

**Title:**                    **Epistemological Foundations Matter: POISE - Personal Orientation to an International Student Experience**

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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify the advantages for internationalised students of developing a personal profile of their epistemological beliefs (affective)
- Articulate five dimensions of epistemological beliefs that can be used to structure interactions with and between students (knowledge).
- Recommend the appropriate dimension of epistemological belief to be used to elucidate specific learning challenges (cognitive)
- Formulate an approach to establishing the beliefs of their colleagues and students for their specific context (affective)
- Document and express alternative questions or approaches that further explore the five binary dimensions under discussion (psychomotor)

### **Session Outline**

Recent attempts to explore the relationship between epistemological beliefs and metacognition and impact on learning, have explored the COPES model (Bromme, Pieschl, & Stahl, 2010). The COPES model conceptualises epistemological beliefs as 'internal conditions of learning' (Greene & Azevedo, 2007), suggesting that beliefs are part of an internal self-regulation system (Winne, 2005).

The POISE 'toolkit' revisits this idea and aims to enable each student, and each member of faculty, to 'hear their own voice' rooted in their unique cultural context. In doing so, they become aware of their own unique epistemological belief structure and therefore of the uniqueness of others' equally valid perspectives.

The notion of binaries presents an opportunity to engage in a 'dialogue about beliefs'. We suggest that it is appropriate to establish the beliefs about learning that underpin a student's (or faculty member's) approach to learning and teaching, rather than to identify a 'problem' and tackle it with an intervention in isolation (Atkinson, 2014).

Based around five dominant themes in the epistemological literature this resulted in the following matrix:

Pneumonic	Binary concept	POISE Questions	Scholarship roots
Pace	Quick or not at all	Is hard work enough?	(Schoenfeld, 1983)
Ownership	Authority or Reason	Who has the answers?	(Perry, 1968)
Innateness	Innate or Acquired	Who is responsible for my learning?	(Dweck & Leggett, 1988)
Simplicity	Simple or Complex	Is there a simple answer?	(Perry, 1968)
Exactness	Certain or Tentative	Is there always a right answer?	(Perry, 1968)

Table 1 - Five POISE Questions built on dimensions

Through an engagement with these five fundamental questions, explored in dialogue and role-play, we aim through this workshop to offer support and inspiration to those supporting the internationalisation of higher education. Particularly of interest to those providing induction and orientation to all students engaging in an international learning context, the principles of POISE apply widely across the internationalisation agenda.

### Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

Action	Time	Brief
Introduction:	5	1. Overview of Workshop and documentation as a 'take away'
Activity:	10	2. Orientation to your epistemological beliefs (in pairs - a prompted paper exercise)
	10	3. Feeding back within a small group (ideally 3 pairs)
	5	4. Discussion within each small group to establish common beliefs
Plenary:	10	5. Feedback from the whole group (whiteboard/flipchart)
Presentation:	10	6. Overview of the POISE approach (web-based audio-visual presentation)
Activity:	10	7. First role play student responses to a POISE question (in new pairs - a prompted paper activity)
Plenary:	10	8. Themes and discussion that emerge from whole group (whiteboard/flipchart)
Activity:	5	9. Scenarios prompted by student profiles - what are the POISE challenges of specific students (small group discussion)
Plenary:	10	10. Feedback from the whole group (whiteboard/flipchart)
Presentation:	5	11. Concluding comments and pointing to support resources and outlining the 'take-away' documentation.

## References

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