



HCR Quality Assurance of Governance in Independent Schools

Strong governance is the foundation of a successful independent school. Trustees and governors play a critical role in safeguarding the school's vision, values, and compliance. But how often do governing bodies pause to assure the quality of their own governance arrangements?

Why Quality Assure Governance?

Governance quality assurance (GQA) helps boards understand whether they're operating effectively, meeting their legal duties and providing the strategic oversight required of them. As schools and school groups become more complex, governance needs to be simplified and focused on risk and opportunity. Fundamentally, schools need to know whether their governance structures are fit for purpose and delivering the best governance outcomes.



What Governance Quality Assurance Involves

Our governance quality assurance process is a structured review designed around five key areas:

1. Clarity of Purpose – evaluating whether a school's vision and strategy are well articulated and understood.
2. Compliance and Risk Oversight – assessing how trustees discharge their legal responsibilities.
3. Board Composition and Functioning – reviewing skills, structure, diversity, and decision-making processes.
4. Leadership and Accountability – examining the relationship between governors, the head and senior leaders
5. Impact and Improvement – identifying how governance adds measurable value to the school community.

Our team of specialist, experienced experts review each area through document analysis, confidential interviews, and benchmarking against regulatory expectations and sector norms.

The Benefits

A governance quality assurance review provides:

- Independent validation of governance strengths and areas for development.
- Clear recommendations to enhance board effectiveness and regulatory compliance.
- Evidence for inspectors demonstrating proactive oversight and self-evaluation.
- Increased confidence for trustees, staff, and parents that the school's governance is fit for purpose.

It's not an audit or inspection — it's a collaborative diagnostic tool offering constructive challenge and practical solutions.

Supporting Better Decisions

Just as due diligence underpins sound financial and operational choices, governance assurance enables boards to make timely, strategic and informed decisions about the future of their school. It ensures that governance is not just compliant, but capable, allowing boards to anticipate challenges, adapt strategically, and sustain excellence.

Estimated Costs

The cost of the Quality Assurance review is largely dependent on how much review and analysis is conducted. Please get in touch for more details.

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