Module 2: Critical Thinking
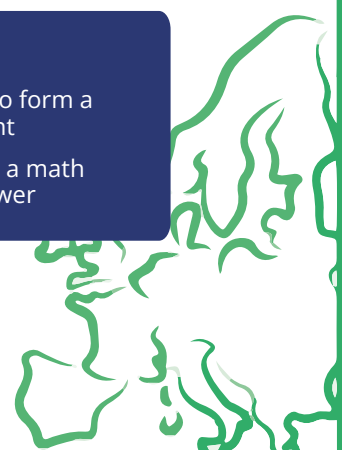
2.1 Introduction to Critical Thinking

What is Critical Thinking?

- Clear and rational thinking
- Understanding logical connections between ideas
- Active rather than reactive thinking
- Questioning and evaluating information, arguments, and ideas

Basic Terms for Understanding Critical Thinking

Analysis
Definition: Breaking down information into parts

Example: Analyzing a news article

Argument
Definition: Reasons or evidence in support of a conclusion

Example: Eating vegetables is healthy because they contain essential vitamins

Assumption
Definition: Something taken for granted without proof

Example: Assuming a restaurant is good because it's always busy

Bias
Definition: Favoring one side or perspective

Example: Preferring news from a source that aligns with your beliefs

Conclusion
Definition: Final decision or judgment after considering evidence and arguments

Example: Deciding that exercise improves mood after reading various studies

Evidence
Definition: Information or facts that help prove or disprove an argument

Example: Scientific data supporting a new medication's benefits

Fallacy
Definition: Mistake in reasoning that weakens an argument

Example: Bandwagon fallacy (assuming something is true because many people believe it)

Inference
Definition: Drawing a conclusion based on evidence and reasoning

Example: Inferring that it will rain from seeing dark clouds

Logic
Definition: Study of proper reasoning

Example: Evaluating arguments for clear and consistent paths

Opinion
Definition: Personal belief or judgment

Example: Liking a movie because it made you feel good

Premise
Definition: Statement or idea used as the basis for an argument

Example: "All humans need water to live" for arguing clean water accessibility

Reasoning
Definition: Thinking logically to form a conclusion or judgment

Example: Reasoning through a math problem to find the answer

Why Critical Thinking Matters?

Better decision-making

Effective problem-solving

Understanding complex situations

Encourages open-mindedness and different perspectives

Essential in everyday life, academics, and professional environments

Leads to informed and logical decision-making