

ANZSOG

INDEPENDENT ACADEMIC REVIEW OF THE
King's College London
Postgraduate Learning Offer
(KCL PGL2)

A Report for the Policy Profession Unit,
United Kingdom Civil Service



Australia &
New Zealand
School of
Government

Review Team:
Dr Christopher Walker
and Dr Avery Poole

July 2023

Lorraine Wall
Interim Head of Policy Profession Unit
United Kingdom Civil Service

Dear Lorraine Wall,

We are pleased to submit this report which details the findings of the academic review of the King's College London Postgraduate Learning offer (KCL PGL2) in professional policy making skills. The review commends the International School for Government, King's College London for providing an outstanding learning program that is innovative in its provision, design and approach to the learning and teaching of public policy. The program is of high quality, intellectually stimulating and well aligned to the professional development and learning needs of mid-career Civil Service policy professionals. The review has identified areas for improvement relating to administrative efficiency and ways in which student engagement and the reach of the program can be extended to provide further opportunity and benefit to the UK Civil Service. A detailed list of recommendations is included at section 12 of the report.

This report is evidence of a well-established connection between the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) and the United Kingdom Civil Service Policy Profession Unit (PPU). For some time now we have shared resources and undertaken reciprocal *pro bono* work for academic program reviews. This has included ANZSOG's review of the Executive Master of Public Policy offered by the London School of Economics and PPU involvement in the review of the ANZSOG Executive Master of Public Administration. It is very pleasing to have now had an opportunity to contribute to this review of the KCL PGL2.

Numerous staff from PPU have provided administrative and research support to the review process. We would like to particularly note and thank the invaluable secretariat support provided by Rebecca Butler and Naomi Kennedy. Their guidance, leadership and management oversight has been instrumental in the success of this project. The research support and results analysis undertaken of the survey findings by Tony Chen and Jack Rodgers from the Government Statistical Service have strengthened the rigor and validity of the findings, and their contribution to the project is greatly appreciated.

Several external parties with experience and expertise in public policy and postgraduate learning and teaching contributed to the discussion and analysis. The review team is particularly grateful to the many students, alumni, working level contacts and other staff in Civil Service organisations who made time to contribute to the review through focus groups, meetings, workshops and by responding to survey requests.¹ The review team met with all staff from the International School for Government (ISfG), King's College London as well as faculty executive and we are incredibly grateful for the time, interest, and information they readily provided to the review process. Professor Linda McKie, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy; Mr Alexander Downer AC, Executive Chair, ISfG; and Professor Massey, Academic Director of the KCL PGL2 were all generous with their time and enthusiastic in exploring ideas and innovations that might result from this review process. Their expressed support for the ongoing development and expansion of the program is very encouraging.

We trust you find the insights, ideas, and suggestions for improvement in this report helpful in the ongoing development of Civil Service learning offers that support the professional development of policy professionals. We have found the review process to be rewarding work and appreciate the support provided over the six months of our involvement.



Christopher Walker

*Review Lead
Deputy Dean
Academic Director, Executive Master
of Public Administration (EMPA)
The Australia and New Zealand
School of Government (ANZSOG)*



Avery Poole

*Review Co-Lead
Deputy Director,
Academic and Research Engagement
The Australia and New Zealand
School of Government (ANZSOG)*

¹ References to Civil Service organisations or organisational stakeholders throughout this review encompass UK Civil Service departments, agencies, Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and nations.

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Reviewers



Dr Christopher Walker

Dr Christopher Walker is the Deputy Dean (Education and University Relations) and Academic Director of the Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA) at the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG). Prior to joining ANZSOG, Chris was the Head of the School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, Australia (2012–2018). Chris' work in academic leadership was preceded by a highly successful 20-year career in the New South Wales public service that included Senior Executive appointments in the portfolios of health, transport and the Cabinet Office. Chris has extensive experience in the leadership of academic programs and has been involved in the conduct of reviews of public policy and social science programs across numerous Australian universities. Chris retains several advisory/steering committee roles to various national and international government agencies and commissions and maintains an active program of research in public policy, risk and compliance regulation. Chris is also an Adjunct Professor with the School of Government and International Relations, Griffith University, Queensland.



Dr Avery Poole

Dr Avery Poole is the Deputy Director, Academic and Research Engagement at the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG). She works primarily on the academic management of ANZSOG's Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA). Her research explores topics relating to public sector education and the role of education as diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific region. She has extensive postgraduate teaching experience in the areas of international governance, regional and international organisations, and Southeast Asian regionalism. Avery holds a PhD and a MA from the University of British Columbia in Canada, and a BA (Hons) and a BCom from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She is an Affiliate in the School of Politics and International Relations at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

Details of secretariat support from PPU

Rebecca Butler

Rebecca Butler is the Accredited Learning Manager for the Civil Service Policy Profession Unit (PPU). She works with university partners (King's College London and the London School of Economics) to manage provision of bespoke postgraduate accredited learning for policy professionals. She has provided secretarial and project management support to the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) throughout this evaluation. Prior to joining PPU in 2022, Rebecca worked as a Lecturer of English at Nottingham Trent University.

Naomi Kennedy

Naomi Kennedy (née Clothier) is the Skills and Capability Lead for the Civil Service Policy Profession Unit (PPU). She oversees a large portfolio of learning and development for the Policy Profession from induction through to level 3 of the Policy Profession Standards. Prior to her maternity leave in May 2023, Naomi regularly consulted with the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) on this review and provided survey design support.

Sarbani Banerjee

As the maternity cover for the Skills and Capability Lead for the Civil Service Policy Profession Unit (PPU), Sarbani Banerjee has overseen the later stages of the review process. She previously worked in higher education policy including as Head of Learning and Teaching at the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

San Kundi

As Accredited Learning Delivery Officer for the Civil Service Policy Profession Unit (PPU), San Kundi provided administrative support for in-person consultations and focus groups during the Australia and New Zealand School of Government's (ANZSOG) UK visit and undertook market research to inform the review.

Vipita Chauhan

As Personal Assistant to the Interim Head of the Policy Profession Unit (PPU), Vip provided crucial administrative support for program meetings, consultations and focus groups during the review process. She also provides business support for the Program Oversight and Governance (POG) team in the unit.

Acknowledgements

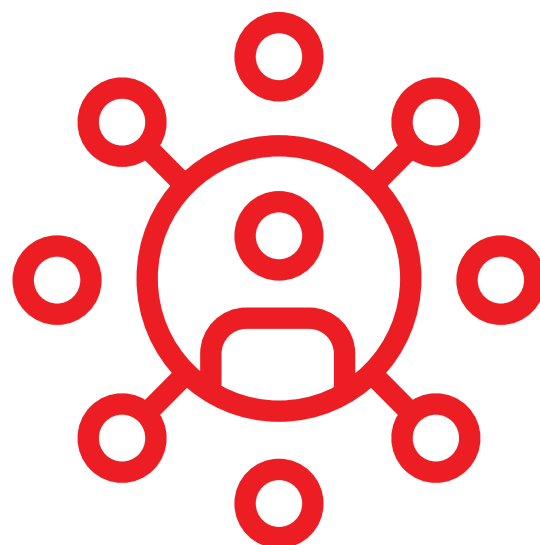
The review team acknowledges the critical reflections and broader discussion on future opportunities held with Tamara Finkelstein CB, Permanent Secretary, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Civil Service Head of Policy Profession.

The services and contribution of Tony Chen and Jack Rodgers, Civil Service Fast Stream, Government Statistical Service are acknowledged and greatly appreciated. Mr Chen and Mr Rodgers assisted with the analysis of survey data and prepared a results and analysis report, the contents of which has been used extensively in the discussion of results and findings. A copy of their full results report is at Appendix 4.

Professor Nick Pearce, Director of the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) and Professor of Public Policy, University of Bath participated as an external academic and policy expert during the workshop, helping to review and critique the results and findings of the review process. Professor Pearce's comments and contribution added to the depth of analysis and expanded upon the range of ideas for improvement and innovation of the KCL PGL2.

Dr Richard Common, University of Nottingham works as an external examiner of the KCL PGL2 and participated as an external academic expert during the workshop, helping to review and critique the results and findings of the review process. Dr Common also provided input and comment on his observations of the evidence of learning displayed in the work of students completing modules of the KCL PGL2. This drew on his comparative experience across public policy programs as a teacher and external examiner.

The contribution of alumni, students, KCL PGL2 Steering Group members, Working Level Contacts (WLCs), line managers and Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession (HoPPs) is greatly appreciated and acknowledged. The time and input provided by these interested parties has ensured that the review is thorough and accurate in its assessment and findings.



Executive Summary

This report was commissioned to provide an independent and expert review of the King's College London Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2) in public policy, that was commissioned by the Policy Profession Unit (PPU) of the UK Civil Service in 2019. The KCL PGL2 has been designed to develop the policy skills and provide a professional development opportunity for mid-career policy practitioners working in the UK Civil Service. This review is an academic program review which focuses on the quality and academic rigour of the program, as well as the alignment and relevance of the learning experience to the contemporary demands and skills development required by professional policy practitioners at level 2 of the [Policy Profession Standards](#).

The Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) was approached to undertake the review because of its expertise and experience in providing executive and postgraduate education programs for civil servants across Australia and New Zealand. ANZSOG academic staff have significant experience in the conduct of academic program reviews. ANZSOG's independence from the UK Civil Service and UK university sector strengthens the value of the review process and this report.

Section 1 of this report provides background information on the role of PPU and the important task it plays in the ongoing development of learning opportunities for policy professionals across the UK Civil Service. This includes a brief overview of the core requirements of the KCL PGL2, which is co-managed and co-delivered by King's College London with the Civil Service Policy Profession.

Section 2 provides a detailed overview of the KCL PGL2, including learning options (standalone modules, postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma); modes of delivery; learning modules; and cohort size and characteristics. This is important information because the learning offer has unique characteristics that distinguish it from standard university postgraduate programs. The learning offer allows students to complete individual learning modules as independent standalone units of study, making the program highly accessible. Individual modules may be banked and then later contribute towards a postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate.

The learning program is predominantly delivered online, with a limited number of hybrid modules involving in-person teaching. Most modules are also very discrete, short, intensive units of study (four weeks) valued at 5 credit points which require study plans to engage in a rolling program of units throughout the year (or more) to achieve a formal postgraduate award. These features make the KCL PGL2 highly adaptive and suitable for busy policy practitioners engaged in full time work. It also makes the program a unique learning offer within the university sector.

The first student cohort of the Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policy Making Skills graduated in July 2022. While the learning offer is still relatively new, this review provides an opportunity to assess processes, student experience and program alignment against original objectives. In addition, within the broader context of the work of the Policy Profession Unit, evidence from this review will contribute to the Policy Profession's Capability Program.

The review of the KCL PGL2 involved an examination of the following issues:

- Quality
- Professional alignment (coverage, contemporaneity, learning transfer)
- Applied and contextual learning
- Commitment and flexibility (including hybridity, accessibility, and support)
- Scalability.

In examining the above issues, the review team and PPU secretariat completed a range of data collection and analysis tasks. This included surveys of students and organisational stakeholders; the convening of numerous focus groups (online and in person); and participation in consultations and meetings with parties involved in the sponsorship and delivery of the learning offer. Discussions were held with staff from the International School for Government (ISfG), the Policy Institute and the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College London. Meetings were held with governance stakeholders including an extraordinary meeting of the PGL2 Steering Group and discussions with the Civil Service Head of Policy Profession, Tamara Finkelstein.

The analysis of survey results was undertaken by two analysts on the Civil Service Fast Stream for the Government Statistical Service. A broader discussion and critique of the results and findings was undertaken at a workshop that involved Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession (HoPPs), alumni, PPU staff and external academic expertise in the learning and teaching of public policy. The purpose of the workshop was to deepen the analysis of the results and explore possible recommendations. Section 4 Methodology provides further detail on the survey and focus group populations, the analytical methods and comments on the validity and reliability of the process and findings. The review process commenced in December 2022 and was completed in June 2023.

The main findings for each area of analysis are summarised below, followed by the review recommendations.

Quality

The review findings indicate that the KCL PGL2 is a high quality, rigorous postgraduate learning offer. The program content is contemporary, intellectually stimulating and well aligned to the professional development needs of the Policy Profession. The academic leadership of the program is excellent; the program is subject to thorough processes of oversight, evaluation, and continuous development. The quality of learning and teaching across the program is highly regarded.

Nevertheless, it is important that the online teaching skills of faculty are developed, and online modules and teaching practices regularly refreshed. The quality of the program can improve with greater diversification of assessment tasks. Across a range of indicators, survey respondents and focus group participants judged that the program was performing well and delivering a valuable, high quality learning experience. There remains room for improvement in the provision of clearer information regarding the roles and responsibilities of the various organisations and the services that support the student learning journey (PPU, Civil Service organisations, ISfG and Ernst and Young (EY)). An opportunity exists to build options and support for greater levels of student networking, and this is seen as both shaping the quality and extending the value of the learning experience. Accessibility is another important aspect of the student experience which should be investigated further by PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group.

Professional Alignment

The review team has concluded that the KCL PGL2 is well aligned to the professional development needs of policy professionals. The program imparts a range of skills; builds confidence in the understanding of policy as a practice and a concept; and is generally considered to contribute to the career advancement aspirations of students. There is strong evidence that the program plays a consolidating role in strengthening the skills and performance of students in their policy roles. The application of skills is explored in more detail when considering applied and contextual learning in section 7.

Applied and Contextual Learning

Student feedback and discussion with stakeholders reveals high levels of interest in ensuring the KCL PGL2 is well aligned to the policy skills and professional development needs of learners. The breadth of learning modules across the program and the design of 15-credit modules (such as Global Public Policy Challenges) were considered well aligned and targeted to the challenges of modern policy making. Students value the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of module topics, but argued that the teaching and promotional material should clearly articulate how these concepts strengthen their policy making capability and connect with the applied context of their work. The use of practitioner speakers, the design of assessment tasks and teaching activities are all effective in connecting module content with the applied context of policy work. Students reported that this has contributed to both their broad understanding of policy work and the development of their applied policy skills.

ISfG was commended for the impressive range of practitioner speakers upon which it draws. Nevertheless, it was generally felt that more could be done to strengthen this aspect of the KCL PGL2. ISfG works with PPU to secure speakers but advance co-ordination would enable access to a more extensive and experienced pool of practitioners working on contemporary policy issues. While program content and connections to practice are seen to contribute to the development of policy knowledge and policy making skills, the extent to which this might be achieved is often influenced by the style and mode of teaching and the amount of time students can commit to learning. These points are discussed further below.

Commitment, Flexibility, Access and Support

The review finds that the KCL PGL2 is a highly accessible and well supported learning program. The program is considered by participants in the review to be highly flexible, although they recommend further guidance on suggested learning pathways (grouping of inter-related learning modules). Successful performance in the program requires a significant commitment of student time, and a key area noted for improvement is the design of essential reading lists and preparation materials. While the scholarly depth of the learning modules should not be reduced, it is important that ISfG remains alert and sensitive to the volume of time that students can commit to completing required reading and other learning preparation tasks. Student learning would benefit if greater effort was put into achieving equivalence and clarifying essential reading across all modules.

Noting this, it is critical that any promotion of the program clearly advises current and prospective students of the importance of effective time management for achieving success. Access to study leave and other forms of Civil Service organisational support significantly influence student success and have an impact on equitable access. Student experiences of organisational support have been variable. The review recommends more proactive forms of communication between PPU and organisations on this important issue. Securing support from organisations is critical for maximising the value of their investment in developing the Civil Service Policy Profession.

Students value the accessibility and flexibility provided by the predominantly online delivery mode. ISfG is commended for the high levels of student satisfaction with hybrid and online teaching. The review recommends the strategic placement of hybrid teaching modules across the learning program to maximise the value of in-person teaching, and to extend the positive impact this may have on interpersonal connections across student cohorts as they progress through subsequent online modules. It is noted that more extensive communications are required to clarify alternative arrangements – including any wider implications – for students who experience disruptions with progression through their program of study.

There is an effective and satisfactory range of academic and study skills support services for students, but greater clarification is needed for students regarding the respective support services offered by the different parties (student's organisation, PPU, ISfG and King's College London). An important area for action concerns more explicitly establishing student peer support mechanisms, which are critical for students who only complete online modules (do not experience in-person teaching) and those who are undertaking university study for the first time or are returning to university study after an extended period.

Scalability

There is general support from students and stakeholders for expanding the number of students participating in the KCL PGL2, subject to demand. The review finds that expansion could potentially provide opportunities for building in more seminar options and flexibility, but is also seen to have potential negative impacts on student engagement and learning. The online delivery format readily allows for upscaling and growth of the number of participants. However, the accommodation of larger student numbers in interactive seminars, small break-out groups and during in-person teaching for hybrid modules was noted by students as a challenge. Increased provision also has resource implications for ISfG. While ISfG and PPU are keen to see enrolments in the program expand if demand allows, it will be important that careful analysis is undertaken on teaching quality and student engagement. The review team recommends that PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group work with ISfG to explore how expansion might best be managed to ensure that student engagement and quality learning are not negatively impacted.

Recommendations

The following recommendations draw on the key findings of the report and identify the responsible lead organisation. Recommendations have been grouped under three major themes that concern:

- Communication, Access, and Organisational Support
- Quality Learning and Teaching and
- Administration and Future Development.

Communication, Access, and Organisational Support

The following recommendations seek to address issues that matter to current and prospective students, in terms of what they might learn about the program; how it applies to their working roles; how they enrol in and progress through the program; and what critical information and support influences their student journey and success in the program:

Communication

That PPU and ISfG work together to review the communication of information to potential and enrolled students. This should seek to simplify messages; communicate core and essential information; achieve consistency in messaging; and clarify which organisation is responsible for messaging on various issues. Critical areas identified for action include:

- *Clearly defining the target audience of the KCL PGL2:* Ensure consistency in information provided to students regarding which Civil Service grades and types of Civil Service work (policy practice) are most suitable for the program.
- *Time management and achieving success:* Ensure that any promotion of the program clearly articulates the importance of effective time management for achieving success. Students should receive consistent and clear communications throughout their programs of study from PPU, ISfG and their organisations regarding how they should manage and plan for the successful completion of learning modules, with reference to preparation, attendance, and assessment completion.
- *The development of student journey maps:* Produce maps or pathways of student journeys that show which organisation (PPU, sponsoring organisation, ISfG, EY) is responsible for the various administrative processes and support services.
- *Delineation of roles and clear articulation of what support services are provided by each organisation:* Provide a simple and accessible table that defines major roles, responsibilities and the key services provided by each organisation (PPU, sponsoring organisation, ISfG, EY) involved in the student's learning experience; and
- *The development of an accessibility statement:* Provide a statement which outlines accessible features and the range of support services available (from their organisation, PPU and King's) for KCL PGL2 students.

Streamlining Application Processes

That PPU examines with organisational Working Level Contacts (WLCs) how application processes can be aligned and streamlined across organisations, or at least contain minimal steps and processes.

Accessibility

That the KCL PGL2 Steering Group initiates a review of accessibility issues impacting on student participation in the KCL PGL2. This analysis should consider the role and resources available from King's College London and the extent to which sponsoring organisations should be supporting the accessible participation of staff with additional needs in the KCL PGL2.

Strengthening Support from Organisations

That PPU initiates proactive forms of communication with sponsoring organisations regarding the provision of support (such as study leave, peer networking, and mentoring from alumni) for students enrolled on the KCL PGL2. This may include direct communication to organisational Heads of Policy Profession and/or a student's line manager outlining the importance of organisational support for maximising the value of its investment in the development of Civil Service policy professionals.

The KCL PGL2: Study Plans, Modules, Assessment and Quality Learning and Teaching

The following recommendations focus on the learning and teaching experience. Recommendations focus on strengthening the impact of the program on learning and the professional development of policy practitioners:

Program Planning and Sample Study Plans

That, to the maximum extent possible, ISfG publishes an advance program plan of learning modules to be taught throughout an academic year according to PPU's recruitment schedule for the learning offer.

That ISfG, in consultation with PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, prepares sample study plans to assist the decision making and planning of prospective students. These sample study plans should seek to align like modules and articulate the primary features that distinguish the difference between each study plan.

Learning Modules

That PPU and ISfG work collaboratively to review module descriptions so that their relevance to policy skills development and the applied domain of policy practice are made more evident. This may be achieved simply by including a mandatory information field asking, "How is this module relevant to policy practice?"

That ISfG works with module presenters/teaching staff to consider how concepts and content connect with policy practice. This may be undertaken by teaching staff through explanation and in-class activities. It may also be conveyed through the effective use of practitioner speakers and the design of assessments.

That PPU and ISfG review how they work together to ensure access to an extensive and experienced pool of practitioners working on contemporary policy issues who may then contribute to module teaching as guest speakers.

That ISfG works to ensure essential readings are limited to a manageable number and are available in advance of the commencement of teaching. While not recommending a reduction of the scholarly depth of the learning modules, it is important that ISfG remains alert and sensitive to the volume of time that students can commit to completing required reading and other learning preparation tasks.

Assessment

That ISfG works to embed clearer connections between, and scaffolding across, student assessment activities in each learning module.

That ISfG considers options for building greater variation into assessment design across the KCL PGL2. This may mean a proportion of modules select alternative assessment formats to the 1,000-word essay. Variation in assessment type would test a broader range of skills and allow students to demonstrate in different ways how they have met the learning objectives of a module.

Networking and Peer Support

That PPU and ISfG work collaboratively to establish options as well as embedded mechanisms that purposely facilitate student networking across the learning program. A stronger focus on how the KCL PGL2 can include networking components that allow students to build connections and share experiences will strengthen the value of the offering to students and sponsoring organisations.

That the design and timing of networking events take accessibility issues into account.

That more explicit work is undertaken by ISfG to build optional systems of peer support (which is different from, but connected to, networking). This should initially target students who enrol on the KCL PGL2 who have not previously completed university study. Some form of buddy or mentoring system (drawing on alumni) may be an option that will help to address and support these students.

That PPU prepares guidance notes for sponsoring organisations on how they might foster peer support arrangements for students. It is also recommended that in consultation with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, PPU considers its role in facilitating peer support arrangements across the program, particularly for students from organisations with few or single sponsored students.

Online Teaching Skills

That ISfG ensures teaching staff remain appraised and make use of the most effective online teaching tools and systems to build student engagement and strengthen opportunities for learning. ISfG should provide a brief annual report (verbal or written) to PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group on staff development specific to online learning and teaching, and any notable innovations introduced to the online learning and teaching experience. This may include, for example, innovations in the online design and presentation of module content, online pre-seminar activities, online teaching delivery innovations and networking tools.

Hybrid Modules

That ISfG gives consideration to the strategic placement of hybrid teaching modules across the learning program to maximise the value of in-person teaching and extend the positive impact this may have on interpersonal connections across student cohorts as they progress through subsequent online modules.

That ISfG with PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group considers options for delivering some in-person teaching for hybrid modules with university partners or involving regional hubs in the programme delivery.

Important Issues of Administration and Future Expansion

The following recommendations address important administrative matters that impact on the continuous operation of the program and its future development:

Disruption to Student Progression

That ISfG articulates the process and KCL rules through which significant disruptions to the progression of a student's program of study are managed.

That PPU, ISfG and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group consider disruptions, flexibility and program completion timeframes so that a clear, efficient and manageable framework is established for all parties (students, sponsoring organisations, PPU and ISfG) impacted by disruption in study plans, within university regulations.

Program Expansion

That plans for the expansion of student enrolments on the KCL PGL2 proceed, if demand allows. However, PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group should work with ISfG on how expansion might best be managed to ensure student engagement and quality learning is not negatively impacted.

Extension to a Master's Program

That PPU considers and promotes pathway options for students to build on their learning, including examining options for innovative extensions in partnership with King's College London or other suitable universities in the Civil Service's new regional hubs that recognise the postgraduate diploma award.

Other Administrative Matters

That PPU and ISfG jointly investigate and determine required action on minor administrative issues raised during the review process. This includes, but is not restricted to:

- *A process for accessing IT support.* This tended to concern students who had recently enrolled on the program and wanted more support in understanding how to access and use university systems such as King's virtual learning environment (KEATS) and anti-plagiarism software (Turnitin), and how they might go about establishing virtual study groups.
- *Supplementary study skills support.* This may include providing best practice sample essays to review, other reviewed work with constructive feedback and early guidance on required referencing practices.



1

Introduction

1.1 The Policy Profession

The Civil Service Policy Profession is a UK-wide professional community. Approximately 32,000 civil servants across government recognise themselves as policy professionals, whose aim it is to develop and deliver public policy for ministers and citizens.

The Policy Profession is led by Tamara Finkelstein (Permanent Secretary, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and her deputy Susan Acland-Hood (Permanent Secretary, Department for Education).

The Policy Profession is charged with designing, developing and proposing appropriate courses of action to help meet key government priorities and ministerial objectives.

The Policy Profession has as its aim to improve policy making by ensuring:

- › better use of evidence
- › better understanding of the political and democratic context and
- › better planning and clarity, from the outset, as to how policies will be delivered.

Current priorities of the Policy Profession include:

- › growing the Policy Profession from a community of practice to a fully established profession with clear expectations, high quality learning programs, and a stronger sense of community, identity and diversity
- › ensuring the continued development of professional capability
- › improving the flow of knowledge within the Civil Service
- › strengthening its career development offer
- › building relationships, including with academic partners and
- › learning from, and sharing best practice with, other administrations around the world.

Two reports have played a major role in shaping the Policy Profession. '[Twelve actions to professionalise policy making](#)' (2013), published by the Civil Service Policy Profession Board, outlined aims and twelve actions to improve policy making across government. These twelve actions were formally reviewed in 2018. '[Looking back to look forward: from "Twelve Actions" to "Policy Profession 2025"](#)' (2019) presents the main findings of the review and sets out the future direction of the profession through the 'Policy Profession 2025' project.

The Policy Profession has its own governance arrangements to drive its ambitions and objectives. According to the [Policy Profession Board \(2019\)](#), the 'Policy Profession Board provides overall governance and direction; the Policy Profession Unit acts as a broker, facilitator and catalyst for improvement across the Civil Service'.

1.2 The Policy Profession Unit

The Policy Profession Unit (PPU) is a central unit that supports the leadership of the profession to build capability of individual policy makers and improve policy making systems across government.

The unit supports the profession's priorities through service provision, including accredited qualifications, careers and talent management, knowledge sharing events, professional standards, skills assessment, policy toolkits and core learning.

The unit delivers these services in collaboration with a wide range of partners, including Civil Service organisations, other government professions, public bodies, academia, and international governments.

In 2021, PPU refreshed the original framework that was developed with colleagues across government in 2018 to set out what skills a good policy maker needs to have. The result is a description of the journey from developing to expert practitioner across 12 skill areas, detailed in the [Policy Profession Standards](#). The standards aim to provide a consistent guide for policy makers, supporting people and their career development at every level in the profession. This professional competency framework also helps to assure skills consistency across organisations.

The levels (Level 1 – Developing, Level 2 – Practitioner and Level 3 – Expert) are not explicitly linked to job grades, as an individual's career journey and experiences could result in them being at different levels for different skill areas. However, by mid-career – with between three and seven years of relevant professional experience – policy professionals should be developing some competencies at level 2. The following discussion briefly outlines how a formal learning offer was commissioned and delivered to support the capability competency development of policy professionals at level 2.



1.3 The original learning offer commission

In 2014, the Policy Profession Board commissioned PPU to explore the potential to create a professional, accredited learning offer that would raise the capability of policy professionals across the Civil Service and fill a recognised gap in the provision of structured and assessed learning for mid-career policy professionals.

PPU initially tried to commission a mid-career program in 2014 but was unsuccessful.

The Policy Profession Board commissioned PPU to go to market in November 2018.

They gave a steer of up to £5k on cost and potential numbers of circa 150 students to pilot the program. The Cabinet Office Investment Appraisal Committee (IAC) approved the outline business case in May 2019 and PPU went out to tender between July and September 2019.

The postgraduate Level 2 Steering Group (See 1.4 Program governance) assessed the quality and the procurement team in Capita/Knowledge pool (the third-party contract supplier for the Cabinet Office learning frameworks at that time) assessed the pricing of the four university bids submitted. The panel assessed according to a 65%/35% quality/pricing ratio.

The key requirements for the successful supplier of this program were to:

- ensure top quality learning, contemporary and credible provision and have the ability to award master's level degrees
- work with practitioners to co-design and co-deliver
- bring a strength of institutional practice, research and public policy expertise which is attractive to experienced policy practitioners
- provide continuous improvement and contemporary approaches to policy analysis, development, design, and delivery as well as learning
- deliver learning which is flexible and can be delivered over a longer time frame for example, for part-time workers
- deliver learning against PPU's professional standards (this could be through optional modules as well as core)
- inspire experienced practitioners to try new approaches / apply new techniques which deliver improvements in their policy areas
- work in a collaborative way to ensure a joint approach, likely with other universities and other practitioners across public policy
- ensure delivery across the UK
- demonstrate how to build up the scale of the qualification to potentially hundreds per year (including how the supplier will work with other universities) and
- make modules available as accredited standalone options where demand is proven.

