**Critical Analysis**

**What is one?**

A critical review of a text or an article is a summary and evaluation of what YOU think of the text. To do this you need to understand and appraise the material and make a judgment on its strengths and weakness. So based on reading the article, what is your position about the subject matter? You may need to draw upon your knowledge and understanding in this field and if the situation allows read around the field to help defend your position and indeed understanding.

***Some of the following steps may help you plan your review: -***

* What is the focus of your paper or text is ie what is the hypothesis or underlying aim
* How do you feel about this hypothesis? - is it convincing? Justified? Etc
* What data or arguments have the authors presented that led you to this conclusion
* Is there sufficient proof and robustness in their methods/ arguments?
* How can you convincingly weight up the pros and cons?

Thinking about the following questions may help you address these steps

***What is the significance of the work to its field?***

* + What were the author’s aim/ hypothesis
  + To what extent has their work answered or achieved what it set out to do
  + How does this work build on the knowledge in the field or the current body of evidence?
  + Or put another way how does it relate to other work in the field?

***Methods***

* + What methods were used?
  + Were they appropriate and relevant to the aims?
    - * Prospective or retrospective
      * Qualitative or quantitative
      * Analysis or review
      * Case study or an RCT etc etc
  + How objective was the approach?
  + Was this the best study design?
  + Were there any biases?
  + Are the results valid and interpreted appropriately bearing in mind the methods and their inherent merits and flaws?
  + Could this have been done better?

***Arguments/ Use of evidence***

* Clear identified and justified problem/ statement/ hypothesis
* Is the argument consistent?
* Will the methods answer this argument or just part of it or none of it?
* How robust an argument is it? And what do the results of the study presented add to this argument?
* Can any conclusions be drawn or has the work simply raise more questions and given no answers?
* Is the evidence and data there to support these conclusions?

***Writing style***

* + Is it appropriate for the forum/ audience it is intended for?
  + Is it logical clear and well organised?
  + Could it have been portrayed better?

**How do I structure my analysis text?**

Once armed with these points you then need to think about how you pull all of this together and make sure your own analysis is structured, referenced with any direct quotes from the article, paper or text in quotations. A rough guide to this is outlined: -

*Introduction – this should be about a ¼ of the overall review*

Briefly outline what the article or paper was about

What were its aims and objectives?

What were the main findings and/or arguments?

What was your evaluation of this? – this should be your concluding statement

*Summary& critique – this should be the main substance of your review approx ½*

Balanced discussion and evaluation of the strengths and weakness – give examples

Discuss notable features and findings and why they are important and address the aim of the work and how they add to the body of literature

*Conclusion – this should be the remaining ¼ of your review*

Re-state you opinion of the text and what recommendation you’d make about this whether its further work, the experiment or study should be repeated by doing a bit differently or if this was then done it would answer this etc etc.