

ANZSOG

EXECUTIVE
MASTER
OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

Academic Program Review 2021

PART TWO:
STRATEGIC
ALIGNMENT



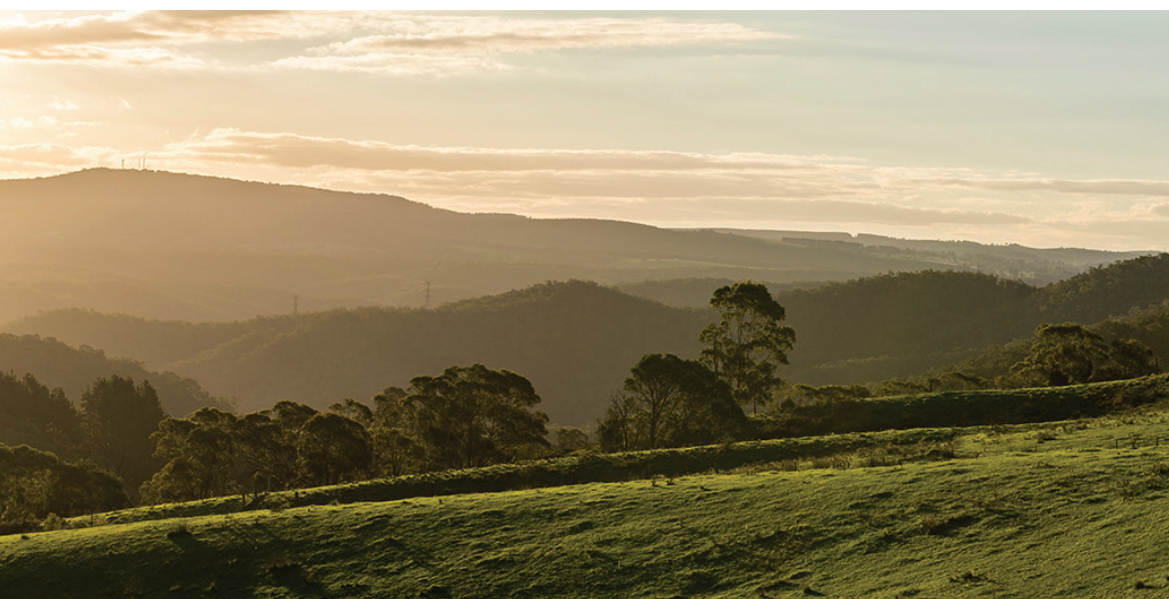
Australia &
New Zealand
School of
Government

PART TWO: STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The EMPA's Contribution to Strengthening Public Sector Leadership and Delivering Value for Stakeholders

ANZSOG works for our government owners and with our partner universities to lift the quality of public sector leadership across Australia and New Zealand. Our work inspires and connects people across agencies, sectors, jurisdictions and nations.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Peoples of Australia, and Māori as tangata whenua and Treaty of Waitangi partners in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Cover: Libby Stratford
EMPA Class of 2020
Chief Financial Officer
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Panel Members, Terms of Reference and ANZSOG Secretariat	04
Executive Summary	05
Value for Students and Alumni	05
Value for Agencies	06
Value for Universities	07
Introduction	08
Strategic Positioning of the EMPA within Public Sector Leadership Programs	08
The EMPA Student Cohort	08
Value for Students and Alumni	12
Key Benefits for EMPA Students	12
Key Benefits for EMPA Alumni	14
Leadership Skills	15
Professional Development and Career Impact	16
Value for Agencies	19
Program Alignment with Contemporary Public Sector Needs and Challenges	19
Gauging Program Impact on Agency Performance	20
Nurturing Leadership Potential, Broadening Organisational Perspectives	20
'Value for Money' Considerations	21
Enhancing Value for Agencies	22
Value for Universities	23
Reputational Gain, Revenue, Administrative Benefits and Perceived Burdens	23
Quality Assurance	24
Diverse Perspectives on Value	25
Strengthening Collaborations with Partner Universities	25
Conclusion	27
APPENDIX A: Value for Students and Alumni	28
Enhanced Conceptual Understandings Applicable to Practice	28
Awareness of Public Purpose and Public Value	30

PANEL MEMBERS, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND ANZSOG SECRETARIAT

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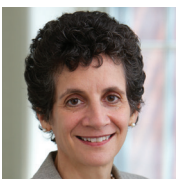
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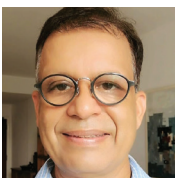
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Terms of Reference

In reviewing the EMPA, the Panel was guided by the following Terms of Reference:

1. **Program Quality** –
Academic quality of the EMPA and academic standards attained by graduates.
2. **Strategic Alignment and Value** –
Strategic positioning and contribution of the EMPA to ANZSOG's mission of strengthening the quality of public sector leadership in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes consideration of outcomes and value for owner governments, partner universities and students.
3. **Sustainability** –
Sustainability of the EMPA program and possible future strategic directions. This includes consideration of the future focus, delivery, governance and business model of the program.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Part Two of the Report responds to the APR's Second Term of Reference: Strategic Alignment and Value. It is an analysis of the EMPA's strategic positioning and the value it delivers for owner governments, partner universities and students. It outlines the distinctive value proposition of the EMPA, highlighting the unique features of the program itself and the students who undertake it. Part Two also provides an overview of the EMPA student cohort, assessing enrolment patterns, student numbers, and diversity and inclusion considerations, such as gender equity and representation of students from smaller jurisdictions. First Peoples enrolment rates are also discussed and analysed in this section of the Report. The distinguishing characteristics of the cohort, such as average age and years of public sector experience are highlighted and explicated. Part Two is divided into three sub-sections, which correspond with ANZSOG's most important stakeholders: students and alumni; government agencies; and partner universities.

Value for Students and Alumni

'There are no comparable programmes out there for public servants.'

- EMPA student

The research and analysis conducted for the APR demonstrate that the EMPA has a strong record of delivering a range of benefits to students. The Review Panel has determined that one of the primary benefits is the opportunity to learn from and form meaningful, lasting professional networks with peers in public sector agencies from across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. After analysing and discussing the student and alumni survey data, the Review Panel has concluded that students also benefit from being exposed to a range of distinctive and important theories, concepts and perspectives on public administration and applying them to contemporary issues and practice. This helps students to hone their critical thinking skills and deepen their understanding of how to shape and influence the central functions of and the public value delivered by their agencies. The EMPA also encourages students to reflect on the value of public service, reaffirming their ethical and professional commitment to their work. The Review Panel has also seen substantial evidence demonstrating that the EMPA develops students' leadership skills and gives them the confidence to lead in a complex and dynamic environment. Many students and alumni stated that the EMPA is having or has already had a positive impact in this regard. The Review Panel has also found that the EMPA positively affects the career trajectories of students, helping them to achieve their professional goals.



Value for Agencies

'It provides a significant opportunity for talented, emerging leaders to pursue professional goals, career opportunities and add value to their existing work.'

- Agency representative

After analysing the available survey and interview data, the Review Panel found that the EMPA is a program that is valued by government agencies across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The program delivers whole-of-government benefits via specialised and academically rigorous training in public administration for emerging public sector leaders. The EMPA's content is aligned with the contemporary public administration challenges faced by emerging public-sector leaders. Agency representatives reported that the EMPA equips graduates with the skills and capabilities needed for effective leadership in the modern public sector. They also reported that the EMPA broadens their organisational understandings of public purpose and public value. Due to data and time limitations, it was difficult to gauge the EMPA's specific impact on agency performance.

In the context of broader public sector learning and development (L&D) offerings, the EMPA is considered expensive. Some agencies (particularly in small jurisdictions) are restricted in their capacity to offer this development opportunity to staff at a significant scale. The Review Panel encourages ANZSOG to further explore ways of highlighting the achievements of students and alumni and the value they generate for agencies. The Review Panel recommends that ANZSOG increase communication with agencies to enhance awareness of the value of the EMPA. This may require developing relationships with key people at the right level of seniority (i.e. managers responsible for nominating and sponsoring staff) and across a more diverse range of public sector organisations. As the analysis in this Review Report demonstrates, the EMPA is much more than a generic leadership program; it broadens students' understandings of the key functions of government and how to lead in an ethical, evidence-informed, and impactful way within established structures.

One option for enhancing value for agencies is to increase agency involvement in the teaching of the EMPA. For example, agency representatives could be invited to showcase recent policy innovations and to facilitate learning in place, examining the most pressing policy considerations of specific jurisdictions. Additionally, expanding ANZSOG's work beyond the EMPA – such as in an additional post-graduate program for early career public servants – may be an effective strategy for enhancing value for public sector agencies and owner governments, particularly for those in smaller jurisdictions.



