Summary of Evaluation issues

Strengths ☺ and Weaknesses ☹

Lab Experiments	Natural Experiment	Field Experiment
☺ High levels of control over possible extraneous variables = Cause and effect can be established. ☺ High controls also allow for replication of the study = Ability test for reliability/repeat the study. ☹ Low ecological validity = Hard to generalise to real life so less useful. ☹ High risk of demand characteristics = Lack of validity	☺ The researcher can use an IV that is naturally occurring (For example comparing the behaviour of participants with a learning disorder to those without.) = Enables you to study behaviour that would be unethical or not practical to manipulate. ☹ Because the IV is naturally occurring, participants will naturally belong to one condition or another. As such, the researcher cannot randomly allocate to conditions which may increase the risk of individual differences. = lack of validity	☺ High ecologically validity as conducted in a natural setting = can generalise behaviour to real life ☺ Due to participants usually being unaware they are taking part, behaviour of 'p' is more natural than in a laboratory experiment so reduced demand characteristics. = Increased validity. ☹ Ethical issues may arise as p don't always know they are being studied e.g. such as a lack of informed consent = can damage reputation of psychology. ☹ Due to natural environment there will be poor control of extraneous variables = lack of validity and so harder to state a cause and effect relationship.
Experimental designs	**Case studies**	**Interviews and questionnaires (self-reports)**
Independent measures ☺ No risk of Order Effects = Increased validity. ☹ High risk of Individual Differences affecting results = Lack of validity. Repeated measures ☺ No risk of Individual Differences affecting results = increased validity. ☹ High risk of Order Effects (practice/fatigue) = Lack of validity.	☺ The case study method allows psychologists to investigate unique cases of behaviour that are not available to study frequently = helps us to increase academic psychological knowledge of the factors that influence our behaviour. ☺ Another strength is that it produces in depth, detailed information about a particular person or condition = the data gathered could then be beneficial to the treatment of the individual. ☹ Case studies often have very small sample sizes, one group or one individual = have to be careful generalising from the findings. ☹ Another disadvantage is that because the case study method occurs over a long period of time, this can affect the researchers' ability to collect objective data (data that is not effected by personal opinions or judgements) = affects the validity of the data gathered.	Many issues will cross over for Questionnaires and Interviews, and there are to many to summarise below however here are a few general things to consider ☺ Use of closed questions (similar to ☺ ☹ of Quant data, reliable). ☺ Use of open questions (similar to ☺ ☹ of Qual data, unreliable) ☺ The opportunity to gain more insight and detail of the individual response = Can increase validity. ☹ Subjective interpretation = Decreased validity ☹ Risk of social desirability/evaluation apprehension = decreased validity.

Observations	Correlations
Controlled observations ☺ High control of extraneous variables due to artificial setting = Increased validity. ☹ Likely to have lower ecological validity as more artificial due to controlled nature = Cant generalise to real-life. **Naturalistic observations** ☺ High in ecological validity because they are conducted in a real-life setting observing natural behaviour = More generalizable to real life. ☹ More potential for confounding variables to effect the results due to lack of controls over the situation participants are observed in = decreased validity **Participant observations** ☺ Allows observer to gather more detailed accounts due to flexibility as observer is involved in the events they are observing = Researchers are more likely to get accurate data. ☹ Hard to remain hidden due the observer being involved in what they are observing = Potential to get spotted by P's so can lead to DC. **Non participant observations** ☺ Reduces the effect of the observer on the participants behaviour because participants are unaware of the observation taking place = Reduces potential for demand characteristics. ☹ The observer may miss vital information as they are external to participants so may not have full view of them = missed data/lack of validity **Structured Observations** ☺ Simplifies the data recording process so makes it easier to establish inter rater reliability ☹ Due to pre-determined categories other spontaneous behaviour cannot be recorded = So less valid **Unstructured Observations** ☺ Allows the researcher to note anything of interest that occurs in detail = increased validity as spontaneous behaviour can be recorded. ☹ May be observer bias (interpret the behaviour the way they think it has happened) = decreased validity	☺ Can identify **relationships** between variables without having to **manipulate behaviour. =** Can be used in situations where experimentation would otherwise be impossible or unethical to manipulate. ☺ Correlations are often used to suggest ideas for future experimental research in order to determine cause and effect relationships. (e.g. may create a hypothesis for future experiments). ☹ Cause and effect CANNOT be established, correlations can only show a relationship between variables = Need further research to establish cause and effect. ☹ Other unknown variable(s) may have caused the link between the co-variables being measured = Therefore correlations may lack in **validity.**