Part 1 **PSYCHOLOGY AS SCIENCE: PRINCIPLES AND METHODS**

**1 Studying psychology**

Moving away from lay psychology

* Academic psychology is a science. Because of this it tends to look very different to the popular psychology you may have come across; for example, in the media or in popular psychology literature.
* Academic psychology is a process of thinking critically about and rigorously testing ideas. There is no uncritical acceptance of popular opinions.

Beginning to use psychology literature

* It is important to begin to use proper psychological literature and to move away from tertiary sources of information and start to use primary sources.

Making the break from pre-degree study of psychology

* Your first year at university is an opportunity to start operating more like a psychologist. This means that you will need to abandon your pre-degree textbook and start making use of primary sources.
* If you studied psychology before your degree, bear in mind that undergraduate psychology is likely to involve more cognitive psychology, more biological psychology, and more practical work.
* As well as basic googling you will need to master some more specialist electronic search tools. You should also gain some proficiency in manual searching through journal stacks.
* Your writing needs to become less descriptive and more analytical.

Beginning to think more like a psychologist

* In order to study psychology you need to be able to think psychologically. This includes but is broader than core scientific thinking.
* You can begin to develop your critical thinking about psychological theory and research by internalizing our critical thinking toolkits.
* You can develop your creative thinking by practising generating predictions from theories and designing studies to test these.
* You can develop your practical thinking skills by practising applying psychology to real-life scenarios.