King's College London was identified as best suited to meet the learning requirements set out in the request proposal and had provided the assurance of quality requested by the steering group and stakeholders. The KCL PGL2 was piloted in May 2020.

1.4 Program governance

A steering group of senior civil servants from across government was originally appointed in 2019 to oversee the commissioning, design, development and (subject to successful pilot) operationalising of the postgraduate level 2 learning offer for the Policy Profession.

The KCL PGL2 Steering Group – chaired by David Kennedy (Director General, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) as the Accredited Learning Sponsor for the Policy Profession – continues to provide quality assurance and oversee the continuous development of the learning offer.

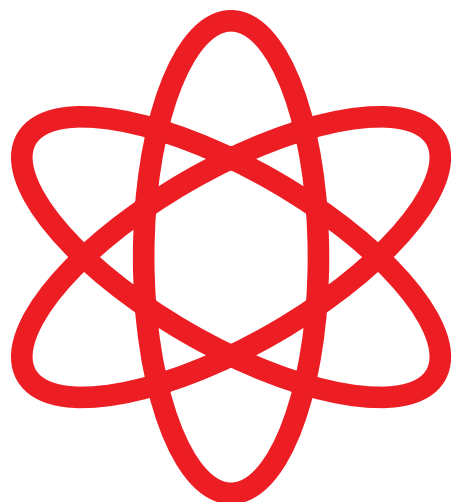
The steering group includes representation from the main governmental organisations that engage with the learning offer, the devolved administrations and other government organisations with strong learning and development portfolios. While the chair and some of the original steering group members remain in their roles, others have stepped down and have either recommended replacements or been replaced by alumni of the Policy Profession's accredited learning offers, who have an interest in learning and development.

The KCL PGL2 Steering Group meets virtually on a quarterly basis with the academic and programs teams in King's College London, the head of PPU and its accredited learning team, and with student and alumni representatives, who provide feedback on the learning offer to inform its continuous improvement.

The International School for Government (ISfG) Programs Team at King's also provides PPU with client reports following each teaching period, including module evaluation and diversity data.

The Policy Profession reports on uptake of the learning offer to the Policy Profession Board on a quarterly basis and on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion metrics annually.

As a condition of the original business case approval for the KCL PGL2, PPU commissioned ANZSOG to undertake an independent evaluation of the KCL PGL2 by peer review. Ahead of the current contract end date for the learning offer (4 October 2024), the purpose of this evaluation is to verify and expand on these regular quality assurance measures for the program's development.



2

About the KCL PGL2

2.1 Learner agreements

The KCL PGL2 is a modularised, flexible learning offer. Students can choose to undertake an individual module or can engage in more sustained programs of part-time postgraduate study.

There are three learner agreements available:

1. Standalone modules:

Each short module is a four-week online course worth five master's level credits. Modules include interactive lessons, guest lectures and three live webinars. Longer 15-credit modules (between four and eight weeks) have varying formats. For example, the Policy Process module blends online learning with two intensive days of face-to-face teaching and pre-reading, whilst Global Public Policy Challenges is three days of intensive teaching with pre-reading. Following successful completion of the module assessment, students obtain an e-certificate of completion.

Students may choose to undertake an individual module in their policy domain area or may use the standalone module learner agreement to test their capacity for further postgraduate study.

The KCL PGL2 allows returning students to bank up to three modules (including a maximum of one 15-credit module) previously undertaken and upgrade to the longer postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma. If choosing to upgrade, students must do so within two years of undertaking the standalone module(s). Their organisation is charged only for the remaining program cost (the program cost minus the cost of each banked module). Their banked modules count towards their course credits for the longer program of study.

2. Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Policy Making Skills:

This accreditation is equivalent to one third of a master's degree or 60 postgraduate credits.

There is just one core module for the postgraduate certificate, The Policy Process: Advanced Theory and Practice (15 credits).

Students choose nine additional short modules. Alternatively, students may take one additional 15-credit optional module (see Appendix 1 – Module list) alongside their core and six 5-credit modules to make up the remaining course credits.

Students are expected to complete the postgraduate certificate in one year but have up to a maximum of three years to complete according to university regulations. Upon graduation, students obtain a paper certificate of their formal postgraduate accreditation.

Students may choose to upgrade from the postgraduate certificate to the postgraduate diploma within the first nine months of study at no extra cost (organisations are charged the remaining course fees).

3. Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policy Making Skills:

This accreditation is equivalent to two thirds of a master's degree or 120 postgraduate credits.

The first year of the postgraduate diploma is the same as the postgraduate certificate with just one core module, The Policy Process. In their second year, diploma students complete a second core module, Global Public Policy Challenges (15 credits) and undertake group work on a policy challenge for the Policy Skills Project (30 credits).

Students make up their remaining course credits by choosing 12 additional short module options or nine short modules and one longer 15-credit optional module.

Students can spread the remaining modules over the two-year period of study as they wish. Although students are expected to complete the course within two years, they have up to four years to complete according to university regulations. Upon graduation, students obtain a paper certificate of their formal postgraduate accreditation.

2.2 Mode of delivery

The dominant mode of delivery is online using King's virtual learning environment KEATS. Although students attend weekly one-hour live webinars, most of the learning is asynchronous through video lectures, pre-reading, designated activities and online discussion boards.

The longer 15-credit modules include two or three hybrid intensive teaching days, which students may attend in person on King's Strand campus in London or online.

All live teaching sessions are recorded and uploaded to KEATS within 48 hours of delivery, where they are available to access for the remainder of the module.

2.3 Range of modules

The KCL PGL2 offers 32 modules, 31 of which are available as optional modules (See Appendix 1 – Program Structure for module list).

Most modules are focused on skills development rather than particular policy issues. Exceptions are the Climate Change and Multilevel Governance modules, which were developed in response to Civil Service demand. The module range combines focus on specific policy domains (e.g., International Trade Policy) and more generalist subjects (e.g., Approaches to Policy Making).

Students can choose one or two modules in any teaching period from three or four module options. Although students have the choice of declining to undertake a module in a teaching period, students undertaking the postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma without banked modules report needing to undertake two modules in some teaching periods to make up the course credits within the specified timeframe, thereby limiting optionality.

The modular cycle is between 12 and 18 months. That means that students can expect a module that is currently running to become available again within an 18-month period. Occasionally, more popular modules are prioritised in the rotation when timetabling the program.

2.4 Audience

The student demographic is majority British (71%) of white ethnicity (84%) and London-based (71%), although the online format also caters to civil servants in the devolved administrations (9%) and overseas (1%). Most students are aged between 30 and 39 years (46%). A small majority of students is female (54% female, 42% male, 4% other).²

The student majority (89%) is broadly in line with the target audience for the program. Most students are mid-career policy professionals at Grade 6 (14%) and Grade 7 (49%). A growing number of more junior policy professionals – Senior Executive Officers (SEOs) (26%) – have enrolled on the learning offer since the grade threshold was lowered.³

To be eligible for the program, students must have a minimum of three years' relevant professional experience and a prior degree (Second Class Honours or above). Previous academic qualifications do not have to be in a relevant field. Alternatively, if students do not have a prior degree at the required classification, they are asked to provide evidence of approximately seven years' relevant professional experience.

Most students on the learning offer have a prior degree. However, a small number of students have applied and been accepted onto the program via the experience-only route.

² Demographic data on age, nationality, ethnicity and gender is valid as of September 2022.

³ Job grade and work location data is valid as of June 2023.

2.5 Cohort size

Cohort sizes typically range from 50 students in quieter teaching periods (May, July) to 100 students in more popular teaching periods (November, January, March). Record cohort sizes were recruited onto the learning offer in January (114) and March (162) 2023.

The majority of cohorts comprise standalone module students only. Student numbers on the postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma are smaller, averaging 53 per year (across two intakes in March and May) for the postgraduate certificate and 66 per year (across two intakes in March and May) for the postgraduate diploma. The maximum cohort size is 150 students, although King's will accommodate higher student numbers with advance notice. Further detail on the program structure, schedule of intakes, enrolment processes and learning modules is provided in Appendix 1.



3

Evaluation rationale

Piloted in May 2020, the KCL PGL2 is still in early development, with the first cohort of the postgraduate diploma graduating in July 2022. An evaluation of the program following the graduation of the first cohort was a condition of the business approval process. Accordingly, in April 2022, PPU began planning the commission of an independent peer review of the accredited learning offer to evaluate its quality, coverage, contemporaneity, flexibility, scalability, early impact and where improvements were needed.

Although the Civil Service has regular reporting mechanisms in place for quality assurance purposes (See 1.4 Program governance), this is the first extensive independent evaluation of the KCL PGL2 using the peer networking model. It provides an external assessment of the program for added assurance, as well as expert recommendations for its continuous improvement.

Using the peer networking model, the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) was deemed a suitable reviewer because of:

- its high profile as a public policy school
- its independence from market competition in UK Higher Education
- its expertise in executive program development and delivery within a comparable politico-cultural landscape
- its recent experience of peer reviewing the Executive Master of Public Policy at the London School of Economics in 2020, the Policy Profession's initial learning offer for senior civil servants (established in 2015)
- its prior relationship with the Policy Profession through their reciprocal evaluative arrangement, given the Policy Profession's contribution to the review of ANZSOG's Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA) in 2021 and
- its interest in flexible and hybrid learning models from a business planning perspective.

3.1 Project scope

This independent peer review forms part of a wider evidence-gathering exercise to inform the Policy Profession's Capability Program. The review's findings will directly inform the development of the profession's level 2 curriculum within this wider program of work.

The primary research questions which shaped the focus of the review inquired into evidence of:

- Quality
- Professional alignment (coverage, contemporaneity, learning transfer)
- Applied and contextual learning
- Commitment and flexibility (including hybridity, accessibility and support) and
- Scalability.

More refined aspects of each of the above points of focus are expanded upon in the discussion of results and findings below.

4

Methodology

The review was predominantly a qualitative study involving surveys of key stakeholders and participants (a diverse range of students and organisational representatives such as line managers, Working Level Contacts and Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession). It also included focus groups (online and in person) and a range of consultations and meetings with parties involved in the sponsorship and delivery of the learning offer. The reviewers engaged with Policy Profession Unit staff and with the Civil Service Head of Policy Profession, Tamara Finkelstein. Additionally, a half day of meetings and presentations was held with staff from the International School for Government, the Policy Institute and the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College London. Furthermore, an extraordinary KCL PGL2 Steering Group meeting was convened where the review methodology and preliminary findings were discussed.

Following discussion with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, interim survey results and general thematic findings from the consultations and focus group discussions were presented at a workshop that engaged alumni, PPU staff, Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession, the survey analysts and external Higher Education expertise in the learning and teaching of public policy. This included Professor Nick Pearce (University of Bath) and Dr Richard Common (University of Nottingham), the external examiner of the learning offer. The purpose of this workshop was to present and discuss the preliminary findings and bring in a broader body of knowledge and experience to the analysis of the findings. This was both to assist with building an understanding of the results and to explore and develop possible recommendations.

Appendix 2 details the different student and stakeholder groups who were sent the survey, response rates and survey instruments. Appendix 3 provides details of the focus group schedule and participants by Civil Service organisation. Participants of both the survey and the focus groups were assured of anonymity and personal details have not been published.

Overall, 169 individuals responded to the surveys, while the focus groups involved 27 participants. Of the survey respondents, 133 were students of the learning offer and 36 were a mix of line managers, Working Level Contacts and Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession. The representation and engagement in feedback was predominantly student-led, and this is considered appropriate. However, it is noted that higher levels of engagement from senior leaders and administrative representatives of the client and primary beneficiary of the program, the UK Civil Service Policy Profession, would have given greater insight into the broader impact and institutional value of the program. Table 1. below provides a detailed breakdown of the survey population by respondent, organisation (Figure 1.2), region (Figure 1.3), study year (Figure 1.4) and self-declared characteristics (Figure 1.5). Figure 1.2 shows that respondents were drawn from across 25 Civil Service organisations, with the largest contributors from Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Education (DfE), HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (formerly Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)), and the majority (just over 50%) based in Greater London (Figure 1.3).

Table 1. Survey Population – Respondents

Survey response	Diploma	Certificate	Module	HoPP	WLC	Manager	Total	Proportion
Diploma	31	4	2				37	0.22
Certificate	1	11	1				13	0.08
Module			83				83	0.49
HoPP				4			4	0.02
WLC					16	2	18	0.11
LM				2		8	10	0.06
Unknown					3	1	4	0.02

Figure 1.1 Survey Respondents by Civil Service Organisation

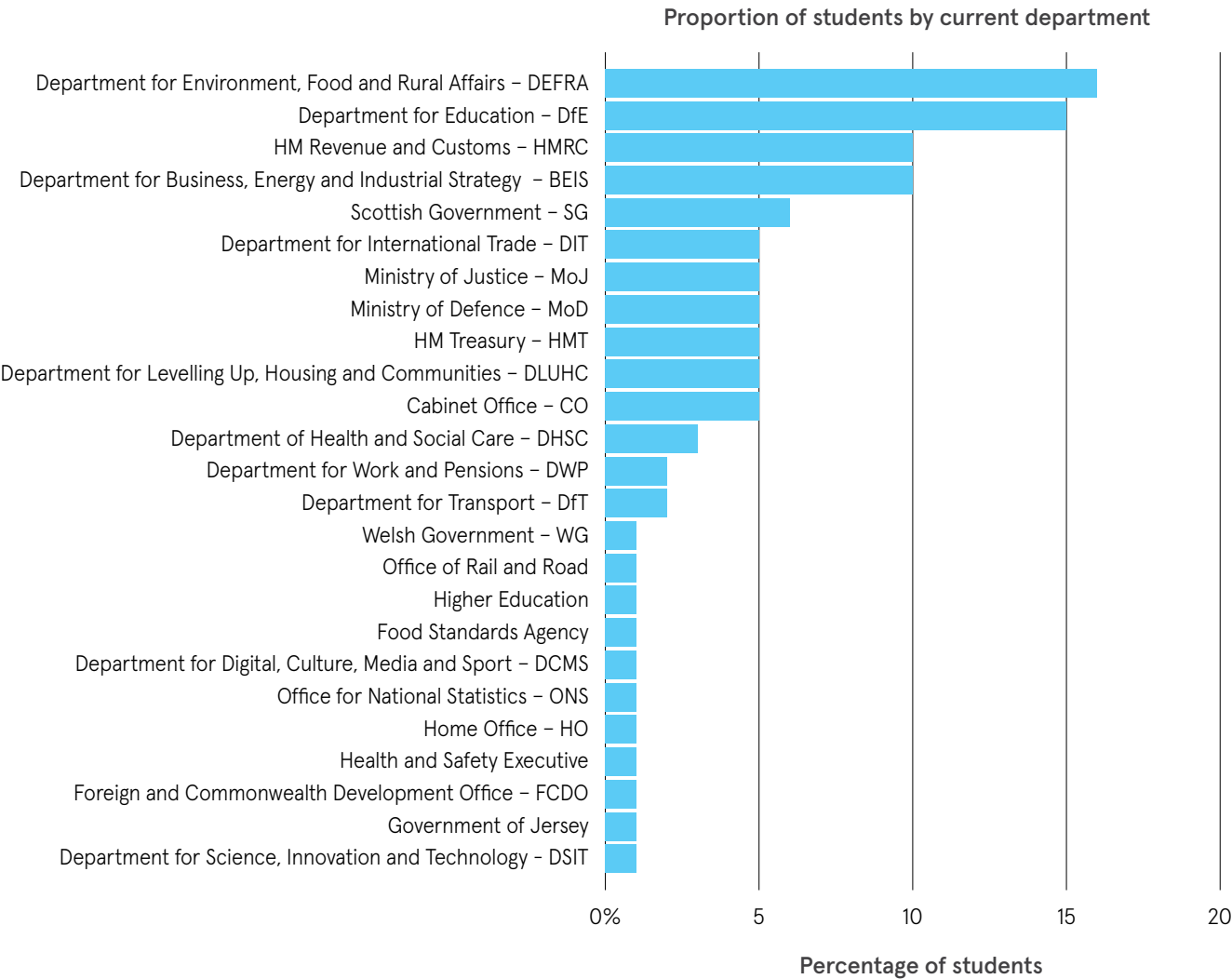


Figure 1.2 Survey Population by UK Region

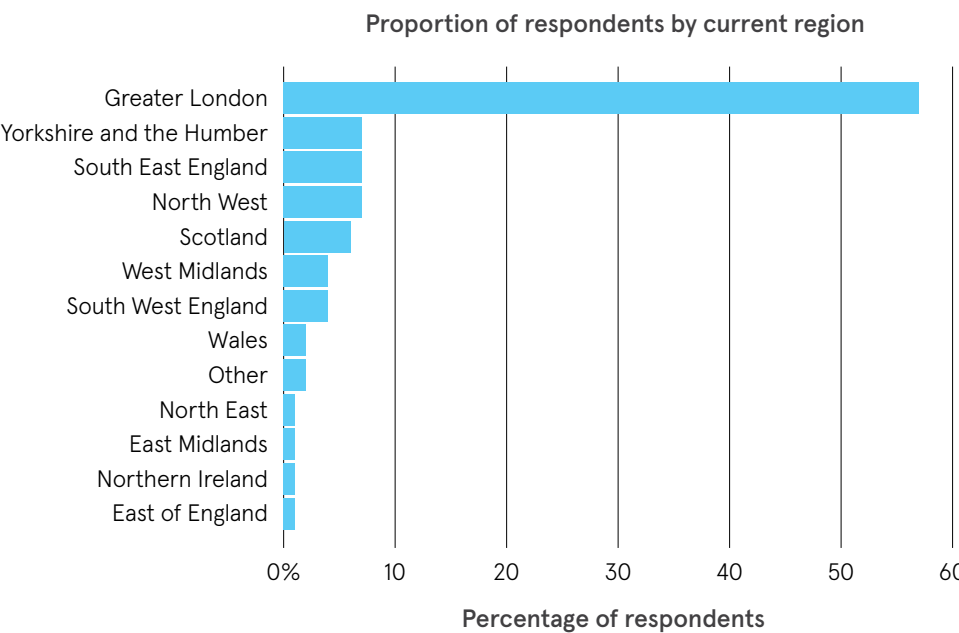
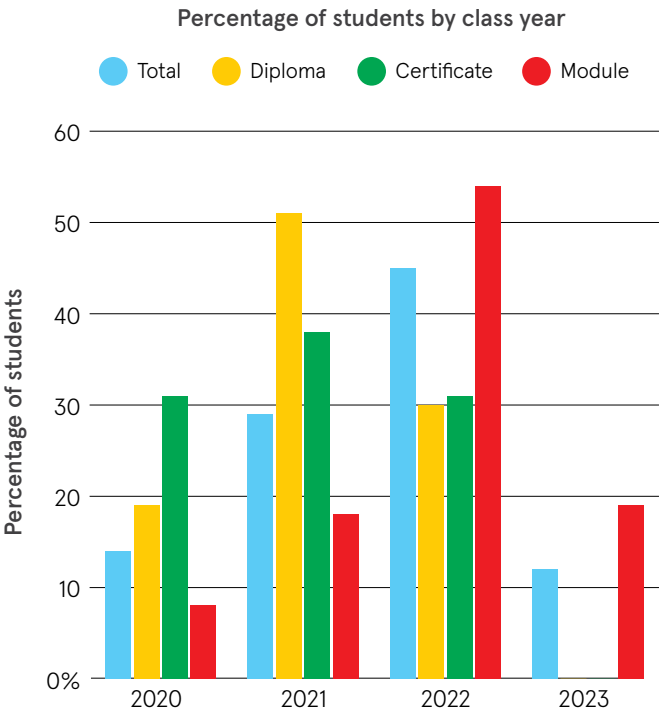
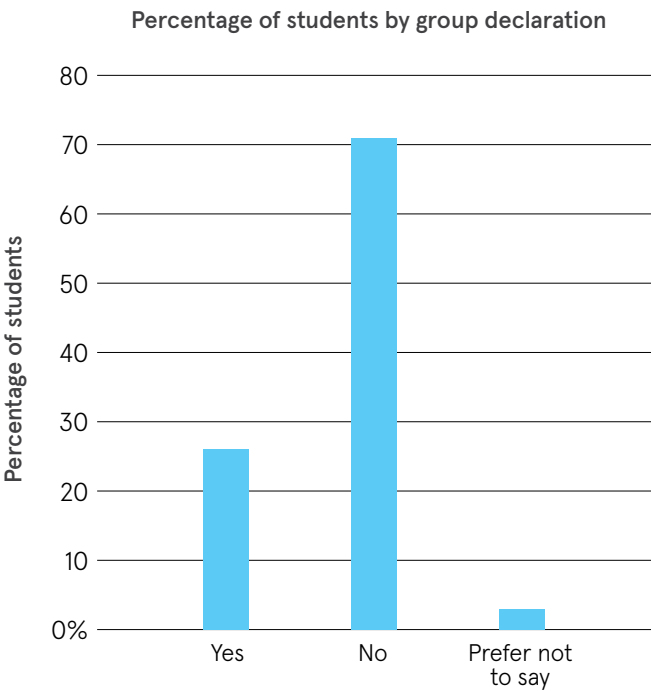


Figure 1.3 Student Survey Respondents by Class Year



The data in Figure 1.4 above (Class Year) also shows the distribution of student responses across the four years of the program’s development. While the majority of responses are from the 2022 cohort, respondents are spread across each year of program delivery and thus there is coverage of the full program experience from inception to present.

Figure 1.4 Student self-declaration of Protected Characteristics



The data in Figure 1.5 above shows the responses to the question ‘Are you in one of more of the following groups, which are under-represented in UK Higher Education? Care leavers; students with caring responsibilities; students with disabilities; students from low-income households.’

King's College London has reported that as of May 2023 (see Appendix 7 – ISfG Overview Report (April 2023)), approximately 1,131 students have enrolled on one of the learning offers (postgraduate certificate (152 students), postgraduate diploma (188 students) or standalone module (791 students)). Thus, the volume of engagement with students for this review, through surveys and focus groups, represents a reasonable sample (around 15%) and is expected to provide an informed insight into aspects of the student experience and student learning.

The work of the review was also informed by other relevant sources of data including the 2021 evaluation report of the learning offer prepared by King's College London and regular program reports provided to the KCL PGL2 Steering Group by the International School for Government, King's College London.

Data analysis was supported by two Civil Service Fast Stream participants – Tony Chen and Jack Rodgers – from the Government Statistical Service. They provided a detailed analysis of the survey data and developed both static and dynamic reports. The presentation of survey results draws on this work and a full copy of their data report and associated analysis is at Appendix 4. Tony Chen and Jack Rodgers presented the survey results and analysis at the concluding workshop mentioned above and they actively contributed to the discussion of findings and exploration of recommendations. Their valuable contributions are acknowledged and greatly appreciated.

Detailed notes were taken during focus group discussions. These were considered and analysed alongside the qualitative feedback provided through the surveys. The analysis of qualitative input was based on a general thematic approach. While the themes were heavily influenced by the specified research questions (quality, applied or contextual learning, flexibility, and so on), additional recurring themes and issues of interest were also identified in the text review and analytic process. The volume of data generated, and the diversity of methods used to gather input from students and other important stakeholders, lends a high level of validity and reliability to the results and findings of the review.

The next sections set out the key findings of the report. A mix of survey data and reflections on the qualitative focus group feedback, as well as input from meetings and consultations, is presented under each of the primary lines of inquiry that informed the review. The discussion of results also includes some reflection on potential action and ideas for improvement, however specific recommendations are itemised in the proceeding section.



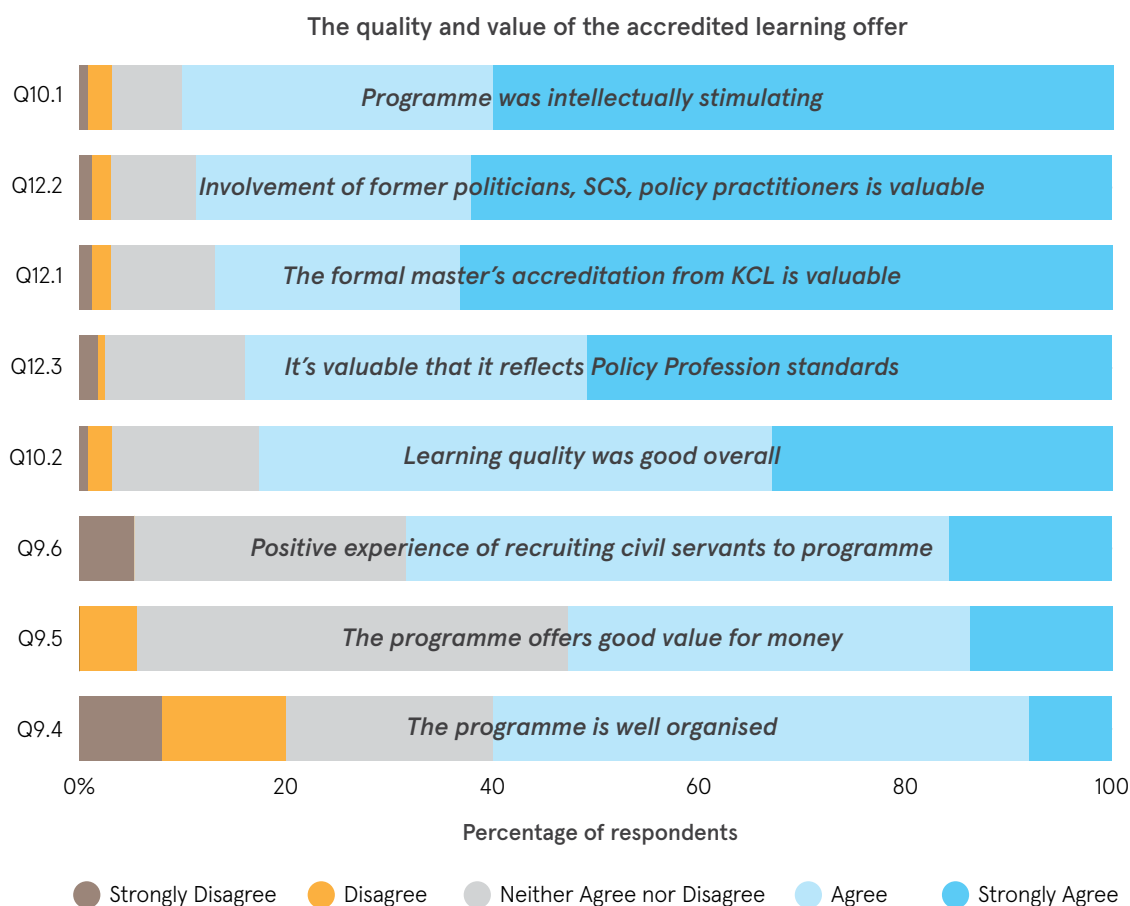
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Quality

Quality is a critical measure of the standing and value of any academic learning program. However, it is difficult to measure and tends to rely on qualitative statements, comparative experience, and peer observations and critique. Measures of student satisfaction, retention and completion also give some proxy indication of quality, since they point to relevance, learner engagement and capacity to successfully progress through the requirements of a program of study. For this measure, the review explored perceptions and assessments of academic quality and the intellectual rigour of the learning offer. This included consideration of program design, substantive content and the calibre of teaching faculty. We were also interested in perceived value, from a comparative cost perspective, and the learners' broader judgement about the value they felt the program provided.

In the analysis of survey responses, a range of questions regarding quality and perceived value have been thematically grouped to present a combined overview of elements that contribute to quality of learning. Figure 2 presents the collated responses to eight survey questions that asked respondents to rate elements of the program relating to value and quality. These included: the involvement of former politicians and policy practitioners, a master's level accreditation from King's, the inclusion of Policy Profession standards, quality of learning, value for money, how intellectually stimulating they found the learning experience and the organisation of the program.

Figure 2. Quality of Learning



Respondents were asked to rank their scores using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 indicated strongly dissenting sentiments (brown) and 5 indicated strongly affirmative sentiments (blue). A score of 3 expressed a neutral or moderate response akin to "neither agree nor disagree" (grey). Based on the colour coding, predominantly blue bars reflect highly affirmative sentiment from respondents, with more negative views and experiences evident in the brown and orange range.

The cumulative overview of the eight items measured in Table 3 indicates that, overall, the quality and value of the learning offer is highly regarded. Potential areas for improvement or concern centre on value for money and the organisation of the program. More specifically, over 80% of respondents agreed that the program was intellectually stimulating and the learning quality was good and valued the involvement of policy practitioners (former politicians and others), the formal postgraduate accreditation from King's, and the program's reflection of the [Policy Profession standards](#). Characteristic qualitative responses included:

"It has been invaluable to be able to step away and give myself time to think about why and how we make policy and what improvements can be made."

"I've found the course really useful in developing policy skills."

"It was absolutely excellent."

"Intellectually stimulating and absolutely fascinating."

