




Graduate Research Advanced Skills Program (GRASP)

# Research Proposal Series (Milestone 1)

## Methodology & Methods

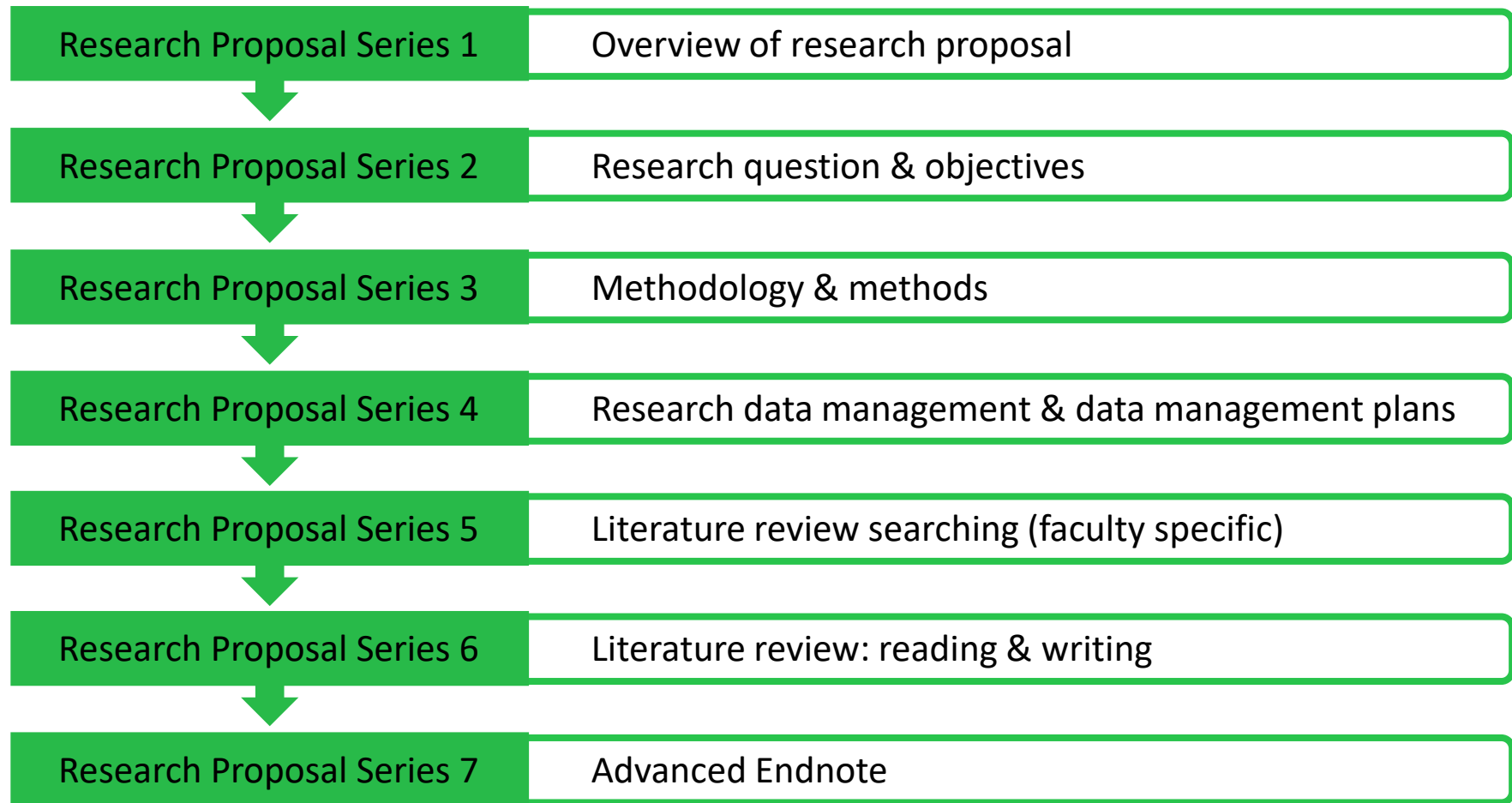
Dr Petra Dumbell, Sem 1 2023

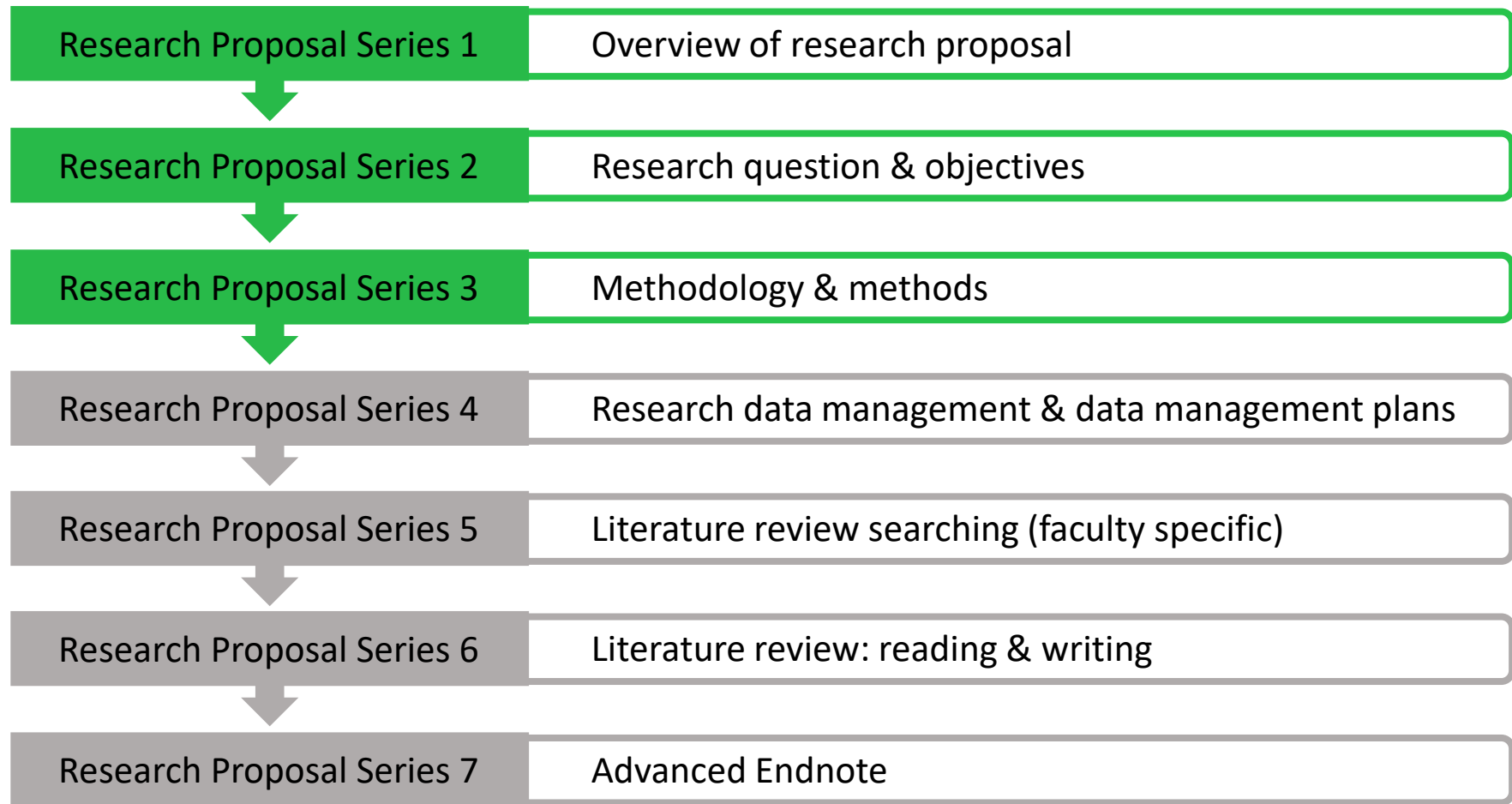


I acknowledge Whadjuk Nyungar as the Custodians of the land on which I live and work. This Country was never ceded, it always was, and always will be Aboriginal land.

I pay my respects to Whadjuk Nyungar Elders past and present. I value their ancestral and continuing caring for Country practices and thank them for looking after this Country for so long.

I appreciate Indigenous ways of communication which are inclusive and respectful, and I recognise that this Country has been a place of teaching, research and learning for tens of thousands of years.





