



**ENHANCING STUDENT CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING SKILLS AT A HIGHER  
EDUCATION LEVEL IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:  
CASE STUDY OF THE BRITISH UNIVERSITY IN DUBAI**

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**Abstract**

Most higher education institutions do not systematically measure student learning and the extent to which their experiences lead to a growth in learning. It seems important to measure the degree of both general learning and development of critical and analytical thinking. Consequently, the primary objective of this project is to establish the degree to which a taught postgraduate education programme at a postgraduate university in a developing country develops student critical and analytical thinking skills. This paper will also investigate best practice and discover ways to promote critical thinking through identifying content and methodological issues, which may influence the ability of students to learn to think critically. The British University in Dubai (BUiD) was selected as the case study for this work and three different faculties with seven taught postgraduate programmes were covered. This study will use a major internationally standardised critical thinking (CT) test, administered first to the entry cohort and then again after students have completed their six modules. By comparing pre-test and post-test scores it is possible to establish whether these programmes do increase critical thinking skills. Surveys and interviews were also used; with the participants including students themselves, academics and senior management. The aim of these surveys and interviews is to identify content and methodological issues which may influence the ability to learn to think critically, as well as to identify demographic, social or cultural variables which may have an impact on that ability to think critically. The findings of this research may have significant value for other higher education institutions in the wider Gulf region.

**Keywords:** Critical Thinking, Higher Education, Developing Countries, BUiD, UAE.