

ANZSOG

EXECUTIVE
MASTER
OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

Academic
Program
Review
2021

SUMMARY REPORT

Australia &
New Zealand
School of
Government



FOREWORD

Professor Ken Smith AO

Dean and CEO
Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)

Dear Professor Smith,

As Chair of the Academic Program Review of the ANZSOG Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA), it is my pleasure to present a summary of the Panel's Review Report.

ANZSOG was established in 2002 to provide innovative training to enhance public sector leadership and deliver public value in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. This mission is arguably more important today than at any time in the past 20 years, given the multitude of issues which governments are confronting. From the complex challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change to the transformational impact of technology and rising geo-political tensions, the need for relevant and effective public leadership training programs has never been greater.

Given the important role of the EMPA in public sector leadership training in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, the Review Panel committed to a thorough and comprehensive review of the program. We considered themes of critical relevance to the EMPA, its students, owner governments and partner universities. Our analysis and findings were informed by extensive consultation with current students, program alumni, ANZSOG faculty and executive staff, partner universities and government owners across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The Review Panel is also deeply appreciative of the support, research and analysis provided by the ANZSOG Secretariat.

I would like to personally acknowledge and thank the members of the Review Panel, whose commitment to the Review Process and deep expertise ensured that the final Report is critical and thorough. The Panel has considered all aspects of learning and teaching, the program structure and the units of study, the expertise of faculty, assessment methods, modes of delivery, student feedback and ANZSOG's role in the provision of teaching and academic support.

The Panel's overall finding is that the EMPA remains an innovative, world-class program which is highly valued by students and stakeholders alike. Nonetheless, given the rapidly changing circumstances confronting governments and the communities they serve, ANZSOG will have to maintain its commitment to the ongoing reform and renewal of the EMPA. Reflecting this imperative, the Review Panel developed recommendations and identified issues for further consideration.

One of the Review's central recommendations is that ANZSOG further enhance First Peoples content and perspectives throughout the EMPA curriculum. A further recommendation of note is that ANZSOG should work with university and government partners to develop complementary policy and leadership training programs derived from the EMPA, which would be accessible to a larger and more diverse cohort of public sector professionals. If successful, this strategy would enhance ANZSOG's impact, deliver greater value to government and partner universities and help assure ANZSOG's future role in public sector leadership training and research in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Panel trusts that this Review will ensure that the EMPA continues to make a valuable contribution to public sector leadership training across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, helping governments respond to the challenges and opportunities that will inevitably arise in an increasingly uncertain future.

Richard Eccleston

Chair, ANZSOG,

Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA) Academic Program Review Panel

Professor of Political Science
Director, Tasmanian Policy Exchange,
University of Tasmania
March 2022

*Cover: Manaia King
EMPA Class of 2019
General Manager
Ministry of Social Development (NZ)*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	02
Introduction	04
Panel Members	05
Terms of Reference	07
ANZSOG Secretariat	07
Data Collection and Analysis	08
Part One: Program Quality	09
Key Findings Related to the Quality of the EMPA	09
ANZSOG EMPA Compared with other World-Leading Public Administration Programs	10
Academic Quality and Intellectual Rigour	11
Recommendations	12
Program Design and Curriculum	12
Quality Assurance	13
Faculty and Alumni	13
Student Diversity, Student Support and Program Delivery	13
Part Two: Strategic Alignment and Value	14
Value for Students and Alumni	14
Value for Agencies	15
Value for Universities	16
Part Three: Sustainability	17
Scale and Financial Sustainability	17
University Partnerships	17
Faculty and Stewardship of the Discipline	18
Support from Owner Governments	18
Conclusion	19

ANZSOG works for our government owners and with our university partners 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.

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, an independent panel of senior scholars and expert practitioners commenced a comprehensive Academic Program Review (APR) of ANZSOG's Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA). The APR complemented the earlier Compliance Review undertaken by Dr Michael Tomlinson and Emeritus Professor Valerie Braithwaite. While the Tomlinson and Braithwaite review was concerned with quality assurance and adherence to the Higher Education Standards Framework, the APR focuses on academic rigour, value for key stakeholders and the future direction of the program.