Value for Universities

'The EMPA is the jewel in the ANZSOG crown.'

- University representative

The Review Panel heard of several ways in which ANZSOG's partner universities benefit from their involvement in the EMPA. The program provides opportunities for universities to showcase the skills and knowledge of their senior academics. Multiple cohorts of EMPA students are taught by academics from partner universities. This occurs in core EMPA subjects and electives units that EMPA students select from the complementary master-level subjects offered at partner universities. These academic interactions can enhance the reputations of partner universities in the eyes of agency representatives from across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The Review Panel heard that engagement between partner university academics and EMPA students can create enduring professional connections, strengthening the ties between universities and government agencies. Such collaborations sometimes coalesce into formalised research collaborations, and they also manifest as informal professional networks. Additionally, many partner universities acknowledge the value of having experienced public sector practitioners studying in their institutions. They report that EMPA students can heighten the calibre of classroom discussion and make connections to contemporary examples of public administration practice.

Nevertheless, there remains some debate over the monetary value generated by EMPA student enrolments in university electives. Universities weigh this financial benefit against the perceived administrative burden associated with supporting student enrolments, progression and graduation. While partner universities receive a secure and reliable source of additional income from EMPA students who enrol in electives, some partners have expressed disappointment that this is limited to three subjects and are interested in maximising income and value by having more students undertake more subjects at their institution.

While partner universities see the ANZSOG relationship as a collaborative one and are keen to expand and grow opportunities of mutual benefit, the Review Panel feels more could be done to raise awareness about its actual and potential value for all parties. This may include regular and targeted communication with relevant Schools and academics who have an interest in public administration and the work of ANZSOG. Actions could include publicising ANZSOG events and research programs, and the sharing of teaching innovations and resources (e.g. ANZSOG's John L. Alford Case Library). There may also be value in highlighting the work of high achieving students enrolled at specific partner institutions. ANZSOG should also collaborate with specific universities to address administrative issues and concerns. For example, annual institution-specific orientation sessions for EMPA students could increase awareness of the available university support services and specific administrative arrangements at each university.

The Review Panel also believes that new and distinctive joint initiatives should be considered. These could include institution-specific collaborations directed at supporting the EMPA and expanding enrolments (e.g. the EMPA Monash Pathway program). For example, Charles Darwin University and Griffith University have suggested initiatives to grow the enrolment of Indigenous students into the EMPA. Additionally, partner universities are highly supportive of the proposal to increase the focus of the EMPA on Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori perspectives and thus where appropriate, ANZSOG should draw on the relevant pools of First Peoples policy expertise in partner universities to achieve this goal.

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Report summarises the analysis and findings made by the Review Panel in relation to the strategic alignment of the EMPA (Second Term of Reference). It assesses the extent to which the program enhances public leadership thereby delivering value for students, owner governments, partner universities and the wider community. The analysis starts with a brief overview of where the EMPA sits within the broader context of public sector leadership programs in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand before providing an overview of the EMPA student cohort. Understanding the unique features that characterise the EMPA cohort is helpful in contextualising the subsequent discussion on the value the program delivers for students, government agencies and universities.

Strategic Positioning of the EMPA within Public Sector Leadership Programs

A key finding of the Review Panel, which is central to the question of the strategic alignment and value of the EMPA, is the program's distinctive and important role in the broader public administration and leadership training systems of Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Specifically, there are significant contributions the EMPA makes to public sector leadership training which are not available through alternative programs or providers and these are central to the value proposition of the EMPA program. These distinctive elements include:

- › The EMPA, along with a small (and diminishing) number of university-based MPA programs, provides emerging public sector leaders with an important grounding in the normative and conceptual foundations of public administration. The program applies contemporary theory to a core range of disciplinary topics that are central to the effective practice of public sector leadership and management. As noted in Part One of the Review Report, this focus on the distinctive nature of public leadership is largely absent from business administration/management degrees and shorter, skills-based training programs.
- › The EMPA is unique in that the cohort is drawn from emerging public sector leaders selected because of their record of achievement and service, seniority, as well as demonstrated leadership potential. This allows the EMPA to focus on a cohort likely to make the greatest contribution to future public sector leadership capability and thus ensures value for the sector and constituent agencies based on the investment in each individual student.
- › The fact that the EMPA student cohort is drawn from a range of jurisdictions and agencies from across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand delivers additional value by enabling cross-jurisdictional learning and facilitating the development of valuable professional networks that support students during and beyond their program of study.

The EMPA Student Cohort

This section provides an overview of characteristics that define the EMPA student cohort. Each year approximately 100 students are enrolled into the program. The table below shows total annual enrolments since 2013 which over this period has ranged between 89 and 111 students.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Student numbers	99	89	100	111	97	101	111	95	102

The gender breakdown of the EMPA student cohort has been consistently around 60% female and 40% male (although female representation increased to 71% in 2021; see table below). This is consistent with the gender distribution of roles across the broader Australian and New Zealand public services¹. However, with regard to *leadership* positions (the focus of the EMPA), the most recent ABS data on Gender Indicators² reports that women occupy around 50% of senior and middle manager roles in the Australian public sector and the most recent New Zealand³ data reports that 53% of positions in the top three tiers of the New Zealand Public Service are occupied by women.

Gender	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Female	59%	55%	57%	59%	55%	69%	55%	60%	71%
Male	41%	45%	43%	41%	45%	31%	45%	40%	29%

The age of ANZSOG's EMPA students ranges from late 20s to mid to late 50s. Across the cohorts from 2013-21, the average age of students is 42 years. This suggests that EMPA students are both experienced and mature.

Age	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Range (years)	27 - 58	29 - 53	29 - 58	27 - 58	29 - 57	27 - 56	26 - 56	30 - 56	30 - 60
Average (years)	42	41	43	44	41	41	42	42	43

The targeting of mid-career officials means that the average length of years in the public service is relatively high, ranging from 14 to 16 years (though the range is broader, stretching from 5 to more than 30 years). Given this general demographic profile it is inevitable that many students also have caring, schooling and family responsibilities while undertaking the EMPA. It was not surprising, therefore, that responses to the student survey for this review revealed that competing priorities across work and personal domains were particularly difficult to manage since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with most students working and studying from home.

Years in Public Service	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Range (years)	5 to 35	5 to 30	5 to 31	5 to 33	5 to 30	5 to 32	5 to 32	5 to 31	5 to 34
Average (years)	13	14	14	15	14	12	14	14	16

A high proportion of students begin the EMPA having already completed postgraduate studies. For example, of the 95 students in the 2020 EMPA cohort, 19 had already completed a master's degree and 5 had completed a doctoral degree. Thus, 25% of the student cohort had already completed an equivalent or higher form of postgraduate study, a ratio which has been relatively consistent over the past 5 years (peaking at 33% in 2019). Survey data suggest that the EMPA also attracts specialist and expert practitioners who have moved into more senior leadership roles which require the skills and core competencies developed by the learning and curriculum of the EMPA.

1 See Diversity and inclusion | Australian Public Service Commission (apsc.gov.au) and Gender representation in the Public Service | Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission.

2 Gender Indicators, Australia, 2020 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au).

3 Gender representation in the Public Service | Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission.

A range of government agencies from national, state and territory governments sponsor staff to undertake the EMPA. A few students work in local government or in the non-government sector. The cohort is dominated (both in absolute and per capita terms) by students from the larger jurisdictions, specifically the Australian, the New South Wales, and the Victorian Governments. Over recent years students from these three jurisdictions have collectively represented between 65% and 80% of the total cohort. Only a small proportion of EMPA students identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and/or Māori. Since 2016, students identifying as First Peoples have accounted for between three to six percent of total enrolments in the EMPA.

The following two tables disaggregate the Indigenous student data into Māori and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments.