Survey questions which only went to colleagues (line managers, Working Level Contacts and Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession) on this topic were slightly less positive in general (Q9.4 "the program is well organised," Q9.5 "the program offers good value for money," and Q9.6 "my experience of recruiting civil servants from my organisation to the program is overall positive"). Whilst only 53% of colleagues agreed that the program offered good value for money, it is worth noting that 42% responded with "neither agree nor disagree" and only 2 respondents (8%) disagreed. Focus group discussions with Working Level Contacts (WLCs) were slightly more positive with the majority indicating that the program provided relatively good value for money; one respondent described the program as

"two thirds of a master's for a fraction of the price".

Overall, the focus group discussions and consultations with stakeholders revealed an equal – if not more enthusiastic – appreciation of the quality of learning and the value of the program. This was expressed with reference to participation in individual learning modules as well as the programs of study (postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma). Many students indicated that they had a sense of the program cost and felt it was good value for money compared with an open market cost for an equivalent master's level qualification. Comments that gave a sense of the quality of the learning program included:

"Definitely one of the best bits of training I've done through the Civil Service, definitely the best subject matter training."

"I was impressed by how holistically King's are thinking about policy when bringing in policy makers as guest speakers."

"I was impressed by how much I was able to learn within the space of a month."

"I am in no doubt that it will be of use to me in the future."

Table 2 below provides an overview of the fees for other similar postgraduate programs in public policy offered by universities in the UK and internationally. The evidence here shows that on a simple cost comparative basis the postgraduate diploma is competitively priced and represents value for money for Civil Service organisations funding student participation in the program. Although lower cost postgraduate certificates exist, the KCL PGL2 is distinct from most comparable learning offers in allowing students to take master's level modules in isolation.

Table 2. Fees for Postgraduate Programs in Public Policy

Country	Institution	Qualification	QS World University Ranking	Course Fees (£GBP)	Duration	Delivery mode
5-credit standalone module						
UK	King's College London	KCL PGL2 standalone postgraduate module	42	£731.25	1 month	online
UK	Ulster University	Social Policy MSc - individual postgraduate module	N/A	£186.65	1 month	hybrid
15-credit standalone module						
UK	King's College London	KCL PGL2 standalone postgraduate module	42	£1,687.50	1-2 months	hybrid
New Zealand	Victoria University of Wellington	Public Policy - individual postgraduate module	209	£1,026.95	3 months	hybrid
South Africa	Centre for Economic Training in Africa (CETA)	Policy Studies - individual postgraduate course	N/A	£1,080	2 months	online
UK	Ulster University	Social Policy MSc - individual module	N/A	£559.95	1-2 months	hybrid
Postgraduate certificate						
UK	King's College London	Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Policy Making Skills	42	£4,725	1 year	hybrid
Australia	University of Queensland	Graduate Certificate in Governance and Public Policy	62	£8,637.56	0.5-1 year	hybrid
UK	Queen Mary University, London	International Public Policy PG Cert	150	£4,450	1 year	in person
Australia	The University of Western Australia	Graduate Certificate in Public Policy	152	£6,543.60	0.5-2 years	in person
New Zealand	Victoria University, Wellington	Postgraduate Certificate in Public Policy	209	£4,368.56	4 months -1 year	hybrid
UK	SOAS, University of London	Postgraduate Certificate in Public Policy	310	£3,640	1-5 years	online
India	Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK)	Executive Postgraduate Certificate in Public Policy Management	N/A	£3,325.42	1 year	hybrid
USA	Kansas State University	Public Administration Graduate Certificate	N/A	£6,285.48	1 year	online
USA	Liberty University	Executive Certificate in Public Policy	N/A	£3,974.86	2 months	online
UK	Ulster University	Social Policy - Postgraduate Certificate	N/A	£2,239.80	1 year	hybrid

Country	Institution	Qualification	QS World University Ranking	Course Fees (£GBP)	Duration	Delivery mode
Postgraduate diploma						
UK	King's College London	Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policymaking Skills	42	£5,259.38	2 years	hybrid
Ireland	Trinity College Dublin	Postgraduate Diploma in Social Policy and Practice	117	£5,688.36	1 year	online
UK	University of Birmingham	PGDip Global Public Policy with Integrated Placement	122	£6,780	9 months	in person
New Zealand	Victoria University, Wellington	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy	209	£8,730.66	1 year	hybrid
UK	Queen's University, Belfast	Postgraduate Diploma in International Public Policy	289	£5,573	1–2 years	in person
UK	SOAS, University of London	Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Studies	310	£7,280	1–5 years	online
Ireland	University of Limerick	Economics and Public Policy – Postgraduate Diploma	363	£2,993.87 p.a.	1–2 years	hybrid
South Africa	Centre for Economic Training in Africa (CETA)	Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Studies	N/A	£4,320	1–5 years	online
Namibia	The International University of Management (IUM)	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy and Management	N/A	£1,321.33	1–2 years	hybrid
Kenya	Lamai Institute	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy and Administration	N/A	£778.41	12 months	online
Uganda	Uganda Management Institute – Kampala Branch	PostGraduate Diploma in Public Policy and Governance (DPPG)	N/A	£592.71	1 year	in person
UK	Ulster University	Social Policy – Postgraduate Diploma	N/A	£4,479.60	1–2 years	hybrid
USA	University of California Riverside, Extension	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy and International Relations	N/A	£14,164.79	34 weeks	hybrid
Fiji	The University of Fiji	Postgraduate Diploma in Governance and Public Policy	N/A	£1,047.12	1–3 years	in person
UK	Stratford College of Business (University of Wolverhampton)	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration	N/A	£2,496	6 months +	hybrid
New Zealand	University of Auckland	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy (PGDipPP)	75	£4,338.39	1–2 years	hybrid
New Zealand	Massey University	Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Social Policy)	298	£3,346.87–£4,420.06	1 year +	hybrid
New Zealand	University of Waikato	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy	370	£2,999.43	1 year	hybrid
South Africa	Johannesburg Business School (University of Johannesburg)	Postgraduate Diploma in Public Policy and African Studies	451–500	£1,577.32 p.a.	2 years	online

5.1.1 Program Design, Modules of Study, Teaching and Student Networking

With regard to specific modules of study, speaker panels on the 15-credit modules were singled out as particularly valued. Panellist selection was praised for balancing expertise and opposing viewpoints. Additionally, many students praised facilitators for sharing real-life experiences and encouraging others to provide role-relevant examples in the webinar discussions. The general sentiment expressed regarding learning and teaching and program content was of *“value and quality”*. Students feel that the program helps them to better *“understand the wider ramifications of the work [they] do”*, and to develop *“... a much more rounded understanding of policy making”*. This feedback provides evidence of insightful learning and intellectual development (*“It allowed me to develop different perspectives”*), which is achieved through quality engagement and targeted program content that aligns with professional practice and work-based challenges. Critical learning was evident in the response from one participant who observed that having completed a particular module they are *“now a far more intelligent customer of these things we must engage with.”*

Several participants indicated a desire to access pathways that would allow an upgrade or continuation of study to a full master’s qualification:

“I would have liked it to be a master’s, perhaps by bulking up credits and assessment word counts.”

“I would really like if they offered a master’s, or rather if government paid for a master’s.”

“I would like to see an option to upgrade to a master’s.”

“I had to look at what a postgraduate certificate/diploma was. The accreditation of a master’s would have been more attractive.”

The desire by several participants to complete further study to enable an upgrade and award of a master’s degree suggests an interest in building on and maximising the perceived value of their investment in tertiary education. It also confirms that the learning experience so far has been positive and suggests that this aligns with students’ expectations of the rigour of a master’s level program.

The review team’s analysis of the program structure, core modules for the postgraduate diploma and postgraduate certificate, and the full range of learning modules available through the KCL PGL2, was positive. The program is seen as containing the core elements of a rigorous postgraduate program of public policy. This was also confirmed by external experts in the discipline who were invited to contribute to the review. The list of 32 modules is presented in Appendix 1. The range of learning modules offered across the KCL PGL2 provides significant breadth to the program and maximises choice for students, allowing them some autonomy in selecting the content and design of their study plan. During focus group discussions students claimed they sought to build some coherence into their program design through module selection, though generally, coherence was considered to be embedded across the full range of modules and the teaching schedule. However, it was suggested that sample programs and roadmaps to support module selection would be advantageous and assist student decision-making. The readings associated with modules were considered substantial and supportive of learning.

There was no major comment on the need to expand the program or consider the inclusion of additional content or specific module topics. As noted later, processes for content development and expansion are well organised through the KCL PGL2 Steering Group. The surveys did ask students and organisational staff for suggestions on program content (see section 2.6 in the Survey Analysis report at Appendix 4). While project management/delivery, stakeholder engagement, and an introduction to administrative law were listed by a few respondents, their ideas were broad and generally related to skills (teamwork) and topics (strategy and planning) that were outside the remit of a postgraduate public policy program.

It was recognised by students and the ISfG team that the schedule of teaching for modules did impact on the extent to which desired modules could be selected and completed by students. There were some comments from students proposing to shuffle the modular cycle or to provide popular modules more frequently throughout the year, as seasonal work pressures often prevented them from taking up topics of interest. For others, this was not a major concern. Several focus group participants commented on how valuable and engaging they found modules that were not their first choice or preference. This pointed to both the quality of module content and the general relevance that many of the module topics have to the applied context of policy work.

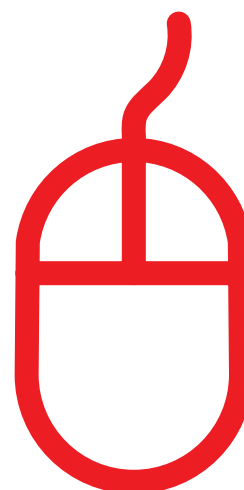
The core units of study for the postgraduate diploma and postgraduate certificate were also considered appropriate and well-targeted to the expertise and knowledge requirements of policy practitioners. Regarding the compulsory core modules of study, the inclusion of face-to-face teaching days and the applied focus of the assessment work were highly regarded. Students reported that the assessment and learning requirements of these core modules were intellectually stimulating, expanding their knowledge and understanding of policy from both a theoretical and applied perspective. The face-to-face learning and teaching experience was particularly valued.

Students reported that they benefited further from the program via networking with peers from across the Civil Service, making stronger connections with teaching staff, and developing a meaningful sense of their student cohort. Connecting and networking with peers also provided a valuable framework of study support and an alternative source of advice and information on the program of study, module recommendations and other practical information. This assisted with making the learning journey a positive and successful experience. Respondents noted:

“The Policy Skills Project helps with developing networks as you could organise to meet up regularly in person.”

“The 15-credit module had a drinks reception and dinner, which was a really useful networking opportunity.”

“Doing intensive weeks on site at KCL with other students would build networks and relationships better and also achieve greater learning.”



In several consultations and meetings, it was felt that more could be done by key parties involved in the delivery of the KCL PGL2 to support student networking and cohort connections. For most students, teaching staff and organisational representatives, the online delivery format – while making the program highly accessible and flexible – was seen as a mode of learning and teaching that was primarily individualised and imposed limits on the extent to which networking could be achieved:

“The lecturers and leaders on the courses were committed to the delivery of an excellent product but online teaching has its limitations.”

“Often with online webinars there is not as much interaction between students, even with break-out groups it can be a bit forced. Spending a full day with someone in person, you build up more of a rapport.”

While there were some reports of action being taken on an organisational level to help support students through networking and peer support mechanisms, more could be done to strengthen the availability and opportunities for student networking, including students initiating networks themselves. This could involve organisation of networking events for students at scheduled times throughout the year, or the establishment of forums or other initiatives that bring students together to strengthen their connections and share experiences. PPU is creating a virtual hub for students and alumni on its website that could facilitate student-led approaches. As one participant suggested, *“It would be nice to have networking opportunities, for example, coffee roulette”*. Networking could be done in a virtual or face-to-face format, and the design and timing should consider accessibility and student interest.

It is noted that networking and support forums do not appeal to all students. Nevertheless, implementing a visible commitment to this dimension of the KCL PGL2 experience can assist with building a culture of peer networking across the program. For many students networking with peers is fundamental to the value they are seeking from engagement in postgraduate learning programs. This could become a distinguishing feature of the program that both attracts students and extends the value of the program beyond the acquisition of learning and policy skills development.

5.1 Faculty and Teaching Quality

Faculty expertise and experience is an important indicator of program and teaching quality. Short biographies of core staff at the International School for Government (ISfG) of King's College London are provided at Appendix 5. The key academics involved in the management, organisation and teaching of the KCL PGL2 have significant international experience and strong track records of scholarly achievement in the disciplines of public administration and public policy. The Executive Chair of the School, Mr Alexander Downer and the Academic Director of the program, Professor Andrew Massey have between them both outstanding records of achievement at the highest levels of government and within the academy of public policy and public administration. They are both well placed to lead the design and development of the academic program and build connections with experienced senior practitioners who provide expert applied input to the teaching of modules. ISfG is well connected to institutes and faculty across King's, and this broad body of expertise is drawn on to design and teach the modules offered through the KCL PGL2. This is a notable strength of the program, making it highly adaptive and responsive when needed.

In meetings with King's executive staff, it was noted that during 2023 ISfG will be incorporated into the Policy Institute of King's College London. The Policy Institute has an outstanding global reputation as a leader in policy research and analysis. The move is designed to ensure that ISfG has access to a broader base of academic expertise in public policy and to strengthen the administrative and business support needed for the delivery of ISfG activities such as the KCL PGL2.

An important issue of teaching quality discussed with ISfG staff concerned the regular conduct of module evaluations and other processes for student feedback. ISfG demonstrated very good practice in this area, reporting that all iterations of modules are formally evaluated by requesting student feedback. Low scoring modules are reviewed and for particularly poor performing modules, action is taken to engage more capable teaching staff. As noted in the survey and focus group discussions, ISfG staff are highly accessible and responsive to student inquiries. In addition, alumni and current KCL PGL2 students sit on the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, which provides a more independent forum for ISfG staff to learn of student and organisational experience. Therefore, as well as being accountable to internal university quality assurance mechanisms, the ISfG team and the KCL PGL2 have regular access to an external forum for the reporting of student and client (PPU, alumni and Civil Service organisations) issues.

The review team and external experts felt that the arrangements for student feedback as well as other critical stakeholder interest make the program highly responsive and adaptive to the learning needs of students and the Policy Profession. There may be room to strengthen the active oversight and strategic analysis provided by the KCL PGL2 Steering Group. Nevertheless, the university and Civil Service oversight mechanisms of the KCL PGL2 are considered highly effective in monitoring and ensuring quality teaching, the contemporaneity of modules and the ongoing development of the program.

The KCL PGL2 is designed to be an online learning program and includes very limited components of face-to-face teaching. Therefore, a critical factor in quality teaching is the skill and capability of teaching staff in the use of online learning systems. This is a very dynamic area of learning and teaching with technological developments progressing rapidly and the diversity of tools available also expanding. As the following comments reveal, student feedback was predominantly positive about the online learning and teaching experience:

**"I was happy to be doing the seminars online
– this made it easier to take a flexible approach."**

**"Great balance of the detailed online learning,
reading and seminars."**

**"I was sceptical at first about all teaching being online,
but it worked very well and flexibly."**

**"Excellent. I would not have taken the course if there
were any in-person elements."**

**"The nature of the online delivery meant it was quite easy to
fit into my workload."**

"The online delivery model is ideal for the shorter modules."

While online delivery is noted as convenient for students, it is still considered to be less engaging than classroom-based face-to-face teaching. It is therefore critical that ISfG teaching staff remain appraised and make use of the most effective online teaching tools and systems to build student engagement and strengthen opportunities for learning. This applies to the online presence of modules (readings, videos, quizzes, exercises, etc.) through which students engage with the content of modules, as well as the online teaching experience (webinars, office hours, online discussion fora). There is a range of tools that can be used during online teaching to engage students and build their participation in the discussion and analysis of module content. This includes, for example, live polls, instant word clouds and live quizzes. During discussions, ISfG staff expressed an awareness of the services provided by King's to support online teaching excellence. It will be critical that staff maintain an active interest in the services provided through King's [Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning](#) so that online teaching skills are continuously refreshed and updated.

It is worth noting that all workplaces are actively developing online processes for staff engagement and the conduct of work and business. Many students of the KCL PGL2 are actively involved in innovative ways of engaging with clients, working with colleagues and reporting on tasks and work-based functions. As worker familiarity with online systems increases, expectations around what constitutes a quality online learning and teaching experience through the KCL PGL2 will also increase. Moving forward, it will be important to ensure the methods and approaches to online teaching continue to innovate and remain contemporary. This will be central to sustaining the quality and growing the attraction of the KCL PGL2 to a broader audience across the Civil Service.

Criticisms and Areas for Improvement in Learning and Teaching Quality

Of course, there were comments during discussions and in the surveys which pointed to areas for improvement and instances of dissatisfaction with the quality of learning and teaching. Some respondents noted the shortness of the 5-credit modules, arguing that this prevented an *“opportunity to dive more deeply into a subject”*, and limited the potential for student engagement (*“being very short limited how much engagement could be done”*). For one respondent, *“the program was incredibly shallow [...] nothing was taught in sufficient detail to give me knowledge that I could practically apply”*. There was also concern about the manner in which teaching and student engagement were organised, with a suggestion that the quality of the learning environment would improve with *“some guidelines about etiquette for attending and contributing actively to seminars”*. One respondent noted that the *“academic element could be more challenging”*.

Not all practitioner speakers were considered engaging, and one respondent noted the program had to *“do better at getting a wide variety of current senior experts to take part”*. There were also several comments arguing that the quality of student engagement would improve with more opportunities for face-to-face learning and for modules to cover *“more material over a longer period of time to allow deeper exploration of themes”*.

5.2 Assessment and Quality

Assessment and the general administration associated with enrolment and continued participation in the learning program were also identified as areas for quality improvement. Assessment is a critical element of learning design and provides a measure of learning acquisition. Therefore, the design and management of assessment is central to the quality of learning and the student experience. Student and expert practitioners noted that the assessment design was highly uniform throughout the program, specifically a 1,000-word essay. This presented both advantages for and challenges to learning.

A number of participants reported that they had to refresh their writing style. Some felt intimidated by the prospect of returning to university and writing essays after a period away from higher education:

“I had to get myself into the academic writing style, which is very different to writing for ministers.”

“I think for my first couple of modules, my score was lower than for later modules, and that was because I’d re-learned how to write essays.”

“The assessment was quite ‘loose’, [...] I had to design my own assessment question which was a bit stressful.”

While the consistent requirement of an essay helps students to develop familiarity with the research, synthesis, critique and writing skills required in addressing the assessment task, reliance on one assessment model limits the range of ways in which students may demonstrate their acquisition of learning. Moreover, while critical writing remains a core and essential skill for the Policy Profession, other modes of communication and approaches to the explanation of complex phenomena are required within the field of policy practice.

Assessment also shapes student behaviour; several students noted how this drove the way they engaged in discussion forums and their approach to readings. It is therefore important both to clearly connect the relevance of assessment tasks (scaffolding) such as discussion boards with the final essay and to build greater variation into assessment design across modules. Variation in assessment type would also test a broader range of skills and allow students to demonstrate in different ways how they have met the learning objectives. As one respondent noted:

“Having timely and substantive feedback on discussion boards and how it connects to the final assessment would be beneficial.”

Diversifying assessment would strengthen the appeal of the program and impact on the way students approach module content.

Support and feedback are also important in the assessment process and building student learning. Most participants felt they received constructive and helpful written feedback on assessments in addition to a mark. However, there was variation in the experience of feedback during teaching:

“Generally, feedback on the modules has been very positive.”

“I think the webinars could include more time for the tutor to give feedback on group discussion.”

“Lecturers were supportive and friendly and offered office hours and email support.”

In limited cases, more feedback was desired: *“the assessor feedback on the final essay exercise was very limited”*. One participant said they had an experience where they only received a mark for their work. For some respondents, more work was needed in clarifying assessment requirements (e.g., *“I found the guidance for the assessment confusing”*), and predictably, some students wanted more time to complete assessments.

When discussing requests for extensions, focus group participants reported that teaching staff were highly responsive to general assessment queries and extension requests. However, it was felt that building more flexibility into assessment deadlines would assist, should work pressures conflict with study and submission deadlines. One respondent suggested that:

“an aspirational submission date (i.e. the current timeline) and then a cut-off date (which doesn’t need an extension) could help. If you have a busy week, suddenly it feels like you are playing catch-up for the rest of the course.”

Assessment submission times were key pressure points in the learning journey for some students. One respondent expressed a clear desire for those leading the learning program to seek more *“feedback from students on balancing postgraduate study and full-time work”*. Relevant comments from focus group participants included:

“The most pressured aspect of the module was the timing of the end of the group sessions in relation to the assessment deadline. If you had struggled to attend the live sessions, the timeframe to submit an essay and play catch up was quite difficult and led to extension requests.”

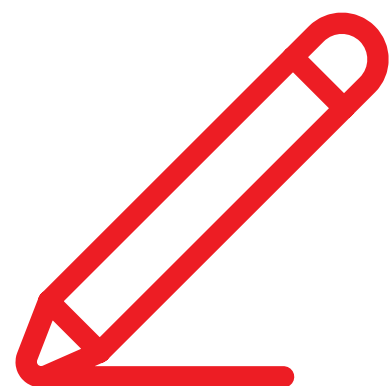
“A lot of people requested extensions because they could not cope with the pace.”

Significant pressure is experienced by students when the challenge of assessment completion combines with administrative complexity. As one student noted, their lack of familiarity with the program’s online learning system during assignment submission time was particularly stressful:

“It was difficult to find and access basic information required at certain points like the “k” number, when the assessment was due.”

“There was the stress of feeling that I was going to fail the first assignment because I could not submit it.”

Student feedback about needing more time, clarity and support for assessment completion is common across all executive university learning programs. This points to the need for regular and consistent advice to students on effective forms of time management in relation to the specifics of the learning program they are completing. The short four-week schedule of the KCL PGL2 learning modules is unique to higher education and likely to be new to most students. This highlights the importance of advising students early and regularly throughout their study program on how they might manage and plan for the successful completion of assessments.



5.3 Administration and Quality

For many, a quality learning and teaching experience includes the smooth administration of matters associated with being an active student. Students' perceptions of the quality and professional nature of the learning offer may be shaped by the ease of enrolment, ongoing access to online learning systems, notifications of teaching schedules, processes for assignment submission, the simplicity of processes for resolving questions and concerns, and other experiences one has in managing one's day-to-day participation as a learner. The responsiveness of staff and administrative systems influences the judgments students make about how they and their program of study are valued. Quality programs work to ensure the efficient and smooth running of administrative matters so that student and staff effort is focused on effective teaching and active learning.

All stakeholder groups consulted for this review noted the administrative complexity of the KCL PGL2. It often involves different requirements (at a Civil Service organisational level and at King's) depending on the program of enrolment (standalone module, postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma). The involvement of multiple agencies in each student's enrolment (King's, PPU, EY and the student's organisation) results in multiple sources of advice and engagement with different administrative processes and IT systems. This highlights the importance of alignment and clarity of messaging to students and clear delineation of support roles and functions across each organisation. Illustrative feedback on these issues included the following:

"I found the complexity of different IT systems challenging [...], there were so many different things to log into."

"King's treats people on the course the same way as undergraduates in terms of the administrative hoops (multiple k numbers, handbooks that don't match)."

"People are time poor – when you are a full-time student, studying is your whole life whereas this needs to be administratively easier to fit around busy work schedules."

"When I enrolled, I had to coordinate between lots of different groups, the policy profession network, the invoicing company, KCL and the central unit. This made it complex when trying to know where to go."

Work is needed on mapping out who delivers what messaging on what issues to students. Regarding student support, there is clarity and a high level of satisfaction (as noted earlier) on assessment advice and feedback, though comments during focus groups suggested more may be needed on academic and study skills support. Program planning and advance notice of the scheduling of modules, including advance access to module materials, were noted as areas for improvement. More general administrative issues – including enrolment and progression processes (moving from independent modules to the postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma) – were flagged by some students as needing more clarity. This would improve the understanding of the division of responsibility and tasks throughout the student journey, from nomination through application and enrolment to program completion.

There is an opportunity here for greater collaboration and coordination of effort between PPU and ISfG. This would allow for more strategic promotion of information and delineation between various student support services. The production of maps of student journeys and where each organisation (King's, PPU, EY and students' organisations) has a role in the process was considered an effective way to communicate to students and other stakeholders how the administrative processes work.

5.4 Accessibility and Quality

Finally, central to the quality of the program is the issue of accessibility. This is particularly important for an online learning offer where one-on-one engagement with students and awareness of their diverse learning needs may not be evident unless expressly discussed or reported. One student reported that:

“I asked for closed captions to be available because I am partially deaf, but these couldn’t be provided.”

This example is a reminder to ensure that accessibility of the learning offer is regularly assessed and, to the maximum extent possible, learning modules and the mode of learning and teaching are designed to address accessibility issues. It is important for the KCL PGL2 Steering Group to note accessibility as an area of work. Action such as an audit to determine the potential range of accessibility issues the program can address within current resources would be of value. Outlining accessible features and the range of support services available for KCL PGL2 students would address an important quality aspect of the program.

5.5 Quality – Summary

The review findings indicate that the KCL PGL2 is a high quality, rigorous postgraduate learning offer. Program content is considered contemporary, intellectually stimulating and well aligned to the professional development needs of the Policy Profession. The academic leadership of the program is excellent, and it is subject to thorough processes of oversight, evaluation and continuous development. The quality of learning and teaching across the program is highly regarded. Nevertheless, it remains important that the online teaching skills of faculty are developed, and online modules and teaching practices regularly refreshed. The quality of the program can improve with greater diversification of assessment tasks.

Across a range of indicators, survey respondents and focus group participants judged that the program was performing well and delivering a valuable, high quality learning experience. There remains room for improvement in the provision of clearer information regarding the role and responsibilities of the various organisations and the services that support the student learning journey (organisations, PPU, EY and King’s). An opportunity exists to build options and support for greater levels of student networking, and this is seen as both shaping the quality and extending the value of the learning experience. Accessibility is another important aspect of the student learning experience and journey, which should be investigated further.



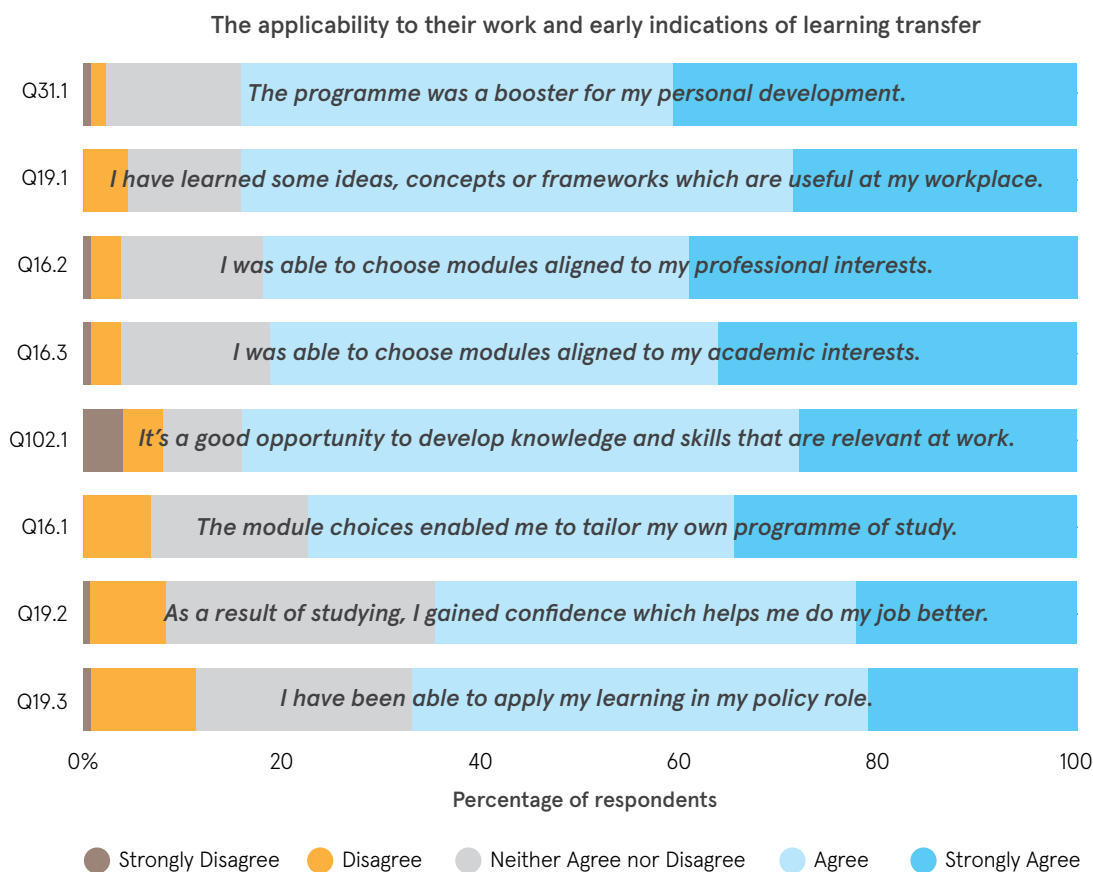
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Professional Alignment

When considering professional alignment, the review team was interested to learn more about the extent to which learning modules align with the knowledge and skills either demanded or in need of development by policy professionals. This meant inquiring into the contemporary relevance of modules and concepts covered across the learning program. Strong indicators of alignment were also noted where participants reported impact on their policy capabilities and subsequent career progression. The analysis of survey data and qualitative responses was centred on identifying how program content connects with the work of policy professionals and evidence of learning transfer.