The Review Panel was chaired by Professor Richard Eccleston, Director of the Tasmanian Policy Exchange and Professor of Political Science at the University of Tasmania. The diverse international Review Panel included globally recognised academics from the world's leading schools of public administration and policy. It also included senior public sector leaders from a range of jurisdictions, as well as EMPA alumni and a current EMPA student. ANZSOG staff provided secretariat support.



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

- EMPA student

PANEL MEMBERS



Professor Richard Eccleston (Chair)

Director, Tasmanian Policy Exchange and Professor of Political Science, University of Tasmania

“There was a clear consensus across the Review Panel that the EMPA is a unique program which continues to evolve and deliver relevant, world-class training to emerging public sector leaders. Evidence gathered from hundreds of current EMPA students and alumni, as well as government agencies themselves, highlights how the program provides emerging managers with new insights and knowledge and professional networks which greatly enhance leadership capability and practice across government. Given the challenges facing society the EMPA will have to continue to adapt to ensure that future public sector leaders and the governments they serve continue to meet ever-changing community needs.”



Mr Richard Banks

Deputy Director, Policy Profession Unit (PPU), Department of Education, United Kingdom

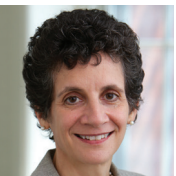
“The critical friend approach of public policy practitioners—all objective, impartial, honest and with integrity—really shone through, with open sharing of alternative approaches and experiences supported with data. I would like to thank my peers on the panel and my colleagues at ANZSOG for a well-managed and fruitful project. I commend this review and remain a committed supporter of future partnership work.”



Mr Adam Fennessy PSM

Victorian Public Sector Commissioner, Victoria. Supported by Daen Dorazio, Executive Director, Capability and Inclusion, Victorian Public Sector Commission

“ANZSOG is uniquely positioned as a partner and expert in government, which makes the EMPA an invaluable program for emerging and established public sector leaders across Australia and New Zealand.”



Professor Sherry Glied

Dean, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University, United States

“The ANZSOG EMPA process stood out in the comprehensiveness of material reviewed, the number and range of people interviewed, and the quality of the deliberations. Finally, I want to comment on the unique nature of the ANZSOG EMPA itself. I am not aware of any comparable program elsewhere in the world.”

PANEL MEMBERS



Dr Lindsey Te Ata o Tu MacDonald
Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science,
University of Canterbury, Aotearoa New Zealand

"An extraordinarily thorough examination of the view of all stakeholders in the EMPA, from government and central agency views, through the teaching and research staff, to the students and their employers. The review sets the EMPA to become a world leader in the research and teaching of governing with and for Indigenous organisations and peoples."



Ms Genevieve Mogridge
Current EMPA student and Senior Director Major Projects,
Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet,
Northern Territory Government

"As a current EMPA student I have experienced first-hand the value of a master's program that brings together internationally recognised academic staff, and emerging public sector leaders. As the student representative, I was provided with the opportunity to actively contribute to the review process, including in the development of various surveys, as well as the Review Report."



Professor M Ramesh
Professor of Public Policy and UNESCO Chair on Social Design in Asia,
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy,
National University of Singapore

"The curriculum is comprehensive, covering broad breadth of policy analytical work, spanning economics, politics, policy design, management, and leadership. The care and diligence that has gone into designing the curriculum and selecting instructors and guest speakers is unmatched. The quality assessment framework in place ensures that the program will continue to serve its stakeholders in the future."



Ms Janet Schorer PSM
NSW Children's Guardian,
EMPA alum and Co-Chair of ANZSOG's Alumni Advisory Council

"The EMPA provides a comprehensive framework for leaders in public service in Australia and NZ. This review has provided the opportunity to take a step back and assess whether the foundational elements of that framework remain evidence based and contemporary. It has been done with rigour and a genuine commitment by ANZSOG to excellence. I valued the opportunity to participate as an alumni representative and bring that perspective to the process."

TERMS OF REFERENCE

In reviewing the EMPA – ANZSOG's flagship educational program – the Review Panel was guided by three broad Terms of Reference, which required an assessment of:

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.

ANZSOG SECRETARIAT

Dr Christopher Walker

Deputy Dean, Education and University Relations
Academic Director, Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA)

Dr Avery Poole

Deputy Director, Academic & Research Engagement
Education and University Relations, ANZSOG

Dr David Coombs

Senior Advisor, Academic Quality and Strategy
Education and University Relations, ANZSOG

Ms Lisa Chanell

Executive Assistant,
Education and University Relations, ANZSOG



DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A range of data collection activities was undertaken for the APR. The Review Panel designed and distributed three surveys of key EMPA stakeholder groups, receiving a total of 245 responses. The first survey was distributed to EMPA alumni; the second to current EMPA students; and the third to representatives of government agencies, including managers who have nominated staff members to undertake the EMPA.

EMPA Student Profile:

- > Average age: 42 years
- > Average experience: 16 years

(2021 Cohort)

In addition, Panel members held online consultations with ANZSOG academics and EMPA Subject Leaders; Deans and Heads of School from ANZSOG's partner universities; the ANZSOG Executive Leadership Team; and representatives from public service commissions and agencies across multiple jurisdictions. ANZSOG also organised a focus group of current EMPA students from Aotearoa New Zealand and presented the key findings to the Review Panel for discussion and analysis. ANZSOG's Senior Advisor, First Peoples Programs and Strategy was also consulted as part of the Review.

The survey data and the feedback from stakeholder consultations constitute the body of evidence that informed the Review Panel's key findings and recommendations. Panellists analysed and reflected upon the data gathered specifically for the Review, and considered student cohort data and recent student evaluations of EMPA core subjects. A comparative review¹ of EMPAs and Master of Public Policy (MPP) and Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs from across the globe was conducted, including a review of executive education programs offered by the OECD Network of Schools of Government. These diverse sources of data and feedback, combined with the expertise, knowledge and experience of Panel members, were instrumental in shaping the Review findings and recommendations.



¹ The Panel noted that the postgraduate programs in public administration and policy offered by large universities in Australia and New Zealand attract very different student cohorts compared to the ANZSOG EMPA, and consequently the fees for these programs are set at different levels (which tend to be higher than for the ANZSOG EMPA). For these reasons and others, domestic MPP/MPA programs were not included in the comparative review.

PART ONE

PROGRAM QUALITY

Key Findings Related to the Quality of the EMPA

The central finding of the Review Panel was that the EMPA is a program of outstanding quality and world-leading stature, reflecting a unique and innovative approach to executive education in public administration. The Review Panel found that the EMPA delivers significant benefits to students and public sector agencies. The Review Panel also identified multiple benefits that accrue to ANZSOG's partner universities who are involved in the delivery of the EMPA. While the Review Panel did not recommend any structural changes to the program, it made recommendations for incremental reform. More specifically, the APR Report laid out options for strengthening relationships with key stakeholders and ensuring the sustainability of the EMPA into the future.

Key Insight:

- > Outstanding quality and world-leading stature
- > A unique and innovative program of executive education in public administration



ANZSOG EMPA Compared with other World-Leading Public Administration Programs

In its comparative review of leading EMPAs and MPP / MPA programs, the Review Panel assessed the cost, duration, curriculum, delivery mode, student cohort, and other distinguishing features of leading programs from around the world. The Review Panel noted that because the ANZSOG EMPA is specifically tailored for and exclusive to Australian and New Zealand public servants, this complicates direct comparisons with other open-to-market offerings. Nevertheless, the Review Panel found that the most comparable international master's programs are delivered by highly ranked universities such as the London School of Economics and New York University, and by a sub-set of smaller universities and specialist, stand-alone Schools of Government. Of all the members of the OECD Network of Schools of Government, other than ANZSOG, only the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government in the United Arab Emirates offers an EMPA. The benchmarking analysis revealed that not only does the ANZSOG EMPA offer students excellent value for money but it covers similar subject matter to the world's leading postgraduate programs. Based on the available data describing the curricula of the programs reviewed, only the ANZSOG degree includes a focus on First Peoples perspectives.

Key Insight:

- > Unmatched value for money
- > Curriculum aligned with world's best programs

1	Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)	EMPA	2+ years PT	AU\$49,000.00*
2	Hertie School of Governance, Berlin	EMPA	1 year FT or 2-4 years PT	AU\$52,131.85
3	University College London (UCL)	MPA	1 year FT or 2-5 years PT	AU\$52,265.36
4	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, United Arab Emirates	EMPA	1 year FT or 2 years PT	AU\$53,993.15
5	National University of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy	MPA	1 year FT only	AU\$64,861.29
6	London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)	MPP	9 months FT	AU\$64,998.25
7	Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs	EMPA	1 year FT, PT options	AU\$77,786.30
8	New York University, Wagner School (NYU)	EMPA	1 year FT or 2+ years PT	AU\$92,671.23
9	Harvard University, Kennedy School	Mid-Career MPA	1 year FT residential	AU\$100,007.50
10	Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs	EMPA	2 years FT or 3 years PT	AU\$169,571.48
11	Oxford University, Saïd Business School	EMBA	2 years PT	AU\$175,165.16

*Prices refer to total tuition costs and fees associated with these degrees. Where universities list different prices for local and international students, the international student fee has been used to illustrate the cost for students from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Calculated on 26/05/2021.

Academic Quality and Intellectual Rigour

The ANZSOG EMPA and each of its subjects offer students strong conceptual foundations for the study and practice of public administration. The Review Panel found that the program introduces students to a range of distinctive and important theories and perspectives on public policy and administration, and teaches them how to apply theory to practice.

The Review Panel concluded that the link between theory and practice is strengthened by the regular presentations delivered in EMPA subjects by expert practitioners from public sector and non-government organisations. These subject matter experts assist the EMPA Subject Leaders in bringing theory to life and demonstrating its practical relevance. The regular engagement of senior practitioners, experts and leaders from the public and community sectors exposes EMPA students to a wealth of experience of public sector leadership in an applied context. The Review Panel found evidence that the EMPA's engagement with senior practitioners helps students to develop higher-order knowledge and enhances their own approaches and confidence in public purpose leadership.

The Review Panel was impressed by the calibre of the Subject Leaders who teach the EMPA. They are all exceptional scholars, have extensive experience and are regarded as national and international experts within their academic disciplines. Having senior, internationally recognised scholars drawn from a diverse range of national and international institutions is an important point of distinction between the ANZSOG EMPA and other postgraduate public administration programs offered in Australia, New Zealand and internationally. Student feedback demonstrated very high levels of satisfaction with subject content and delivery.

The Review Panel noted that the EMPA's delivery schedule and student cohort are unique. Current students and alumni identified the intensive residential delivery as a key strength of the program. All EMPA students are drawn from Australian and New Zealand public sector agencies and have been identified as future leaders by their employers. This makes for a high calibre and focused cohort, which generates many opportunities for peer learning and networking. While the Review Panel found that the online resources developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are of remarkably high quality and among the best available internationally, it was felt a blended model of delivery should be established (COVID restrictions permitting) for future years. This would capture the benefits of face-to-face residential and online modes of delivery.

Key Insight:

- > Strong conceptual foundations
- > Enhances critical understanding of theory and its application to practice

Another defining strength of the EMPA program is the integration of a range of partner universities from multiple jurisdictions. The Review Panel was supportive of the embedded processes of reporting and review provided by the EMPA Academic Advisory Council (EAAC). The EAAC provides partner universities with a regular forum and formal processes to participate in course review and quality improvement. The Review Panel concluded that deeper collaboration between ANZSOG and its partner universities, particularly around the offering of elective units, could make the degree more customisable, thus increasing the potential value it generates for students and allowing partner universities to highlight their unique areas of expertise.

The Review Panel felt that an emerging area of particular importance and contemporary relevance is the development of curriculum that embraces First Peoples perspectives across the full spectrum of public administration. By deepening engagement with Indigenous perspectives on contemporary public administration the EMPA could broaden its value proposition for students and public sector agencies. This view emerged after reviewing survey data from students, alumni and representatives of public sector agencies. Many survey respondents expressed an eagerness to develop more sophisticated understandings of Indigenous policy priorities and governance, and the ways that governments can work with First Peoples to achieve them. It is also a recognition of the unique circumstances and obligations of public sector leaders in Australia and Aotearoa, and the increasing need for the public sector to support Crown relationships with First Peoples, such as under New Zealand's revised Public Service Act (2020). The Review Panel concluded that it was opportune and appropriate for the EMPA to play a critical and leading role in developing this emergent policy capacity.

Key Insight:

- › A need for deeper engagement with First Peoples perspectives on and priorities for public administration

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to the Review Panel's findings in relations to the APR's First Term of Reference: Program Quality. Below, recommendations are grouped under major thematic headings and references to the relevant sections of Part One of the Review Report are included.

Program Design and Curriculum

The Review Panel makes recommendations that involve:

- › Revising and rationalising program learning outcomes and graduate attributes to achieve stronger alignment and specify more meaningful higher order attainment (Section 1.2, pp. 23-26).
- › Considering review of the arrangements governing elective units in consultation with partner universities with a view to providing a wider range of options for students regardless of their enrolling universities (Section 1.2, pp. 27-30).
- › Establishing a process to consider expanding the range of topics examined by existing core subjects on issues such as ethics, accountability and integrity; data analytics; digitisation/technology; crisis management, leadership and resilience; strategic/political communication; and that significant work addresses the inclusion of Indigenous content and perspectives (see below). This should occur without increasing the number of core subjects (Section 1.4, pp. 35-38).
- › Considering program and subject design revisions to achieve stronger connections, learning alignment and opportunities for consolidation between the gateway (Delivering Public Value) and capstone (Work Based Project) subjects (Section 1.4, pp. 35-38).
- › Initiating a detailed plan of action that includes diverse strategies (such as a First Peoples advisory body) to expand subject content, the student experience and to lift student awareness of First Nations and the connection with public administration (Section 1.6, pp. 42-45).
- › Working with ANZOG's partner governments to explore innovative ways (e.g. government funded scholarships and proactive recruitment) to achieve higher participation rates of First Peoples public servants (Section 1.6, pp. 42-45).

Quality Assurance

The Review Panel makes recommendations that require ANZSOG to establish and consider:

- That efforts to monitor and detect plagiarism and breaches of academic integrity should also consider how to deter and identify instances of contract cheating (Section 1.5, pp. 39–41).
- That a formal process of internal and external moderation should be established to validate marking practices across the EMPA core subjects (Section 1.8, pp. 49–53).

Faculty and Alumni

The Review Panel recommends that:

- ANZSOG continues to engage world class faculty as Subject Leaders and continue to engage senior practitioners in subject design and delivery, including, where possible, expanding the range of input from alumni and First Nations speakers (Section 1.7, pp. 47–48).
- ANZSOG continues to provide teaching faculty with support from administrative staff, education designers and education technologists to help ensure online and blended delivery remains of world-leading standard (Section 1.7, pp. 47–48).
- ANZSOG provides greater opportunity for the appropriate involvement of alumni across the EMPA, including as expert speakers, panel members and assessors, and mentors for project teams in the capstone unit Work Based Project, or through other mechanisms that help build student networking across the public sector (Section 1.7, pp. 47–48; Section 1.9, p. 62).

Student Diversity, Student Support and Program Delivery

The Review Panel recommends that:

- Effort is put into recruiting a more diverse EMPA student cohort. This may involve more direct engagement with government agencies and their diversity initiatives with a view to increasing the diversity of students sponsored by governments. Consideration might also be given to the establishment of a scholarship program (funded by agencies and supported by ANZSOG) targeted at the recruitment of students who are underrepresented in the EMPA cohort, such as students with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and students from small jurisdictions (ACT, SA, NT & TAS) (Section 1.9, p. 59–61).
- ANZSOG more explicitly engages in communication with students' managers and agencies to convey the high expectations associated with an academic program of the EMPA's quality and standing. This should note the significant demands on student time, the nature of online and residential delivery, and that students, while bringing value to the organisation, require agency commitment and support to succeed and maximise the benefits that result from participation in the program (Section 1.9, pp. 54–59).
- The EMPA moves to a mixed mode of delivery involving residential, fully online and blended subject delivery. When planning residential consideration should be given to the value for students 'learning in place' with the option of subjects being held in more remote and/or regional locations in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Where possible this should occur in locations that help highlight First Nations perspectives in public service delivery and administration (Section 1.9, pp. 54–59; see also Part Three of Review Report).
- ANZSOG undertakes work to establish specific online systems and mechanisms (outside of subject delivery systems) that target the development of professional networks and the maintenance of a robust and meaningful cohort experience for EMPA students (Section 1.9, pp. 61–62).

PART TWO

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT AND VALUE

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. This part outlines the distinctive value proposition of the EMPA, highlighting the unique features of the program itself and the students who undertake it. Part Two of the Report also provides an overview of the EMPA student cohort, assessing enrolment patterns and student numbers. Diversity and inclusion considerations, such as gender equity and the participation of students from smaller jurisdictions, are also discussed and analysed in this section of the Report. The distinguishing characteristics of the cohort, such as their average age (42 years) and average years of public sector experience (16 years) 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 universities.

Value for Students and Alumni

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 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 seen substantial evidence demonstrating that the EMPA develops students' leadership skills and gives them the confidence to lead in a complex, contested 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 also found that the EMPA positively affects the career trajectories of students, helping them to achieve their professional goals.



Value for Agencies

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 leaders need in the 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 offerings, the EMPA is considered relatively expensive. Some agencies (particularly in smaller jurisdictions) have limited capacity to offer this development opportunity to staff at a significant scale. However, recent research from the Australian Institute of Human Resources highlights that learning and development opportunities are crucial for staff retention. The EMPA is a valued professional development opportunity that reaffirms students' commitment to public service and reduces the likelihood of their premature departure from the public service. This helps minimise agency turnover and recruitment costs.

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 and enhance awareness of the value of the EMPA. This may require developing relationships with key people at appropriate levels of seniority (those who are responsible for nominating and sponsoring staff) and across a greater diversity of public sector organisations. As the analysis in the APR has demonstrated, 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 or regions. Such collaborations would demonstrate the importance of local knowledge and highlight localised examples of practical expertise. 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 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. This occurs in core EMPA subjects and elective units that EMPA students select from the complementary master's level subjects offered at partner universities. These academic interactions can enhance the reputations of partner universities in the eyes of public sector agencies 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 public agencies. These engagements sometimes coalesce into formalised research collaborations, and they also manifest as informal professional networks. Additionally, many partner universities acknowledge the value of having experienced and senior 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.

Frequently chosen elective subjects:

- > Strategic Political Communication
- > Organisational Behaviour and Leadership
- > Persuasion in Policymaking

Nevertheless, there remains some debate over the monetary value of EMPA student enrolments in university electives. Universities weigh this 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 students undertake more subjects at their institutions.

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 faculty 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. the Case Library). There may also be value in highlighting the work of high achieving students enrolled at specific partner institutions. ANZSOG should also continue to 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 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 in the EMPA. Additionally, partner universities are highly supportive of the proposal to increase the focus of the EMPA on Indigenous and First Nations perspectives and thus where appropriate, ANZSOG should draw on Indigenous and Māori policy expertise in partner universities to achieve this goal.

