



**EMBARGOED UNTIL: 00:01 28/04/17**

**A Visionary, Qualitative Approach to Promoting the Very Best in Educational Guardianship for International Students**

Quality Guardianship UK Ltd, brings a unique offering to education: a quality assurance scheme, founded on its own distinctive methodology, which is tailored to meet the needs of UK-based schools and colleges with international students on roll, working collaboratively with overseas parents and guardianship organisations.

"I am committed to ensuring that all international students studying here in the UK receive the highest standards of care, support and guidance, which is why I have developed QegUK School/College Validation." **Val Barnes, Founder and CEO.**

Hitherto, no such school/college-based framework has existed for the care, safeguarding and well-being of international students, a group QegUK recognises as being particularly vulnerable. According to the Independent Schools Council, there are over 47,000 international students at ISC schools alone, the majority of whom are boarders.

"I believe that QegUK is a visionary idea, with a unique offer for schools and colleges." **Gerry Holden, former head of three of the UK's top independent schools.**

QegUK School/College Validation is also a response to the ever-increasing numbers of overseas parents who choose to send their children to study here in the UK and who seek firm assurance that their children are well cared for. Based on evidence gathered, it would appear that schools and colleges wrestle with a lack of clarity over how best to meet the needs of their international students. Anxious to address this shortcoming, many heads and principals are looking for a quality mark to give them the necessary recognition and support for the excellent work many are currently undertaking.

"International students attending British schools and colleges contribute significantly to the economy and culture of these institutions. These students are living a long way from their countries of origin and need more focused and specialist attention. QegUK is able to provide such an essential service in the form of validating safeguarding and welfare arrangements in schools and colleges. This is very much welcomed by heads and principals, who recognise the particular vulnerabilities of international students and would value external validation of their provision." **Martin Ayres, HMI, former Head of Inspection, ISI (the Independent Schools Inspectorate) and Director, Lordenshaw Consultancy Ltd.**

**Notes to the Editor:**

Val Barnes, Founder and CEO T. 0330 223 0651 M. 07977 052 424

E. [val.barnes@qualityguardianship.co.uk](mailto:val.barnes@qualityguardianship.co.uk)

Office: [admin@qualityguardianship.co.uk](mailto:admin@qualityguardianship.co.uk)

Website: <http://www.qeguk.co.uk>

Quality Guardianship UK Ltd, East House, Hedley, Stocksfield, NE43 7S



**About Val Barnes:** Founder, Quality Guardianship UK Ltd, BA(Hons), PGCE, MEd, MBA, FRSA

Val has over thirty years' experience of education, largely at senior leadership level. She has lived and worked abroad and has substantial experience of business, marketing and as a professional writer on the visual arts. With additional experience of inspection and compliance, most recently as Head of Inspection and Accreditation for AEGIS (The Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students), Val has gone on to found Quality Guardianship UK Ltd, believing that high quality, care and standards are essential for promoting the very best in educational guardianship. Val was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 2003. She shares its philosophy that building networks provides opportunities for people to collaborate, thereby creating fulfilling lives and a flourishing society.

Val is committed, through Quality Guardianship UK Ltd, to ensuring that all international students studying here in the UK, a group she has identified as being particularly vulnerable, receive the highest standards of care, support and guidance. She is of the firm belief that effective delivery of high-quality safeguarding by schools and colleges working in close partnership with educational guardianship organisations, is the major contributory factor to securing and thereby enhancing each international student's health, well-being and happiness.

**About Martin Ayres:** Director, Lordenshaw Consultancy Ltd, BSc(Hons), CQSW Dip Adv. SW(Children & Families), Dip. Management, Cert. Management, HMI

Martin is one of the UK's most respected authorities on safeguarding. He is a recognised expert in child protection, having spent his entire career working in children's services in a range of operational, policy and senior management roles. With HMI status, he has been heavily involved in policy development, inspection and service improvement. He has also worked overseas on behalf of the UK government and inspection agencies.

In 2013, Martin was invited to become Head of Inspection for ISI (the Independent Schools Inspectorate) with a particular focus on strengthening inspection arrangements. In this role, he was responsible for all inspection activity in relation to independent schools and colleges in England and overseas.

As Director of his own consultancy business, he helps local authorities, schools and colleges prepare for inspection and advises on quality assurance arrangements, measuring outcomes and auditing both in the UK and overseas. He is commissioned by school associations and groups of schools to provide independent help and support including the development of new inspection methodologies based on improvement.

Martin is passionate about good outcomes for children and young people and increasing life opportunities through education and building their resilience.

----- Ends -----