

Examiners' expectations

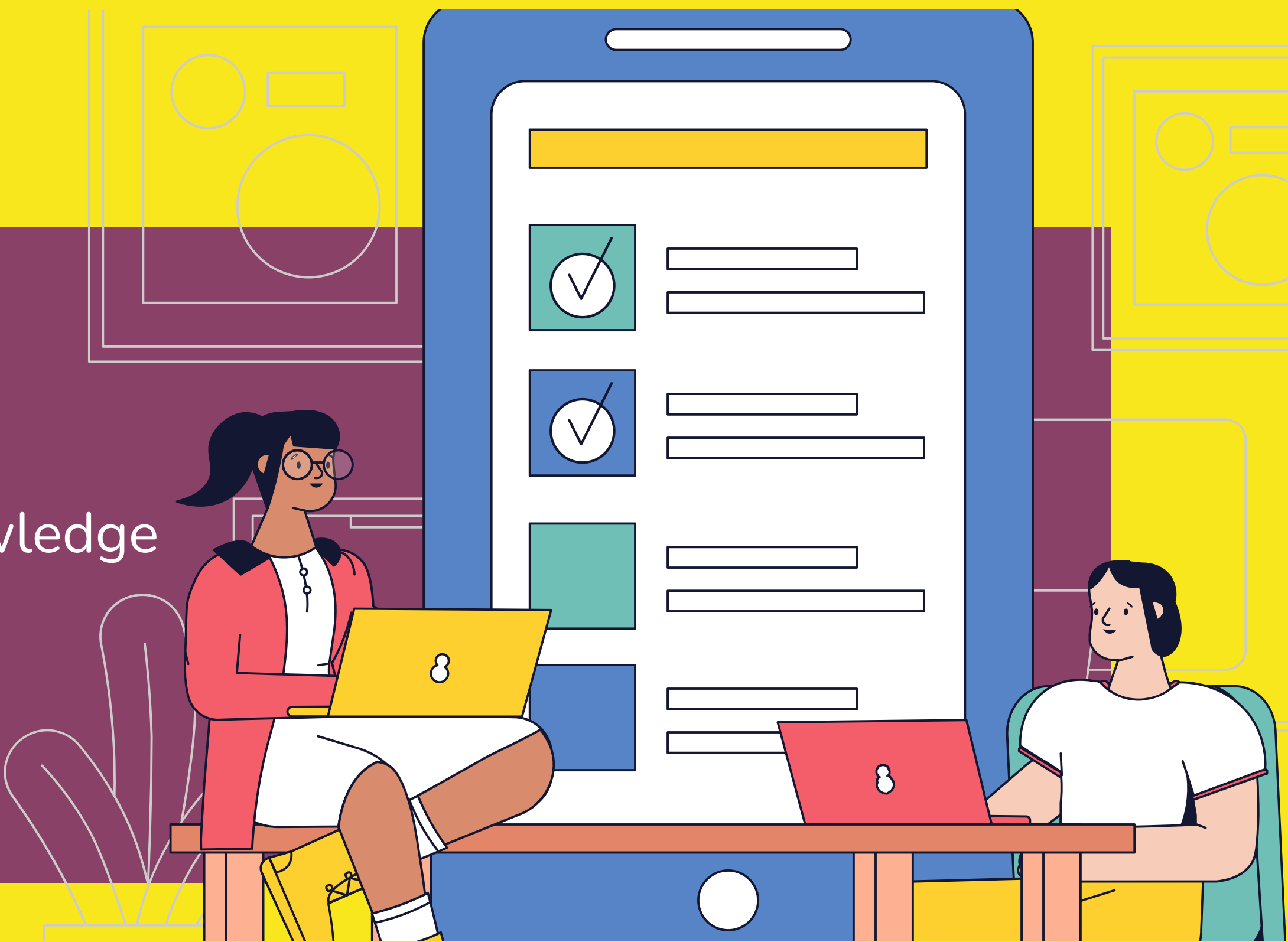
Five key areas

Examiners of doctoral dissertations share common expectations of the PGRs at the viva stage (Chetcuti et al. 2022, Golding et al. 2014, Holbrook et al. 2007, Mullins & Kiley 2002, Tan 2022).