PART THREE

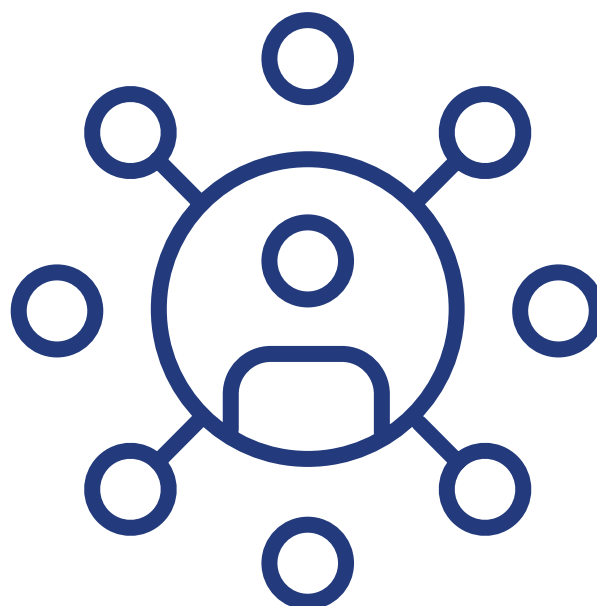
SUSTAINABILITY

Part Three of the APR Report assesses the sustainability of the EMPA and considers its strategic direction. In assessing sustainability, the Review Panel examined the educational focus, delivery mode, governance arrangements and business model of the program. Despite significant evidence of the EMPA's quality and committed support from key stakeholders, the program faces several sustainability challenges, which ANZSOG will need to examine and address in the coming years. Given the centrality of the EMPA to the ANZSOG mission, the Review Panel thought it appropriate to offer some broad observations about the sustainability challenges that it has identified. Drawing on the evidence and insights gained from the work of the APR, the Panel has outlined some potential strategies for addressing the EMPA's sustainability challenges, which may be useful to ANZSOG in its ongoing strategic review and planning processes.

The Review Panel saw merit in dividing the EMPA's sustainability challenges into four categories, which are outlined below. Some of the Review Panel's suggestions for reform are also listed, in brief.

1. **Scale and Financial Sustainability:** The small size of the EMPA student cohort, shifting modes and associated costs of learning and teaching, and the growing financial pressures across the university sectors in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand require that ANZSOG think strategically about the EMPA business model. The financial return to universities conferring the EMPA is marginal relative to that generated by regular degree programs. Moreover, engagement with the ANZSOG executive suggested that the EMPA's ongoing financial viability may be at risk in the absence of revenue growth from increasing the student cohort and/or student fees. The Review Panel offers the following suggestions for fortifying the EMPA's financial sustainability:
 - a. Marginally increase the number of students admitted to the EMPA each year;
 - b. Alter the admission criteria to create a larger pool of potential EMPA applicants;
 - c. Review EMPA pricing on a regular and systematic basis;
 - d. Consider a funding model that would include some student co-payment of fees;
 - e. Allow the enrolment of senior public servants from the Asia Pacific region, possibly into a separate stream or cohort of international EMPA students.
2. **University Partnerships:** The Australian and New Zealand higher education sector's shift away from public administration as a discrete academic discipline has disrupted the shared understanding of public administration that underpins ANZSOG's relationship with its partner universities. The Review Panel also noted the recent discontinuation of two postgraduate offerings in public administration at partner universities (UoM and USYD). Options beyond the EMPA may need to be considered to sustain the value and benefit of ANZSOG's university partnerships. These could include:
 - a. Additional educational programs (e.g. a graduate certificate in public administration or an early career postgraduate program);
 - b. 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);
 - c. Condensed versions of EMPA core subjects offered as microcredentials;
 - d. Alternate entry pathways offered at specific institutions (e.g. the EMPA Monash Pathway for students with no prior university education).

