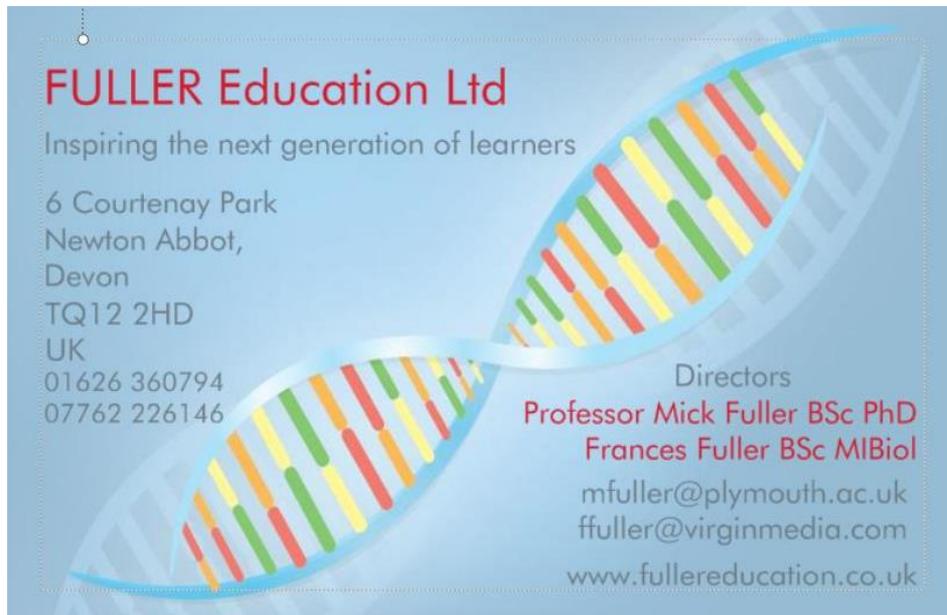


# Requirements to Dissertation works for PhD in EU Universities

Professor Mick Fuller



**FULLER Education Ltd**  
Inspiring the next generation of learners

6 Courtenay Park  
Newton Abbot,  
Devon  
TQ12 2HD  
UK  
01626 360794  
07762 226146

Directors  
Professor Mick Fuller BSc PhD  
Frances Fuller BSc MIBiol  
mfuller@plymouth.ac.uk  
ffuller@virginmedia.com  
www.fullereducation.co.uk

# The Organisation of PhD's in Europe

- PhD qualification has been in existence for 200 years
- PhD is the qualification for entry to University teaching
- PhD is the qualification for a career as a leader of research/development in industry
- Recently the PhD has been scrutinised and new models for PhD have been developed

# The PhD requirements

- Europe is not all the same – different systems for examination exist
  - The Private Viva Voce – UK/Ireland
  - The Public Defence – France/Holland
- But there is harmony in what is being examined
  - Core attribute is the production of a dissertation which demonstrates an original contribution to knowledge in the subject area

# The UK requirements

- Thesis (up to 80,000 words) plus private Viva Voce (private defence)
- 2 examiners – 1 internal and 1 external to the University. Examiners must be active researchers and have previous experience of examining
- Supervisors can observe with the students permission but must not contribute to the examination

# UK QAA Framework for HE Qualifications

## Doctorates are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication;
- a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice;
- the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

# Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- make informed judgments on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches;
- and will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

# Examiners are looking for:

- An understanding of the research context, i.e. how the candidate came up with the research question and how they formulated their aims and objectives.
- An exploration of the methodology they have used, the research design, issues that arose from the method(s) used and whether they are aware of the limitations to the method.
- Problems they have encountered and how they overcame them.

# Examiners are broadly looking for:

- The data/findings yielded by the project and how these have been analysed.
- How the data/findings relate to the research question i.e. can the candidate interpret the data/findings in a meaningful and sensible manner.
- Whether the candidate is confident in their results and their interpretation.
- Whether the work is publishable (in Science and Technology the expectation is that some of the thesis has already been published)

# The Public Defence system

- Requires
  - A Thesis
  - Testament of submission of the supervisors
  - Delivery of a Public Lecture on the research
  - Cross examination from Examiners (internal and external examiners)

# The Outcome

- UK/Ireland
  - Pass
  - Minor Corrections
  - Major Corrections
  - Resubmission
  - Award of Lower degree (Masters)
  - Fail

# The Outcome

- France/Germany
  - Pre-meeting of examiners before Public Defence
  - Do not proceed to examination unless is going to Pass
  - Grades of Pass (Pass/Good/Very Good)

# The PhD by Publication

- Small number of candidates every year submit for a PhD by Publications
- submit 5/6 cross-related papers published in a 5/6 year period
- In Holland candidates can decide to follow this route
- In the UK normally members of academic staff

# New Models of PhD training (1)

- **Structured PhD**
  - Taught elements/Modules in year 1 of study
  - Personal Development Skills courses
  - Cohorts of candidates with mentoring
  - Mobility of candidates
  - Interdisciplinarity
- **Professional Doctorate DBA/EdD/DClinPsy**
  - Expanding in UK, USA, Australia
  - Usually undertaken in part-time mode by professionals from industry/business/public sector
  - Taught elements in years 1 & 2
  - Thesis examined in same way as PhD

# New Models of PhD training (2)

- Industrial PhD/Engineering Doctorate
  - Industry-based workplace
  - Some taught elements in years 1
  - Period(s) of study and work in both University and Industry
  - Thesis examined in same way as PhD

# RESEARCH DEGREES WITH PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY

