problem to creatively developing remedies to fix issues.” Nial Vivian, MSc Dispute Resolution student



Qualifications: Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert – 60 credits, 3 modules); Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip – 120 credits, 6 modules); MSc in Dispute Resolution (180 credits, 6 modules + dissertation). Single modules are also available.

Delivery: The programme is available entirely online, on both a full time and part time basis. There is an optional campus based element for those wishing to complete a practical mediation element. This is taught over a four day period of block teaching.

Completion: The PgCert is normally completed in 1 year (maximum = 4 years), the PgDip is normally completed in 2 years (maximum 5 years) and the MSc is normally completed in 3 years (maximum 7 years).

Entry requirements: An undergraduate degree in any subject and demonstrable enthusiasm for the subject. Students without an undergraduate degree but with substantial professional experience may also apply.

Start date and fees: The course starts in September each year (a January start may also be possible, depending on circumstances). For fee information, please visit:

http://www.qmu.ac.uk/registry/fees_charges.htm

Further information : Please contact the programme leader, **Dr Chris Gill**, at cgill@qmu.ac.uk for more information or to discuss your application. We look forward to hearing from you!



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