Survey questions asked students to score the extent to which the program was a boost for their professional development, useful for their work, aligned with their professional interests, helped them to 'do their job better' and if the knowledge gained was applicable to their policy role. Organisational contacts, including students' colleagues, were specifically asked to comment on the opportunity the program provided for students to develop knowledge and skills relevant to policy work. Consistent with Figure 2 above, the colour coding in Figure 3 below indicates a range where predominantly blue bars reflect highly affirmative sentiment and negative views and experiences are shown in brown and orange. Grey represents a neutral position, neither agree nor disagree.

Figure 3. Professional Alignment



The survey data shows that 85% of students agreed that they learned ideas which were useful for work and 84% agreed that the program was a good opportunity to develop professional skills. This result is very much consistent with the 2021 data from King's internal evaluation of KCL PGL2 students, which reported that 83% found the learnings and concepts useful for their workplace. This reveals some evidence of consistency in performance of the program over time, at a high level. Lower scores were reported when asked about the application of learning to their policy role (67%) and 64% indicated that the program had contributed to greater confidence in performing their role. These are still relatively positive scores for the latter two measures, particularly when noting the larger scores of neutral responses and negative scores remaining below 11%. The qualitative comments from the survey and focus groups provide more detail on modules that students felt were aligned to their professional development needs. This was evident for modules on:

Leadership:

"There's a huge stress on leadership in HM Revenue and Customs, particularly for higher grades, so doing a leadership module [through King's] was a big help."

"The Understanding Public Leadership module was the most relevant to me. I thought about it on a day-to-day basis."

Embracing uncertainty:

"Dealing with wicked problems on the Embracing Uncertainty module was super helpful and relevant, I apply it all the time."

Multi-level Government:

"I work a lot with devolved governments so Understanding Multi-level Government was a really useful module."

Conflict Analysis:

"The Conflict Analysis module was very applicable to my role."

Communications:

"The Communications [Media and Public Policy] module was directly applicable to my work and got me thinking about audience in terms of my policy writing."

More generally, students also commented on how a mixture of modules related to the diversity of work they come across in their policy career and contributed to their overall confidence and skills development. Characteristic comments included:

“I chose a mixture of modules, some aligned to policy roles I had undertaken in the past [...], others were more directly aligned to my current role. I chose some modules because I felt like it was something I might pursue in my career further down the line.”

“You can try a mixture of things that are clearly related to the job and some that are not, as it is useful to broaden your horizons.”

“It boosted my confidence and helped me refresh my critical thinking and analysis skills.”

However, not all students felt that the module content was directly relevant to their role with one noting that *“The two modules I undertook don’t really have a direct link to my job but more of a general relevance to ‘policy’ – it would be a bit of a stretch to say that they were directly relevant to my job.”* Another student noted with reference to the Policy Process module that *“There’s always a bit of a gap between the reality and the theoretical models we studied”*.

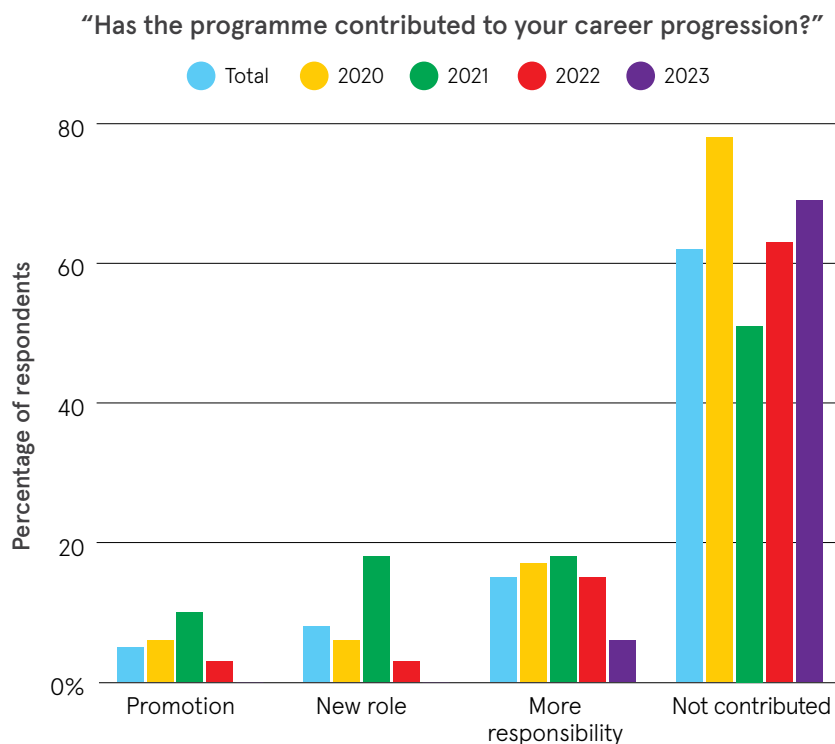
These comments suggest that while conceptual knowledge has developed, an understanding of the direct relevance of such concepts to the day-to-day role and function of a policy professional may not be as evident. The review team does not consider this a shortcoming of the program, but these student comments do point to the need for module presenters to regularly consider how content and concepts connect with policy practice. Drawing this out for students can lift the professional alignment and applied value of the program.

Overall, the qualitative and quantitative evidence demonstrates that the KCL PGL2 is relevant to the work-based challenges of policy professionals and contributes to their professional development. The learning helps to build the conceptual skills, confidence and a broader understanding of the role and function of policy staff, particularly within the bigger picture of public leadership and governance. The knowledge gained from the program – and learning how others deal with issues, challenges, and policies – contributes to the professional development of students. This helps to build a more informed and skilled practitioner that is better positioned to advance and take on greater challenges in their future career.

While it was noted that they were relevant to policy work, it was generally recognised that individual modules did not contribute to the development of foundational level, immediate skills such as writing policy briefs, holding stakeholder consultations, and organising meetings. Skills and capability development is at the higher order level in terms of strategic thinking, conceptual understandings of how policy works in the governing context and the use of frameworks to assist with the analysis and critique of issues. This is an important observation for PPU since there may be a gap in the broader suite of learning offers for the profession regarding the schedule of skills identified in the Policy Profession Standards. It will be important to identify where lower order, but very important, professional skills are developed. For students enrolled on the KCL PGL2, the practice of these lower order skills is likely to be well developed with learning acquired through other experiences and professional practice as mid-career policy professionals.

Another measure the review team assessed was the extent to which students felt that their skills acquisition and professional development on the KCL PGL2 contributed to their career progression. Here students were asked to provide some indication of whether completion of the program facilitated them obtaining a new role, promotion or more responsibility. The breakdown of survey responses is presented in the bar chart below.

Figure 4. Career Progression



The data shows that only a small proportion of students across the full period for which the program has been offered (2020–2023) considered that it had contributed to a change in their policy role. There was, however, a relatively consistent score of influence across each year for students reporting the acquisition of more responsibility in their role. This averages out at approximately 17% for the three full-year cohorts (2020, 2021 and 2022). While not substantial, it is pleasing to note that almost two in every 12 students participating in the KCL PGL2 are likely to have experienced some positive impact on their role and career progression within a short period of time following completion. In the focus groups and survey responses, there was some reporting of aspirational and positive impacts on career development, consolidation of confidence and performance in new policy roles, and connection with progression and job changes. Characteristic responses are listed below:

"I hope it will help me with my career development."

"I anticipate that it may contribute to my career progression in the future."

"Content was excellent and was extremely useful for me in my current role and future career."

"It was helpful to my career development and progression to see that broader context of policy making."

"The Behavioural Change module was very relevant in terms of skills I need to move from being a Private Secretary to becoming a policy professional."

"Having moved from operations into a policy Grade 7 role, the postgraduate diploma gave me a foundational knowledge of policy."

"When I first joined the Civil Service, I felt I had a knowledge and skills 'deficit' [...]. This program is helping me to feel that that deficit is reducing and I am 'catching up' to my colleagues."

"It has certainly signalled to seniors that I am taking my career seriously and given me more confidence in engaging and leading teams of analysts and other departments."

Despite this positive evidence, there were some participants who were less enthusiastic about the impact on their careers. This was particularly the case for respondents who only completed individual modules. One respondent was positive about the learning experience but noted, *"I consider it pointless from a career progression point of view"*. Another observed that *"I do not think an individual module will help my career."* Finally, one respondent noted that despite not making a direct contribution to their career progression, *"it has made me feel more engaged and interested in my role as it has given another dimension to my job"*.

6.1 Professional Alignment – Summary

The review team has concluded that the KCL PGL2 is well-aligned with the professional development needs of policy professionals. The program imparts a range of skills, builds confidence in the understanding of policy as a practice and a concept, and is generally considered to contribute to the career advancement aspirations of students. There is strong evidence that the program plays a consolidating role in strengthening the skills and performance of students in their policy roles. The discussion of skills continues in the next section which examines in more detail practical and contextual learning and how students apply the knowledge and learned concepts in their workplace.

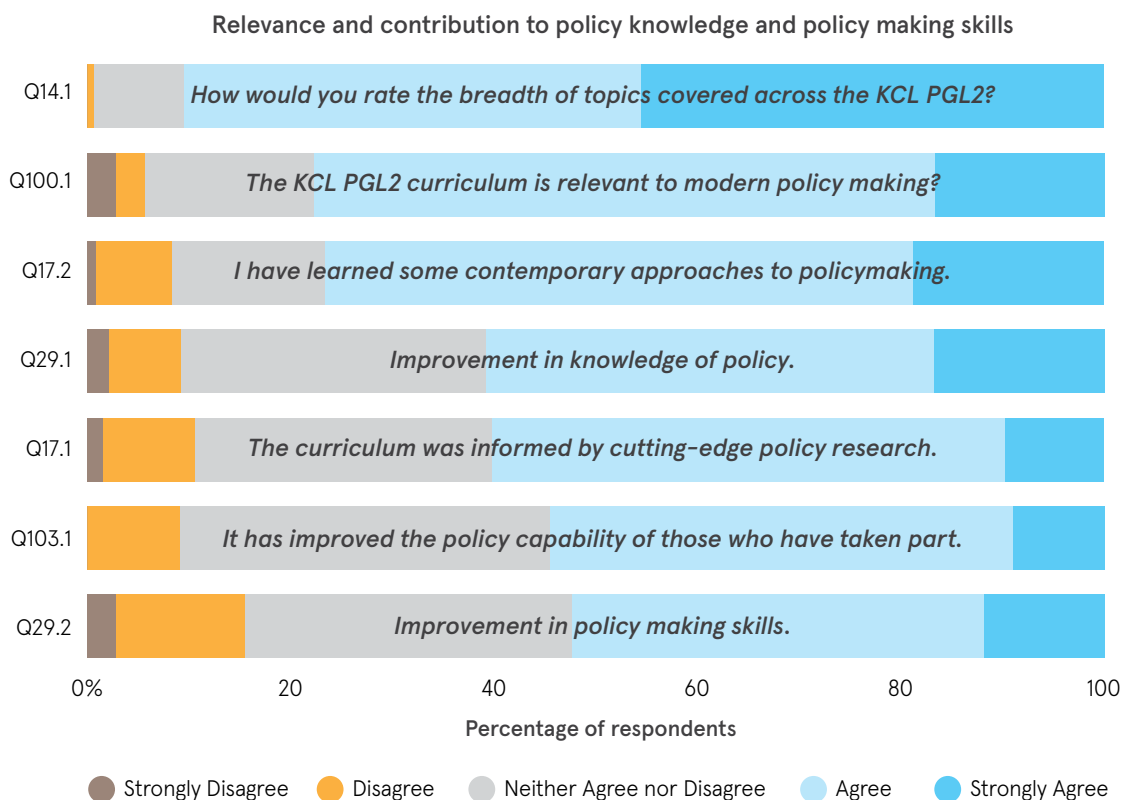


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Applied and Contextual Learning

The discussion of applied and contextual learning is concerned with how ideas, concepts and frameworks learned from the KCL PGL2 apply to students' workplaces. Here we are interested in any evidence that learning on the KCL PGL2 is transferable, relevant and applied by students in their workplace. An important consideration here is the relevance of the learning to modern policy making skills. A range of survey questions were clustered to give an overview of the relevance and contribution to policy knowledge and policy making skills.

Figure 5. Relevance and Contribution to Policy Knowledge and Policy Making Skills



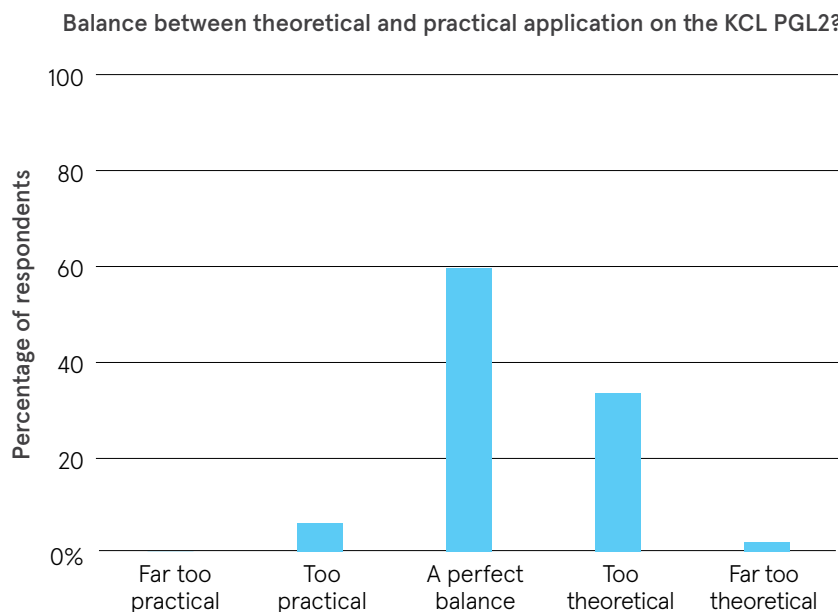
As indicated by the range of blue in the above bars, scores were high for breadth of topics covered and the relevance of this to modern policy making. Lower range scores are concerned with capability and discernible improvements in policy making skills. Interestingly, only approximately half (54%) of line managers thought the KCL PGL2 had improved the policy capability of those who have taken part. This could suggest that whilst people feel the learning contains interesting approaches and theory, they are yet to incorporate these or struggle to understand how they might go about introducing new approaches, knowledge, or change to their work and practice. This may improve over time with confidence and broader work experience, or it may also suggest a failure of the teaching to convey how new knowledge and concepts might be used in practice. One participant reported that the Department for Education (DfE) conducted an internal survey in December 2022, in which 100% of colleagues agreed that the KCL PGL2 had helped them to become better policy professionals. Across the qualitative feedback, there was strong evidence of student and stakeholder interest in the applied side of learning. For example:

"I was hoping the topic would be much more applied than just the different ethical frameworks."

"I would have enjoyed having longer seminars to allow for even deeper exploration of the topics and discussion of how they can be applied."

This is interesting to consider alongside the question that asked if the balance of learning on the program was too practical or too theoretical.

Figure 6. Balance Between Theoretical Learning and Practical Application



The data above shows that most respondents feel the program has a ‘perfect balance’ of theory and practice, though this is skewed towards an excessive orientation towards theory. This may help to explain why a lower proportion of students (40%) have reported that the program has resulted in improvements to their policy making skills. This finding points to an earlier comment and recommendation that it is important for teaching staff to regularly connect the concepts and content of their modules to the applied contexts. This can be done by teaching staff through explanation and in-class activities and can also be conveyed through the effective use of practitioner speakers and the design of assessments.

Connecting with the applied context was a theme across the feedback where students were asked to identify areas for improvement in the program. One respondent suggested that *“The content needs to be reconsidered and designed in a way that is more focused around equipping students with applied skills and knowledge, with less focus on the theoretical”*. Another echoed this sentiment, requesting that teaching staff *“think about grounding the courses further in the real world to strike the balance between academic theory and real scenarios”*. Providing stronger explanations or pushing students to more deeply explore how the ideas covered in a module connect with their applied working environment is critical for the development of professional policy skills. It also helps to build an understanding of how theory connects with – and is founded on – observations of practice. This is an important insight from learning as it then enables students to more readily see the value and use of theory. One student reported that *“I’ve been able to apply the policy theory and use key concepts in my role”*. Another noted that extant opportunities to connect discussions of practice to the theories being learnt were under-used: *“I felt opportunities were missed to apply some of the theory to live real world problems that were emerging from the participants”*.

Of course, achieving a satisfactory balance between the discussion of theory and practice is a challenge for all learning programs targeting professionals. For some, the practical application of knowledge is immediately linked to the value of learning while for others, knowledge of theory and concepts provides confidence, is seen as useful and is considered a deeper form of learning:

“learning about the theory of policy [...] – it also helps me feel more confident.”

“[I] much preferred deeper diving into theory and writing a longer assignment.”

“I am specifically after learning theory and from the experts.”

The evidence around applied and contextual learning suggests that the KCL PGL2 makes strong connections to both theory and practice. For many students this was particularly evident in the Policy Skills Project and through the use of guest practitioner speakers. Here, we heard from students on how they came to apply concepts to their work challenges and how their own understanding of policy practice was enhanced when learning how fellow students and leading practitioners from other organisations responded to both similar and different policy problems. As one student noted, “the external speakers gave an insight that you don’t get from academic papers”.

The online delivery format was seen as a bonus for engaging guest speakers from across the UK and internationally. Several focus group participants praised King’s for securing high calibre guest speakers on the longer modules which included a face-to-face component.

Student feedback was critical of speakers who drew on less relevant experience, preferring more focused speaker selection based on current domestic policy issues.

The broad tenor of student feedback provides a cautionary warning that continuous attention is required on how the content of all learning modules relates to professional context. This may be through practitioner speakers, assessment design or teaching practices. This will help to lift the impact of the program on policy knowledge and policy making skills.

7.1 Applied and Contextual Learning - Summary

Student feedback and discussion with stakeholders reveal high levels of interest in ensuring that the KCL PGL2 is well aligned to the policy skills and professional development needs of learners. The breadth of learning modules across the program and the design of 15-credit modules such as the Policy Process were considered well aligned and targeted to the challenges of modern policy making. Students value the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of module topics but also expressed a desire to see the teaching clearly articulate how these concepts strengthen their policy making capability and connect with the applied context of their work.

The use of practitioner speakers, the design of assessment tasks and teaching activities are effective in connecting module content with the applied context of policy work. Students reported that the KCL PGL2 has contributed to both their broad understanding of policy work as well as to the development of their applied policy skills. ISfG was commended for the impressive range of practitioner speakers on which it draws. Nevertheless, it was noted that more could be done to strengthen this aspect of the learning offer. ISfG works with PPU to secure speakers but greater advance coordination with longer lead times would ensure access to a more extensive and experienced pool of practitioners working on contemporary policy issues.

In the next section, the discussion moves to contextual factors that influence learning. While program content and connections to practice are seen to contribute to the development of policy knowledge and policy making skills, the extent to which this development might be achieved is often influenced by style and modes of teaching and the amount of time students are able to commit to learning. The following section examines time requirements and how the flexibility of the mode of delivery might impact on learning.

8

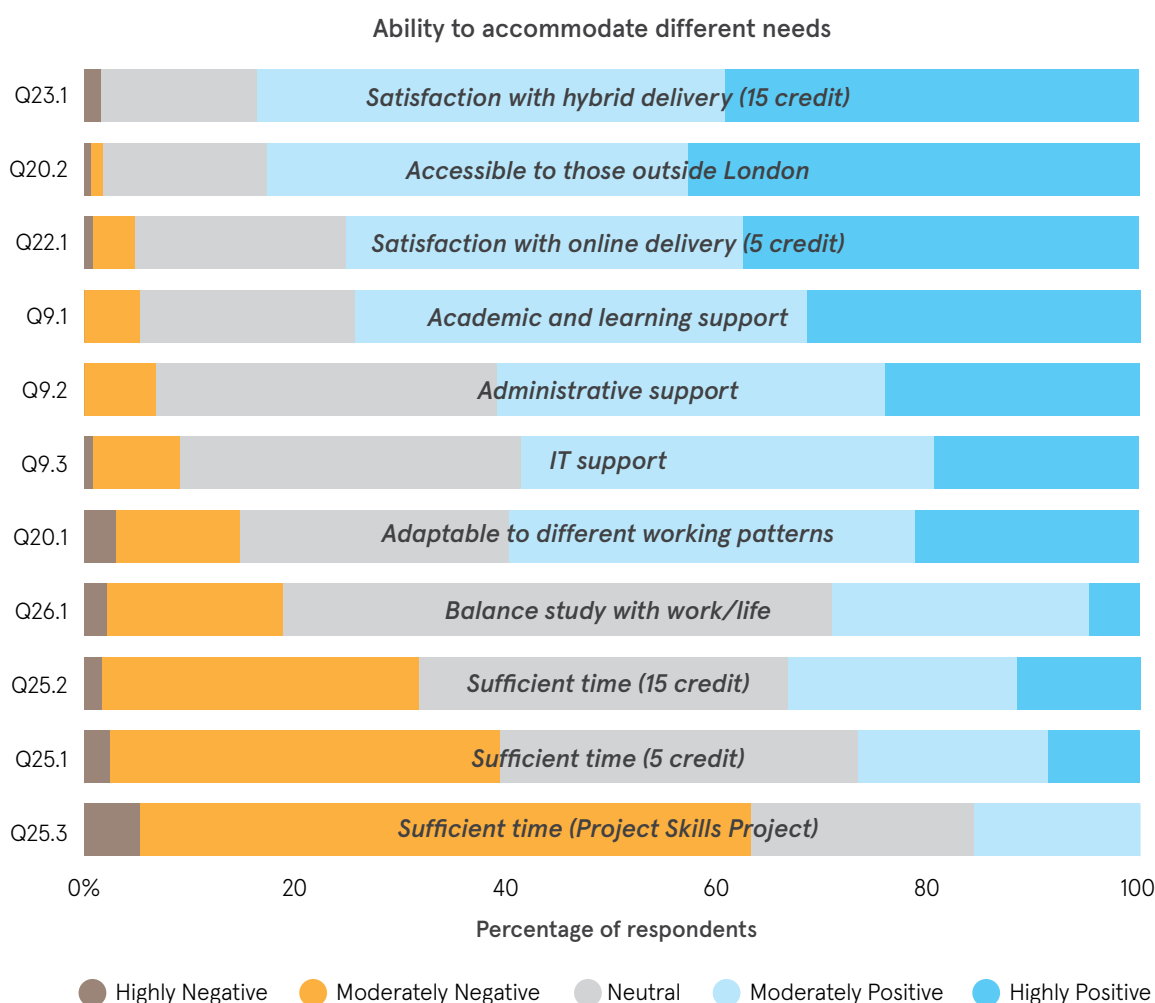
Commitment,
Flexibility, Access
and Support

In this section, the discussion examines student views on their time commitment to learning and study and the general flexibility of the KCL PGL2. Reference will also be made to access issues and the provision of support. All these issues interact and impact student learning. For example, the online delivery of teaching is seen by many students to make the program highly accessible and this in turn provides more flexibility in how they might allocate their time towards preparation and learning tasks. Factors outside the KCL PGL2 also influence access and a student's commitment to and capacity for learning. Central to this is the level of organisational support provided to students. This might concern access to study leave or the management and allocation of work within a student's organisation during the teaching of module webinars. This discussion includes comment on the current teaching delivery mode and consideration of how this might develop going forward.

The analysis of survey results clustered a series of responses to questions concerning access and levels of satisfaction with the delivery mode, satisfaction with forms of support, questions regarding sufficient study time and the achievement of an appropriate work/life and study balance. The results are presented in Figure 7 below. There are high levels of satisfaction with hybrid and online delivery and reasonable levels of satisfaction with the range of support provided to students. Importantly, satisfaction remained high for hybrid delivery when broken down by London/non-London work locations of students. This is also an indicator of accessibility for regional students.

Across the full range of issues examined by survey, levels of satisfaction with time commitment and study-work/life balance scored the lowest. However, the high proportion of neutral responses to study-work/life balance suggests that this is not as problematic as finding sufficient time to complete modules of study. This points to an important area of concern and interest to students.

Figure 7. Modes of delivery, support and time commitment



8.1 Time Commitment

For students completing any module of the KCL PGL2, the core component of independent study time is focused on reading and completion of the assessment task. Mixed feedback was received on reading lists. Comments ranged from *“good”* and *“realistic”* to *“confusing”* and *“not particularly helpful”*. However, the overwhelming concern was that the time required to complete the reading list within the required study period was onerous. Here, the challenge of balancing full-time work and other family and social commitments with academic study becomes apparent. One respondent noted:

“I didn’t have any other major commitments outside of work and found the time commitment a struggle at times, so I imagine that those with childcare or other caring responsibilities would have found it really, really challenging.”

Students noted that the quality of reading material was excellent, however the volume and scheduling of reading time became a barrier to learning:

“I struggled to do pre-reading for group sessions on a number of occasions.”

“The volume of reading was the biggest barrier. The teaching staff put a lot of work into the reading lists but there are almost too many options for busy professionals. It would be better to streamline absolutely essential reading a bit more.”

“It was nigh impossible to read even the core reading and then play catch up by the time the assessment was due.”

Given the essential role of reading and the importance of the reading material to successful learning on each module, the review team felt it was important that greater attention be paid to the timely access and design of reading lists for each module. It is important that essential readings are limited to a manageable number and are available in advance of the commencement of teaching. This will help to ensure that a maximum number of students come to the seminars prepared for discussion and debate.

A number of students commented on the lack of equivalence of workload and reading lists across modules and between modules of different weightings (5 credits versus 15 credits):

“The balance of work between 5 and 15-credit modules needs improvement.”

“One 15-credit module is not three times the amount of work of a 5 credit!”

Again, to the maximum extent possible, achieving a level of consistency in the volume of reading across modules of equal credit weighting would assist students in the management of their learning. The above observations also suggest a need to consider the diversity of module materials (videos, podcasts etc.) that students should review in preparation for weekly webinars. It is also worth noting that the consistent structure of module teaching (four weeks) and assessment was generally considered advantageous and ensured that students became familiar (and consequently more capable over time) with the approach to teaching and learning and requisite reading and assessment. This allowed students to develop efficient approaches to time management and supported deep learning. Early advice to students – particularly those enrolled on the postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma – on the importance of careful time management should be embedded by King's, by PPU in promoting the KCL PGL2 and by organisations sponsoring students on the program.

Another factor in student success is support and recognition from the learner's work organisation. Several participants noted that where they were supported by their organisation and had regular access to study leave, their involvement in the program was deeper and more consistent. However, student feedback indicated that organisational support varied widely. Many felt this came down to the commitment of individual line managers, while one participant claimed that they attended webinars on their lunch break because the learning offer was deemed unimportant by their organisation.

Access to study leave and other forms of expressed support by organisations meant that students were more likely to complete reading and other preparation tasks, actively participate in webinars and successfully progress through the program. This is an important equity and access issue since time commitment is a very influential factor in student decisions regarding enrolment and their capacity to complete a program of study. Comments from two participants illustrate this:

"I work full time with two young children and was concerned about the time commitment. It was stretching without being unmanageable. The half-day study leave allowed made a huge difference."

"The experience of the workload on the 15-credit [standalone] module put me off doing the diploma because I could not commit to the time for a longer duration."

The review team recommends that PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group examine ways of regularly communicating with organisations on the value and benefit of institutional support for improving access and ensuring student success on the learning offer. Other aspects of student support are expanded upon in the following subsections.



8.2 Flexibility

Concerns about flexibility relate to program design, the manner in which learning and teaching occurs and other administrative issues such as processes for extending or moderating program enrolment and the duration of study. Central to the discussion of flexibility amongst students was the online and hybrid nature of teaching delivery.

In terms of program design, students were consistently positive about the range of modules from which they could select, and how their program of study could be organised in a flexible manner. The inductions were seen as helpful in explaining the flexible nature of the learning program offer, and the mandatory core module(s) were regularly reported as engaging:

"I really appreciated the flexibility [of module options] – there was only one mandatory module [on the postgraduate certificate], which was actually a really good foundation."

However, for some, excessive flexibility was thought to potentially negatively impact optimal learning. There was strong support from students for the publication of suggested study plans and grouping of well aligned modules to help students navigate and design a highly coherent individualised program of study on the postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma. This is a suggestion that ISfG and PPU should consider co-developing and providing to potential and enrolled students:

"It would be helpful to have roadmaps/pathways through the program for particular policy domain areas to avoid the selection seeming quite random."

"There could be too much flexibility for some, it could be useful to group the modules and categorise them."