# Why is it important to think about this?

Methods and methodologies

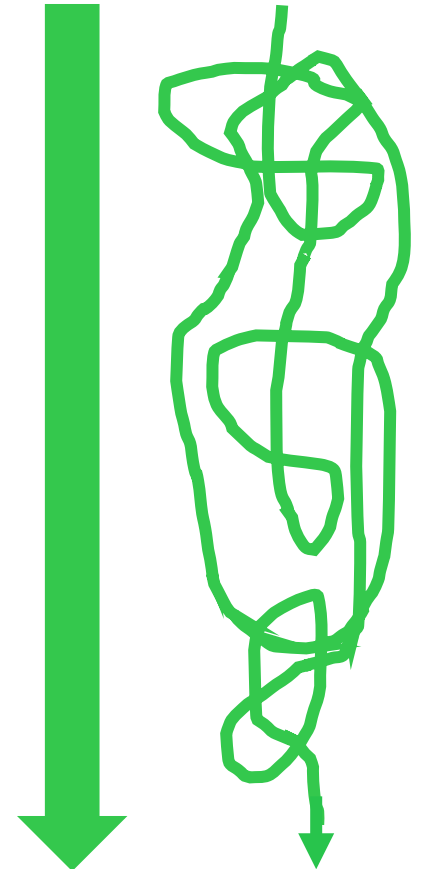
is a key stage of developing your own identity as a researcher and your writing voice.

If you are not aware of the traditions, philosophies and concepts of your field you will be unable to make a knowledge claim, to add to you field or develop a scholarly voice that belongs to you and which also builds on the voices of others.

(McDonough, 2017, p. 60).

# Main concepts

- Ontology  
*What's out there to know?*
- Epistemology  
*What and how can we know about it?*
- Methodology  
*How can we go about acquiring that knowledge?*
- Methods  
*Which precise procedures can we use to acquire it?*
- Research tools/instruments  
*How can we collect the data?*



(Daniel & Harland, 2018, p.36 – after Grix, 2002)

# Main concepts

- Ontology
  - The ology (the debate about) being*
  - The study of what is real*
  - What's out there to know?*
  - What is existence?*

# Main concepts

- Epistemology

*The ology (the debate about) knowledge*

*What is worth knowing?*

*How do we know if something is true or false?*

*What can we know and how can we know?*

*Knowing, not believing!*

Empiricist - *We can only arrive at knowledge through sensory experience.*

Rationalist - *Reason and rationality provide the basis for all knowledge.*

Postmodern - *Truth and knowledge are relative, fluid, ambiguous...*

Indigenous - *Truth and knowledge are validated apart from colonial systems*



# Main concepts

- Methodology
  - Quantitative: study based on primarily numerical data
  - Qualitative: study based on primarily non-numerical data, words, images, stories, etc.
  - Mixed methods: Both methods combined
- Methods
  - Interviewing, surveying, observation
  - Statistical analysis, thematic analysis (coding)
- Research tools/instruments
  - Questionnaires, equipment for experiments

# Pause and reflect

## What's your research philosophy?

- *My research philosophy is...*
- *As a researcher, I think I am independent of the phenomena I study, because...*
- *I think knowledge is constructed/incremental/stable/unstable/unreliable...*
- *Knowledge in my area is (re)presented by/through...*
- *Reality is..., Knowledge is...*
  - *accessible*
  - *Inaccessible*
  - *discovered*
  - *constructed*
  - *illusory*
  - *depends on...*