EMPA students from Aotearoa New Zealand identifying as Māori:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Māori enrolments	1	1	2	2	2	2
Total NZ enrolments	11	5	2	7	6	9
Māori students as % of total NZ students	9.1%	20.0%	100.0%	28.6%	33.3%	22.2%

NB: Māori population of Aotearoa New Zealand = approx. 17%

EMPA students from Australia identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
ACT	0	1	0	0	0	0
NSW	0	1	1	2	0	1
QLD	0	0	0	2	0	0
VIC	1	1	1	1	1	2
SA	0	0	0	0	0	1
WA	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments	2	3	2	5	1	4
Total Australian enrolments	100	92	96	105	93	93
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as a % of total Australian enrolments	2.0%	3.3%	2.1%	4.8%	1.1%	4.3%

NB: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Australia = approx. 3%

In general, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are underrepresented in the EMPA on a per capita basis. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people constitute approximately 3% of the Australian population, but have only made up more than 3% of the Australian EMPA student cohort in three of the past six years. Māori students also have low levels of representation, partly attributed to the small number of total student enrolments from Aotearoa New Zealand. Nevertheless, Māori representation in the program may be considered strong on a per capita basis given Māori constitute approximately 17% of the population of Aotearoa New Zealand. Despite the proportional analysis of First Peoples' representation in the annual student cohort, it would be an appropriate aspiration for all member governments to see the sponsorship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori students increase in real numbers.

The levels of Indigenous enrolment in the EMPA reflect the demographic characteristics of the middle and senior tiers of public sector agencies in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 3.5% of the Australian Public Service, they are concentrated in the lower employment grades and tend to be less experienced than non-Indigenous public servants⁴. These issues of equity and inclusion and their impact on the EMPA's sustainability are discussed in more detail in Part Three of the Report.

In summary, the EMPA student body is not typical of postgraduate cohorts studying master's degrees. EMPA students are, on average, older and have significantly more professional experience than the average student cohort of postgraduate programs⁵. A significant proportion of students hold postgraduate qualifications, and all students are in full-time public sector employment across a range of Australian and New Zealand agencies. Students are predominantly drawn from the east coast of Australia and there is limited representation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and Māori within the cohort. As ANZSOG's partner universities have observed, the EMPA student cohort is relatively homogenous. This general profile of the student cohort is presented here to aid understanding and analysis of the value of the program for students, their agencies and their enrolling universities. The next section explores value for students and draws on information provided by both alumni and current students.



4 APS Employment Database (2021) 'APS employees by Indigenous status and agency size'
<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/aps.employment.databse/viz/APSEDii-IndigenousStatusbyAgencySize/Indigenous>

5 *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported in 2015 that the average age of postgraduate students in Australia is 32 years: Are you a typical postgraduate student? (smh.com.au).

VALUE FOR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Students benefit in the first instance from completion of the EMPA. Sponsoring agencies and the broader public sector benefit from enhanced staff capability and performance and their heightened capacity to provide leadership of people and organisational resources. To obtain deeper insights into perceptions of value, the Review Panel asked current students and alumni: What is the greatest benefit gained from completing the EMPA? The word cloud below is a visual representation of the thematic categories that were developed from an analysis of student responses to this question. The size of the words corresponds to the frequency at which students mentioned these broad categories of benefits.

Key Benefits for EMPA Students



As this word cloud illustrates, the most common responses referred to the acquisition of new knowledge. Survey responses linked the acquisition of new knowledge to a deeper theoretical understanding of public administration and students' role in the process. One student noted that the greatest benefit that the program had afforded them was a:

'Much deeper understanding of what it means to be a public servant and the processes and responsibilities that come with it.'

Several students linked new knowledge with the development of new skills, tools or capabilities, with one student noting that the EMPA *'...has already begun to expand the range of tools at my disposal to develop and deliver policies – this will only improve over time.'*



The closely related categories of networking and interjurisdictional learning were frequently cited benefits of the EMPA. For example, one student highlighted that:

'It's been wonderful to work with such a diverse cohort; as a member of the NZ cohort I've also found this invaluable in helping me to connect with peers.'

The value of learning from peers was also seen as particularly beneficial, '*...broadening my skills and exposing me to other jurisdictions and their way of working*'. The importance of networking and building long-term relationships with peers across the public sector is discussed in Part One of this report (as is the obstacle posed to networking by online delivery).

Building confidence was another benefit cited by many students. Peer learning and the development of a valued network of colleagues contributes to this confidence and enthusiasm. As one respondent noted:

'I think the greatest benefit is the confidence I'm building by engaging with a smart bunch of public servants and the new knowledge. I feel totally empowered.'

This data indicates that the EMPA is a valued professional development opportunity that enables the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, and the development of a broad network of peers across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.



Key Benefits for EMPA Alumni

Alumni expressed similar views to students in response to the survey question about the greatest benefit of the EMPA. The strongest themes in the qualitative feedback from alumni centred on the benefits of broader and *deeper understanding, networking* and learning from the *cohort*, and gaining *confidence*. Many alumni stated that building networks across jurisdictions was the greatest benefit that they had gained from the EMPA. Alumni attested to the enduring nature of the relationships they formed with others in the EMPA cohort. One alum noted that their *'...wide network of colleagues can still be called on today'*. Another reported that value came from the *'...terrific network of colleagues across various jurisdictions (who I would not have likely met through my work)'*. One respondent appreciated not only the connections and networks, but the cross-jurisdictional insights and sharing of perspectives. This can enhance curriculum content, as this student explains, *'...interaction with other students opened me to new perspectives and points of view which enriched the topics being taught'*.

A heightened capacity for critical thinking was another key benefit highlighted in the alumni survey. For example, one respondent stated that the EMPA *'Really challenged the way I think about my role, the role of the public sector'*. And like current students, alumni reported an important outcome of the program was the development of leadership confidence. Alumni articulated this benefit in a variety of ways including: *'Confidence in myself in terms of leadership skills and lifelong learning'*; and *'Confidence to tackle a wider range of topics and responsibilities having built core, adaptable public service skills'*. Another alum reported gaining:

'The confidence to perform consistently! Knowing I had developed the core knowledge and skills to be effective in my organisation, to work under constant pressure, and to be able to build better teams and individuals around me was crucial to my career development.'

These alumni explained that this increased self-confidence had led to professional and personal growth and made them more effective and resilient at work. Other alumni explained that they had gained a strengthened commitment to the public service, and a *'Deep understanding and appreciation of the value and purpose of the public sector'*. For some alumni, the EMPA's focus on public value gave them the skills they needed to be effective. As one alum reported:

'I am a better public sector leader, who understands the value of the public service and I am equipped to lead through our uncertain and complex world.'

Appendix A provides further data and discussion of the value that students and alumni attribute to the EMPA, with reference to enhanced conceptual understandings and increased awareness of public purpose and public value. The following discussion concludes this section with reference to two critical areas of value to students and alumni: Leadership skills and career development.

Leadership Skills

Respondents to the alumni survey were very positive about the EMPA's value and impact on their leadership skills. The most common responses to the question *'What skills and/or attributes do you feel you have acquired or significantly enhanced as a result of completing the EMPA?'* related to leadership, analysis and working with others (and often, to combinations of these). For example, one respondent referred to:

'Certainly leadership, but also problem solving, looking at issues through different lenses, and dealing with people.'

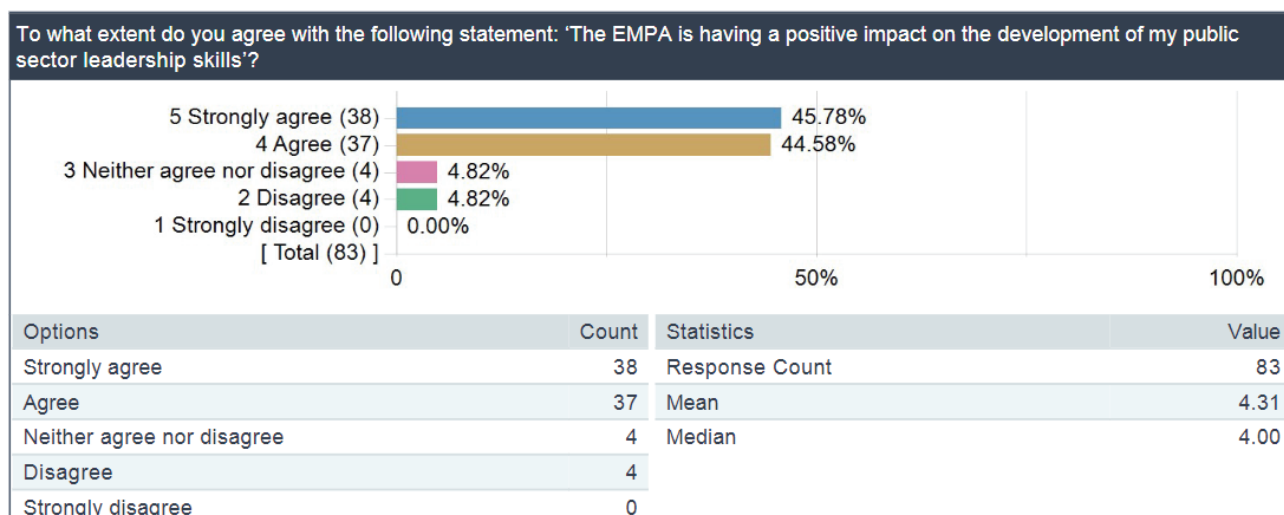
Similarly, 83% of respondents to the alumni survey either strongly agreed (42%) or agreed (41%) with the statement *'The EMPA has had a positive impact on the development of my public sector leadership skills'*. They noted that the EMPA challenged their thinking about leadership and exposed them to a variety of roles in the public service. One respondent wrote that the EMPA *'Helped me think more strategically about narrative and leading a team'*. Another noted that:

'The course included very relevant leadership information and also theories which I utilised back in my workplace.'

