

# Psychology 1A (PSY1011)

## Chapter 1: Introducing Psychology

### THE WORLD OF PSYCHOLOGY: AN OVERVIEW

**Psychology** is the science of behaviour and mental processes. It is the scientific study of mind, brain and behaviour.

There are multiple levels of analysis:

- multiple determinants
- inter-relationships
- different for each individual
- influenced by others
- cultural differences

The mind - involved in more higher order thinking

The brain - structure that allows these mental processes

Thinking (mind) is different to behaviour (brain).

### What makes Psychology fascinating?

- human behaviour is difficult to predict - all actions are multiply determined
- psychological influences are rarely independent of each other
- there are individual differences - people can surprise us by their behaviour
- reciprocal determinism - people mutually influence each other's behaviour
- cultural differences - generalisations cannot be drawn on human nature

Important questions psychologists try to answer:

- why do people behave the way they do?
- why do people behave terribly/violently towards each other (e.g. war)
- diagnosis of patients with a psychological disorder

\*difference between psychologist and psychiatrist - psychologist cannot prescribe drugs and doesn't have a medical degree

### Subfields/branches of psychology

- biological - physiological causes of behaviour, relationship between the brain and the nervous system with behaviour, also called behavioural neuroscience
- cognitive - the way people process behaviour, mental abilities like creativity, intelligence memory, thinking, special interest such as engineering psychology
- developmental - life span development, cognitive, social, intellectual, emotional growth, studies parenting techniques
- clinical - causes and treatment of mental disorders, provide wide range of psychological services for individuals with mental health conditions
- educational - theories about teaching and learning, social emotional and cognitive processes involved in learning, focuses on how students can learn and effective learning and teaching techniques
- organisational - people in the workplace, productivity, motivation, absenteeism, leadership, effective training programs, skills in areas of recruitment and selection
- others include sport psychology, music psychology (performance based)