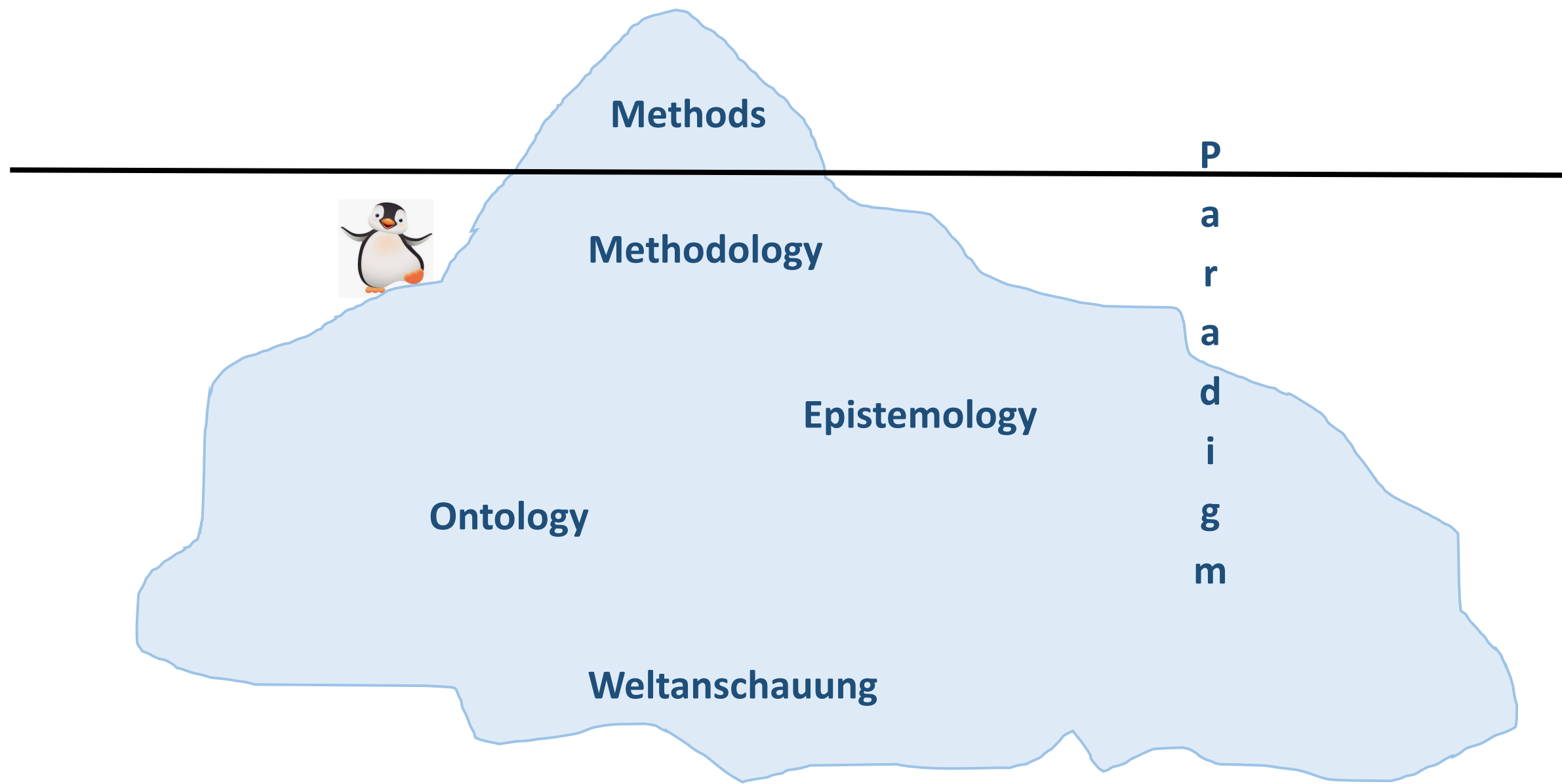
# Why is all this a bit ... *difficult*?

“...all research, including pure science, starts with underlying assumptions about a phenomenon that depend on ontology and epistemology, even when these are inaccessible to the human mind.”

However,

“...knowing about something and then working out how one knows about something is difficult...because they are experienced as one and the same thing...so trying to separate ontology and epistemology invariably brings any analysis to a stop.”

(Daniel & Harland, 2018, p.32)



James, D. (2016): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ\\_Kw&t=1806s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ_Kw&t=1806s)

## Some advice

- ✓ Candidacy proposal document: requires section called 'Methods', consider having two sections: 'Methodology' and 'Methods'.
- ✓ Awareness of usefulness & limitations of your methodology  
>> you are demonstrating critical thinking.
- ✓ Testing limits of research methodology/methods  
>> original and significant contribution to knowledge

# What to do next

- ✓ Watch James 2015 talk

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ\\_Kw&t=1806s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ_Kw&t=1806s)

- ✓ Explore Sage research methods

<https://methods.sagepub.com/>

- ✓ Explore Library's GRASP Research Methods Series

<https://researchtoolkit.library.curtin.edu.au/grasp/research-methods/>

# What you should do now...

GRASP webpage

<https://researchtoolkit.library.curtin.edu.au/grasp/about-grasp/>

Questions

[LibraryResearchSupport@curtin.edu.au](mailto:LibraryResearchSupport@curtin.edu.au)

Feedback/Networking

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1t7roPInys2xK\\_0zY69ivY9s09ZNs2iY\\_byLVdCSKD7M/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1t7roPInys2xK_0zY69ivY9s09ZNs2iY_byLVdCSKD7M/edit?usp=sharing)

# References/Resources

Ben Kei, D. & Harland, T. (2018). *Higher education research methodology: a step-by-step- guide to the research process*. London: Taylor & Francis.

[Link to Curtin Library catalogue record](#)

James, D. (2015). “How to get clear about method, methodology, epistemology and ontology, once and for all.” Talk given at Cardiff City Hall, January 19, 2015. Accessed 11 March, 2021.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ\\_Kw&t=1806s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b83ZfBoQ_Kw&t=1806s)

O’Leary. (2010). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. London: Sage.

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McDonough, S.(2017).Playing, moving and shifting. In: Postgraduate Study in Australia. Edited by McMast Murphy, Whitburn & Mewburn.

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