As expected, several responses referred to developing leadership skills through interaction with fellow students.

A minority of alumni survey respondents were more ambivalent about the program's impact on leadership. 14% neither agreed nor disagreed with the abovementioned statement. Some argued that leadership cannot be studied. For example: *'Leadership skills are not enhanced through academic study'*. Similarly: *'Your leadership is really judged by those around you not the number of pages you have read on this topic'*. In contrast, others suggested that the EMPA include *'more practical learning and teaching'* on leadership.

Survey responses from students were even more positive about the EMPA's leadership benefits than those from alumni. 90% of student survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the EMPA is having a positive impact on their public sector leadership skills (see graph below).



One student singled out a particular core subject in this regard, but also referred to the program's broader focus on group work:

'LPSC [Leading Public Sector Change] has had a significant impact on the development of my leadership skills. In addition, the focus on group work throughout the program provides a practical opportunity to develop team and leadership skills.'

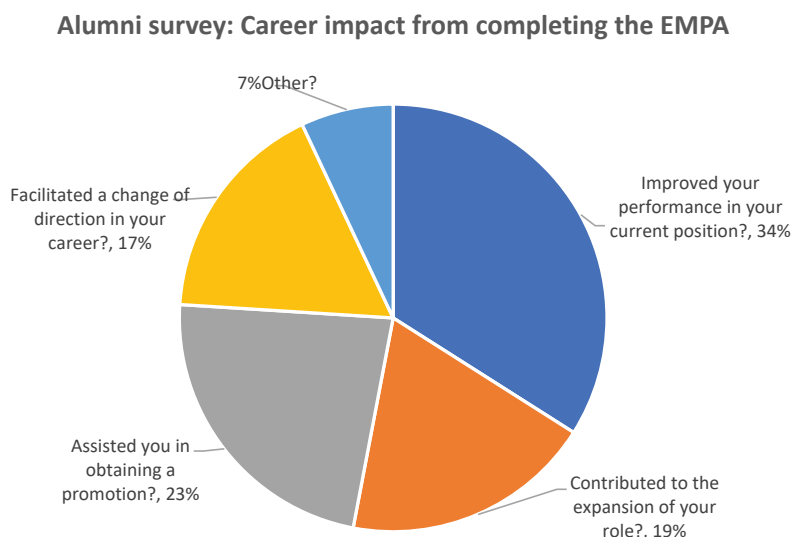
Several students also noted the benefits of hearing from expert practitioner speakers. One noted that *'The exposure to excellent public sector leaders and thinkers is very beneficial to my leadership development'*.

In summary, the evidence from students and alumni demonstrates the value provided by the EMPA in regard to the development of leadership skills. This is critical given the program's focus on current and emerging public sector leaders. For most students, the EMPA contributes to professional development and to their advancement in the public sector; this is discussed in the next section.

Professional Development and Career Impact

The value of the EMPA for students and for the broader public sectors in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand is reflected, in part, by students' career progression after graduation. Just over 1,500 people have graduated from the EMPA since 2003. Of these, 75 alumni have been appointed as Secretaries/CEOs, and 73 have been appointed as Deputy Secretaries/Deputy CEOs. That around 10% of graduates have progressed to the most senior levels of public sector agencies is evidence of the achievement of ANZSOG's mission and is a positive reflection on the focus of the program.

The Review Panel collected survey data from alumni regarding the career impact of the EMPA. Around one third of respondents reported that completing the EMPA had improved their performance in their current position. This figure is slightly higher for more recent alumni (40% of alumni who graduated less than 5 years ago) than for those who completed the EMPA earlier (35% for alumni who graduated 5-10 years ago, and 29% for alumni who graduated more than 10 years ago). One respondent noted that the EMPA is *'Still the best learning / professional development / training experience I have ever undertaken (by a long way)'*. Another noted that *'I feel the EMPA has been an important part of my growth as a manager'*. The following pie chart illustrates the distribution of responses to the question on career impact following completion of the EMPA.



Alumni reported that completion of the EMPA has had a range of positive impacts on their performance and careers. Some believe it has assisted them in obtaining a promotion (23%). Others reported that the EMPA has facilitated an expansion of their responsibilities in their current role (19%). A slightly smaller number of respondents indicated that the program helped progress a change in career direction (17%). Several alumni reported that completing the EMPA has served as a demonstration of their commitment to learning and development, which helped them to secure more senior roles. As one reported:

'I do not believe I would be a Deputy Chief Executive without completing the EMPA. It showed to future employers my approach to lifelong learning and capacity to undertake the program while working full time and it helped me develop a more refined, purposeful approach to executive roles.'

A small number of alumni indicated that the EMPA had not positively impacted their career development because of a lack of recognition of the EMPA within their agencies. For example, one alum who graduated in the last 5 years noted: *'Unfortunately in my organisation the knowledge and skills gained are not valued or utilised to the extent that I would have imagined. There has been a steady reduction in emphasis on qualifications and study in recent years. However, I have tried to add value where possible'*. Another alum, who graduated between 5 and 10 years ago, reported: *'Unfortunately I have felt that my department does not value the EMPA and has not seen to support me leveraging this education to undertake stretch assignments to further develop my career'*. These comments highlight the importance of ANZSOG actively promoting the value the EMPA provides for individuals as well as their sponsoring agencies, an issue addressed by Recommendation 11 in Part One of this Report.



THE ANZSOG EMPA: DELIVERING VALUE FOR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Based on the above analysis the Review Panel has concluded that the EMPA delivers value for students in a number of ways. The program:

1. Gives students the opportunity to form meaningful, lasting **professional networks** and to **learn from peers** in public sector agencies from across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand;
2. Exposes students to a range of distinctive and important **theories, concepts and perspectives** on public administration, applying them to contemporary issues and practice. This helps students to develop **critical thinking** skills and a **deeper understanding** of how to shape and influence the central functions and **public value** purpose of public sector agencies;
3. Encourages students to reflect on and think critically about the **value of public service**, which in turn reaffirms their **ethical and professional commitment** to their work and the communities they serve;
4. Develops students' skills and **confidence to lead in a complex and dynamic environment**;
5. Has a positive impact and demonstrably enhances and improves the **leadership skills** of students; and
6. Supports the **professional development** objectives of emerging leaders and contributes to their **career advancement**.

As the Review Panel indicated in Part One, it is important that ANZSOG sustain a proactive approach in promoting the value of the EMPA for students and their sponsoring departments. And it is important to note that the value of the program will be further enhanced as the diversity of the student cohort increases, and with the increased participation of public servants who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and/or Māori. The Review Panel is aware that ANZSOG's Strategy 2025 commits the organisation to '*Work[ing] closely with our member governments to support greater inclusion and representation of First Peoples at all levels of the public sector and broader public policy*'. Given each government's role in nominating and supporting students, growing the numbers of Indigenous students in the EMPA will be a critical pathway for progressing this valued policy objective of each of the 10 member governments.



VALUE FOR AGENCIES

This section of the report examines in further detail the value of the EMPA for public sector agencies. The analysis below is based on survey data, stakeholder meetings and the professional experience and insights of Review Panel members. As demonstrated in Part One of this Report, the EMPA is a high quality and internationally recognised public sector leadership development program. The Review Panel is confident the EMPA provides a valuable educational opportunity for government agencies seeking to enhance the capability of their emerging public sector leaders. The Panel believes that value for agencies should be viewed in terms of a whole-of-government return on investment. Specialised and academically rigorous training programs in public administration improve the performance of public sector leaders and thus the overall performance of government organisations. They may also increase the mobility of talented public sector leaders across agencies and jurisdictions; the Panel argues that this should be viewed as a net benefit because of the potential for policy transfer, innovation and entrepreneurship, and increased collaboration. Again, these are whole-of-government benefits that extend beyond the specific agencies from which EMPA students are drawn.

