



Sophie Clifford

Sophie is an employment barrister, mediator and trainer with over 20 years' experience in advisory, policy and compliance work, as well as mediation and litigation. She has worked for private sector employers and employees on the full range of employment issues, such as discrimination, difficult exits, restructuring, TUPE and whistleblowing. She worked in government for over a decade. Sophie helps the United Nations in relation to misconduct and harassment. She brings this diverse range of perspectives to her work.

Sophie has been a mediator since 2000, both in the workplace and in the community. She incorporates high EQ and mediation skills into everything she does. She enjoys equipping people to prevent problems escalating in the first place and delivers byrne·dean training across our client groups. She designed training and learning material for the UN on the prevention of harassment and promoting dignity and respect in the workplace.

Sophie is a French national and has lived and worked in the US, the Dominican Republic and Europe. She has volunteered for Liberty. She is a community volunteer mediator and a trustee of the Brighton and Hove Independent Mediation Service.

Experience

Mediation and conflict resolution – Sophie has been involved in finding alternative ways to resolve workplace disputes without litigation since 1998. As an accredited mediator she has resolved many conflicts, either by formal mediation or informal facilitated conversations.

Recent examples include:

- resolving seemingly intractable performance issues between a manager and a team member, avoiding a grievance against an appeal rating; and

- a cross-cultural mediation with an employee on long-term sick leave who brought a claim. As a result of the mediation, a way was found under which she returned to work and the litigation was dropped.

Sounding board – Sophie was the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) champion for the Government Legal Service. She is frequently sought out to advise on how to resolve difficult situations informally.

Investigations – Sophie spent two years at the UN working exclusively on investigations into staff misconduct. These included serious allegations of harassment or corruption against high profile leaders. As part of the UN's process, Sophie was required to defend investigation findings before the UN Dispute Tribunal.

Culture and harassment – lead developer of the UN's prevention of harassment toolkit and training programme for leaders, managers and staff - United To Respect.

Training – Sophie facilitates behaviour, culture and risk training for individuals, leaders, HR and teams as part of the byrne·dean training team. She also runs training for employee representatives.

Qualifications

I.I.b. and Maitrise de Droit (Law, King's College, London and Universite La Sorbonne)

Bar School (Nottingham University)

Accredited Mediator (Society of Mediators and other community mediation project)

Accredited Conflict Coach (Brighton and Hove Independent Mediation Service)

Mental Health First Aider and trained in D&I