3. **Faculty and Stewardship of the Discipline:** The structure of the academic discipline of public administration is changing. Specialisation is increasingly common, and the discipline is now constituted by a diverse group of scholars focused on specific policy sub-systems or domains, such as social policy and environmental regulation. ANZSOG should reaffirm its position as a steward of the discipline by adapting to the shift in available expertise. The organisation can play a coordinating role in nurturing and assembling emerging and established sources of expertise relevant to the practice and understanding of public administration. This will ensure the sustainability of the EMPA's faculty. Initiatives for consideration and forward planning could include:
 - a. Mentoring and nurturing the talent of emerging public administration scholars and teachers (e.g. PhD scholarships, postdoctoral appointments, EMPA subject leaders mentoring the participation and engagement of junior public administration scholars in subject delivery);
 - b. Growing the network of public administration scholars (e.g. via early career research conferences or existing forums such as the 'Policy Institutes Panel for ANZSOG Research');
 - c. Recruiting Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori faculty and co-presenters to lead or co-deliver EMPA core subjects, and or other major education programs offered by ANZSOG;
 - d. Globalising the EMPA's faculty by recruiting additional international scholars.
4. **Support from Owner Governments:** Limits on public sector resources, particularly during times of crisis, and the competitive nature of the executive education market mean that the distinctive value of the EMPA for governments must be clearly articulated to help ensure their ongoing commitment to sponsor students into the program. And while comparative program fees suggest the degree is relatively under-priced, especially compared to other EMPA programs in the international market, from the perspective of public sector agencies the program represents a significant investment. This is a constraint on program growth and equitable student participation, particularly for those from smaller jurisdictions. Further work on how to engage and build government commitment to ANZSOG's executive education programs is needed. Strategies could include:
 - a. Communicating to government agencies that their staff members who are EMPA students need to be afforded the necessary study time to excel and gain the maximum value from the EMPA;
 - b. Raising awareness of the program amongst executives and managers at the appropriate employment grades (those likely to sponsor their staff to enrol);
 - c. Encouraging government agencies to sponsor more students from Indigenous and minority backgrounds to ensure equitable access to the EMPA;
 - d. Exploring opportunities for greater government involvement in the EMPA (e.g. via place-based teaching of policy case studies from smaller jurisdictions such as the Northern Territory and Tasmania);
 - e. Increasing alumni engagement in EMPA teaching and mentoring (e.g. in the presentation of contemporary challenges facing practitioners).



CONCLUSION

The Review Panel believes that ANZSOG and the EMPA play a critically important stewardship role in public sector education and training in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The EMPA promotes innovative and ethical public sector leadership, and the application of contemporary research to public administration practice. Due to ANZSOG's unique position at the interface between cutting-edge scholarship, training and innovative practice, the Review Panel contends that there is a growing case for deeper collaboration and resource sharing between ANZSOG, its partner universities and owner governments across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. This would ensure the continued delivery of ANZSOG's exemplary public sector leadership and administration programs into the future. The way ANZSOG approaches and facilitates such collaboration will be critical to the long-term sustainability of the EMPA. On a final note, ANZSOG's key stakeholder groups informed the Review Panel of the need to invest in greater cross-cultural public administration capacity. The Review Panel saw significant evidence of a need to further embed Indigenous content and perspectives within and across all subjects in the EMPA. With this in mind, the Review Panel recommends that ANZSOG consider reinvigorating the EMPA's animating idea of public value so that it is firmly place-based and connected to Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori perspectives on and priorities for public administration. Deeper engagement with Indigenous scholars, practitioners and communities would further demonstrate ANZSOG's commitment to reconciliation and assist future public sector leaders to advance co-governance.



'The EMPA was the best investment I have made in terms of my career. I would not have achieved the things I have without it and I strongly encourage others to undertake the program if it is the right time for them.'

- EMPA alum



Find out more

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