

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION SUMMARY

# The Flourishing Profile

POISE Framework | Psychometric Design & Scoring Architecture

## 1. Purpose & Theoretical Foundation

### 1.1 What the Instrument Measures

The Flourishing Profile is a targeted psychometric assessment designed to measure an individual's current psychological capacity to engage fully with their life and work. It is specifically designed for use in organisational transition contexts — international mobility, onboarding, and coaching for engagement and wellness.

The instrument measures two things in combination:

- Need Intensity — the strength of each core psychological need as a motivational driver for this individual
- Need Fulfilment — the degree to which each need is currently being met

The gap between these — weighted by need intensity — produces an Incongruence Score per dimension. This is the primary diagnostic signal of the instrument.

### 1.2 Theoretical Basis

The Flourishing Profile is grounded in a convergence of validated psychological needs frameworks. Across multiple independent theoretical traditions — including Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan), Attachment Theory (Bowlby), Cognitive-Experiential Self Theory (Epstein), McClelland's Needs Theory, and neuropsychotherapy research (Grawe) — a consistent set of five fundamental psychological needs emerges whose chronic non-fulfilment is associated with psychological distress, reduced functioning, and ill-health.

The strength of the POISE framework lies precisely in this convergence: the five dimensions are not derived from a single theoretical source but reflect needs that appear consistently across independent bodies of research. This multi-framework grounding provides a more robust evidential foundation than any single theoretical model alone.

### 1.3 The POISE Framework

	Dimension	Core Psychological Need	Theoretical Reference
<b>P</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	Direction, meaning, and the need to understand one's role in a larger context	<i>SDT (Deci &amp; Ryan) — Autonomy &amp; Competence; Epstein — Need for Meaning</i>
<b>O</b>	<b>Others</b>	Connection, belonging, and the need for supportive, caring relationships	<i>Bowlby — Attachment; SDT (Deci &amp; Ryan) — Relatedness</i>
<b>I</b>	<b>Identity</b>	Self-worth, recognition, and the need to feel valued for who one is	<i>McClelland — Need for Achievement; Epstein — Self-esteem maintenance</i>
<b>S</b>	<b>Safety</b>	Agency, autonomy, and the need to feel able to shape one's own situation	<i>SDT (Deci &amp; Ryan) — Autonomy; Rotter — Locus of Control</i>
<b>E</b>	<b>Energy</b>	Positive engagement, vitality, and the need to feel alive and enthusiastic about life	<i>SDT (Deci &amp; Ryan) — Intrinsic Motivation; McClelland — Need for Affiliation</i>

### 1.4 Three-Level Architecture

Each POISE dimension is measured at three levels of personality functioning — providing psychometric depth while keeping output simple for end users.

Level	Description & Role in Scoring
<b>Wired</b>	Fixed neurological traits and primal instinctive drives. Contributes to Need Intensity Score — reflects the depth of biological and instinctive drive toward the need.
<b>Felt</b>	The felt emotional experience of need fulfilment or frustration. Primary diagnostic level — contributes to both Intensity and Fulfilment Scores. Houses all 15 Need Fulfilment items anchored to current state.
<b>Conscious</b>	Cognitive engagement with and valuation of the need, and contextual adaptation. Contributes to Need Intensity Score. The most plastic and coachable layer.

## 2. Psychometric Design

### 2.1 Item Sources

All items are drawn from open-source, peer-reviewed psychometric instruments with established reliability and validity evidence. No proprietary items are used.

Source	Instrument
IPIP	International Personality Item Pool (Goldberg, 1999)
TIPI	Ten Item Personality Inventory (Gosling et al., 2003)
BIS/BAS	Behavioural Inhibition/Activation Scales (Carver & White, 1994)
HSP	Highly Sensitive Person Scale (Aron & Aron, 1997)
LOC	Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966)
MLQ	Meaning in Life Questionnaire (Steger et al., 2006)
PANAS	Positive & Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988)
UWES	Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003)

### 2.2 Item Design Rationale

#### Intensity vs Fulfilment Items

A critical design decision was the explicit separation of need intensity (how much does this matter to this person) from need fulfilment (how well is it currently being met). Many needs-based instruments conflate these, producing scores that cannot distinguish between a need that is unimportant and adequately met versus a need that is critically important and severely frustrated.

Fifteen new Need Fulfilment items were developed specifically for The Flourishing Profile, one set of three per POISE dimension, all anchored explicitly to current state. These sit at the Felt level — the most proximate level to the lived experience of need satisfaction.

#### Response Scale

A uniform 5-point Likert scale is used throughout, with three distinct anchor sets that shift visibly across item types — signalling to respondents that different aspects of experience are being assessed. Anchors are:

- Intensity items: 'Not important to me at all' → 'Absolutely central to who I am'
- Fulfilment items: 'Not at all true for me right now' → 'Completely true for me right now'
- Amplifier/Buffer items: 'Does not describe me at all' → 'Describes me perfectly'

The neutral midpoint (3) is retained. A 5-point scale is preferred for this population over forced-choice formats given the wellbeing-adjacent nature of the content.

