

Sam Yates

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CMC Associate Mediator and NRAC auditor and member of the Access Association and the Discrimination Lawyers Association. Background in property law and education with personal and professional experience of dealing with potential and perceived discrimination and a wide range of access requirements relating to disability. Committed to developing mediation services to help participants identify cost-effective and creative solutions to a range of community, civil and commercial disputes.

Key skills

- **Consultation and stakeholder engagement** — Experienced in working with diverse groups to understand needs, surface concerns and represent different perspectives fairly, drawing on roles as a union representative, planning panel contributor and access adviser.
- **Built-Environment, Planning & Property Insight** — Combines experience as a commercial property solicitor with practical involvement in planning and heritage reviews to understand how legal, technical and design considerations interact. Skilled in analysing planning and listed-building applications, identifying accessibility implications and facilitating constructive dialogue between architects, planners, conservation officers and user groups.
- **Accessibility & Inclusive Design Expertise** — Specialist understanding of Equality Act duties, reasonable adjustments and inclusive design standards, with hands-on experience conducting audits, feasibility studies and access appraisals across education, heritage and public environments.
- **Clear, Person-Centred Communication** — Former solicitor and teacher with a calm, structured communication style; adept at simplifying complex information, supporting participation and creating psychologically safe environments for constructive problem-solving.

Yates Mediation

From March 2026

Civil and commercial mediator

- Accredited as a Civil and Commercial Mediator by the London School of Mediation (March 2026) and established Yates Mediation as an independent practice specialising in disputes involving accessibility, inclusive design, heritage environments and the built environment.
- Provide impartial, facilitative mediation to support parties in resolving disagreements arising from communication breakdowns, competing priorities or complex stakeholder relationships.
- Draw on a unique combination of commercial property law experience, NRAC-accredited inclusive design expertise and multi-stakeholder engagement (including planning panel work and union representation) to support constructive, future-focused dialogue.

Purple Pin Ltd

From April 2025

Access Auditor and Consultant

- Walk-and-talk access audit for Nottingham Hockey Centre that led to rapid improvements, including viewing areas, signage, accessible WCs, parking provision and strengthened engagement with local partners to address wider access barriers.
- Carrying out desktop access and inclusion design appraisals to implement and promote a university access strategy across an extensive programme of campus improvement works.
- Undertaking site visits to gather site-specific information and producing pre-visit information access guides and feasibility reports to inform design of accessible and inclusive entrances, accessible routes, accessible toilets and student spaces.

Leeds Civic Trust

From October 2024

Access Adviser: Volunteer

- Contributing to committee reviews of planning and listed building applications and drafting comments, concerns and recommendations relating to accessibility, for example making use of planning conditions to require compliance with accessible housing quotas prescribed by 'Accessible Leeds' SPD and promoting suitable provision for hoists in new hotels.
- Working as part of the Heritage Open Days Group to promote more accessible and inclusive venues and events, for example by designing and using short form access questionnaires to improve quality and consistency of published information. Preparing and presenting an online talk on the journey towards an 'Accessible Leeds' (from VE Day to the DDA and beyond, 1945-2025).

Education: Crimson Global Academy

September 2021 to January 2025

Teacher of History and Law; UCAS and Academic Extension Coordinator

Online teaching to help students overcome barriers of geography and legacy

- Recommended and introduced a new online Extended Project Qualification opportunity for international students across different campuses and time zones (from UK to NZ).
- Adapted 'best practice' guidance from the Bell Foundation to help EAL students overcome language barriers to learning and progression.

Education: The Grammar School at Leeds

from September 2009 to July 2021

Deputy Head of History, Head of Academic Extension and Union Representative

A large co-educational independent day school

- Negotiated and drafted the school's first union recognition agreement to provide a more robust process for consultation between senior leadership and members of staff.
- Successfully advocated on behalf of my disabled son for a personal care suite and other reasonable adjustments for improved access to school facilities/the learning environment.

Pinsent Masons and Eversheds

September 2002 to August 2007

Solicitor (Real Estate and Restructuring)

Large national commercial law firms

- Provided specialist real estate advice and support to companies, insolvency practitioners and banks using plain English to identify specific risks and potential legal solutions.
- Worked as part of clearly defined teams to develop client relationships, share knowledge and meet annual billing and budgeting targets.

Freeths

September 2000 to August 2002

Trainee Solicitor

Completed training seats in civil litigation, commercial property and planning, employment and corporate finance; exposed to a wide range of public, private and corporate clients on transactional and litigation matters.

Qualifications

Accredited Mediator	London School of Mediation	March 2026
NRAC Auditor	National Register of Access Consultants	December 2026
MA	University of Nottingham (Church History)	2015-2018
PGCE	Trinity and All Saints University	2007-2008
PGDL and LPC	Nottingham Law School	1998-2000
BA	University of Leeds (History)	1994-1997