As noted in Figure 7 above survey respondents reported high levels of satisfaction with the hybrid and online delivery modes. While most focus group participants indicated that the KCL PGL2 was their first experience of online learning, they readily identified both the benefits and challenges of this mode of learning and teaching. Online delivery was seen as highly accessible, it did not limit student participation in the learning offer based on location. This was considered a very positive and important aspect of the program. Students reported that online teaching was done well and retention of this delivery mode was strongly supported. Some students advised that they could not undertake the learning modules if physical attendance was a requirement:

"I would not have been able to do this program if I had to go to King's once a week."

"Having all of the teaching virtual, helped me to attend."

"I did everything online, which I thought King's did an excellent job of facilitating!"

"The remote angle was a selling point as having a family meant not wanting to have long teaching blocks away from home."

"The way it was delivered in terms of flexibility made it look accessible and doable."

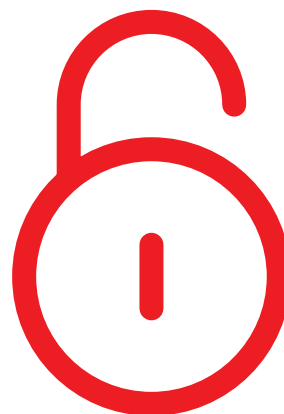
The review team commends ISfG on providing a quality, accessible learning offer that addresses an important access issue, particularly for many learners located outside London. As noted earlier, it will be important that the use of contemporary online technology and the digital delivery skills of academic teaching staff continue to develop so that the online learning experience remains of high quality.

Students, however, also recognise that online modes of teaching face limitations in terms of student engagement, collaboration and the interpersonal and social aspects associated with face-to-face teaching. This issue and its impact on student networking has already been covered in the discussion on Quality (section 5.1). Those who had experience with hybrid modes of teaching involving both online learning and attendance of face-to-face teaching days were enthusiastic and reported very positive experiences. The inclusion of in-person teaching was seen to “*add something*” to the learning experience and retention of this option across a few learning modules was seen as a positive.

The review team suggests that there would be value in exploring how to carefully curate points of hybrid/blended learning at strategic points within the program calendar. As with current hybrid modules, engagement in face-to-face learning could be optional. These in-person experiences could be used to strengthen student engagement with peers and staff. Those important interpersonal and social experiences are then likely to flow forward and lift engagement and the value of future online learning modules. While several regional students noted that making time for and being able to travel to London to attend in-person teaching on the King’s campus can be a barrier to their participation in hybrid modules, one option that ISfG should explore is involving university partners or regional hubs in the programme delivery, particularly of hybrid modules. The review team considers this a possible option, particularly if future enrolments on the program substantially increase and hybrid modules are repeated each year.

Finally, there were some comments from students on the broader flexibility of the program for students who have to pause their program of study, take leave, and other aspects of program rules that concern timelines for completion and the management of disruptions. Comments on how ISfG staff dealt with individual students and special circumstances were positive, particularly regarding assignment extensions and clarifying processes for managing disruptions that impact on the completion of an individual module. A range of complex administrative concerns were raised regarding the processes for transition from individual learning modules to the postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma. There was also lack of understanding of how disruptions to a program of study were supposed to be managed. Some of this complexity relates to the internal processes of the students’ funding organisations, some to the rules and processes that need to be followed by ISfG.

The review team felt that two actions were important regarding this matter. Firstly, clear information to KCL PGL2 students on how disruptions to the program of study are dealt with by ISfG and by their sponsoring organisation should be provided. Secondly, the flexibility of program completion timeframes should be further considered by PPU with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group so that a clear, efficient and manageable framework is established for all parties (students, sponsoring organisations, PPU, ISfG and EY) impacted by disruption to study.



8.3 Access and Support

Some issues relevant to access and support have already been discussed. Regarding accessibility for students with disabilities or learning support needs, the review found very limited evidence. One student with dyslexia praised the organisation of resources:

"Having access to all the resources was a key stand out for me. Having the readings but also having the activities alongside them was really helpful. Particularly as someone with dyslexia, it made it easier to frame and digest the information."

However, another student noted that the lack of captions in webinars constrained their participation:

"I was unable to get closed captions which limited my interaction in the online events."

The provision of recruitment material (module descriptions, program flyers and teaching schedule) by ISfG in pdf format was also raised by PPU as inaccessible and against government protocol. Although PPU has converted recruitment material into accessible formats for recruitment purposes, ISfG and PPU should collaborate to improve the accessibility of resources from the outset.

While the learning and teaching of ISfG would be guided and supported by the broader student access and support resources at King's, it would be timely and appropriate for the KCL PGL2 Steering Group to conduct an examination of accessibility issues that may be relevant to the learning offer. This analysis should consider the role and resources available from King's and the extent to which sponsoring organisations should be supporting the accessible participation of staff with additional needs in the KCL PGL2.

As noted above, the predominantly online delivery of the KCL PGL2 is highly valued in terms of access, and the rotation of in-person teaching days outside of London would also improve access for regional students. ISfG staff are highly accessible and responsive to student queries (e.g., *"Staff were well-informed and supportive"*). Comments on the learning support resources and program information emphasised their value and accessibility. Working Level Contacts described the program entry requirements as highly accessible, allowing a diversity of applicants from a wide variety of backgrounds. Entry rules permit admission of students without an undergraduate degree and with significant work experience. During focus group discussions, one such student reported how life changing and rewarding access to the KCL PGL2 had been. The review team found the KCL PGL2 a highly accessible university program and commends ISfG on their work and success in this area.

A key issue raised by students concerned how stronger elements of peer support could be developed across the program. For some, their sponsoring organisation played a role in connecting students (past and current) to help build a network of peer support. A number of students felt that the online learning environment was a barrier to the natural evolution of peer support networks, but also by its nature (with students working in isolation) increased the need for peer support. Accessing peer support was also considered a critical issue for those few students who had not previously studied at university.

The review team feel that peer support and networking are very much intertwined and so the recommendation that more explicit work be done on networking will primarily address this issue. However, it is also recommended that specific work is done to support those students on the KCL PGL2 who have not previously undertaken university study. Some form of buddy or mentoring system may be an option that will help to address and support these students. In addition, it is recommended that PPU prepares guidance notes for sponsoring organisations on how they might foster peer support arrangements for students. It is also recommended that, in consultation with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, King's considers its role in facilitating peer support arrangements across the program, particularly for students from organisations with few or no other sponsored students.

Minor issues where students indicated need for support included:

- a process for accessing IT support. This tended to concern students who had just enrolled on the program and wanted more support in understanding how to access and use university systems such as KEATS and Turnitin and how they might go about establishing virtual study groups.
- supplementary study skills support by providing best practice sample essays and other annotated coursework to review, as well as early guidance on required referencing practices.
- providing one source which defines the support roles and support services provided by ISfG, King's, PPU, EY and students' organisations. It was suggested that a flowchart of the student journey from nomination to enrolment and then the student journey on the program would help both to locate support services and to clarify when they are best called upon.

The above minor points on access and support are reported for information. The review team felt that some issues may already be addressed, some are addressed through progressive student familiarisation and others may require administrative action. Reviewing the necessity for action on these matters should be determined by PPU in consultation with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group.

8.4 Commitment, Flexibility, Access and Support – Summary

The KCL PGL2 is considered a highly accessible and well supported learning offer. It is seen to be highly flexible, although the provision of guidance on suggested learning pathways was recommended. Successful performance on the program requires a substantial commitment of student time; a key area noted for improvement is the design of essential reading lists and preparation materials. While not recommending a reduction in the scholarly depth of the learning modules, it is important that ISfG remains alert and sensitive to the volume of time that students can commit to completing required reading and other learning preparation tasks. Student learning would benefit if greater effort was put into achieving equivalence and clarifying essential reading across all modules.

Noting this, it is critical that any promotion of the program clearly advises on the importance of effective time management for achieving success. Access to study leave and other forms of organisational support significantly influence student success and have an impact on equitable access. Student experience of organisational support was variable. The review recommends more proactive forms of communication from PPU to organisations on this important issue and notes that organisational support is critical for maximising the value of their investment in developing the Policy Profession.

The predominantly online delivery mode is highly valued and is both accessible and flexible. ISfG is commended for the high levels of student satisfaction with hybrid and online teaching. The review recommends the strategic placement of hybrid teaching modules across the learning program to maximise the value of in-person teaching and extend the positive impact this may have on interpersonal connections across student cohorts as they progress through subsequent online modules. It is noted that some communication work is required to clarify arrangements for students who experience disruptions and progression impacts on their program of study.

There exists an effective and satisfactory range of academic and study skills support services for students, though improvements in clarifying for students the respective support services offered by the different parties (student's organisation, PPU, ISfG and King's) is needed. An important area for action concerns more explicitly establishing student peer support mechanisms, this is critical for students who only complete online modules and those who are undertaking university study for the first time.

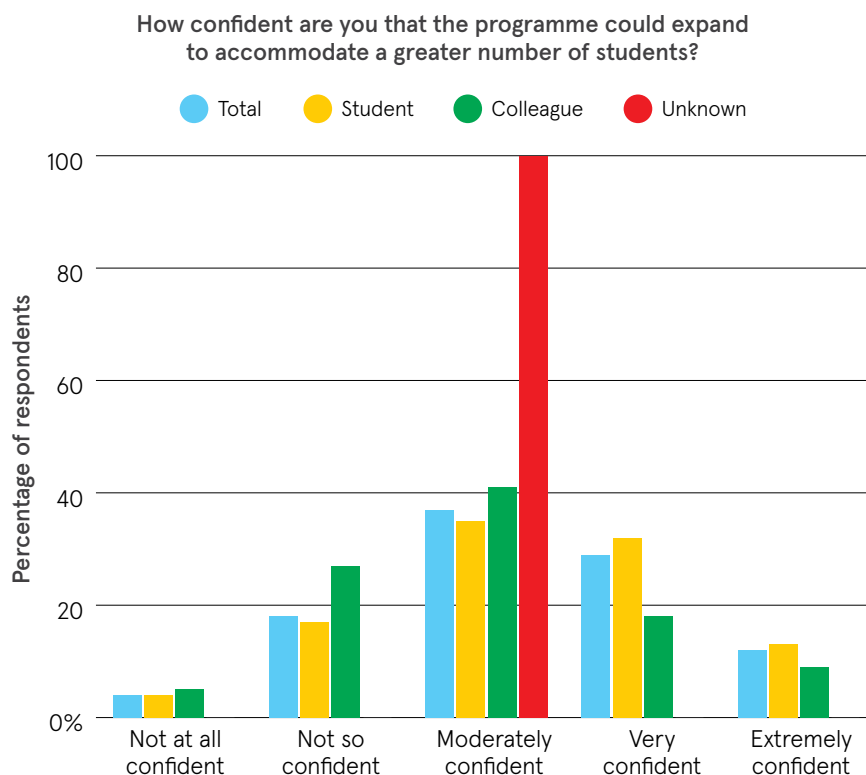
9

Scalability

An important question for this review concerns the potential to expand the KCL PGL2 and grow enrolments. Here, we were interested in building an understanding of the possible impact on the student experience, as well as the learning and teaching resources of ISfG. Section 2 of the report provided a general outline of the KCL PGL2 and reported on cohort data, noting that generally between 50 and 100 students participate in any teaching period and that cohort sizes are currently capped at 150. The program therefore has room to grow and its current penetration across the Civil Service Policy Profession is small given its relative newness (first enrolments commenced in 2020). Discussions with ISfG and King's College London executive staff confirmed their interest in the growth of program enrolments. This includes an interest in growing the intake of Civil Service policy professionals as well as open market applications. This means that the KCL PGL2 will retain identified modules reserved for Civil Service policy professionals only and open modules that include a mix of external students and Civil Service KCL PGL2 students. Similarly, discussions with PPU and organisational staff indicated some interest in the program growing its intake of policy professionals. However, concern was expressed regarding the impact this might have on learners and administrative staff.

The following figure shows the survey results from students and organisational staff when asked if the program could accommodate a larger number of students.

Figure 8. Scalability



The scoring scale listed 5 as extremely confident, 4 as very confident, descending to 1 as extremely not confident. The survey results show that the general disposition of participants was positive (45% of students were 'very' or 'extremely' confident), however organisational representatives were less enthusiastic (only 6 out of 22 colleagues (27%) thought the same). The largest response for both groups was 3 out of 5, meaning both groups were mainly 'moderately confident' about expansion. The vast majority of stakeholders do not see expansion of the program as problematic.

The qualitative data provided further insight into this issue with most students pointing to two important consequences. Firstly, expansion of the program was seen as contributing to greater flexibility by potentially resulting in more weekly webinar options being available and thus allowing greater choice and 'work arounds' when work demands interfere with attendance. There was a view that upscaling was fine provided staffing resources also expanded to allow for the provision of larger online lectures but maintain a range of smaller seminar groups for more intimate student interaction.

The second consequence flows from the above point. While there was consistent feedback that the number of students attending an online lecture was generally immaterial, concern was expressed for retaining small interactive discussion in webinars and breakout groups. It was generally felt that larger numbers in interactive sessions would be problematic and negatively impact on student engagement and learning. There was also some concern about the impact on the quality and level of student services and support provided by ISfG staff. Substantially growing student numbers was therefore seen to have potential positive program implications but negative learning and support implications. Characteristic negative comments included:

"Expanding the program may have a small negative impact on the level of service they are able to provide. I think there is a risk that in expanding to a cohort which is too large, you will lose the quality of the course."

"I would worry that expanding the cohort size means increasing the number of students in each weekly webinar – as there is a finite number of academics to teach them and a finite amount of their time."

"I think the course should focus on making the experience more immersive and intensive for the cohort intake rather than expanding."

"I think expanding the program would be detrimental to the learning experience."

"I'd have reservations that expanding the cohort too much might not enhance my learning."

Positive comments included:

"I think expanding the program would be positive."

"It will have benefits in terms of expanding choice of modules."

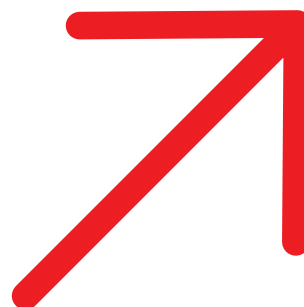
"Overall, I think it would be good for more civil servants to be able to receive this education."

"Expanding gives more opportunity."

Students noted that staffing arrangements at ISfG also have implications for expansion. The impact of significant expansion of student numbers on ISfG staffing was not explicitly discussed with the review team, although the Faculty Dean was confident that the program needs to expand and that this would be supported by the faculty. The move of ISfG into the Policy Institute was seen as an important decision that would support expansion plans, providing access to both additional academic support and significant administrative and business development support. The review team notes the general support for expanding student enrolment on the KCL PGL2 and encourages PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group to work with ISfG on how this might be best developed to ensure that student engagement and quality learning is not negatively impacted.

9.1 Scalability – Summary

There is general support from students and stakeholders for expanding student participation in the KCL PGL2. Expansion is seen to provide opportunity for building in more options and flexibility, but also seen to have potential negative impacts on student engagement and learning. The online delivery format readily allows for upscaling and growth of the number of participants. However, how larger student numbers might be accommodated in interactive webinars, small break out groups and during in-person teaching for hybrid modules was noted as a challenge. Increased provision also has resource implications for ISfG. While ISfG and PPU are keen to see enrolments on the program expand it will be important that careful analysis is undertaken to ensure the maintenance of teaching quality and student engagement. The review team recommends that PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group work with ISfG on how expansion might best be managed to ensure that student engagement and quality learning are not negatively impacted.



10

Other Findings of Relevance

The above discussion has identified outstanding practice and areas where opportunities for improvement exist. In addition to those areas targeted for analysis, the review team was informed of other student concerns where action can be taken. This primarily centred on the manner in which the KCL PGL2 is promoted across the UK Civil Service, information about the focus of the learning offer and how units of study (modules) are described.

Feedback revealed variable approaches across organisations in how information is relayed to potential program participants. Some students reported that while they received information on the existence of the KCL PGL2, they were given little information on how it worked or who it was suited for (which grades could apply). They also reported that there was limited explanation of the respective roles and relationships between the key organisations (their organisations, PPU, EY and ISfG). There was a general feeling expressed by several respondents that the KCL PGL2 was only very lightly advertised by email in their organisation. They described their awareness of the program as incidental or fortuitous rather than part of a structured and deliberate approach to their professional development by their organisations.

There was evidence of a diverse range of internal application processes across organisations, with some being streamlined while others required detailed internal applications for nomination for each learning module. The latter approach was seen as a barrier that delayed enrolment and participation. Finally, many participants commented that the module descriptions were not accurate representations of the module content and generally undersold the value of the module. It was recommended that module descriptions include learner outcomes and that descriptions address the practical aspects of the module, highlighting the module's relevance to particular organisations or policy domains. These comments were not so much critical of the modules and program but were said in the context of how the value of the learning offer could be made more readily evident and align with their positive experience. On this matter, the review team notes that many academic institutions have highly prescriptive rules and limits on how units of study may be described, and recognises that ISfG may face limitations on how this feedback can be addressed. Nevertheless, one option may be to develop promotional material for the KCL PGL2 in consultation with PPU, that includes descriptions of a few sample modules and clearly articulates the practical aspects and relevance to policy making and/or a particular policy domain.

Taking into account the above, the review team recommends that PPU leads a process with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group to review the relevance and accuracy of information circulated on the KCL PGL2. This work should include working with WLCs to ensure organisations adhere to information provided on which types of policy practitioners are most suitable as applicants for the program and at what career stage. There would be value in engaging with organisational Working Level Contacts to examine how application processes and messaging can be aligned and streamlined across government, or at least contain minimal data fields. It is also recommended that PPU and ISfG work collaboratively to review module descriptions so that the content's relevance to policy skills development and the applied domain of policy practice is made more evident. This may simply involve including a mandatory information field asking, "How is this module relevant to policy practice?"

Another point of interest when results and findings were discussed during the final workshop, was the interest of postgraduate diploma students in progressing on to the completion of a master's degree. One idea for PPU to consider is whether other regional universities with schools of government and public policy can be engaged to provide the supplementary study program (recognising the student's King's College London postgraduate accreditation) and award a master level degree. This would help to disperse the next stage of the learning offer beyond London and may contribute to building higher levels of participation in the KCL PGL2 from civil servants located in regional areas, particularly if they know the final third (from postgraduate diploma to master's degree) of their program could be acquired from their local university. This is an option that PPU may wish to explore as a longer-term development of the learning offer.

11

Summary

The overall findings of the review are highly positive and demonstrate the applied and academic value of the KCL PGL2 for policy professionals. The program structure is considered relevant, coherent and well aligned to the career interests, challenges and professional development of policy staff. Module content is considered contemporary and the approach to learning and teaching engages students in learning. There is a general perception that more can be done to achieve greater alignment and equivalence in workload (reading, participation and assessment) across modules and for the volume of credits (5 or 15) awarded. The importance of managing module material, reading lists and other preparatory tasks to a level that is both credible for academic standards and achievable for students engaged in full time work was noted as a matter that requires regular attention.

Complementing this is the call for greater recognition and consistency in provision of student support by sponsoring organisations, such as study leave. There has been no suggestion that new program content is required or that any existing module is not directly relevant to the professional development or learning aspirations of students. The quality of teaching was commended and the engagement of guest practitioners was highly valued. ISfG's own monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms are effective for identifying areas in need of improvement and this evidence is picked up and acted on in a timely manner. There is a general view that the mode of assessment across modules should be diversified and differentiated to a greater extent.

The KCL PGL2 is considered a highly accessible program that is flexible in design and the administration of the program is responsive to student concerns. The predominantly online mode of delivery is seen to work well, increases accessibility and would readily permit further expansion of the program. A critical concern for program expansion is the impact on student engagement and the resource implications for ISfG in supporting small group webinars and hybrid delivery. Strengthening mechanisms through which student networking and peer support might develop is noted as an important area for lifting student engagement and increasing the value of the program for students and organisations. Finally, there exist opportunities for improving communication across the UK Civil Service on the specifics of the learning offer and for whom it is most suited as a professional development opportunity.



12

Recommendations

The following recommendations draw on the key findings of the report and identify the responsible lead organisation. Recommendations have been grouped under three major themes that concern:

- > communication, access and organisational support
- > quality learning and teaching and
- > administration and future development.

Communication, Access, and Organisational Support

The following recommendations seek to address things that matter to prospective and current students in terms of what they might learn from the program, how it applies to their working role, how they enrol on and continue to participate in it, and what critical information and support influences their student journey and success.

Communication

The review team recommends that PPU and ISfG jointly examine the communication of information to potential and enrolled students with a view to simplifying messages, communicating core and essential information, achieving consistency in messaging and clarifying which organisation delivers what messaging on what issues. Critical areas identified for action include:

- > *Clearly defining the target audience of the PGL2 learning offer:* Work closely with organisations to promote consistency on which Civil Service job grades and type of Civil Service workers (policy practitioners) are most suitable as applicants for the program.
- > *Time management and achieving success:* It is critical that any promotion of the program clearly advises on the importance of effective time management for achieving success. Students should receive consistent and clear communication throughout their program of study from ISfG and their organisations on how they should manage and plan for the successful completion of learning modules. This should include reference to preparation, attendance, and assessment completion.
- > *The development of a map of the student journey:* The production of a map or pathways of a student journey that shows which organisation (PPU, sponsoring organisation, EY, ISfG) is responsible for the various administrative processes and support services.
- > *Delineation of roles and clear articulation of what support services are provided by each organisation:* The production of a simple and accessible table that defines major roles, responsibilities and the key services provided by each organisation (PPU, sponsoring organisation, EY, ISfG) involved in the student's learning experience and
- > *The development of an accessibility statement:* This statement should provide an outline of accessible features and the range of support services available to PGL2 students (from their organisation, PPU and King's).

Streamlining Application Processes

That PPU examines with Working Level Contacts how application processes can be aligned and streamlined across organisations, or at least contain minimal steps and processes.

Accessibility

That the KCL PGL2 Steering Group initiates a review of accessibility issues impacting student participation in the learning offer. This analysis should consider the role and resources available from King's and the extent to which sponsoring organisations should be supporting the accessible participation of staff with special educational needs and disabilities in the KCL PGL2.

Strengthening Support from Organisations

That PPU initiates proactive forms of communication with organisations on the provision of support (such as study leave, peer networking, mentoring from alumni, etc.) for students enrolled on the KCL PGL2. This may include direct communication to Heads of Policy Profession and/or a student's line manager advising how important organisational support is in maximising the value of their investment in the development of mid-career policy professionals.

The Learning Offer: Study Plans, Modules, Assessment and Quality Learning and Teaching

The following recommendations focus on the learning and teaching experience. Recommendations focus on strengthening the impact of the program on learners and the professional development of policy practitioners.

Program Planning and Sample Study Plans

That to the maximum extent possible – and in line with PPU’s recruitment schedule – ISfG publishes an advance program plan of learning modules to be taught throughout an academic year.

That ISfG – in consultation with PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group – prepares sample study plans to assist prospective students in decision making and planning. These sample study plans should seek to align like modules and articulate the primary distinguishing features of each study plan.

Learning Modules

That PPU and ISfG work collaboratively to review module descriptions so that the content’s relevance to policy skills development and the applied domain of policy practice is made more evident. This may simply involve including a mandatory information field asking, “How is this module relevant to policy practice?”

That ISfG works with module presenters/teaching staff to consider how concepts and content connect with policy practice. This may be done by teaching staff through explanation and in-class activities, it can also be conveyed through the effective use of practitioner speakers and assessment design.

That PPU collaborates with ISfG to ensure access to an extensive and experienced pool of practitioners working on contemporary policy issues who may then contribute to module teaching as guest speakers.

That ISfG works to ensure that essential readings are limited to a manageable number and are available in advance of the commencement of teaching. While not recommending a reduction to the scholarly depth of the learning modules, it is important that ISfG remains alert and sensitive to the volume of time that students can commit to completing required reading and other learning preparation tasks.

Assessment

That ISfG works to embed clearer connections and scaffolding across student assessment activities in each learning module.

That ISfG considers options for building greater variation into assessment design across the KCL PGL2. This may mean that some modules select alternative assessment formats to the 1,000-word essay. Variation in assessment type would test a broader range of skills and allow students to demonstrate in different ways how they have met the learning objectives of a module.

Networking and Peer Support

That PPU and ISfG work collaboratively to establish options as well as embedded mechanisms that purposely facilitate student networking across the learning program. A stronger focus on how the KCL PGL2 can include networking components that allow students to build connections and share experiences will strengthen the value of the offering for students and sponsoring organisations.

That, where specific networking events are planned, the design and timing should consider accessibility issues.

That (noting that peer support is different but also connected to networking) more explicit work be done by ISfG on building optional systems of peer support. This should initially target students who enrol on the KCL PGL2 who have not previously completed university study. Some form of buddy or mentoring (drawing on alumni) system may be an option that will help to address and support these students.

That PPU prepares guidance notes for sponsoring organisations on how they might foster peer support arrangements for students. It is also recommended that in consultation with the KCL PGL2 Steering Group, PPU considers how peer support arrangements across the program can be facilitated, particularly for students from organisations with few or only one sponsored student(s).

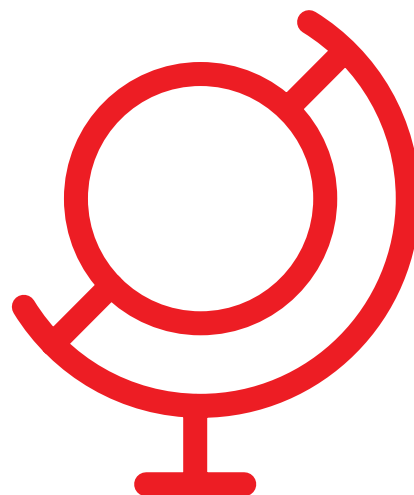
Online Teaching Skills

That ISfG ensures teaching staff remain appraised and make use of the most effective online teaching tools and systems to build student engagement and strengthen opportunities for learning. ISfG should provide a brief annual report (verbal or written) to PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group on staff development specific to online learning and teaching, and any notable innovations introduced to the online learning and teaching experience. This may include for example, innovations in the online design and presentation of module content, online pre-seminar activities, online teaching delivery innovations, or networking tools.

Hybrid Modules

That ISfG gives consideration to the strategic placement of hybrid teaching modules across the learning program to maximise the value of in-person teaching and to extend the positive impact this may have on interpersonal connections across cohorts as students progress through subsequent online modules.

That ISfG considers the viability of involving university partners or regional hubs in the delivery of in-person teaching for hybrid modules. PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group should explore how they might support this option.



Important Issues of Administration and Future Expansion

The following recommendations address important administrative matters that impact on continuous operation of the program and its future development:

Disruption to student progression

That ISfG articulates the process and university rules by which significant disruptions to the progression of a student's program of study are managed.

That PPU, ISfG and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group consider disruptions, flexibility and program completion timeframes so that a clear, efficient and manageable framework is established for all parties (students, sponsoring organisations, PPU and ISfG) impacted by disruption in study plans, within university regulations.

Program Expansion

That plans for the expansion of student enrolments on the KCL PGL2 proceed. However, PPU and the KCL PGL2 Steering Group should work with ISfG to manage expansion to ensure that student engagement and quality learning is not negatively impacted.

Extension to a Master's Program

That PPU examines options for the introduction of an innovative extension program that would permit postgraduate diploma students to progress their policy studies to a full master's qualification. This may be through King's College London or other suitable universities that recognise the award.

Other Administrative Matters

That PPU and ISfG jointly investigate and determine required action on minor administrative issues raised during the review process. This includes, but is not restricted to:

- › *A process for accessing IT support.* This tended to concern students who had just enrolled on the program and wanted more support in understanding how to access and use university systems such as KEATS and Turnitin and how they might go about establishing virtual study groups; and
- › *Supplementary study skills support* by providing best practice sample essays to review, other reviewed work with constructive feedback, and early guidance on required referencing practices.



Appendices



Appendix 1:

Program structure

The King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2) is a modularised, flexible postgraduate accreditation in professional policy making skills.

Entry points

There are six entry points for standalone modules (5 or 15 credits) each year: January, March, May, July, September and November.

There are just two annual entry points for the postgraduate certificate (60 credits) and the postgraduate diploma (120 credits), in March and May.

Application process

The bespoke learning offer for the Civil Service is offered at a discounted rate compared with the open market price. As such, there is a different application process from the public access route onto some of the same modules.

Step 1 – Civil Service nomination

To apply for the KCL PGL2 through the Civil Service, applicants must be nominated by their organisation in the first instance.

PPU distributes recruitment packs for three teaching periods to their organisational Working Level Contacts between three to five months ahead of time. Each organisation decides which learner agreements to promote and how to allocate funding. WLCs advertise the learning offer on their organisation's intranet accordingly and set internal deadlines to meet PPU's central nomination deadline for each teaching period.

Each organisation has its own internal application process for shortlisting candidates. PPU does not currently issue central guidance on conducting this internal process. All candidates must obtain line manager approval and some organisations request a personal statement and learning and development records. Organisations typically scrutinise applications for the longer learner agreements of the postgraduate certificate or postgraduate diploma more heavily because of the higher expense and commitment involved.