Consistent with its approach to students and alumni, the Review Panel commissioned a survey of public sector agencies across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand to gauge the views of managers who have nominated staff members for the EMPA or have been otherwise involved in the program. The survey aimed to collect information on how the EMPA may contribute to the development of leadership and management skills and to the broader operational capability of agencies. The response rate to this survey was unfortunately low, despite repeated efforts over a six-week period to disseminate the survey through various distribution channels across the Australian and New Zealand public sectors. In total the Review Panel received 20 responses to the agency survey. This consisted of 10 responses from agencies (HR/L&D departments) and 10 responses from managers who had nominated a member of staff to the EMPA. A full report and analysis of responses to the agency survey is located at Appendix L of Part One of the Review Report.

The Review Panel gave some consideration as to why the response rate to the agency survey was low. One possibility is that identifying agencies with experience of the EMPA is difficult given the small number of enrolments relative to the size and diversity of the Australian and New Zealand public sectors. Other factors may include the high work volumes and demands on staff time due to COVID resulting in limited interest in completing activities such as surveys. The results may also highlight the challenge this form of data collection presents for public sector agencies compared with individuals.

Program Alignment with Contemporary Public Sector Needs and Challenges

Despite the low response rate, the Review Panel was able to make some broad observations about the perceived contribution and value of the EMPA to public sector agencies. Respondents generally viewed the EMPA as a valuable development program for emerging leaders in their agencies. This was confirmed by the small number of agency interviews (undertaken in the Northern Territory and Tasmania) as well as by the representatives of a Public Service Commission who served on the Review Panel⁶. The most common factor influencing decisions to sponsor staff members to undertake the EMPA was that they had been identified as high potential future leaders.

84% of respondents to the agency survey agreed that 'the EMPA is aligned to the contemporary challenges faced by emerging leaders in the current public sector environment'.

⁶ At a meeting of the Australian Public Service Commissioners in April 2021, it was agreed that the Victorian Public Service Commission would represent Commissioners on the Review Panel.

Similarly, the majority of respondents (79%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement *'The skills and capabilities developed in the EMPA are aligned to the needs of the public sector'*. Again, direct discussions with agencies confirmed these points, though smaller jurisdictions expressed concerns about the cost of the program and thus the lack of capacity to sponsor any more than one or two candidates per year. This evidently limits the value and broader benefits that could be realised across the public sectors of small jurisdictions.

Gauging Program Impact on Agency Performance

Almost two-thirds (63%) of respondents to the agency survey agreed that the EMPA *'Has a positive impact on the performance'* of their agencies. One respondent argued that *'The course has provided graduates with a broader, more strategic lens regarding policy and program outcomes'*. Another noted that *'Staff have reported application immediately of learnings'*. However, over a third (37%) of respondents chose *'Neither agree nor disagree'* in response to this statement linking the EMPA to positive agency performance; some felt they lacked the evidence to respond otherwise. One noted that:

'Sometimes it is hard to disaggregate – in that we put our leaders and those with future promise on the program – but there does appear to be a strong alignment between participation and progression within the public service and enhanced delivery to the agency.'

There were also mixed responses to the statement *'The EMPA has a positive impact on the development of public sector leadership skills across the agency'*. Over half (58%) agreed with the statement, with respondents noting *'It really lifts leadership quality and strategic thinking'*, and *'My staff member is already using the skills learned in the EMPA in her dealings across the agency, especially in the way she is working with her direct reports'*. However, just under half (42%) of respondents remained neutral, with one reporting that *'We don't have data to inform this either way'*. In the context of the overall survey, the Review Panel tended to find that while there was significant agreement that the EMPA was of value, it is difficult (as with all training and development programs) to determine how best to measure this in terms of improved leadership skills and improvements in agency performance. The limited scale of the EMPA – the fact that only a small number of emerging leaders in any given agency participate in the program – also makes it difficult to gauge its organisational impact.

Nurturing Leadership Potential, Broadening Organisational Perspectives

In response to the question *'Do you consider the EMPA a valuable development program for emerging leaders in your agency?'*, 89% of respondents indicated that they do. One wrote that *'The EMPA is a premium professional development program for current and aspiring public sector leaders'*. Another described the program as offering *'Great exposure to leadership capabilities at the senior level. Great platform for networking. Great exposure to public administration and policy development'*. A third respondent argued that *'It provides a significant opportunity for talented, emerging leaders to pursue professional goals, career opportunities and add value to their existing work'*.

The survey also asked if *'Having EMPA graduates in the agency contributed to a broader organisational understanding of public purpose and public value'*. The vast majority agreed with one respondent noting that:

'The program encourages that breadth of perspective across the public service – which is of value to the agency including around understanding of public value.'

Here we see how the renewed commitment to public value gained by individual students has an important influence on the approach to public service across the organisation and in the particular work areas they lead. On balance, the survey evidence and other forms of input reveal that agency representatives consider the EMPA to be a valuable professional development program for their employees and by extension – while this is difficult to directly attribute and measure – for their agencies.

'Value for Money' Considerations

Asked explicitly about whether the EMPA represents *'value for money'*, one respondent noted that *'This is a high value course, with access to great lecturers and very experienced guests that would not be possible to access otherwise'*. Another stated that the degree *'Seems in line with costs of other masters degrees. It is a serious investment of both time and money'*. However, some respondents indicated that, while they believe the EMPA program is valuable, they also see it as expensive. For example, one reported *'We consider this a valuable development program, but it is not value for money'*. Similarly, another respondent wrote:

'Definitely a highly reputable and established academic program for senior leaders however not scalable enough to develop the broad development needs of emerging leaders.'

This highlights an important and contentious point: that the *'value'* of the degree is subject to various and often conflicting interpretations. For some, the price point of the EMPA reflects the credibility and rigour of the program. Others think more in terms of opportunity cost relative to their overall training budget and how this funding might be distributed across a higher number of employees on lower cost initiatives such as short courses. One respondent wrote *'It is a super program, but it is very expensive. For agencies to pay this amount effectively takes the training budget from other programs'*. Another respondent wrote that:

'\$45,000 on one person is a huge amount of money for a small government, and with just 2 people attending a year, we can't send enough people to get the saturation we would need for this program to have the sort of impact it should for that investment.'

These responses illustrate the tension for agencies when considering the value of the EMPA. There is broad agreement that the program is of high quality and represents excellent value, particularly on a comparative basis with similar programs around the world (see the discussion on international benchmarking in Part One). However, agencies must also weigh up their capacities to invest in the professional development of all staff, which is evidently more difficult if resources are constrained. Nevertheless, as the Australian Human Resources Institute points out, learning and development opportunities are crucial for staff retention⁷. The EMPA is a valued professional development opportunity that reaffirms students' commitment to public service, helping to minimise agency turnover and recruitment costs⁸.

Enhancing Value for Agencies

Participation in the EMPA from the smaller states and territories (NT, ACT, SA and TAS) is consistently low (see Appendix A in Part Three), reflecting the tendency for these jurisdictions to favour shorter, lower cost programs spread across a larger number of staff. While initiatives such as scholarships may lift EMPA participation rates from smaller jurisdictions, this poses a challenge given the complexities of sustaining funding and administrative resources.

It is worth noting, however, that value for agencies may be explored through other innovations, such as teaching *'in place'*. For example, as reported in Part One (p.58), the Northern Territory Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment has noted the potential value of hosting a residential delivery of an EMPA subject. This would provide an opportunity to expose EMPA students to: approaches to contemporary public administration challenges in the NT; the importance of local knowledge; and local responses to pressing policy challenges. Place-based teaching may also encourage some students to pursue career opportunities in different locations. This would address concerns expressed to the Review Panel about the relevance of the EMPA curriculum to government agencies in smaller jurisdictions.

This discussion reiterates **the need for ANZSOG to increase communication with agencies and enhance awareness of the value of the EMPA** (see Recommendation 11, Part One).

It is evident that ANZSOG has strong relationships at the CEO level and across Public Service Commissions throughout Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. However, there is less evidence of active relationships with agencies across all jurisdictions, particularly with managers at the appropriate level of seniority (those who are responsible for nominating and sponsoring staff). The Review Panel encourages ANZSOG to work with governments and their agencies to further explore ways of promoting the achievement of graduates and more clearly articulating the value they bring to agencies. Feedback processes that highlight this value to agencies should operate in parallel with the existing processes that support the enrolment and teaching of students into the EMPA.

