

# The Role of Evidence in an Accuracy-centered Epistemology for Credences

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I advocate an accuracy-centered epistemology for credences. According to this view, the chief epistemic virtue is the holding of beliefs that accurately reflect the world's state, and the fundamental epistemic duty is to rationally pursue credal accuracy. This talk will explain the role of norms of evidence within the accuracy-based approach. It will make it clear why the rational pursuit of accuracy never requires us to invest more confidence in any proposition than our evidence warrants, and why honoring our duty to hold justified beliefs never forces us abandon the rational pursuit of accuracy. The core "bridge-principle" linking accuracy and evidence is this: A body of evidence provides more justification for one credal state than for another just when it requires a believer to fix a higher estimated accuracy for the first state than for the second. After explaining what this core principle means, I will show how it applies to some specific issues of epistemological interest, including questions about justification, probabilistic coherence, epistemic expertise, and inferences based on data about objective chance. On the picture that emerges, there will be many coherent ways of valuing doxastic accuracy, each of which is reflected in an inaccuracy score that incorporates distinctive epistemic values and evidential norms. These scores can be used to provide a kind of consistency test for systems of epistemic principles: a system is consistent just when it can be portrayed as furthering credal accuracy, relative to some score. Time permitting, I will consider a fascinating new objection to this approach, due to Michael Caie, which aims to show that "considerations of accuracy support the claim that an agent may rationally fail to have probabilistically coherent credences." I will argue that Caie's objection is based on a subtle, understandable and instructive misuse of the accuracy-centered framework.