

Code	OLP.001
Title	Online Learning Policy
Status	Active
Prepared by	Dawn Stainer
Approved by	Stuart Matthew Hanson
Date Approved	05.01.2026
Revision Number	Version 1.0
Date last amended	02.01.2026
Date of last review	02.01.2026
Date of next review	02.01.2027
Contact Officer	Stuart Hanson
Distribution Status	Controlled

Civil and Commercial Professional Mediation Foundation Training Course

Online Learning Policy

Course: IMI CMTP – Civil & Commercial Mediation

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the VMA community, including: staff, trainers, coaches, and assessors, subcontractors and guest experts, all learners enrolled in the IMI Civil and Commercial Mediation Professional Foundation Course (CMTP).

It covers:

- online teaching, coaching and observation
- digital access requirements
- online role-play and assessment arrangements
- learner support and readiness
- any additional or catch-up learning required

This policy operates alongside the VMA Online Safety Policy and the VMA Feedback Policy.

Purpose of the Policy

Veritas Mediation Academy (VMA) is committed to delivering high-quality, engaging and pedagogically sound online training that meets the IMI Civil and Commercial Certified Mediator Training Programme (CMTP) standards.

This policy outlines how VMA ensures:

- high-quality online delivery
- effective learner engagement
- accessibility and online readiness
- robust online role-play assessment
- compliance with IMI requirements

The policy draws on andragogy, experiential learning (Kolb) and constructivist pedagogical approaches to support effective online professional learning.

Pedagogical and Andragogical Basis for Online Delivery

VMA designs online learning based on:

- ✔ **Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle:** where VMA students learn by doing, reflecting, conceptualising, and testing through simulations.
- ✔ **Adult Learning Theory** (Knowles): VMA learning must be relevant and problem-centred, our adult learners bring existing experience to build upon and their learning should be collaborative, interactive, and supports autonomy.
- ✔ **Constructivist Learning Principles:** where knowledge is built through discussion, active engagement, and shared meaning making.
- ✔ **Psychological Safety** (Edmondson): VMA online environments are structured to support interpersonal risk-taking, enabling learners to practise new skills, receive feedback, and participate fully.

Online Delivery Model: Platforms, Tools & Engagement

VMA delivers online learning through secure, professional video-conferencing platforms (Zoom) and its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), 360Learning. Learners have 24/7 access to course materials, enabling them to balance professional responsibilities alongside their VMA training.

The VLE supports flexible, self-paced learning and provides remote access to the Lead Tutor for guidance throughout the programme in addition to the tutor-led sessions. Our learning platform includes interactive materials, video resources, case simulations, quizzes, and discussion forums, all designed to deepen understanding and promote active engagement.

These features ensure that VMA's Civil and Commercial Mediation Training is dynamic, immersive, and directly relevant to the real-world challenges encountered by practising mediators in the UK.

Ensuring Engaging Online Delivery

VMA ensures online sessions remain highly interactive and aligned with IMI requirements:

- breaking sessions into short, varied segments (input → discussion → exercise → breakout practice)
- using polls, chat, digital whiteboards, shared documents, and breakout rooms
- applying a learner-centred design that limits didactic delivery to approximately 10%
- embedding 40% discussion and exercises, 50% role-play and coaching
- VMA trainers will, as a minimum, schedule regular breaks approximately every 60–90 minutes
- a 'cameras-on' approach will be the default expectation to ensure visibility and engagement
- VMA trainers require participants to remain present and visible during assessed or coached activities

On-Screen Visibility Requirements

To uphold professional practice standards:

- VMA learners must be visible on screen during all teaching, coaching and assessment
- cameras may be turned off only for agreed accessibility needs or during breaks
- assessors must clearly see the trainee mediator at all times during assessed role-plays

Ensuring Participants Are Fully Equipped for Online Learning

To enable our learners to meet the expectations of their online training course, VMA ensures all learners are prepared for online participation.

Pre-Course Guidance and Requirements

All learners receive, technical guidance on Zoom, details of equipment and physical space requirements, expectations for online etiquette, confidentiality, and camera use and safeguarding and online safety guidance - please see the VMA Online Safety Policy.

VMA learners receive a downloadable pre-course checklist, instructions for accessing the VLE and guidance on protecting confidentiality during online simulations.

Pre-Course Practice Session

All learners have access to a technical induction, via a restricted access YouTube video, that includes:

- testing audio and video
- using breakout rooms
- screen-sharing and chat
- practising mute/unmute
- guidance on managing online fatigue
- accessibility adjustments where required

Minimum Equipment Requirements

Learners confirm they have:

- reliable high-speed internet
- desktop/laptop with functional camera
- quiet and confidential space
- ability to appear fully on camera

Opportunities for Informal Social Interaction

To replicate the natural social learning of in-person courses, VMA structure for online mediation professional training courses includes:

- informal meet-and-greet sessions before the programme begins
- optional social breakout rooms during breaks and lunchtimes on training days
- peer learning groups arranged between sessions
- WhatsApp or VLE discussion spaces (moderated)
- post-course graduate access to the **VMA Online Forum** – an online space for professional learning and interaction

These opportunities support psychological safety, trust-building and community formation, an essential foundation for effective mediation role-play.