The **value for agencies may be enhanced by increasing opportunities for input into the design and content of the EMPA curriculum**. For example, agency representatives may showcase examples of innovation or present current policy and service challenges for students to address (similar to work done in the Work Based Project subject). Such opportunities may be explored in consultation with the public sector agency representative on the EMPA Academic Advisory Council.

Expanding ANZSOG's work beyond the EMPA may also be an effective strategy for providing greater value to agencies and jurisdictions. ANZSOG currently delivers a range of custom executive engagement, webinars and seminars, research translation, and communities of practice (e.g. National Regulators' Community of Practice). **Continuing to build parallel programs that draw on and promote the expertise of the EMPA** may present new opportunities for valuable engagement. This is explored further in Part Three of the Report, which considers the sustainability of the program.

7 <https://www.ahri.com.au/ahri-assist/recruitment-and-retention/retention/the-role-of-hr-in-improving-retention#:~:text=Training%2C%20Development%20and%20Learning>

8 <https://www.anao.gov.au/work/performance-audit/management-recruitment-australian-public-service>

VALUE FOR UNIVERSITIES

Reputational Gain, Revenue, Administrative Benefits and Perceived Burdens

The EMPA is co-delivered under the terms of historical agreements between ANZSOG and each partner university. All conferring universities are located in ANZSOG's member government jurisdictions:

Member governments	Conferring partner universities
Aotearoa New Zealand	Victoria University of Wellington
Australia	The Australian National University
Australian Capital Territory	The University of Canberra
New South Wales	The University of Sydney
Northern Territory	Charles Darwin University
Queensland	Griffith University
South Australia	Flinders University
Victoria	Monash University The University of Melbourne
Western Australia	Curtin University

Each EMPA student enrolls at both ANZSOG and their conferring university (usually within the same jurisdiction where they work). As outlined in the Part One of the Report, students complete eight core subjects delivered by ANZSOG, and three electives delivered by partner universities. They ultimately graduate with an EMPA degree conferred by their university. Partner universities play an important role in providing EMPA students with access to a diverse range of electives. They also provide services such as libraries and academic skills resources, and opportunities to network and participate in the university environment. In turn, the EMPA facilitates connections between universities and senior public servants, who also enrich the mix of students on university campuses.

The Review Panel found that participation in the EMPA program yields a range of tangible and intangible benefits for universities. Some partner universities also report an administrative burden. The key factors shaping value for universities include:

- › **The value of association with ANZSOG.** ANZSOG is well recognised across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally as a leading and premier institution involved in the provision of executive education in public administration. The association with ANZSOG enhances credibility for university departments and schools delivering programs of public policy and public administration. It also provides access to senior practitioners and academics who may contribute to and support their programs, and facilitates universities' connections with public sector institutions through research and other collaborations
- › **Showcasing academic expertise.** The majority of faculty teaching into the EMPA are drawn from ANZSOG's partner universities (The University of Melbourne, The University of Sydney, Griffith University, Monash University and Victoria University Wellington). In addition, many core EMPA subjects draw on supplementary academic expertise to provide guest lectures drawing on contemporary research. This provides other academics from partner universities with opportunities to engage and build networks with senior public servants across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Academic staff involved in the EMPA (as Subject Leads or guest presenters) report high levels of satisfaction and value from this engagement.
- › **Senior, experienced students.** Some universities report that the participation of EMPA students brings additional depth of experience to elective subjects, in regard to the operation of public sector organisations. This can heighten the standard of assessment work and deepen student discussion and debate in the classroom. The presence of EMPA students also provides other students the opportunity for networking with senior professionals employed in the public sector.

- › **Revenue.** Universities receive additional revenue from the completion of three elective postgraduate subjects by EMPA students. Some universities have expressed disappointment that this is limited to three subjects and feel that greater value and income would be gained from increasing the number of EMPA electives.
- › **Administrative burden.** Some universities report an additional administrative burden because the management of EMPA student matters requires particular attention. The management of EMPA student admission, enrolment, progression and graduation requires a more direct, hands-on approach because of the unique and shared nature of the program. This is inconsistent with the general systems and processes established by universities for efficiently managing the high volume of student enrolments across mainstream programs. For example, the processing of student amenity and elective subject fees must be separately managed, with invoices sent to ANZSOG. Similarly, student results for core EMPA subjects delivered by ANZSOG must be separately managed and entered into the university student record system. Some universities have commented that the special attention provided to EMPA student administration matters seem disproportionately high given the relatively limited income gained from the program.
- › **Administrative advantage.** In contrast to the perceptions of administrative ‘burden’, other universities have reported that they value ANZSOG’s role in advertising and promotion of the EMPA; management of student queries; and receipt and processing of enrolment applications (including assessment of applicants’ eligibility for the program). By the time applications are referred to universities, admission is very straightforward, and universities may be confident the students will complete the program with all costs covered. From this perspective, the significant pre-admission work carried out by ANZSOG represents an administrative saving for universities and the sponsored students represent secure and reliable income.

Quality Assurance

The co-delivery of the EMPA is underpinned by ANZSOG’s commitment to ensuring that the design and delivery of the program meets the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF). This commitment is outlined in ANZSOG’s Delivery with Conferring Universities Policy and Program and Learning Design Policy. The EMPA quality assurance framework (discussed in Part One) is designed to ensure that ANZSOG fulfils these responsibilities and, consequently, to provide confidence to its partner universities regarding the quality of teaching and learning in the EMPA. In addition, the framework ensures appropriate policies and procedures exist around student administration; academic support; program standards; quality review and improvement processes; and infrastructure and facilities used in program delivery. ANZSOG’s quality assurance framework ensures program oversight and continuous improvement, with independent compliance and academic reviews (such as this one) conducted every five years. As noted in Part One, ANZSOG also reports annually to its partner universities on quality assurance matters, and the partners are represented on the EMPA Academic Advisory Council. The Council provides a forum for partner universities to have input to ANZSOG’s quality assurance arrangements and the connections with university systems and processes. These quality assurance mechanisms and activities help ensure the EMPA is a quality program that does not present a compliance risk to partner universities.

The ANZSOG assurance and compliance work reduces the regulatory compliance burden on partner universities. This Review Report is an example of ANZSOG undertaking significant work to ensure comprehensive documentation of quality practices and their alignment to national regulatory standards in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. ANZSOG has also liaised with the Australian higher education regulator, TEQSA, to ensure the framework and approach to assurance and compliance is considered acceptable and appropriate for ANZSOG and its partner universities. And as noted by TEQSA, these arrangements provide a possible model for other multi-institutional programs that universities may consider establishing in other disciplinary fields.

Diverse Perspectives on Value

Consultations conducted for this review indicate that partner universities have diverse views about the ANZSOG relationship, and the value of being involved in the EMPA program. For smaller partners (e.g. Charles Darwin University, Curtin University, Griffith University and Flinders University), participation in the EMPA is seen as a strategic opportunity to engage in an extended academic and professional network of public sector expertise. They tend to be enthusiastic about how they can build on the relationship with ANZSOG, and value the reputational benefits that flow from participating in the EMPA program.

Representatives from ANZSOG's partner universities acknowledged the quality of the overall EMPA program and the high calibre of ANZSOG's academic staff. One university representative stated that *'The EMPA is the jewel in the ANZSOG crown'* and saw the strategic value of networking opportunities with senior academics and practitioners in public administration. However, while they enrol approximately 65% of the EMPA cohort each year, the same enthusiasm was less forthcoming from ANZSOG's larger partner universities (The University of Sydney, The University of Melbourne and The Australian National University). A key question for ANZSOG is how to make more visible and evident the value and the mutual benefits of its relationships with larger partner universities. In part, this reflects the fact that EMPA students are a small cohort relative to the overall student body in these major institutions. The enrolment of EMPA students in program electives is considered marginal to the success of their own public administration and public policy programs. While the value of EMPA students adding to the depth and diversity of classroom level learning is recognised by teaching academics, the material and strategic significance of the relationship may be undervalued by schools and faculties. This may reflect a lack of knowledge and understanding of the strategic potential of the relationships. It highlights the challenges faced by a small, discipline-specific organisation such as ANZSOG in trying to build and sustain visibility within the complex structures of very large universities.

