

**Lou MCLAUGHLIN**

## **Quality Without Borders: Aligning Global and Local Standards in International Education**

### **Abstract**

Quality standards form the bedrock from which academic excellence develops. The rationale behind building quality foundations culminates in profile-raising, ensuring the institution stands out and maintains higher standards. In practical terms, it means quality support for the students and paves the way for stronger performances across the board in academic programmes.

In today's competitive environment, accreditation is becoming the preferred form of quality standards assurance in the international education sector.

This increased drive for accreditation raises questions in the area of quality standards at both a local and a global level.

- What do we mean by “quality”?
- What are the standards that underly quality?
- How do we know that our understanding of quality standards is understood externally?
- What underlying principles should inform the assessment of quality?
- What are the benefits, if any, to be gained from accreditation and quality assurance?

This presentation will address these questions and emphasize the importance of being able to benchmark the standards of the local institution against international quality standards and situating oneself with peers of the same calibre. It will put forward the tangible benefits that being part of a quality assurance scheme can bring to any tertiary institution as it builds strong quality foundations.

### **Biodata**

Lou is the Executive Director of Eaquals (Evaluation & Accreditation of Quality Language Services). She is the Founder Chair of *ELT Ireland*, the network for ELT professionals in Ireland, and served on the IATEFL Board of Trustees as the Associates Representative for 6 years until 2021. Lou holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics, Masters in ELT, DELTA, TESOL Cert. in Leadership & Management and Trinity TESOL Cert. Her special interests are Young Learner teacher training, teacher cognition and management in ELT. Lou is a frequent speaker at international conferences and was the co-editor of *Children Learning English: From Research to Practice* (2015).