

Who's Immune to Bias in Psychological Reports?

The Answer: No One.

When it comes to psychological reports, bias isn't just a risk—it's a reality. The key question isn't "Is there bias?" but rather "Where is it, and how is it influencing this report?"



Common Types of Bias to Watch For:

1. Confirmation Bias:

- Focusing on information that supports initial impressions while ignoring contradictory data.

2. Cultural Bias:

- Applying assumptions based on cultural norms that may not align with the individual's background.

3. Language Bias:

- Using subjective or emotionally charged language that subtly frames interpretations.

4. Selection Bias:

- Relying on specific data points while overlooking broader context or relevant collateral information.

5. Anchoring Bias:

- Giving undue weight to the first piece of information received, which skews subsequent interpretations.

Who's Immune to Bias?

Experienced psychologists? **No!**

Judges and legal professionals? **No!**

Highly trained experts? **Still no!**

Bias is part of human cognition. It's not about eliminating it completely—it's about recognising it, mitigating its impact, and ensuring it doesn't shape conclusions unchecked.



What Lawyers Can Do:

• **Ask critical questions:**

- What data has been emphasised?
- What might be missing?

• **Look for transparency:**

- Does the report acknowledge limitations or alternative explanations?

• **Challenge assumptions:**

- Are conclusions supported by objective evidence, or do they rely on subjective interpretation?