

The Family Mediation Council seeks to appoint independent members to its Family Mediation Standards Board

The Family Mediation Council (FMC) is dedicated to promoting best practice in family mediation and to ensuring the public can confidently access family mediation services which meet exacting professional and training standards.



Background

In 2015, the FMC established a committee responsible for implementing and overseeing these standards: the Family Mediation Standards Board (FMSB).

The FMSB has made considerable progress since its establishment, introducing a register of family mediators, approving foundation training courses, implementing an appeals system and working with the Ministry of Justice to ensure that only authorised family mediators can sign court forms. The challenge that lies ahead is to strengthen regulation by keeping the standards framework under review, providing guidance on developing it further as required, developing and implementing clearer assurance of practice, and continuing to demonstrate the value of self-regulation to mediators, the family justice system and the public.

The FMSB is made up of five independent non-mediator members, and four practising family mediators. John Hobson, a long serving independent member, will end his term of office in April 2026, and the FMC is looking to appoint his successor.

The role

Members are at the forefront of the implementation and development of standards and self-regulatory framework of the FMC. Independent members bring an important outside perspective to the FMSB. Its five current independent members have backgrounds working at a senior level in the NHS, the nuclear industry, business and in the regulation of opticians and the police.

We are particularly interested to hear from people who have different experience and backgrounds to those already on the FMSB, who may bring other perspectives.

It is anticipated that the work will involve a time commitment of two or three days per month. This time will be spent in FMSB meetings (c. three meetings a year in London, and two online), with remaining time spend in working group meeting or working on projects that you take on.

The role is not remunerated although reasonable travel expenses to meetings on FMC related business will be reimbursed. Subject to an initial review after six months, it is anticipated that the appointment will be for a period of three or four years, with the potential for re-appointment.

The work of the FMSB and expectations of FMSB members

The FMSB is responsible strategically to the FMC for the operation of the professional standards and self-regulatory framework for family mediation in England and Wales. This is a non-statutory professional framework that mediators are nevertheless required to comply with if they wish to undertake publicly funded work or sign official documentation relating to mediation information and assessment meetings (MIAMs). More details about the standards framework can be found on our website [here](#).

The primary functions of the FMSB are to do the following, in accordance with the professional standards and self-regulation framework:

- Maintain, keep under review and develop the professional standards for family mediation.
- Maintain a publicly accessible register of trained and qualified family mediators, of Professional Practice Consultants and of Child-Inclusive mediators, who are in good standing
- Consider initial and Child-Inclusive mediation training courses for approval, consider any appeals relating to courses that are not approved, and monitor the ongoing quality of courses.
- Oversee the accreditation process that leads to qualified (FMCA) status.
- Consider and make decisions on complaints about registered mediators if a mediator's own complaints process has not resolved matters.
- Maintain management information to enable the Board of the FMC to carry out its responsibilities effectively and to provide statistics relating to the professional standards and self-regulation framework.
- Keep under review the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the Board's operations.

Members are supported in these functions by the FMC's and FMSB's Chief Executive Officer and a small staff team.

Independent FMSB members are expected to:

- Pursue the agreed purposes and objectives of the FMSB at all times.
- Contribute actively to the creation, implementation and monitoring of the FMSB's strategic and operational plans that give effect to its objectives.
- Participate regularly in meetings of the FMSB and nominated committees or working groups, keeping well prepared and well informed, and able to contribute productively to all discussions and decision-making.
- Sit on complaints and good standing panels up to approximately four times a year
- Contribute to the creation, development and confirmation of documents, and comment on issues and proposals, by email and phone.
- Volunteer for and take on as requested specific roles and assignments as delegated from the FMSB, reporting back to the FMSB as determined.
- Establish and maintain collegial working relationships with other FMSB members and with the FMC, contributing to the effective conduct of business on behalf of the family mediation profession.
- Participate positively in the annual processes for the FMSB's self-evaluation and members' appraisal.
- Maintain high standards of integrity and probity, sustaining best practice in governance.

Person Specification and Role Description for independent FMSB Members

Successful candidates will have:

- Enthusiasm for the development of the family mediation profession through promoting high standards of conduct and practice
- Commitment to the protection of the public through professional self-regulation and familiarity with the operation of standards and regulation in a professional setting
- Experience of working well in a team and making decisions in a demanding environment by:
 - engaging in constructive but challenging debate
 - contributing to collective decision-making
 - giving direction to an enterprise
- Ability to prepare materials and reports in isolation, if necessary, to feed into the Board and/or a committee
- Experience of applying high standards of integrity and probity
- Experience or understanding of the constraints of running a small organisation with limited resources and a significant reliance on voluntary effort
- Ability not only to set and oversee the FMSB's strategic direction but also to pay appropriate attention to operational implementation of the FMSB's terms of reference working with the Executive Officer
- Ability to grasp and analyse complex issues, and creativity to propose practical solutions
- Strong verbal and written communication skills
- Sensitivity and tact to work constructively with colleagues in the FMSB and the FMC and with the wider family mediation community
- Time and energy to contribute to the role

Candidates may also have:

- An understanding of the role of family mediation in family justice
- Experience of developing professional standards/training/programmes of learning for professionals;
- Experience of complaints handling procedures;
- An understanding how to respond to changing demands and deliver innovative solutions to grow a profession;
- Commissioning/designing/developing IT infrastructure;
- Working with different stakeholders; or
- Acting as an independent person to making evidence-based decisions (for example as a judge or complaints officer).

Applications

Applications should be sent by e-mail to Helen Anthony, Chief Executive Officer, at executive@familymediationcouncil.org.uk and should include:

1. A supporting statement no longer than two pages explaining why the role interests you and how you meet the criteria outlined in the person specification.
2. Your CV with details of your education, professional qualifications and employment history. Please include your daytime and evening telephone contact numbers and an e-mail address, which will be used only to contact you. Please also include the names of two referees. Please note that referees will be approached only with your prior knowledge, and only following a successful application and final interview.

You will also be asked to complete a diversity questionnaire – completing and returning this is optional.

Interviews

Applicants with the most appropriate mix of qualifications and experience will be invited to participate in the selection process.

Informal first interviews will take place online or in person in London, with the FMC's recruitment panel. Successful candidates will then be invited to interview with the full FMC Board – this is likely to be online.

Appointments will be made subject to satisfactory references.

Further information

If you have any questions about the appointment or the process, please call Helen Anthony on 07817 743194 or e-mail executive@familymediationcouncil.org.uk.