PPU supplies each organisation with a nomination sheet template for each teaching period in the recruitment pack. Organisational Policy Profession teams populate the nomination sheet with the personal details, contact information, program and module choices of their chosen candidates and send one nomination sheet for their organisation to PPU by the nomination deadline.

PPU reviews nomination sheets from across government and sends one collated nominated sheet for the Civil Service to the ISfG Programmes Team at King's College London by the university's nomination deadline.

Step 2 – King's College London application

After reviewing the nominations, PPU shares a student timeline with nominated candidates, including information about King's application deadline and process. The ISfG Programmes Team sends application instructions to students shortly thereafter, adjusted for each learner agreement.

Nominated candidates must then complete their application on King's online portal by King's application deadline.

The online application form asks nominees for their personal details, a 5-year employment history and educational background. Nominees are encouraged to upload their CV and must upload their degree certificate or official transcripts if applying via the academic route onto the KCL PGL2. Candidates who do not have a previous degree (2:2 or above) will be assessed on their experience alone.

Nominees must complete this part of the application process even if they are a current or former student of the learning offer. The only exception to this is students who are already enrolled on the postgraduate certificate and wish to upgrade to the diploma (this is managed internally by the ISfG team and requires a Civil Service nomination only). If undertaking more than one standalone module in the upcoming teaching period, nominees must complete a separate online application for each module that they are undertaking.

The central admissions team at King's reviews applications. Any applications that do not meet the standard entry criteria are passed on to the ISfG Programmes Team and Academic Director to assess on a case-by-case basis.

Following review, King's Admissions issues offers to successful candidates on the online portal. Candidates must accept their offer to be enrolled on the course.

Fees and funding

Course fees are set at current pricings until the call-off contract end date of 4 October 2024 under the central Civil Service HR Learning Frameworks, as follows:

	Course fee
Standalone Modules	
5-credit module	£731.25
15-credit module	£1,687.50
Postgraduate Certificate	
Postgraduate certificate (for new students)	£4,725.00
Postgraduate certificate (for students with banked modules)	£4,725.00, minus cost of max. 3 banked modules
Banked 5-credit module (max. 3)	- £731.25 per module
Banked 15-credit module (max. 1 can be included in the 3 banked modules)	- £1,687.50
Postgraduate Diploma	
Postgraduate diploma (for new students)	£5,259.38
Postgraduate diploma (for students with banked modules)	£5,259.38 minus cost of max. 3 banked modules
Banked 5-credit module (max. 3)	- £731.25 per module
Banked 15-credit module (max. 1 can be included in the 3 banked modules)	- £1,687.50
Upgrade from postgraduate certificate to diploma	£534.38

All prices are quoted exclusive of VAT (at 20%, recoverable).

Student fees are financially processed by the Cabinet Office approved third-party contract supplier for bespoke learning, Ernst and Young (EY).

When nominating a candidate, the Civil Service organisation agrees to fully fund their place on the learning offer, either through their central budget or via directorates or a combination.

The funding model operates on an organisational level only. There is no central funding available through PPU for the KCL PGL2 and no central finance team to process payments. Self-funding is not possible through the Civil Service route.

Module list

There are 32 modules available on the KCL PGL2, all of which – except for the Policy Skills Project – may be undertaken as standalone modules.

There is one core or compulsory module for the postgraduate certificate (60 credits):
The Policy Process (15 credits). Students make up the remaining course credits by choosing from a range of module options.

There are three core modules for the postgraduate diploma (120 credits): The Policy Process (15 credits), Global Public Policy Challenges (15 credits) and the Policy Skills Project (30 credits). Students make up the remaining course credits by choosing from a range of module options.

The following modules are scheduled on a 12–18-month rotation with 3–4 module options to choose from in any given teaching period:

1. 7SSO1000 The Policy Process (15 credits)
2. 7SSO1001 Learning What Works (5 credits)
3. 7SSO1002 User-Centred Digital Government (5 credits)
4. 7SSO1003 Robust Decision Making Under Deep Uncertainty (5 credits)
5. 7SSO1004 Approaches to Policymaking (5 credits)⁴
6. 7SSO1005 Empathy and Emotion in Policymaking (5 credits)
7. 7SSO1006 Communications, Media and Public Policy (5 credits)
8. 7SSO1007 Ethics, Leadership and Governance (5 credits)
9. 7SSO1008 Key Models in Public Management: A Comparative Analysis (5 credits)
10. 7SSO1009 Understanding Political Leadership (5 credits)
11. 7SSO1010 Advanced Parliamentary Theory and Practice (5 credits)
12. 7SSO1011 The Economic Analysis of Public Policy (5 credits)
13. 7SSO1012 Participatory and Deliberative Governance (5 credits)
14. 7SSO1013 International Conflict Analysis and Resolution (5 credits)
15. 7SSO1014 Foresight and Horizon-Scanning in Policymaking (5 credits)
16. 7SSO1015 Behavioural Insights and Policymaking (5 credits)
17. 7SSO1017 data: The Markets and Politics of Personalisation (5 credits)
18. 7SSO1018 Working Internationally (5 credits)
19. 7SSO1019 Understanding Multi-Level Government (5 credits)
20. 7SSO1020 Regulatory Policy and Politics (5 credits)
21. 7SSO1021 Policy Analytics: Understanding and Using Data (5 credits)
22. 7SSO1022 Embracing Uncertainty: Policymaking in Turbulent Times (5 credits)
23. 7SSO1023 Financial Management for Policymakers (5 credits)
24. 7SSO1024 Climate Change and Policy (5 credits)
25. 7SSO1025 Anti-Corruption and the Rule of Law (5 credits)
26. 7SSO1026 Public Sector Leadership (5 credits)
27. 7SSO1027 Embracing Uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability (15 credits)
28. 7SSO1028 International Trade Policy (5 credits)
29. 7SSO1029 Text Mining and Analysis for Public Policy (5 credits)
30. 7SSO2000 Global Public Policy Challenges (15 credits)
31. 7SSO2001 The Policy Skills Project (30 credits)
32. 7SSO2006 European Capitals: Reforming the UK Public Service (15 credits)

⁴ Approaches to Policymaking (5 credits) contains overlapping content with The Policy Process (15 credits). Students cannot take both modules.

Modes of Assessment

The dominant mode of assessment on the KCL PGL2 is the essay.

All modules, except for the Policy Skills Project (30 credits), are assessed by essay, which accounts for at least 90% of a student's final grade. Most modules also assess student participation (webinar attendance and contributions to online discussions), which accounts for 10% of a student's final grade.

5-credit Modules

Students are given a choice of at least two questions and asked to complete a 1,000-word essay which they submit via King's virtual learning environment KEATS. The essay accounts for 90% of their final grade, while 10% of their grade is based on their participation in the module (attendance of webinars and contributions to online discussion forums).

15-credit Modules

The difference between this and a 5-credit module assessment is that the essay is 2,500 words.

For the Policy Process module, 90% of the student's final grade is awarded for the essay and 10% for their participation in the module. By contrast, Global Public Policy Challenges is assessed by essay submission alone.

Policy Skills Project (30 credits)

The Policy Skills Project is the exception to the essay-based assessment model. This is a core module for students on the postgraduate diploma. Students work in cross-organisational groups to develop a policy intervention in response to a complex policy challenge.

Assessment on this module is weighted towards a group presentation (50% – maximum of 20 minutes duration) to a panel of academic and policy practitioner experts.

Additionally, each student must write an individual reflective essay (25% – 2,500 words max.) on the group's process for the project.

Group participation accounts for a further 25% of the grade awarded to individuals.

Appendix 2: Survey Populations and Survey Instruments

The following groups were surveyed:

- current learners and alumni of the KCL PGL2, tiered by learner agreement (standalone module, postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma)
- line managers and/or team members of students/alumni
- Heads of Policy Profession (HoPPs) and their deputies
- Working Level Contacts (WLCs) and organisational Policy Profession teams.

Survey group	Respondents	Contacted	Response rate
Postgraduate diploma	32	140	22.86%
Postgraduate certificate	15	67	22.39%
Standalone modules	86	334	25.75%
HoPPs/Deputy HoPPs	6	51	11.76%
WLCs	19	111	17.12%
Line managers	11	Unknown	Unknown
Total	169	703	24%

Survey questions

Survey of postgraduate diploma students and alumni

1. What is your organisation?

2. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?

I am an alumna/alumnus of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a student on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a Head of Policy Profession

I am a Working Level Contact for the Policy Profession

I am a member of an organisational Policy Profession team

I am the line manager of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a team member of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

Other (please specify):

3. Which learning agreement did you undertake?

(If you upgraded please select your highest level of agreement)

Standalone module(s)

Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Policymaking Skills

Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policymaking Skills

4. When did you first enrol on the program?

2020

2021

2022

2023

5. Which region are you based in?

6. Are you in one or more of the following groups, which are under-represented in UK Higher Education? care leavers students with caring responsibilities students with disabilities students from low-income households students with mental health support needs students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

7. If yes, please select which group(s) you are in (tick all that apply)

care leavers

students with caring responsibilities

students with disabilities

students from low-income households

students with mental health support needs

students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Prefer not to say

8. Have you found the Policy Skills Project beneficial in developing the following professional skills? (Tick all that apply)

Cross-government collaboration

Leadership skills

Data analysis

Financial planning

Research skills

Stakeholder engagement

Multidisciplinary approaches

Consultation skills

Legal skills

N/A - I did not find the Policy Skills Project beneficial for my professional skills development.

Other (please specify):

Please explain your response.

**9. How would you rate the following support on the program?
(1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent)**

Academic and learning support

Administrative support

IT support

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

My program of study was intellectually stimulating.

The quality of learning on my program was good overall.

11. We are interested in your feedback – do you have any recommendations for how student engagement on the KCL PGL2 could be improved?

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

It is valuable that the program is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level.

It is valuable that the program is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.

It is valuable that the program reflects the Policy Profession standards.

13. Do you have any other recommendations for enhancing the overall learner experience on the KCL PGL2?

14. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2?

(1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive)

See current module list below for reference:

1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice
 2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law
 3. Approaches to policy making
 4. Behavioural insights and government policy
 5. Climate change and policy
 6. Communications, media and public policy
 7. The economic analysis of public policy
 8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability
 9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times
 10. Empathy and emotions in policy making
 11. Ethics, leadership and governance
 12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service
 13. Financial management for policy makers
 14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making
 15. Global public policy challenges
 16. iData: the markets and politics of personalisation
 17. International conflict analysis and resolution
 18. International trade policy
 19. Key models in public management: a comparative analysis
 20. Learning what works
 21. Participatory and deliberative governance
 22. Policy analytics: understanding and using data
 23. The policy process: advanced theory and practice
 24. The policy skills project
 25. Public sector leadership
 26. Regulatory policy and politics
 27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty
 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy
 29. Understanding political leadership
 30. Working internationally
 31. User centred digital government
-

15. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?

16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The module choices enabled me to tailor my own program of study.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my professional interests.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my academic interests.

17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The curriculum was informed by cutting-edge policy research.

I have learned some contemporary approaches to policymaking.

18. How would you rate the balance between theoretical learning and practical application on the KCL PGL2?

Far too theoretical

Too theoretical

A perfect balance

Too practical

Far too practical

19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

I have learned some ideas, concepts or frameworks which are useful at my workplace.

As a result of studying, I have gained confidence which helps me do my job better.

I have been able to apply my learning in my policy role.

20. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is adaptable to different working patterns,

e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.

The program is accessible to participants based outside of London.

21. We are interested in your feedback – Do you have any recommendations for improving the flexibility and/or accessibility of the program?

22. If you undertook any shorter (5 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the online mode of teaching delivery?

(1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Please explain your response (optional)

23. If you undertook any longer (15 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the hybrid (in person and online) mode of teaching delivery? (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Please explain your response (optional)

24. If you undertook a combination of modules, what was your preferred delivery model, if any?

Hybrid (combination of online and in person teaching)

Fully online

No preference

I only experienced one delivery model

25. How easy was it for you to find sufficient time to satisfactorily prepare, read for, attend and complete the assessment for each of the following types of module on average: (1 = impossible; 2 = difficult; 3 = moderately easy; 4 = very easy; 5 = extremely easy; N/A – have not completed)

5-credit module

15-credit module

Policy Skills Project

26. To what extent were you able to balance study with other work/life commitments? (1 = not at all able; 2 = not so able; 3 = moderately able; 4 = very able; 5 = extremely able)

27. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the program could expand to accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals. (1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident; 5 = extremely confident)

28. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the program would have on the learning experience and other aspects of the program?

29. To what extent have you improved in the following areas as a result of the KCL PGL2? (1 = not at all improved; 2 = barely improved; 3 = moderately improved; 4 = much improved; 5 = very much improved)

Knowledge of policy

Policy making skills

30. Which skills has the program helped you to develop? (Tick all that apply)

How to:

Analyse data

Analyse problems and seek solutions in a setting governed by rules of public administration

Understand the trends shaping the public sector and what they mean for contemporary leaders

Understand the role of evidence in guiding complex decision making

Appreciate the importance of ethics, values and the role of technology in relation to value creation

Understand the theory and practice of strategic thinking and value creation in the public sector.

31. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The program was a booster for my personal development.

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

32. Has the program contributed to your career progression? (Tick all that apply)

It helped me to achieve a promotion

It helped me to obtain a new role

It helped me to take on more responsibility in my current job

N/A – it has not contributed to my career progression

Other (please specify):

Survey of postgraduate certificate students and alumni

1. What is your organisation?

2. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?

I am an alumna/alumnus of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a student on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a Head of Policy Profession

I am a Working Level Contact for the Policy Profession

I am a member of an organisational Policy Profession team

I am the line manager of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a team member of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

Other (please specify):

3. Which learning agreement did you undertake? (If you upgraded please select your highest level of agreement)

Standalone module(s)

Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Policymaking Skills

Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policymaking Skills

4. When did you first enrol on the program?

2020

2021

2022

2023

5. Which region are you based in?

6. Are you in one or more of the following groups, which are under-represented in UK Higher Education? care leavers students with caring responsibilities students with disabilities students from low-income households students with mental health support needs students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

7. If yes, please select which group(s) you are in (tick all that apply)

care leavers

students with caring responsibilities

students with disabilities

students from low-income households

students with mental health support needs

students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Prefer not to say

8. How would you rate the following support on the program?

(1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent)

Academic and learning support

Administrative support

IT support

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

My program of study was intellectually stimulating.

The quality of learning on my program was good overall.

10. We are interested in your feedback – do you have any recommendations for how student engagement on the KCL PGL2 could be improved?

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

It is valuable that the program is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level.

It is valuable that the program is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.

It is valuable that the program reflects the Policy Profession standards.

12. Do you have any other recommendations for enhancing the overall learner experience on the KCL PGL2?

13. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2?

(1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive)

See current module list below for reference:

1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice
2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law
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8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability
9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times
10. Empathy and emotions in policy making
11. Ethics, leadership and governance
12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service
13. Financial management for policy makers
14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making
15. Global public policy challenges
16. iData: the markets and politics of personalisation
17. International conflict analysis and resolution
18. International trade policy
19. Key models in public management: a comparative analysis
20. Learning what works
21. Participatory and deliberative governance
22. Policy analytics: understanding and using data
23. The policy process: advanced theory and practice
24. The policy skills project
25. Public sector leadership
26. Regulatory policy and politics
27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty

- 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy
 - 29. Understanding political leadership
 - 30. Working internationally
 - 31. User centred digital government
-

14. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The module choices enabled me to tailor my own program of study.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my professional interests.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my academic interests.

16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The curriculum was informed by cutting-edge policy research.

I have learned some contemporary approaches to policymaking.

17. How would you rate the balance between theoretical learning and practical application on the KCL PGL2?

Far too theoretical

Too theoretical

A perfect balance

Too practical

Far too practical

18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

I have learned some ideas, concepts or frameworks which are useful at my workplace.

As a result of studying, I have gained confidence which helps me do my job better.

I have been able to apply my learning in my policy role.

19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is adaptable to different working patterns, e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.

The program is accessible to participants based outside of London.

20. We are interested in your feedback – Do you have any recommendations for improving the flexibility and/or accessibility of the program?

21. If you undertook any shorter (5 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the online mode of teaching delivery?

(1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Please explain your response (optional)

22. If you undertook any longer (15 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the hybrid (in person and online) mode of teaching delivery?
(1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Please explain your response (optional)

23. If you undertook a combination of modules, what was your preferred delivery model, if any?

Hybrid (combination of online and in person teaching)

Fully online

No preference

I only experienced one delivery model

24. How easy was it for you to find sufficient time to satisfactorily prepare, read for, attend and complete the assessment for each of the following types of module on average:
(1 = impossible; 2 = difficult; 3 = moderately easy; 4 = very easy; 5 = extremely easy; N/A – have not completed)

5-credit module

15-credit module

Policy Skills Project

25. To what extent were you able to balance study with other work/life commitments?
(1 = not at all able; 2 = not so able; 3 = moderately able; 4 = very able; 5 = extremely able)

26. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the program could expand to accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals.
(1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident; 5 = extremely confident)

27. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the program would have on the learning experience and other aspects of the program?

28. To what extent have you improved in the following areas as a result of the KCL PGL2?
(1 = not at all improved; 2 = barely improved; 3 = moderately improved; 4 = much improved; 5 = very much improved)

Knowledge of policy

Policy making skills

29. Which skills has the program helped you to develop? (Tick all that apply)
How to:

Analyse data

Analyse problems and seek solutions in a setting governed by rules of public administration

Understand the trends shaping the public sector and what they mean for contemporary leaders

Understand the role of evidence in guiding complex decision making

Appreciate the importance of ethics, values and the role of technology in relation to value creation

Understand the theory and practice of strategic thinking and value creation in the public sector.

30. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The program was a booster for my personal development.

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

31. Has the program contributed to your career progression? (Tick all that apply)

It helped me to achieve a promotion

It helped me to obtain a new role

It helped me to take on more responsibility in my current job

N/A – it has not contributed to my career progression

Other (please specify):



Survey of standalone module students and alumni

1. What is your organisation?

2. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?

I am an alumna/alumnus of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a student on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a Head of Policy Profession

I am a Working Level Contact for the Policy Profession

I am a member of an organisational Policy Profession team

I am the line manager of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a team member of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

Other (please specify):

3. Which learning agreement did you undertake? (If you upgraded please select your highest level of agreement)

Standalone module(s)

Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Policymaking Skills

Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Policymaking Skills

4. When did you first enrol on the program?

2020

2021

2022

2023

5. Which region are you based in?

6. Are you in one or more of the following groups, which are under-represented in UK Higher Education? care leavers students with caring responsibilities students with disabilities students from low-income households students with mental health support needs students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

7. If yes, please select which group(s) you are in (tick all that apply)

care leavers

students with caring responsibilities

students with disabilities

students from low-income households

students with mental health support needs

students from minority ethnic backgrounds

Prefer not to say

8. How would you rate the following support on the program? (1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent)

Academic and learning support

Administrative support

IT support

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

My program of study was intellectually stimulating.

The quality of learning on my program was good overall.

10. We are interested in your feedback – do you have any recommendations for how student engagement on the KCL PGL2 could be improved?

11. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

It is valuable that the program is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level

It is valuable that the program is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.

It is valuable that the program reflects the Policy Profession standards.

12. Do you have any other recommendations for enhancing the overall learner experience on the KCL PGL2?

13. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2?

(1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive)

See current module list below for reference:

1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice
 2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law
 3. Approaches to policy making
 4. Behavioural insights and government policy
 5. Climate change and policy
 6. Communications, media and public policy
 7. The economic analysis of public policy
 8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability
 9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times
 10. Empathy and emotions in policy making
 11. Ethics, leadership and governance
 12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service
 13. Financial management for policy makers
 14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making
 15. Global public policy challenges
 16. iData: the markets and politics of personalisation
 17. International conflict analysis and resolution
 18. International trade policy
 19. Key models in public management: a comparative analysis
 20. Learning what works
 21. Participatory and deliberative governance
 22. Policy analytics: understanding and using data
 23. The policy process: advanced theory and practice
 24. The policy skills project
 25. Public sector leadership
 26. Regulatory policy and politics
 27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty
 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy
 29. Understanding political leadership
 30. Working internationally
 31. User centred digital government
-

14. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The module choices enabled me to tailor my own program of study.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my professional interests.

I was able to choose modules aligned to my academic interests.

16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The curriculum was informed by cutting-edge policy research.

I have learned some contemporary approaches to policymaking.

17. How would you rate the balance between theoretical learning and practical application on the KCL PGL2?

Far too theoretical

Too theoretical

A perfect balance

Too practical

Far too practical

18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

I have learned some ideas, concepts or frameworks which are useful at my workplace.

As a result of studying, I have gained confidence which helps me do my job better.

I have been able to apply my learning in my policy role.

19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is adaptable to different working patterns,
e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.

The program is accessible to participants based outside of London.

20. We are interested in your feedback - Do you have any recommendations for improving the flexibility and/or accessibility of the program?

21. If you undertook any shorter (5 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the online mode of teaching delivery?

(1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)

Please explain your response (optional)

22. If you undertook any longer (15 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the hybrid (in person and online) mode of teaching delivery?

(1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied; N/A)

Please explain your response (optional)

23. If you undertook a combination of modules, what was your preferred delivery model, if any?

Hybrid (combination of online and in person teaching)

Fully online

No preference

I only experienced one delivery model

24. How easy was it for you to find sufficient time to satisfactorily prepare, read for, attend and complete the assessment for each of the following types of module on average: (1 = impossible; 2 = difficult; 3 = moderately easy; 4 = very easy; 5 = extremely easy; N/A - have not completed)

5-credit module

15-credit module

Policy Skills Project

25. To what extent were you able to balance study with other work/life commitments? (1 = not at all able; 2 = not so able; 3 = moderately able; 4 = very able; 5 = extremely able)

26. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the program could expand to accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals. (1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident; 5 = extremely confident)

27. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the program would have on the learning experience and other aspects of the program?

28. To what extent have you improved in the following areas as a result of the KCL PGL2? (1 = not at all improved; 2 = barely improved; 3 = moderately improved; 4 = much improved; 5 = very much improved)

Knowledge of policy

Policy making skills

29. Which skills has the program helped you to develop? (Tick all that apply) How to:

Analyse data

Analyse problems and seek solutions in a setting governed by rules of public administration

Understand the trends shaping the public sector and what they mean for contemporary leaders

Understand the role of evidence in guiding complex decision making

Appreciate the importance of ethics, values and the role of technology in relation to value creation

Understand the theory and practice of strategic thinking and value creation in the public sector.

30. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

The program was a booster for my personal development.

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

31. Has the program contributed to your career progression? (Tick all that apply)

It helped me to achieve a promotion

It helped me to obtain a new role

It helped me to take on more responsibility in my current job

N/A - it has not contributed to my career progression

Other (please specify):

Survey of Working Level Contacts (WLCs)

1. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?

I am an alumna/alumnus of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a student on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a Head of Policy Profession

I am a Working Level Contact for the Policy Profession

I am a member of an organisational Policy Profession team

I am the line manager of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a team member of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

Other (please specify):

2. Which region are you based in?

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

My experience of recruiting civil servants from my organisation onto the program is overall positive.

The program is well organised.

It is valuable that the program is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level.

It is valuable that the program is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.

It is valuable that the program reflects the Policy Profession standards.

The program offers good value for money.

4. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2?

(1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive)

See current module list below for reference:

1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice
2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law
3. Approaches to policy making
4. Behavioural insights and government policy
5. Climate change and policy
6. Communications, media and public policy
7. The economic analysis of public policy
8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability
9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times
10. Empathy and emotions in policy making
11. Ethics, leadership and governance
12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service
13. Financial management for policy makers
14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making
15. Global public policy challenges
16. iData: the markets and politics of personalisation
17. International conflict analysis and resolution
18. International trade policy
19. Key models in public management: a comparative analysis
20. Learning what works
21. Participatory and deliberative governance
22. Policy analytics: understanding and using data
23. The policy process: advanced theory and practice
24. The policy skills project

- 25. Public sector leadership
- 26. Regulatory policy and politics
- 27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty
- 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy
- 29. Understanding political leadership
- 30. Working internationally
- 31. User centred digital government

5. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?

6. Based on your experience, is the KCL PGL2 curriculum relevant to modern policy making?
(1 = not at all relevant; 2 = not very relevant; 3 = moderately relevant; 4 = very relevant;
5 = extremely relevant)

7. The program aims to teach the following skills:

Data analysis skills

Evaluation skills

Consultation skills

Leadership skills

Negotiation skills

Research skills

Are there any other skills that you think are important to a mid-career
policy professional and should be taught on the program?

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

**The program provides a good opportunity for civil servants to develop knowledge and skills
that are relevant at work.**

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is adaptable to different working patterns,
e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.

The program is accessible to participants based outside of London.

**10. We are interested in your feedback – Do you have any recommendations for improving
the flexibility and/or accessibility of the program?**

**11. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the program could expand to
accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is
currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals.**

(1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident;
5 = extremely confident)

**12. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the program would have on the learning
experience and other aspects of the program?**

Survey of Heads/Deputy Heads of Policy Profession (HoPPs)

1. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?

I am an alumna/alumnus of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a student on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a Head of Policy Profession

I am a Working Level Contact for the Policy Profession

I am a member of an organisational Policy Profession team

I am the line manager of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

I am a team member of a past/current student of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer

Other (please specify):

2. Which region are you based in?

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is well organised.

It is valuable that the program is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level

It is valuable that the program is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.

It is valuable that the program reflects the Policy Profession standards.

The program offers good value for money.

4. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2?

(1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive)

See current module list below for reference:

1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice
2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law
3. Approaches to policy making
4. Behavioural insights and government policy
5. Climate change and policy
6. Communications, media and public policy
7. The economic analysis of public policy
8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability
9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times
10. Empathy and emotions in policy making
11. Ethics, leadership and governance
12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service
13. Financial management for policy makers
14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making
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24. The policy skills project

- 25. Public sector leadership
- 26. Regulatory policy and politics
- 27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty
- 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy
- 29. Understanding political leadership
- 30. Working internationally
- 31. User centred digital government

5. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?

6. Based on your experience, is the KCL PGL2 curriculum relevant to modern policy making?
(1 = not at all relevant; 2 = not very relevant; 3 = moderately relevant; 4 = very relevant;
5 = extremely relevant)

7. The program aims to teach the following skills:

- Data analysis skills
- Evaluation skills
- Consultation skills
- Leadership skills
- Negotiation skills
- Research skills

Are there any other skills that you think are important to a mid-career policy professional and should be taught on the program?

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

The program provides a good opportunity for civil servants to develop knowledge and skills that are relevant at work.

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

(1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)

The program is adaptable to different working patterns, e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.

The program is accessible to participants based outside of London.

10. We are interested in your feedback – Do you have any recommendations for improving the flexibility and/or accessibility of the program?

11. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the program could expand to accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals.

(1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident; 5 = extremely confident)

12. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the program would have on the learning experience and other aspects of the program?

