

## **Criticality in student learning and the teaching of management**

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### **Project description:**

While there is universal agreement that a postgraduate education should ensure students leave with an ability to think critically about business and management issues, developing a critical awareness among students is difficult, confusing and can be frustrating. Further, accrediting bodies require it, the UK's Quality Assurance Agency emphasises it, employers see the benefit of it and business schools frequently assure their prospective students that they will develop this capacity during their studies. And yet, a lack of criticality characterises much of student and dare I say faculty work. I would like to invite interested parties to submit their applications to undertake Ph.D. research to explore how criticality is developed in postgraduate management learning and education. To clarify, when I refer to 'critical' I am referring to it in the general academic sense, not in the way it has been developed within the critical management studies field. The focus of the studentship therefore, is criticality in the typical management student experience, in MBA education for example. Interested parties may, for instance, be interested in how MBA students develop their critical qualities. Related to that, it seems to me, will be an interest in how faculty understand, communicate, teach and assess students' progress in extending and enhancing their critical understanding. So, a Ph.D. candidate may wish to study curriculum development, approaches to teaching and assessment strategies. The management learning and education literature has displayed a tendency to divide criticality up; so, critical thinking, critical reflection and critical reflexivity each have their individual literatures that while impressive, have not appeared to make a significant impact on what and how students learn. A Ph.D. research project could investigate one of these in more depth, but perhaps there is a more significant contribution to be made in a study that seeks to integrate them under the broader heading of 'criticality'. The above should indicate that I foresee this research as a qualitative inquiry. Being qualitative, I would anticipate an ethnographic-inspired piece of research that could be a single case study or a comparative analysis of two or three cases. I invite applications from a variety of backgrounds. You may be a practicing academic/tutor, you may be a student who through your studies has developed an interest in androgogy/pedagogy, or you may be someone with an interest and curiosity about management learning and education. If my outline appeals to you I am keen to hear from you.