### 2.3 Amplifier & Buffer Layer

In addition to the five POISE need dimensions, The Flourishing Profile includes a second measurement layer assessing personality traits that moderate how acutely an individual experiences need incongruence. These are drawn from across all three levels of the personality architecture — Wired, Felt, and Conscious.

#### Amplifier Traits

Traits that intensify the felt experience of need incongruence. Individuals scoring high on amplifier traits are likely to experience unmet needs more acutely and visibly.

- Sensitivity (Wired)
- Behavioural Inhibition / BIS (Wired)
- Emotionality (Felt)
- Introversion (Conscious)

#### Buffer Traits

Traits that attenuate the experience of need incongruence. Buffers are further sub-classified by an Awareness sub-score that distinguishes genuine resilience from adaptive suppression — the latter representing a hidden risk profile of particular relevance in mobility contexts.

- Optimism (Conscious)
- Adaptability (Conscious)
- Self-Concept Stability (Conscious)
- Awareness (Conscious) — key differentiator

*The distinction between genuine resilience and adaptive suppression is a design feature with particular clinical and organisational significance. An individual scoring high on adaptability but low on self-awareness may present as coping well while experiencing significant unaddressed psychological strain — a pattern associated with delayed performance deterioration and burnout in high-demand transition environments.*

### 3. Scoring Architecture, Output & Appropriate Use

#### 3.1 Scoring Cascade

##### Step 1 — Item Level

All items scored 1–5. Reverse-scored items corrected using the formula: Corrected Score = 6 – Raw Score. Higher scores are consistently directional throughout (more of the construct).

##### Step 2 — Dimension Level

- Intensity Score = mean of all intensity items for the dimension
- Fulfilment Score = mean of all fulfilment items for the dimension

$$\text{Incongruence Score} = (\text{Intensity} - \text{Fulfilment}) \times \text{Intensity}$$

This weighted formula ensures that a gap in a highly valued need scores significantly higher than an equivalent gap in a need of lesser personal importance — reflecting the actual felt experience of psychological incongruence more accurately than simple gap scoring.

Theoretical range: –4 to +20 per dimension. Negative scores indicate fulfilment exceeding need — noted in narrative as a positive signal. Near-zero scores indicate alignment regardless of need intensity level.

#### 3.2 Banding & Flags

##### Dimension Banding

Band	Score	Descriptor
Balanced	< 4	No significant incongruence
Under Pressure	4 – 8	Moderate incongruence
Significant Strain	9 – 14	High incongruence / Red Flag
Critical	15+	Urgent — primary coaching focus

##### Additional Flags

- Red Flag — any dimension scoring 9 or above
- High Intensity Flag — Intensity Score ≥ 4.5 regardless of incongruence score (signals a need central to identity that is vulnerable to transition disruption)

##### Threshold Note

Current thresholds are informed by theoretical reasoning and scale properties, and are designed to be sensitive to response compression in occupational populations. The High Intensity Flag is specifically designed to capture risk that narrow score distributions might otherwise obscure. Like any well-designed instrument, The Flourishing Profile improves with use — thresholds and norms will be refined continuously as real-world data accumulates across populations and contexts.

#### 3.3 Overall Flourishing Indicator

The instrument deliberately avoids reducing output to a single composite score, which would mask the qualitative differences between score profiles. Instead the Overall Flourishing Indicator is a two-component index:

Component	Definition	Interpretive Significance
Breadth	Number of dimensions scoring 4 or above (range 0–5)	Indicates how widespread psychological disruption is across the need profile. High breadth with moderate depth = generalised strain. Low breadth with high depth = targeted acute need.
Depth	Number of dimensions scoring 9 or above — Red Flags (range 0–5)	Indicates severity of disruption. A single high-depth score may be more clinically significant than multiple moderate scores. Depth drives report narrative urgency.

#### 3.4 Refinement & Improvement

The Flourishing Profile is designed to improve continuously with use. Score distributions, threshold calibration, and narrative accuracy are refined as real-world data accumulates across diverse populations and transition contexts. This is a living tool — it gets sharper the more it is used. Organisations using the instrument at scale will benefit from population-specific norm development over time. A full technical manual documenting psychometric properties and practitioner guidance will be made available to licensed users.

### 3.5 Appropriate Use

<b>Recommended Contexts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• International mobility and expatriate transition</li><li>• Organisational onboarding — individual and cohort level</li><li>• Executive and performance coaching</li><li>• Occupational wellness screening by qualified practitioners</li></ul>	<b>Qualified Users</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chartered or registered psychologists</li><li>• ICF PCC-level and above coaches with psychometrics training</li><li>• Occupational and organisational development professionals with assessment competency</li></ul>
<b>Limitations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not designed for clinical diagnosis or mental health screening</li><li>• Adult working population only</li><li>• Self-report instrument — subject to standard response bias limitations</li><li>• Results should be interpreted alongside contextual information and professional judgement</li></ul>	<b>Copyright &amp; IP</b> <p>The POISE framework, instrument design, scoring architecture, and report format are the intellectual property of Jenny Watson. All items are drawn from open-source instruments. The Flourishing Profile name and associated materials are protected.</p>

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*The Flourishing Profile | Technical Specification Summary | v1.0 | February 2026 | Jenny Watson  
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