Strengthening Collaborations with Partner Universities

Nevertheless, throughout the consultation process partner universities indicated that they view the ANZSOG relationship as collaborative, and several expressed interest in enhancing the relationship beyond the EMPA in mutually beneficial ways. The recent EMPA Monash Pathway initiative demonstrates the potential for other collaborative innovations that allow schools and faculties with expertise and experience in public administration to expand their offerings, strengthen their engagement with the local public sector and grow student enrolments. A suggested innovation is to develop EMPA 'specialisations' delivered with interested partner universities (i.e. universities packaging and sequencing three elective units as an EMPA '*major*' focused on that institution's area of expertise, e.g. environmental regulation or social policy). Another option is to develop additional micro-credentials that could be recognised as credit for future enrolment in the EMPA and or other postgraduate degrees offered by accrediting universities. Additionally, the EMPA student cohort could be expanded to include international students. Any or all of these new specialisations, programs or micro credentials could be pitched, in particular, to senior public servants across the Asia-Pacific region.

While Panel members noted the value of the EMPA and the ANZSOG relationship to partner universities, they feel more could be done to raise awareness about the actual and potential value of the relationship. Two distinct areas of value and mutual interest were identified:

- Collaboration and support in the **development of professional networks** across the public sector as a basis for **research collaborations and partnerships**; and
- The development of **new teaching collaborations** with ANZSOG that provide opportunities for new educational offerings (e.g. micro-credentials and Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma programs) to individuals and organisations both domestically and internationally.

The possible development of new initiatives is discussed in more detail in Part Three, which focuses on sustainability of the program. These initiatives may include regular and targeted communication with relevant schools and faculties to publicise ANZSOG events, research programs and the sharing of teaching innovations and resources (e.g. the Case Library). ANZSOG could also provide feedback to partner universities in regard to their academic staff who have had their academic expertise showcased through the EMPA (e.g. by supervising Work Based Projects). There may also be value in publicising the work of high achieving students and noting their enrolled institution.

Other activities to deepen and strengthen the value of the relationship with partner universities may include:

- › **Increasing direct collaboration with partner universities to address administrative issues** and concerns. This should include consideration of annual institution-specific orientation sessions for EMPA students, to improve awareness of university support services available to students and clarify the administrative arrangements specific to the students' enrolling institution.
- › Consideration of **further institution-specific initiatives that support the EMPA** (similar to the EMPA Monash Pathway program). For example, Charles Darwin University and Griffith University have suggested they may be able to develop initiatives that help grow the enrolment of Indigenous students into the EMPA or other ANZSOG programs.
- › Increase the focus of the EMPA on First Peoples perspectives and where appropriate, **draw on the relevant pools of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori policy expertise in partner universities.**

In summary, the EMPA provides significant value for those partner universities involved in its delivery and conferral. Nevertheless, many partners feel that more can be achieved through strengthening and deepening the relationship with ANZSOG, using the EMPA as a foundation upon which to build. Part Three of this report considers various options for collaboration in the interests of ensuring the sustainability of the EMPA.



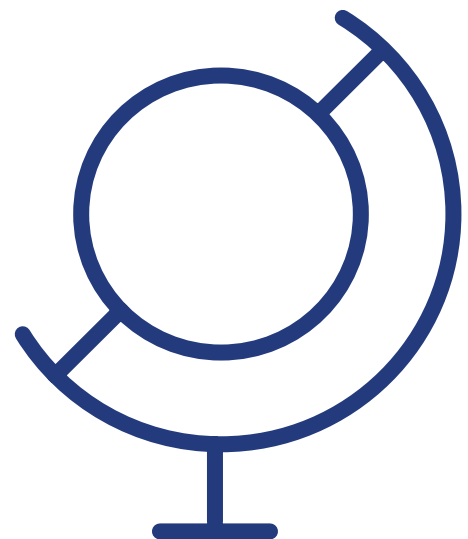
CONCLUSION

Part Two of the Review Report has assessed the strategic alignment of the program and the extent to which the EMPA delivers value for key stakeholders, specifically students, public sector agencies and partner universities. The research and analysis have found that the EMPA has a demonstrable record of delivering value for students. The program provides relevant and new knowledge that builds a deeper understanding of public administration, develops critical thinking skills, and builds students' confidence to engage with the complex challenges they face as emerging leaders in the public sector. In particular, the program develops leadership skills and has made critical contributions to the professional development and career progression of graduates.

Public sector agencies value the EMPA as a highly reputable program that contributes to the professional development of emerging leaders. However, in the context of broader public sector learning and development offerings, the EMPA is considered relatively expensive and agencies (particularly in small jurisdictions) are restricted in their capacity to offer this development opportunity to a larger number of staff members. The Review Panel believes it is important that ANZSOG continue to engage with public sector agencies to actively promote the value acquired from having staff undertake the EMPA.

Increasing communication and promoting the benefits of participating in the EMPA have also been identified as important strategies for improving ANZSOG's relationships with partner universities. Some partner universities explicitly recognise the reputational gain and value of showcasing academic expertise across EMPA cohorts, and of having experienced public servants participate and complete elective subjects from across their own programs. However, there remains some debate on the value of student income from elective subjects relative to the perceived administrative burden of supporting student enrolments, progression and graduation. Nevertheless, partner universities see the ANZSOG relationship as a collaborative one and are keen to expand and grow opportunities of mutual benefit. New innovations may strengthen the value of the EMPA to students and partner universities. ANZSOG may also consider new initiatives extending beyond the EMPA.

In contrast to Part One, Part Two does not contain specific recommendations. A significant part of the analytical work focuses on highlighting those elements that constitute value for key stakeholders of the EMPA. The evidence demonstrates that the program generates significant value across the core stakeholder groups. However, opportunities exist for further articulation and the development of mutual benefits for these stakeholders and for ANZSOG. The Review Panel believes the prioritisation and operationalisation of strategies and implementation plans are matters for further consideration by ANZSOG. To some extent the progress and ongoing development of value for stakeholders will largely be influenced by the actions taken in response to matters that also concern the sustainability of the EMPA, which are discussed in Part Three.



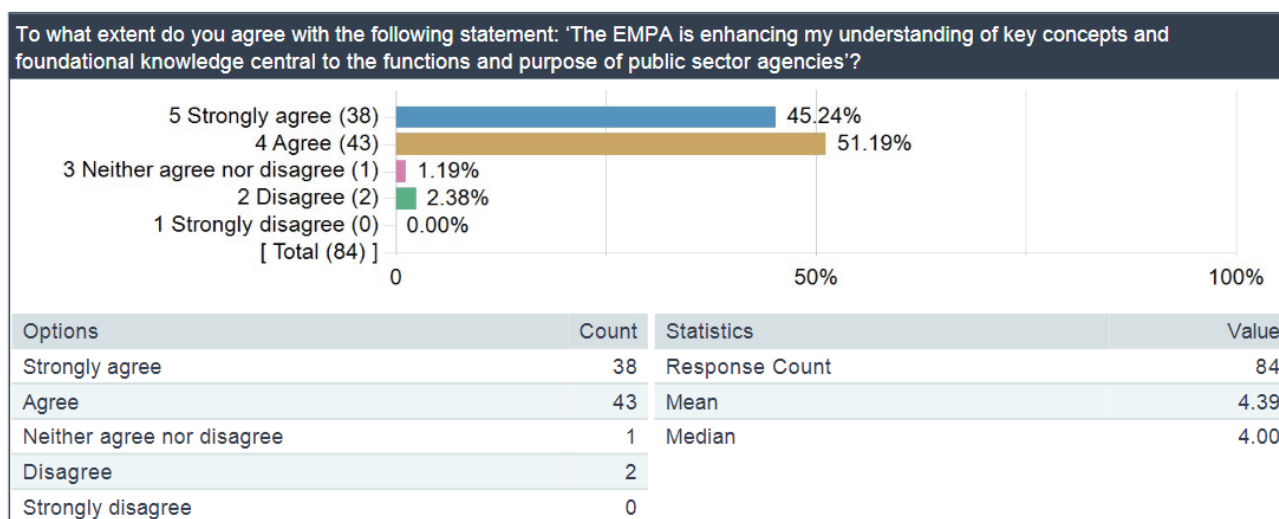
APPENDIX A

VALUE FOR STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

This appendix presents an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data gathered via two surveys; one distributed to current EMPA students and the other to EMPA alumni. It focuses on the data that offer relevant insights into the value and key benefits that the EMPA generates for these key stakeholder groups..