1

Quality research

- presents an original contribution to knowledge
- is based on relevant theory
- uses sound methodology
- is publishable



2

Criticality and argument

- selecting relevant literature
- synthesising literature
- critically evaluating literature
- justifying own research
- supporting claims with literature and evidence
- interpreting findings in relation to literature
- evaluating own research
- showing original contribution
- drawing implications



3

PGR as a researcher

- research skills
- independence in research
- ability to discuss research in depth, clearly and with confidence



4

Structure of dissertation

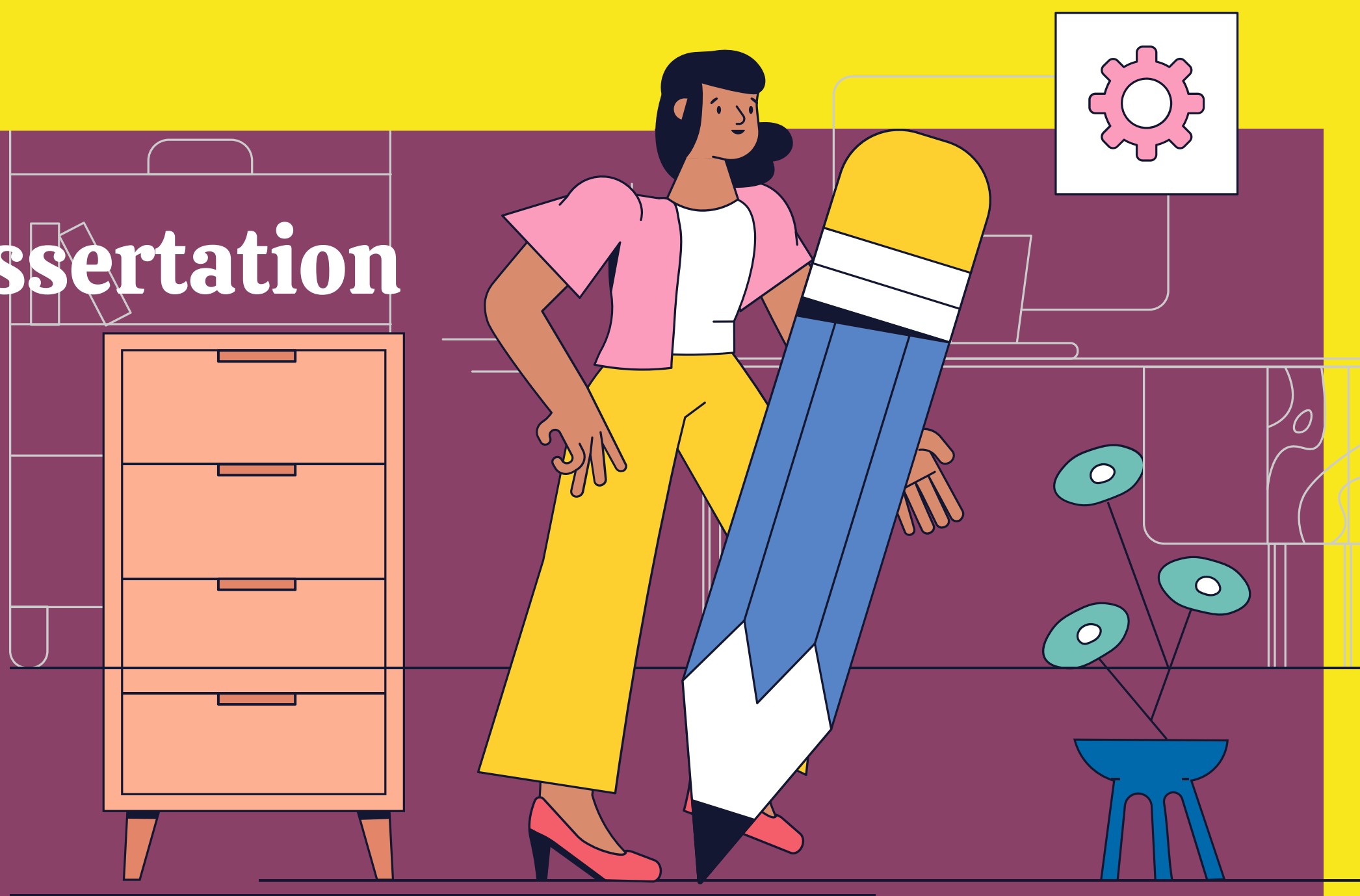
- coherence
- connections of parts
- signposting



5

Professionally looking dissertation

- accurate spelling and language
- accurate citations and references
- formal academic style
- clear visuals



References

- Chetcuti, D. et al. 2022. What do examiners look for in a PhD thesis? Explicit and implicit criteria used by examiners across disciplines. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 47(8): 1358–1373.
- Golding, C. et al. 2013. What examiners do: what thesis students should know. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 39(5): 563–576.
- Holbrook, A. et al. 2007. Examiner comment on the literature review in Ph.D. theses. *Studies in Higher Education* 32(3): 337–356.
- Mullins, G. & Kiley, M. 2002. "It's a PhD, not a Nobel Prize": How experienced examiners assess research theses. *Studies in Higher Education* 27(4): 369–386.
- Tan, W.C. 2022. Speaking the language of defence: narratives of doctoral examiners on the PhD viva. *Qualitative Research Journal* 22(4): 478–488.

