# Apprenticeships: how to think critically

## What is critical thinking

* Critical thinking means examining ideas objectively and evaluating their merits.
* Challenging information you are given in a constructive manner (within the limits of your expected knowledge and research).
* Taking into consideration different perspectives and alternative points of view.

## Why is critical thinking important?

* The process of thinking critically allows you to breakdown, understand and synthesise information from a variety of sources, enabling you to formulate your own ideas about a topic, and present them convincingly supported by the evidence you have gathered.
* It helps you make informed judgments and create strong arguments of your own. You will be able to justify any claims you make based on evidence you have critically evaluated.
* It demonstrates that you can learn and think independently, which is central to studying at higher or degree level.

## Critical thinking involves:

* Actively presenting all sides of an argument.
* Raising questions about claims made by sources and the evidence used to support them.
* Identifying flaws in reasoning and logic.
* Assessing evidence for and against an argument or proposition.
* Identifying biasthat might affect your reasoning or that of your source.
* Presenting your own interpretation of an issue, supported by academic sources.

## Critical thinking applies across all academic work, for example:

* Your research: critical thinking asks why and how it was conducted and considers its limits.

* A journal article: critical thinking identifies key issues and explores its reasoning and accuracy.
* Survey results: critical thinking asks what they show or suggest, whilst questioning methods.
* An idea: critical thinking asks why it is important, whilst identifying its flaws or contradictions

## The language of critical thinking:

As you write your assignments, indicate that you have critically assessed the evidence

it contains by using appropriate language, for example:

* The main weakness of this argument is that…
* The text does not fully explain…
* The author does not take account of…
* This method has several limitations…
* Newer studies contradict some of the claims made by…
* The study failed to address…

Skills for Academic Success (S.A.S.) is here to support your academic development. We offer individual appointments to distance learners (in person or via Microsoft Teams) on all aspects of effective learning and study skills, including maths and stats

A qr code on a white background

Description automatically generatedScan the QR code to book appointments, view our events calendar, watch skills videos and more…