Enhanced Conceptual Understandings Applicable to Practice

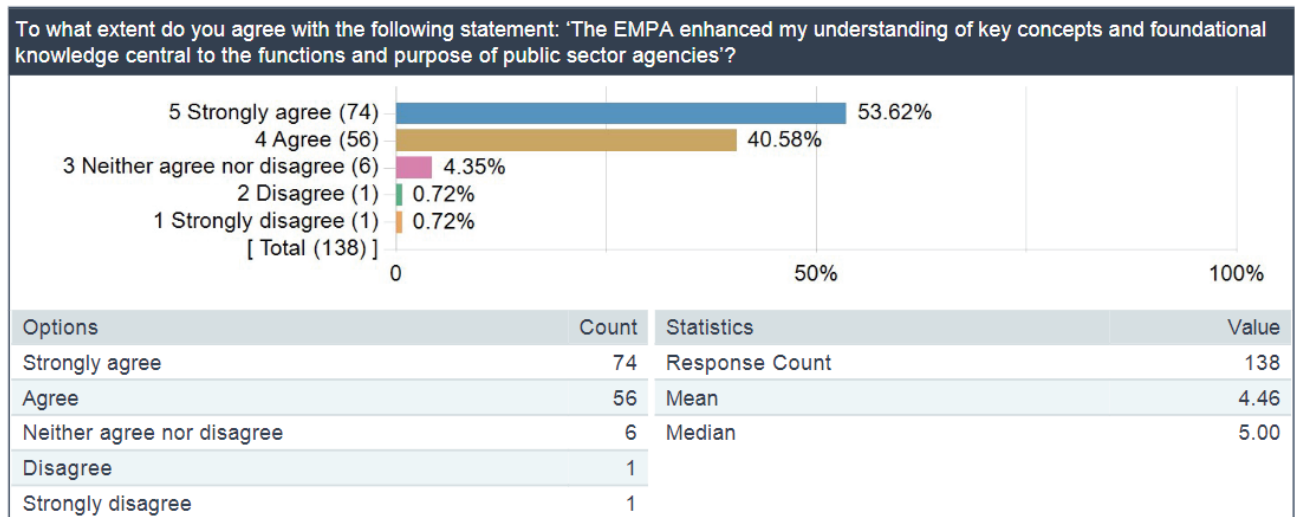
One of the central benefits delivered by the EMPA is its contribution to the breadth and depth of students' understanding of public service work. This was consistently reported by students and alumni. Current students were near universal in reporting that the EMPA is enhancing their conceptual understanding of the purpose and functions of public sector agencies (see quantitative responses below).



In the qualitative comments students explained that the EMPA was broadening their knowledge of key principles and theoretical perspectives of public policy. One student reported that the, *'Content so far has really helped me think differently about both my own agency as well as more broadly about government'*. New understandings and new knowledge was also seen as applicable in their working environment. As one student claimed they saw, *'...lots of things I'm keen to incorporate into everyday practice and setting strategic direction for my teams.'*

'Some of my EMPA learnings have been 'just in time', such that I am forced to try and apply them the next day due to unanticipated circumstances.'

Alumni were also firmly in agreement that the EMPA had enhanced their understanding and knowledge of concepts central to the function and purpose of public sector agencies (see graph below).



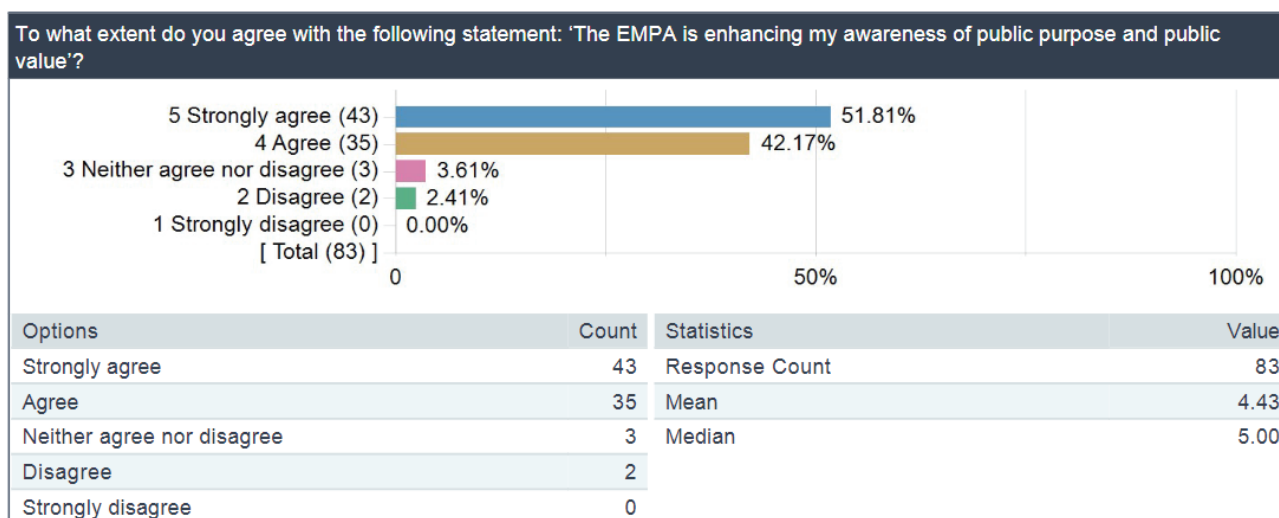
As the above quantitative data illustrate, almost all alumni who responded to the survey believed that their understanding of public sector work had been enhanced by the EMPA. In the related qualitative comments, alumni explained in more detail the utility of the EMPA's theoretical and conceptual elements. Only a small minority of respondents commented that they had not derived significant benefit from the program, with a few respondents characterising the teachings as *'distant from reality'*. Nevertheless, a majority maintained that the program was of value and expanded their knowledge *'...into areas I had not engaged with previously and into new and current ways of thinking about public sector issues'*. One respondent pointed to the contemporary and strategic nature of the program:

'Although I had a degree in Government (public administration) and 24 years' experience in the public service, the EMPA provided more contemporary and strategic knowledge and broadened my understanding of how public administration contributes to society.'



Awareness of Public Purpose and Public Value

A major strategic theme identified by students and alumni was public value. Students and alumni regularly argued that the EMPA's focus on public value was an enduring and transformative concept, which was representative of the overarching benefit of completing the EMPA. The following graph shows that the majority of current EMPA students affirmed that the program is enhancing their awareness of public purpose and public value.



Qualitative comments highlighted the importance of this concept for many students. For example, one respondent noted that:

'Understanding public value has been a defining lesson to date and fundamentally changed the way I view my work and my organisation (despite having work in govt for a decade and undertaken previous public policy studies).'

Another student conceptualised public value and public purpose as:

'Neat frameworks for conceptualising what we do, what systems and processes support it, and greater understanding of how to incorporate the experiences of the recipients of our services.'

A minority of students indicated that they already had a strong understanding of public purpose prior to enrolling in the EMPA. Nevertheless, the following comment captures the dominant sentiment that students expressed in relation to public value and public purpose:

'The EMPA establishes a strong foundation through the concept of public value/purpose through DPV, which is complemented and expanded upon through other subjects, particularly DPPP, LPSC and GBR.'

In addition, many alumni found public value to be a useful conceptual framework, for example:

'Having studied Commerce previously, the EMPA provided me with language and concepts to define public value, so I can now identify and explain public value, as well as define private value.'

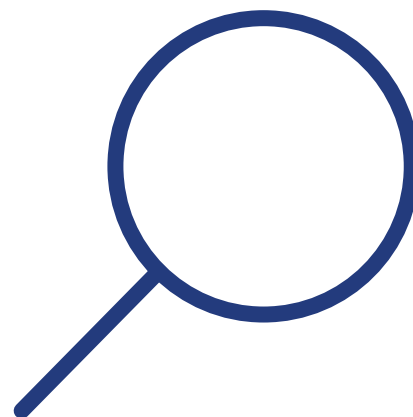
The EMPA subject Delivering Public Value and the concept of public value itself constituted the topic that alumni most frequently cited as being particularly useful for their work and or career progression. Some 50 respondents to the alumni survey (out of 144 total) cited the utility of DPV or public value in this regard. One respondent explains how the concept has impacted on their work and team:

'The EMPA expanded my view of my role within the Public Sector and has helped shape my approach to ensuring that what my team does delivers public value and supports the role of government in the community.'

There is evidence to suggest that one of the central benefits that the EMPA delivers to students/alumni is to consolidate their ethical commitment to public service. Several alumni stated that the EMPA had enhanced their commitment to serve the public. For example, this respondent highlighted the following skills and/or attributes that they had acquired or enhanced as a result of completing the EMPA:

'Leadership and commitment to serve are good examples along with a renewed sense of mission and a level of fearlessness that I should engage in the change process to support positive outcomes.'

By introducing and applying the public value conceptual framework, the EMPA reaffirms students' belief in the importance of their everyday work and gives them confidence to lead. There is substantial evidence that current students and alumni find public value to be a highly useful framework.





Find out more

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