

Chapter 1 - The Science of Psychology

- **Psychology** is the scientific study of behaviour and the mind
 - Developed from Philosophy
 - Behaviour = actions and responses that we can directly observe
 - Mind = internal states and processes such as thoughts and feelings
 - These cannot be seen but inferred from observable, measurable responses
 - Psychology is more than just clinical psychology
 - Sub fields of Psychology
 - **Biopsychology or Behavioural Neuroscience** - focuses on the biological underpinnings of behaviour
 - E.g. examine brain processes, hormones influence on actions
 - **Development Psychology** - examines human physical, psychological and social development across life span and the effects of ageing on cognitive and behavioural processes
 - **Experimental Psychology** - basic processes such as learning, sensory systems, perception and motivation states.
 - **Industrial- Organisation Psychology** - examines people's behaviours in the workplace
 - **Personality Psychology** - focuses on the study of human personality - they identify core personality traits and how they influence behaviour
 - **Social Psychology** - examines people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour pertaining to the social world: the world of other people.
- **Scientific Approach**
 - **Empirical Evidence** - is evidence gained through experience and observation
 - It includes evidence obtained from manipulating variables and observing what happens
 - **Understanding Behaviour: Some pitfalls of everyday approaches**
 - Everyday approaches are usually casual and do not use a systematic approach to critically evaluate
 - Humans also take mental shortcuts when forming judgements, fail to consider alternate explanations and once beliefs are established we often fail to test them further.
 - To reduce this science uses measures such as questionnaires, brain imaging and video cameras and can have multiple people watch them
 - Science is also public, results are posted and others can criticize
 - **Thinking Critically about Behaviour**
 - Critically thinking involves taking an active role in understanding the world around you, rather than merely receiving information.
 - Also means evaluating the validity of something presented
 - **Goal of Psychology**
 - Description - Seek to describe how people behave, think, feel
 - Explanation - to understand why people act as they do - Hypotheses and theories
 - Control - designing experiments or other types of research to test their proposed explanations
 - Application - apply information to enhance human welfare.
 - **Basic and Applied Research**
 - Basic - reflects the quest of knowledge for its own sake e.g. why people behave and think the way they do
 - Applied - designed to solve specific, practical problems e.g. design interventions or cures