Appendix 3: Focus Groups

Small focus groups were arranged in person and online for each learner agreement. Graduates and current students from across government volunteered to take part in these discussions. Participants are identified below by organisation and learner agreement only, to preserve anonymity

Key

Civil Service Organisation	Acronym
Cabinet Office	CO
Department for Business and Trade	DBT
Department for Education	DfE
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero	DESNZ
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	DEFRA
Department for Health and Social Care	DHSC
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	DLUHC
Department for Transport	DfT
Department for Work and Pensions	DWP
Health and Safety Executive	HSE
HM Revenue and Customs	HMRC
HM Treasury	HMT
Ministry of Defence	MoD

Combined focus group participation by organisation

Organisation	No. of participants
CO	2
DBT	1
DEFRA	6
DESNZ	1
DfE	3
DfT	2
DHSC	4
DWP	3
HMRC	2
HMT	1
HSE	1
MOD	1
Total	27

Focus group participation by learner agreement / stakeholder relationship

Date	Learner agreement	Organisation	Participant numbers	Venue
31 March 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DfE	1	Online
18 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DHSC	1	Online
18 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DEFRA	3	Online
18 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DWP	1	Online
18 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	HSE	1	Online
20 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DfT	1	Department for Education, London
20 April 2023	Postgraduate diploma	DHSC	1	Department for Education, London

Date	Learner agreement	Organisation	Participant numbers	Venue
17 April 2023	Postgraduate certificate	HMT	1	Department for Education, London
20 April 2023	Postgraduate certificate	DEFRA	1	Online
20 April 2023	Postgraduate certificate	DfT	1	Online
20 April 2023	Postgraduate certificate	MOD	1	Online

Date	Learner agreement	Organisation	Participant numbers	Venue
17 April 2023	Standalone module	DBT	1	Online
17 April 2023	Standalone module	DEFRA	1	Online
17 April 2023	Standalone module	DESNZ	1	Online
17 April 2023	Standalone module	HMRC	1	Online
18 April 2023	Standalone module	DEFRA	1	Department for Education, London
18 April 2023	Standalone module	DfE	1	Department for Education, London
18 April 2023	Standalone module	HMRC	2	Department for Education, London

Additionally, a focus group was arranged with a subset of those administering the learning offer on an organisational level (Working Level Contacts (WLCs) and/or Policy Profession teams/networks), as follows:

Date	Organisation	Participant numbers	Venue
24 April 2023	CO		Online
24 April 2023	DfE	1	Online
24 April 2023	DHSC	2	Online
24 April 2023	DWP	2	Online

Focus group questions

The sample questions listed below were used as a guide and adjusted depending on the experience, background and learner agreement of those taking part in these 60-minute sessions:

Focus group sample questions for students/alumni

Quality and perceived value	
1	What brought you to the KCL PGL2? Why this particular learner agreement?
2	How did your experience of the program align with your expectations of it based on its marketing? Are there any disconnects and what should be done about those?
3	Do you have any other suggestions for strengthening the effectiveness of the learner experience?
4	How does the intrinsic value of the learning offer compare with the value attached to it in your organisation (e.g., in performance reviews, job interviews, promotions)?
Flexibility/hybridity	
5	Do you have any comments on the delivery model of the program?
6	What are your views on the amount of contact time provided?
Coverage	
7	How would you rate the depth of topic coverage within individual modules?
8	Do you have any recommendations for how The Policy Skills Project could be improved?
Role relevance and career progression	
9	What skills did the program most help you to develop?
10	Are there any ways that the relevance of the program curriculum to your work could be improved?
11	Have you changed your role or place of employment since starting the program? Has the program played a role in that career progression?
12	What is the impact of the program on your career?
Modern relevance	
13	How confident are you in the KCL PGL2 curriculum's ability to evolve with new and emerging policy concerns?
14	How up-to-date are the teaching methods used on the program?
Applied/contextual learning and learning transfer	
15	Would you like to have greater or fewer opportunities for applied or contextualised learning on the program? (By this we mean, exercises and teaching that directly connect subject content to your work environment.)
16	Can you provide any examples of how you have applied the learning to your work?
17	What barriers have you encountered to applying the learning to your work?
18	What, if any, changes to the program would enable you to better apply the learning to your work?
Time commitment	
19	How did you feel about the expectation to complete this program within the assigned timeframe?
20	Do you have any recommendations for how to make the time commitment more manageable?

Scalability

- 21 Would you recommend any alterations to the current program if it were to accommodate a higher number of students? (The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals.)

Changing/ improving

- 21 Overall, what do you see as the core strengths of the KCL PGL2?
- 22 How would you improve the offer?
- 23 What are your thoughts on program administration and management and IT support?
- 24 What could have worked better?

Focus group sample questions for Working Level Contacts (WLCs)

Quality and perceived value

- 1 What brought you to the KCL PGL2 as a learning opportunity for your organisation?
- 2 How does the intrinsic value of the learning offer compare with the value attached to it in your organisation (e.g., in performance reviews, job interviews, promotions)?

Flexibility/hybridity

- 3 Do you have any comments on the delivery model of the program?

Role relevance

- 4 The program aims to teach the following skills:
- Data analysis skills
 - Evaluation skills
 - Consultation skills
 - Leadership skills
 - Negotiation skills
 - Research skills
- Are there any other skills that you think are important to a mid-career policy professional and should be taught on the program?
- 5 Do you have any recommendations for making aspects of the curriculum more applicable to the work of a policy maker?

Modern relevance

- 6 How confident are you in the KCL PGL2 curriculum's ability to evolve with new and emerging policy concerns?

Applied/contextual learning and learning transfer

- 7 Do you think that the KCL PGL2 has improved policy capability beyond those who have taken part in the program?

Time commitment

- 8 Do you have any comments on the time commitment involved for the learning offer?

Cohort size

- 9 Would you recommend any alterations to the current program if it were to accommodate a higher number of students? (The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals.)

Changing/ improving

- 10 Overall, how would you improve the KCL PGL2?

Appendix 4: KCL Survey Analysis for ANZSOG Review

By Tony Chen and Jack Rodgers (April 2023)

Introduction

This paper analyses the results of the KCL survey with regards to:

- > The extent to which the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer is meeting the desired benefits described in the KCL PGL2 Statement of Requirements,
- > policy professionals' satisfaction with the learning offer, and
- > recommendations for improvements to the KCL PGL2.

This review will analyse the results of the KCL survey on the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer. The contents of the survey revolved around 5 topics:

- > **Quality and value** of the accredited learning offer.
- > **Applicability** to policy work and early indications of learning transfer.
- > **Relevance** and adaptability to meet emerging policy skills needs.
- > **Accommodation** different working patterns, work locations and access needs.
- > **Scalability**, or how well it could be adapted for a larger cohort of policy professionals.

The survey was sent to all types of **students** of the offer (Module, Certificate and Diploma) as well as **colleagues** of the students (line managers, working level contacts and Heads of Policy Profession).

The text version of this report contains the main points, whereas the interactive html version contains further breakdowns and details. Question ID numbers and their full question text can be found in the appendix.

Responses on a 1 to 5 scale indicate strongly dissenting sentiments to strongly affirmative sentiments regarding a question, such as 1 representing "strongly disagree," 3 expressing a neutral or moderate response like "neither agree nor disagree," and 5 representing "strongly agree."

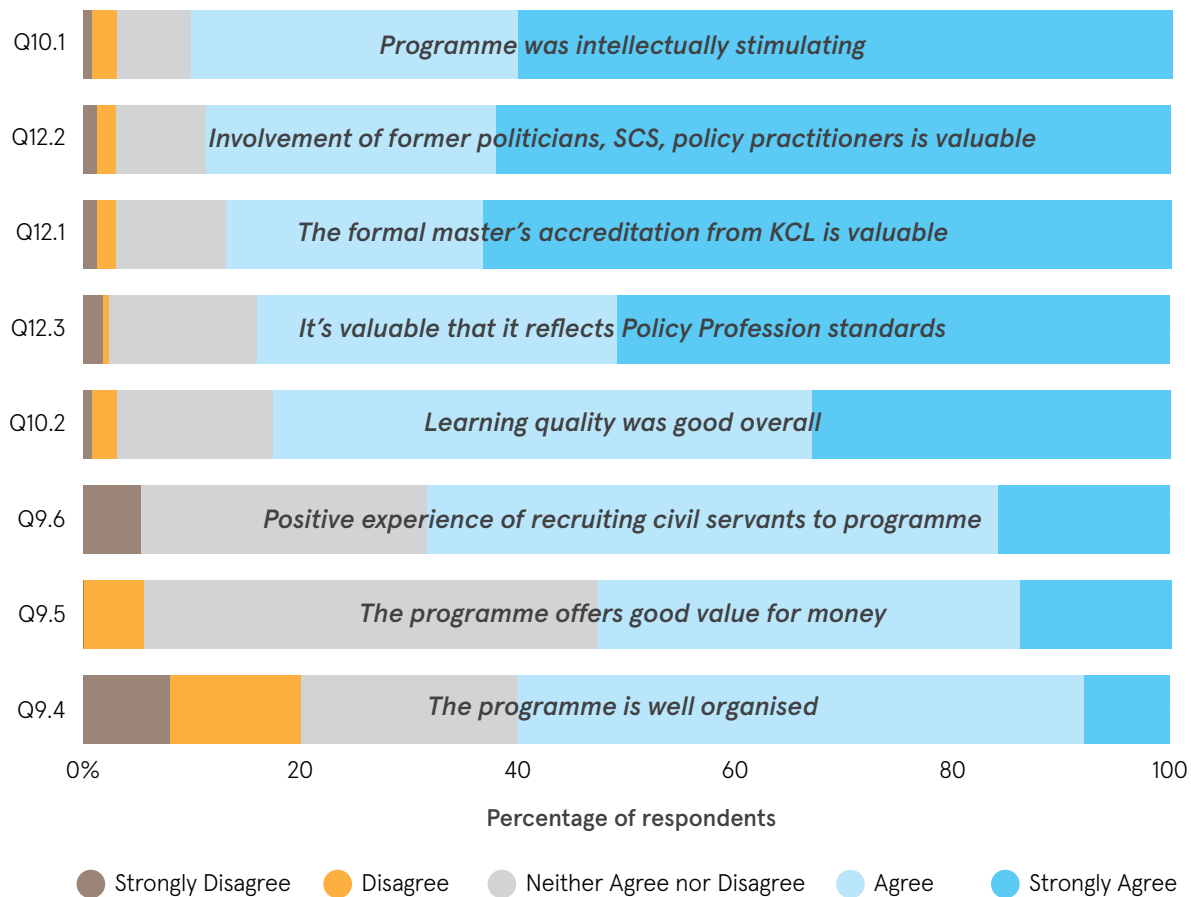
For free text questions, an algorithm extracted keywords that best defined the text responses and scored them by their likelihood of being an important term in the text (i.e., a "keyword," **not** how often the keyword appears or how subjectively important it is). While highly scored extracted keywords may indicate overarching themes, they neither provide context (such as sentiment) nor necessarily capture everything of relevance.

Key findings

- 90% of students thought the value of the formal master's accreditation was useful and 89% agreed the quality of learning was good.
- Students felt that the content was applicable to their work and that they could tailor it for their own interests, however less felt that they've been able to implement it.
- Satisfaction with hybrid delivery was high but many students did not feel they had sufficient time to complete aspects of the scheme.
- Responses about the programme meeting policy skills needs varied – many students felt moderate or less improvement in policy making skills while most felt they learned some contemporary approaches to policy making.
- Students were also more positive about scalability than colleagues.

Quality of Learning

The quality and value of the accredited learning offer



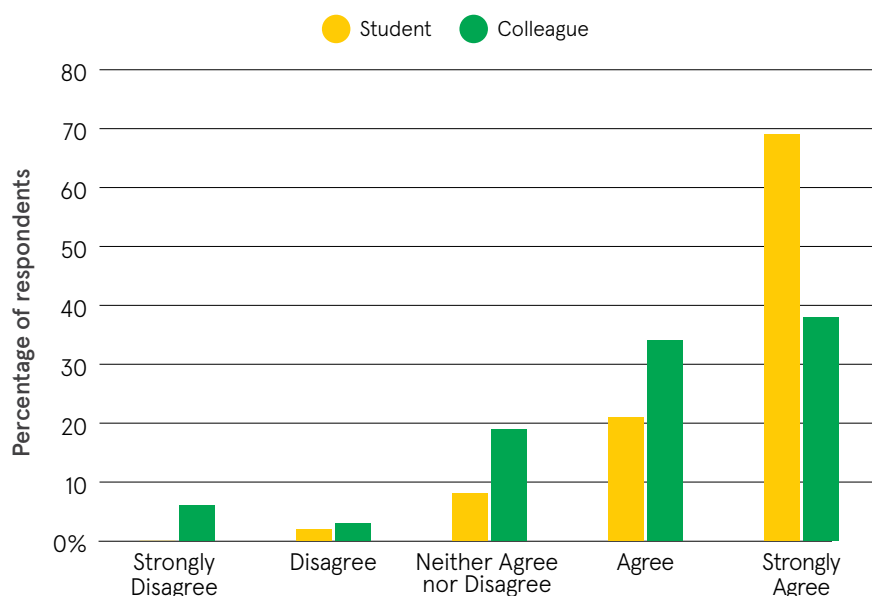
Overall, over 80% of respondents at least agreed the programme was intellectually stimulating, the learning quality was good overall, and felt that the involvement of policy practitioners (former politicians, SCS, and others), the formal master's accreditation from KCL, and the programme's reflection of Policy Profession standards were valuable.

Questions which only went to colleagues on this topic were slightly less positive in general (Q9.4 "the programme is well organised," Q9.5 "the programme offers good value for money," and Q9.6 "my experience of recruiting civil servants from my organisation to the programme is overall positive").

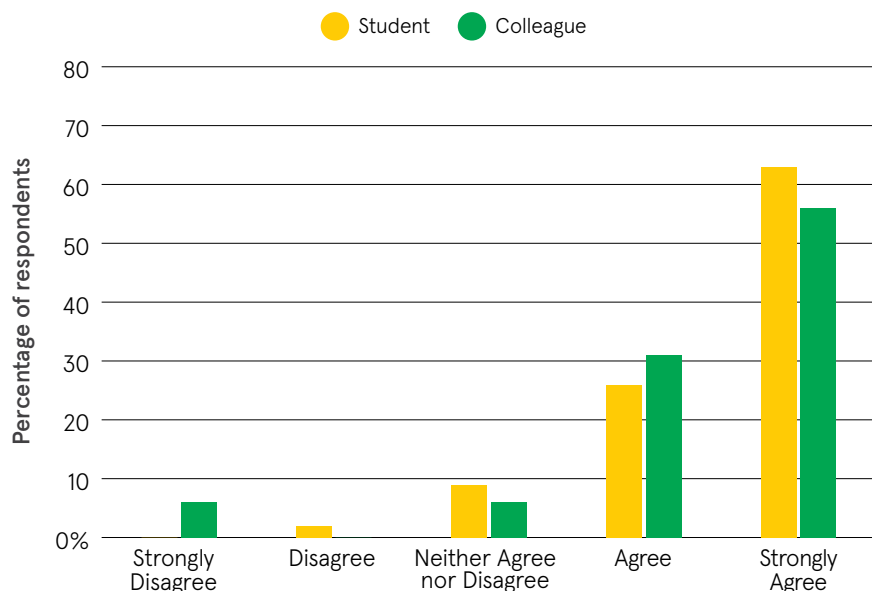
Whilst only 53% of colleagues agreed that the programme offered good value for money, 42% responded with 'neither agree nor disagree' and only 2 respondents (8%) disagreed.

Questions regarding the formal accreditation (87% agreed it was useful) and that the scheme was co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants, and other policy practitioners (89% agreed it was useful) received some of the most positive responses in the survey. Students were more positive about both; however, responses were largely positive across both colleagues and students.

"It is valuable that the programme is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level."

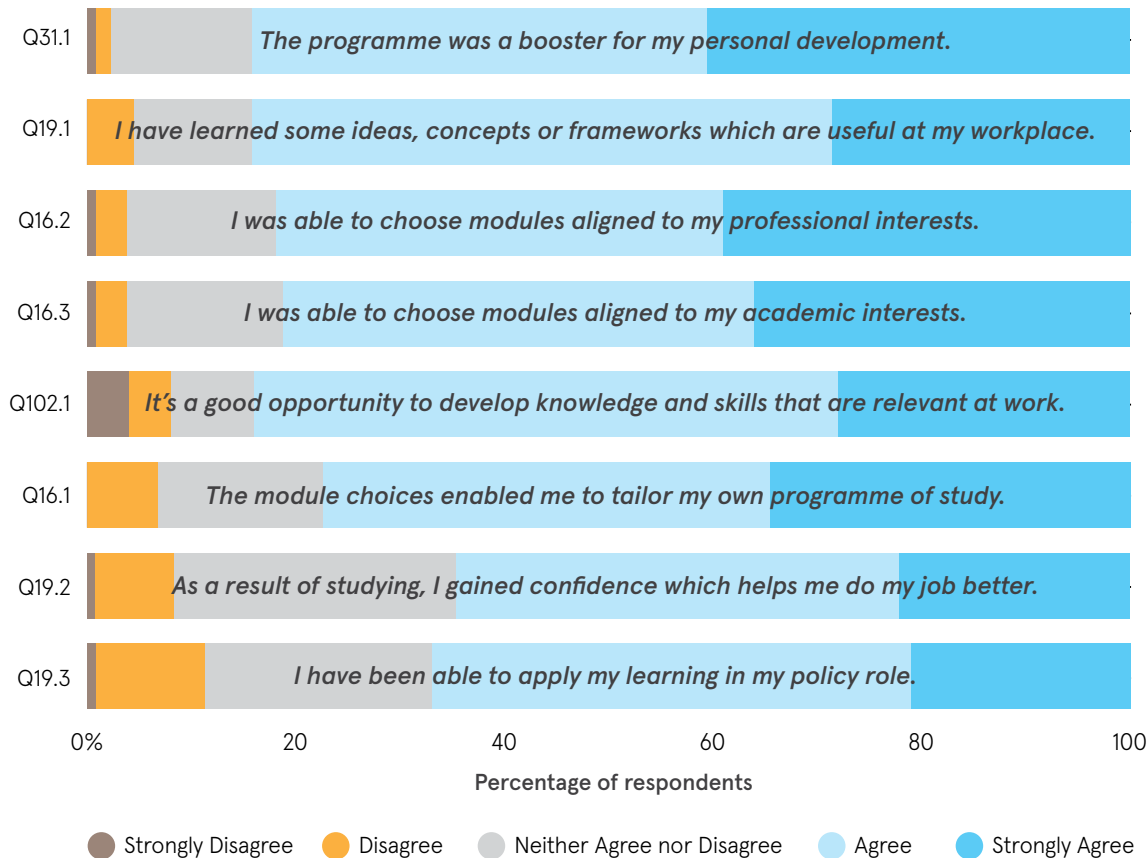


"It is valuable that the programme is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners."



Applicability to work

The applicability to their work and early indications of learning transfer



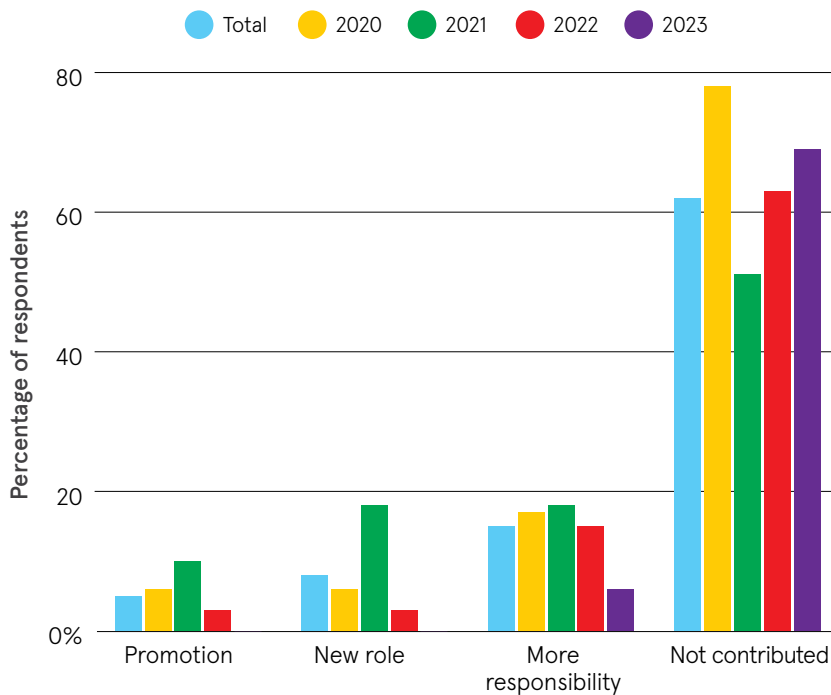
Students thought that the programme and ideas were useful for their role but did not feel that they have been able to implement them.

85% agreed they learned ideas which were useful at their workplace and 84% agreed the programme was a good opportunity to develop skills for work.

Only 67% said they have been able to apply their learning in their role, and only 64% said the study has given them more confidence to perform their role better.

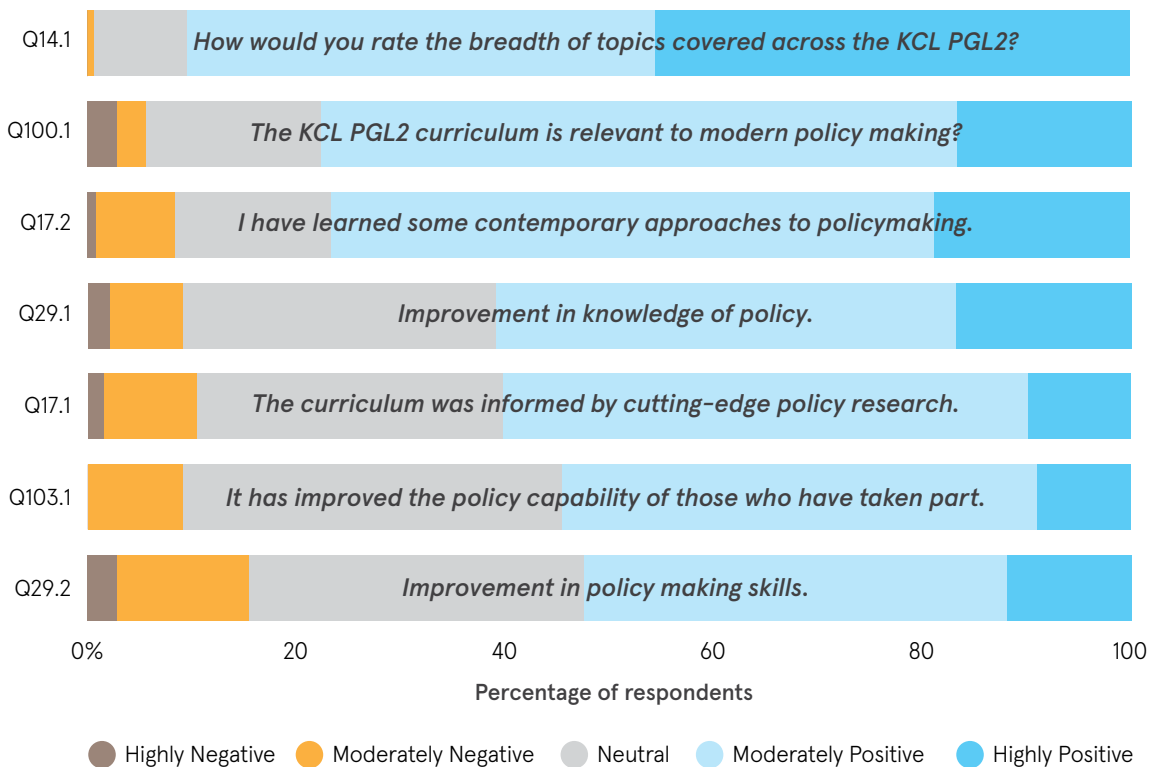
Part of this could be students not having enough time to have implemented these findings. However, even when broken down by year of study, respondents ticking Q32.4 ('It has not contributed to my career progression') still constitute the largest groups for each year. Q32.1 ('It helped me to achieve a promotion'), Q32.2 ('It helped me to obtain a new role') and Q32.3 ('It helped me to take on more responsibility in my current job') were all low.

"Has the programme contributed to your career progression?"



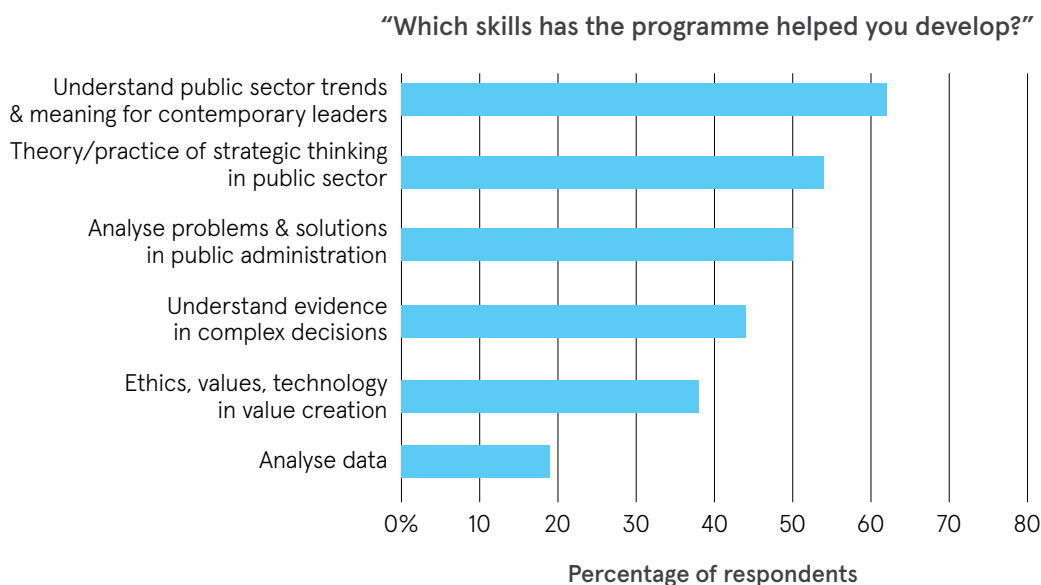
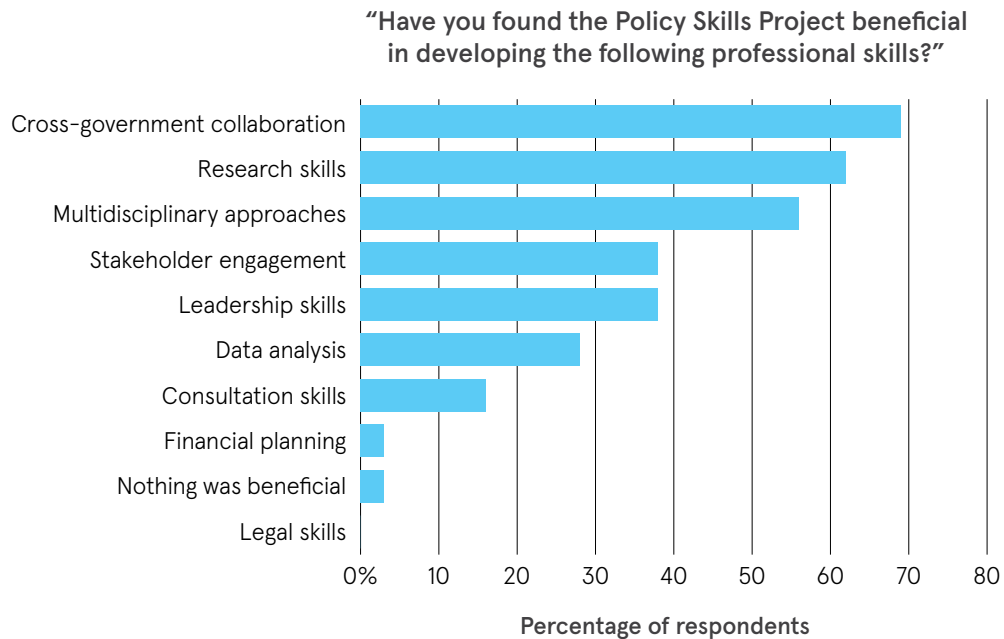
Relevance to policy skills needs

Relevance and contribution to policy knowledge and policy making skills

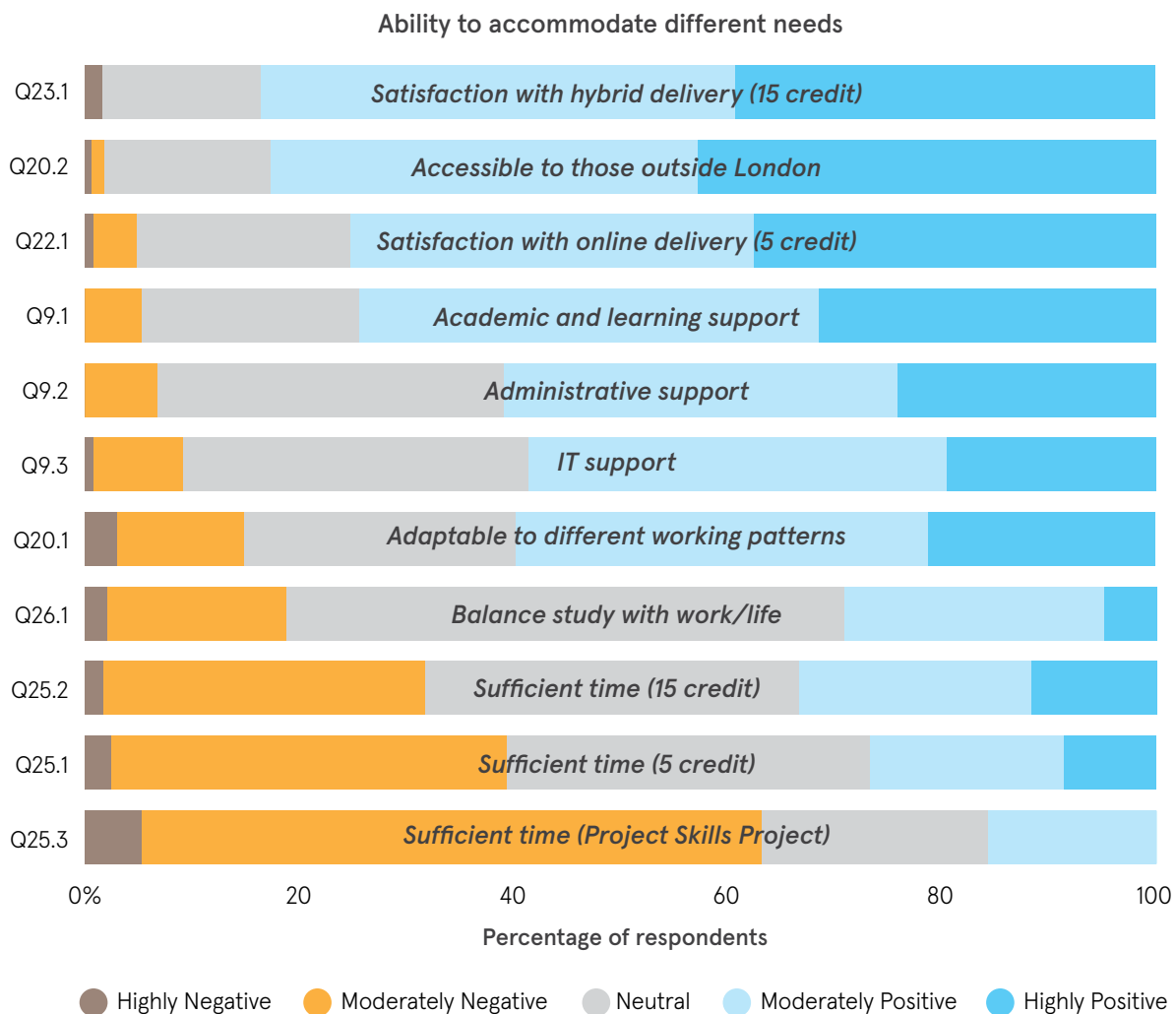


78% of colleagues agreed that the scheme is relevant to modern policy making and 77% of students said they learned contemporary approaches to policy making. 53% of students agreed the scheme improved their policy making skills and 64% agreed it improved their knowledge of policy. 54% of line managers thought it had improved the policy capability of those who have taken part. This could suggest that whilst people feel the scheme contains interesting approaches and theory, they are struggling to implement it into their work.

