



QUALIFICATION CHECK GRADUATES WITH GROWTH CAPITAL FROM CHELVERTON INVESTOR CLUB

Members of the Chelverton Investor Club have raised a significant sum of growth capital to support the continuing and rapid development of Qualification Check Limited.

London-based Qualification Check is a leading verifier of academic and professional qualifications, on a global basis. Working with degree and professional qualification awarding bodies as well as global recruitment firms, background screening companies and large employers. By integrating directly with the IT systems of the degree awarding institutions, or employing API links, Qualification Check's web-based platform enables users to remove the delays and frustration they might otherwise experience in having to directly contact a multitude of qualification awarding bodies.

Background screening and identity checking is experiencing increasing demand as more of everyone's personal details are available on-line, with the opportunity for fraud and deception an ever-escalating risk. In regulated industries or other sensitive areas, such as financial services, healthcare or education, knowing employees are who they claim to be and are qualified to do the job is critical. At the same time, in an increasingly global world, there are over 21,000 higher education establishments and 125 million students, not to mention the thousands of professional bodies offering qualifications, with numbers anticipated to grow rapidly over the coming years.

Qualification Check was founded in 2010 by a frustrated recruitment professional, Ed Hall, with the belief that there had to be a better way of confirming claimed graduate qualifications. With significant initial investment deployed in the early years, building and refining a robust software platform, the business sees a growing opportunity for its services and hopes to exploit this potential with the Chelverton investment.

Chelverton Investment Director, Richard Bucknell, who led the transaction on behalf of Members of Chelverton Investor Club – and who will join the Board of Qualification Check – commented: *“Qualification Check is a leading player in a fast-growing market, with a proposition that has proven attractive to some of the major names in global recruitment, along with many well-known academic bodies and professional qualification awarding bodies. Ed and his team have validated the model, and we are delighted that he has chosen to work with Chelverton to help take the business to the next level”*

Since launching its Investor Club service in 2013 Chelverton has seen a significant uplift in its unquoted investment activity within the equity gap under-served by the more established private equity community.

“It is an area of the market in which investors recognise that good returns can be delivered, with business valuations at sensible levels and company growth prospects looking better than for some years”, says Bucknell. *“High Net Worth individuals can access these opportunities through our Investor Club, and we're seeing strong levels of interest amongst prospective investors at this time.”*



Ed Hall, Qualification Check's CEO, added: *"Our business has grown significantly this last year. This investment gives us the opportunity to accelerate that growth as well as expand overseas and fulfil our aim of offering a fully global education verification platform for the benefit of educational institutions, graduates and their employers. Chelverton have provided a highly professional and experienced team to diligence our business and management and we are delighted the demand from investors was so high. We have great opportunities ahead of us."*

Chelverton Investor Club

Chelverton Investor Club provides an important new source of funding for UK SMEs and was established to offer private investors a simple and discrete means of making direct investments in private UK companies, using the firm's strong pedigree in managing the acquisition of, and investment in, unquoted SMEs. The Club invests only in companies with stable business models, backed by the strongest management teams, and which operate in sectors it knows and trusts. These firms, which Chelverton believe will become more profitable and cash generative over time, will typically seek investment of between £500,000 and £2m (and have a transaction value of £0.5m – £5m).

Commenting on the Club's unique proposition, Chelverton Asset Management Managing Director and Founder, David Horner said, *"We have identified many highly competitive investment opportunities in recent times, and have seen the way in which these companies have been overlooked by other private company equity providers. At the same time, we are being approached by growing numbers of investors looking for compelling tax-efficient investments, capable of offering good, solid returns and a more bespoke approach to investing in private companies. We have created the Club to fill this gap in the market, and to give members access to a selection of high quality opportunities in the UK SME space, which we believe in as a firm, and which we have appraised as presenting a lower risk profile to prospective investors. The Club will allow them to create a self-selected private equity portfolio with ease."*