The charts below show what proportion of students felt they learned certain skills.



Accessibility

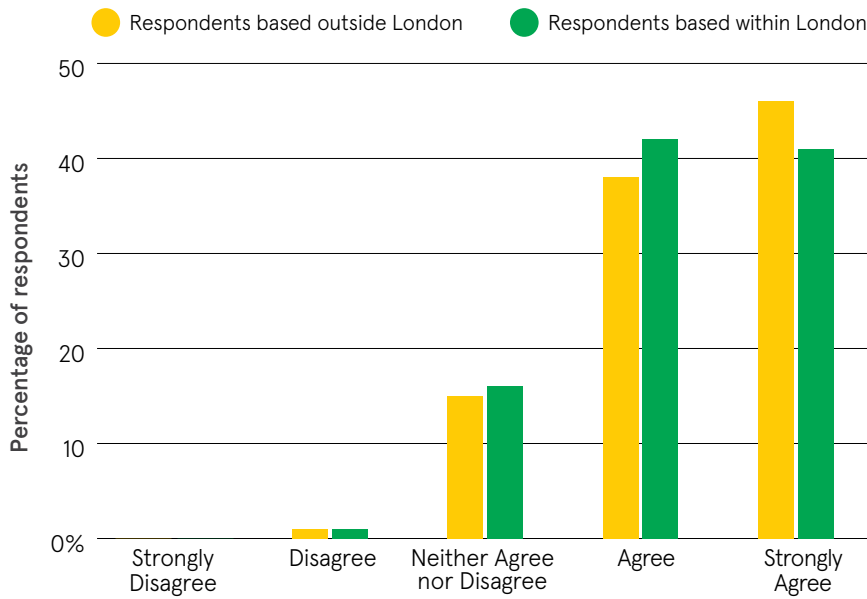


The chart above shows that satisfaction with the hybrid delivery was high. Importantly, satisfaction remained high when broken down by London/non-London and by year of study, hybrid delivery.

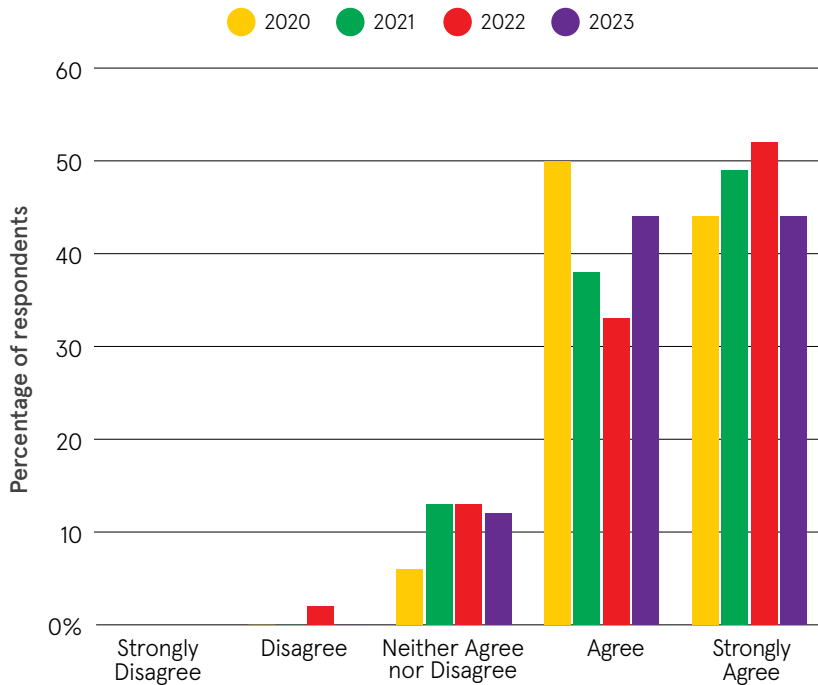
Satisfaction with the support available was also high.

However, many students felt they did not have enough time to complete the modules and PSP. 3 out of 19 PSP respondents found it easy to find enough time to complete the module and only 27% found it easy to find enough time to complete a 5-credit module. Most respondents were moderately able to balance study with work/life.

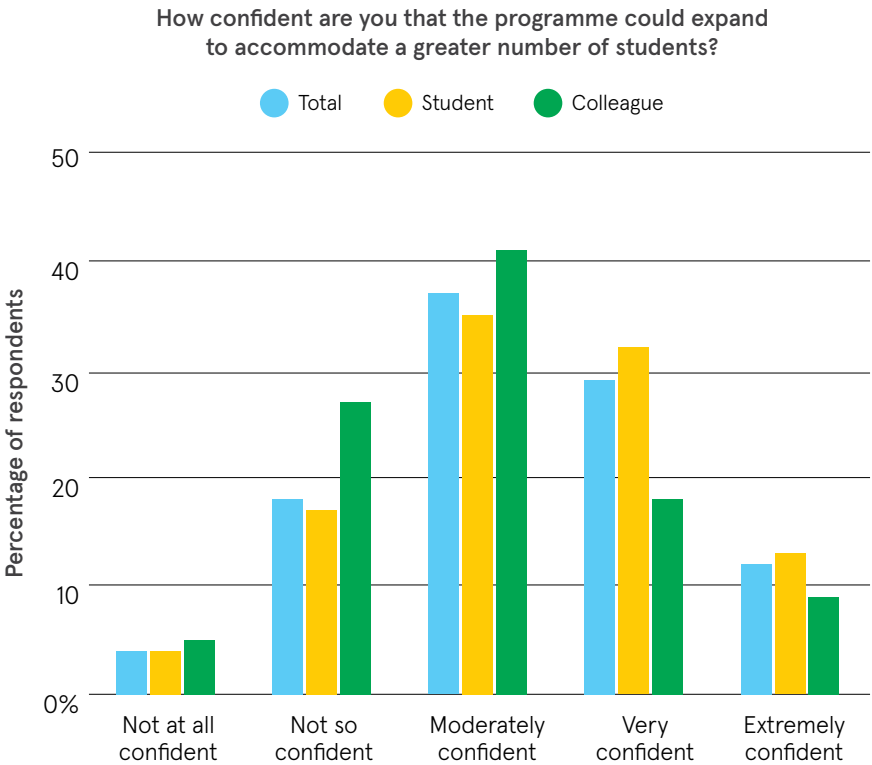
Programme is accessible to those outside of London



Programme is accessible to those outside of London

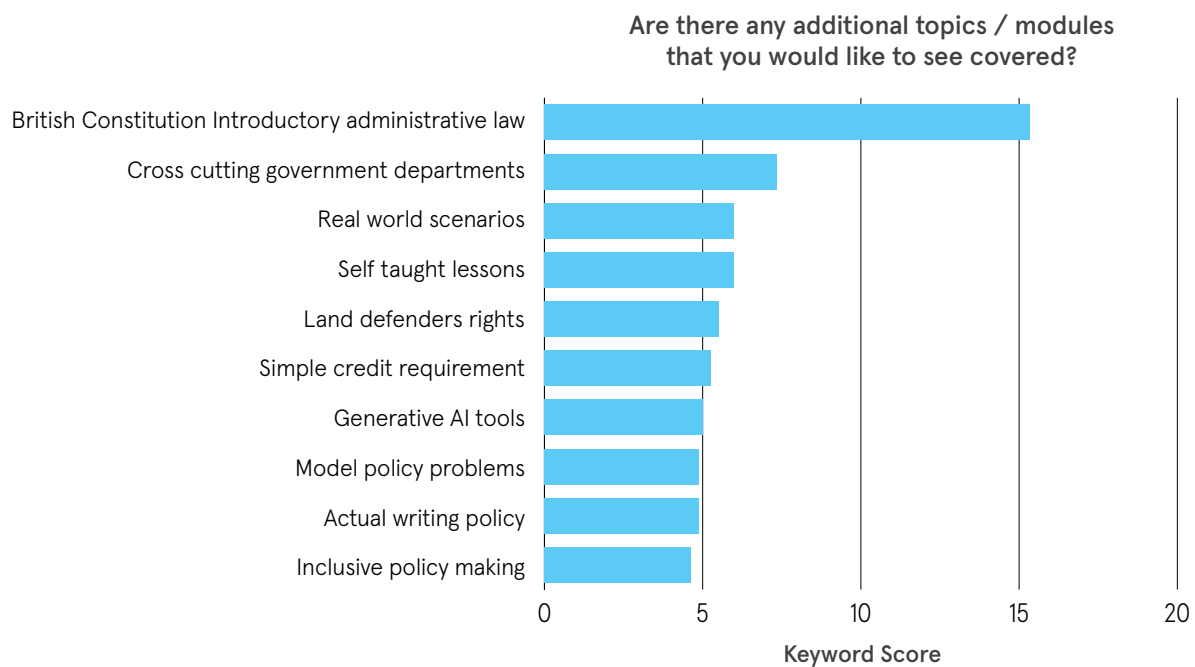


Scalability



45% of students were ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ confident that the programme could be expanded to a greater number of students but only 6 out of 22 colleagues (27%) thought the same. However, the largest response for both groups was 3 out of 5, meaning both groups were mainly ‘moderately confident’ about expansion.

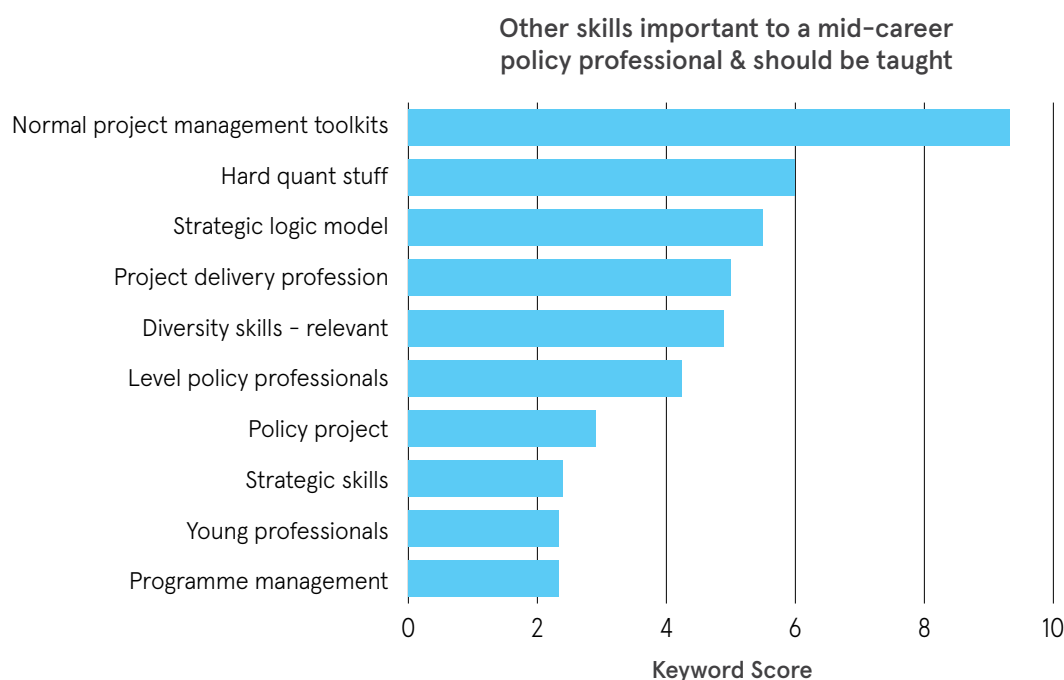
Change and improvement



Question: "Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?"

Select responses:

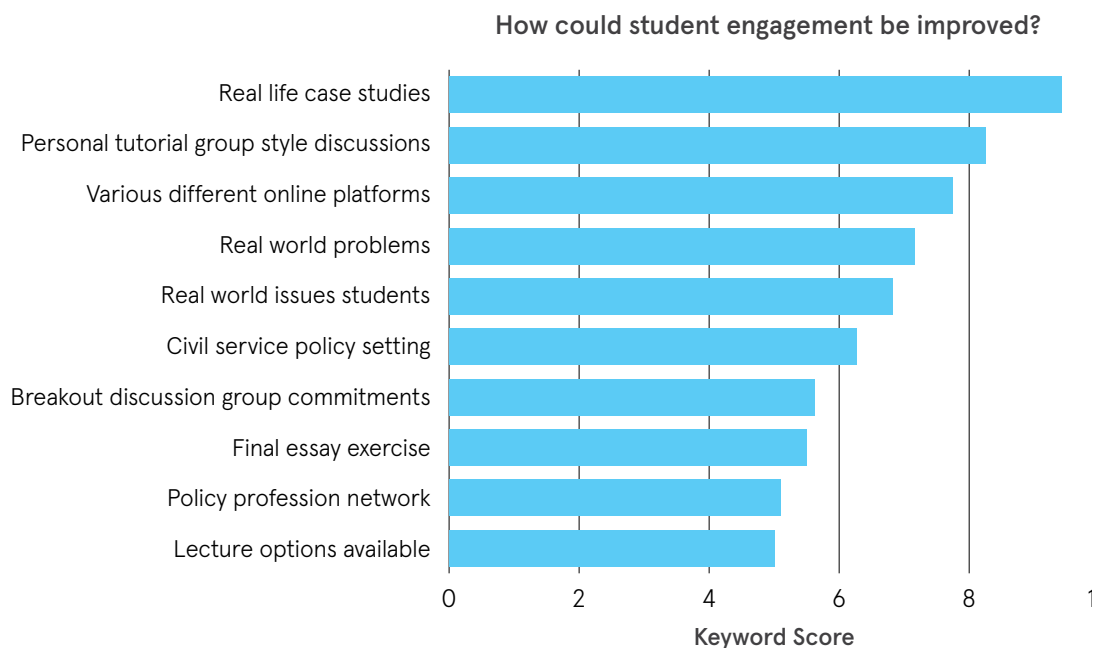
- > British Constitution Introductory administrative law
 - 'Understanding the British Constitution Introductory administrative law Understanding fiscal policy - not sure if this is covered in the financial management for policymakers module - but understanding more about fiscal policy and public financial management would be good.'
 - 'Could benefit on modules on constitutional practice in UK; and comparative political systems'
 - 'More on legislation and law making Constitution'
- > 'Learning on cross cutting government departments or units...Sir Michael Barber style delivery...'
- > 'A good portion of policy making is in-person through dialogue with stakeholders or colleagues, teaching or practical training on this aspect could be really beneficial in translating other modules learning into real world scenarios'
- > 'The existing offer was wide ranging but the ability to study more widely would have welcome; to do more than the simple credit requirement.'



Question: “The programme aims to teach the following skills: Data analysis skills Evaluation skills Consultation skills Leadership skills Negotiation skills Research skills Are there any other skills that you think are important to a mid-career policy professional and should be taught on the programme?”

Select responses:

- > ‘Project and programme management – sometimes policy development doesn’t fit within the normal project management toolkits in the same way that other projects do and this is something that we have to get right for each policy project.’
- > ‘Policy initiation / scoping skills and for ‘Research Skills’, keen that this includes user research not just hard quant stuff’
- > ‘I think strategic skills, and planning delivery/implementation skills are perhaps areas that could be added. Would align with the policy standards, and I think when considering through the lens of policy failure, both logical failures (in strategic logic model/theory of change) and implementation failures (in planning, oversight and delivery) are key drivers of failure, and perhaps a greater focus on them may round out the offer, whilst also focusing in on some areas where value could be added.’
- > ‘Delivery/implementation – how to work with the Project Delivery profession’
- > ‘The principles of what is covered in the learning is very helpful but our understanding from students is that this won’t teach someone how to do a policy job which is much more softer skills such as attending meetings, writing submissions etc. However, the course can do a good job of explaining principles to apply to issues / what policy professionals need to consider. Generally, HEO/SEO level policy professionals seem to benefit from the course more as they may have more flexibility / time to consider and actually apply principles.’
- > ‘Communication skills (new generation of young professionals are graduates of the academies policy from a former administration, and the communication and baseline of skills has dramatically changed).’



Question: “We are interested in your feedback - do you have any recommendations for how student engagement on the KCL PGL2 could be improved?”

Select responses:

- > ‘Some of the modules were being delivered by staff who hadn’t written them and weren’t necessarily experts in the subject matter - this showed in the quality of seminars where participant questions weren’t necessarily explored fully. I felt this left lost opportunities for more detailed analysis of real world problems and much richer learning for those contributing.’
- > person tutorial group style discussions
 - ‘Post-covid the opportunity for in-person tutorial group style discussions would be a benefit’
 - ‘More opportunities for in-person sessions, not just through the big 15-credit modules - one option could be to encourage study groups in a particular city or department?’

Recommendations for future work

The main recommendation is to understand the experiences of those who dropped off the programme. This is an important population to understand as they will have had different experiences to those who completed the programme.

Ambiguity around the wording of the questions for department and, especially, location mean that the quality of the data is hard to assess. Responses around hybrid working were consistently high and whilst it could be assumed that the locations provided by responses loosely reflected the locations at the time of study, it's unknown how accurate this assumption is.

Appendix A1: Methodology

The survey was sent to all students who completed the offer. However, due to contact information not being updated, it is unknown how many received the survey. There is also no record of the number of students who completed the course. These mean it is difficult to calculate a response rate and the proportionate size of the sample. Comparing the number of responses to the best available figures of completed modules, certificates and diplomas gives the following sampling proportions.

Year	Nominations	Nominations %	Responses	Responses %
2020	295	21.61%	18	13.53%
2021	342	25.05%	39	29.32%
2022	452	33.11%	60	45.11%
2023	276	20.22%	16	12.03%
Total	1365	100.00%	133	100.00%

(Note: These nomination counts are an over-estimate of final cohort figures because they do not take withdrawals or application rejections into account and because they include returning students who have signed up to more than one module or learner agreement.)

Due to the low numbers of responses, the decision was made to not weight the survey. Weighting the survey would give too much power to the small sample sizes of X and Y sections of the offer. Therefore, this research is not necessarily representative of the population who completed the scheme.

The survey was also not sent to those who dropped out of the scheme. Since this population will have had a more negative experience than those who completed the scheme, the results of this analysis will likely be biased towards positivity.

An important methodological note is that the questions 'What is your department?' and 'What is your location?' were asked in the present tense and not the past. It's possible that the intention for this question was finding out the department/location at the time of completing the offer, and that some students may have answered in this way. However, without knowing this, we are assuming these responses are referring to the time at completing the survey, and not when then completed the offer. This may affect the accuracy of the data on some of these variables. (Q: Have this in the intro, and link to the methodology in the appendix for more details. How many Q's did this effect? May be easier to just list them here)

We also felt the question about breadth of topics was leading. Listing the topics available may have affected the students' perceptions of the breadth of topics in the moment of answering and therefore have affected the response. Therefore, we think it is difficult to draw conclusions from responses to this question.

A2: Question numbers

In order to analyse across surveys, we had to re-number the questions. This table shows the new question number, question and sub-question. For how the new numbers relate to the old numbers, contact Tony or Jack for the file.

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
UserID	UserID	
UserNo	UserNo	
Name	Name	
Email	Email	
IP Address	IP Address	
Unique ID	Unique ID	
Started	Started	
Ended	Ended	
Q1.1	Q1. What is your organisation?	Answer
Q1.2	Q1. What is your organisation?	Other - please specify:
Q2.1	Q2. Which of the following best describes your involvement with the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2)?	
Q3.1	Q3. Which learning agreement did you undertake? (If you upgraded please select your highest level of agreement)	
Q4.1	Q4. When did you first enrol on the programme?	
Q5.1	Q5. Which region are you based in?	Answer
Q5.2		Other - please specify
Q6.1	Q6. Are you in one or more of the following groups, which are under-represented in UK Higher Education? care leavers, students with caring responsibilities, students with disabilities, students from low-income households, students with mental health support needs, students from minority ethnic backgrounds	
Q7.1	Q7. If yes, please select which group(s) you are in (tick all that apply)	Q7.1. care leavers
Q7.2		Q7.2. students with caring responsibilities
Q7.3		Q7.3. students with disabilities
Q7.4		Q7.4. students from low-income households
Q7.5		Q7.5. students with mental health support needs
Q7.6		Q7.6. students from minority ethnic backgrounds
Q7.7		Q7.7. Prefer not to say

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
Q8.1	Q8. Have you found the Policy Skills Project beneficial in developing the following professional skills? (Tick all that apply)	Q8.1. Cross-government collaboration
Q8.2		Q8.2. Leadership skills
Q8.3		Q8.3. Data analysis
Q8.4		Q8.4. Financial planning
Q8.5		Q8.5. Research skills
Q8.6		Q8.6. Stakeholder engagement
Q8.7		Q8.7. Multidisciplinary approaches
Q8.8		Q8.8. Consultation skills
Q8.9		Q8.9. Legal skills
Q8.10		Q8.10. N/A – I did not find the Policy Skills Project beneficial for my professional skills development.
Q8.11		Q8.11. Other (please specify):
Q8.12		Q8.12. Please explain your response.
Q9.1	Q9. How would you rate the following support on the programme? (1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; 5 = excellent)	Q9.1. Academic and learning support
Q9.2		Q9.2. Administrative support
Q9.3		Q9.3. IT support
Q9.4		Q9.4. The programme is well organised.
Q9.5		Q9.5. The programme offers good value for money.
Q9.6		Q9.6. My experience of recruiting civil servants from my organisation onto the programme is overall positive.
Q10.1	Q10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q10.1. My programme of study was intellectually stimulating.
Q10.2		Q10.2. The quality of learning on my programme was good overall.
Q11.1	Q11. We are interested in your feedback – do you have any recommendations for how student engagement on the KCL PGL2 could be improved?	

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
Q12.1	Q12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q12.1. It is valuable that the programme is formally accredited by King's College London at master's level.
Q12.2		Q12.2. It is valuable that the programme is co-designed and co-delivered by former politicians, senior civil servants and other policy practitioners.
Q12.3		Q12.3. It is valuable that the programme reflects the Policy Profession standards.
Q13.1	Q13. Do you have any other recommendations for enhancing the overall learner experience on the KCL PGL2?	
Q14.1	Q14. How would you rate the breadth of topics covered across the KCL PGL2? (1 = not at all comprehensive; 2 = not so comprehensive; 3 = moderately comprehensive; 4 = very comprehensive; 5 = extremely comprehensive) See current module list below for reference: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advanced parliamentary theory and practice 2. Anti-corruption and the rule of law 3. Approaches to policy making 4. Behavioural insights and government policy 5. Climate change and policy 6. Communications, media and public policy 7. The economic analysis of public policy 8. Embracing uncertainty: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and unpredictability 9. Embracing uncertainty: policy making in turbulent times 10. Empathy and emotions in policy making 11. Ethics, leadership and governance 12. European capitals: reforming the UK public service 13. Financial management for policy makers 14. Foresight and horizon scanning in policy making 15. Global public policy challenges 16. iData: the markets and politics of personalisation 17. International conflict analysis and resolution 18. International trade policy 19. Key models in public management: a comparative analysis 20. Learning what works 21. Participatory and deliberative governance 22. Policy analytics: understanding and using data 23. The policy process: advanced theory and practice 24. The policy skills project 25. Public sector leadership 26. Regulatory policy and politics 27. Robust decision making under deep uncertainty 28. Text mining and analysis for public policy 29. Understanding political leadership 30. Working internationally 31. User centred digital government 	
Q15.1	Q15. Are there any additional topics / modules that you would like to see covered?	

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
Q16.1	Q16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q16.1. The module choices enabled me to tailor my own programme of study.
Q16.2		Q16.2. I was able to choose modules aligned to my professional interests.
Q16.3		Q16.3. I was able to choose modules aligned to my academic interests.
Q17.1	Q17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q17.1. The curriculum was informed by cutting-edge policy research.
Q17.2		Q17.2. I have learned some contemporary approaches to policymaking.
Q18.1	Q18. How would you rate the balance between theoretical learning and practical application on the KCL PGL2?	
Q19.1	Q19. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q19.1. I have learned some ideas, concepts or frameworks which are useful at my workplace.
Q19.2		Q19.2. As a result of studying, I have gained confidence which helps me do my job better.
Q19.3		Q19.3. I have been able to apply my learning in my policy role
Q20.1	Q20. To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	Q20.1. The programme is adaptable to different working patterns, e.g. part-time, jobshare, flexible working etc.
Q20.2		Q20.2. The programme is accessible to participants based outside of London
Q21.1	Q21. We are interested in your feedback - Do you have any recommendations for improving the flexibility and/or accessibility of the programme?	
Q22.1	Q22. If you undertook any shorter (5 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the online mode of teaching delivery? (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)	Answer
Q22.2		Please explain your response (optional)

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
Q23.1	Q23. If you undertook any longer (15 credit) modules, how would you rate your satisfaction with the hybrid (in person and online) mode of teaching delivery? (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied)	Answer
Q23.2		Please explain your response (optional)
Q24.1	Q24. If you undertook a combination of modules, what was your preferred delivery model, if any?	
Q25.1	Q25. How easy was it for you to find sufficient time to satisfactorily prepare, read for, attend and complete the assessment for each of the following types of module on average: (1 = impossible; 2 = difficult; 3 = moderately easy; 4 = very easy; 5 = extremely easy)	Q25.1. 5-credit module
Q25.2		Q25.2. 15-credit module
Q25.3		Q25.3. Policy Skills Project
Q26.1	Q26. To what extent were you able to balance study with other work/life commitments? (1 = not at all able; 2 = not so able; 3 = moderately able; 4 = very able; 5 = extremely able)	
Q27.1	Q27. Based on your experience, how confident are you that the programme could expand to accommodate a greater number of students? Please note: The maximum cohort size is currently 150, with cohorts typically made up of 50-100 professionals. (1 = not at all confident; 2 = not so confident; 3 = moderately confident; 4 = very confident; 5 = extremely confident)	
Q28.1	Q28. What impact, if any, do you think expanding the programme would have on the learning experience and other aspects of the programme?	
Q29.1	Q29. To what extent have you improved in the following areas as a result of the KCL PGL2? (1 = not at all improved; 2 = barely improved; 3 = moderately improved; 4 = much improved; 5 = very much improved)	Q29.1. Knowledge of policy
Q29.2		Q29.2. Policy making skills
Q30.1	Q30. Which skills has the programme helped you to develop? (Tick all that apply) How to:	
Q30.2		Q30.2. Analyse problems and seek solutions in a setting governed by rules of public administration
Q30.3		Q30.3. Understand the trends shaping the public sector and what they mean for contemporary leaders
Q30.4		Q30.4. Understand the role of evidence in guiding complex decision making

Question ID	Question	Sub-question
Q30.5		Q30.5. Appreciate the importance of ethics, values and the role of technology in relation to value creation
Q30.6		Q30.6. Understand the theory and practice of strategic thinking and value creation in the public sector.
Q31.1	Q31. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? The programme was a booster for my personal development. (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	
Q32.1	Q32. Has the programme contributed to your career progression? (Tick all that apply)	Q32.1. It helped me to achieve a promotion
Q32.2		Q32.2. It helped me to obtain a new role
Q32.3		Q32.3. It helped me to take on more responsibility in my current job
Q32.4		Q32.4. N/A – it has not contributed to my career progression
Q32.5		Q32.5. Other (please specify):
Q100.1	Q100. Based on your experience, is the KCL PGL2 curriculum relevant to modern policy making? (1 = not at all relevant; 2 = not very relevant; 3 = moderately relevant; 4 = very relevant; 5 = extremely relevant)	
Q101.1	Q101. The programme aims to teach the following skills: Data analysis skills, Evaluation skills Consultation skills, Leadership skills Negotiation skills, Research skills. Are there any other skills that you think are important to a mid-career policy professional and should be taught on the programme?	
Q102.1	Q102. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The programme provides a good opportunity for civil servants to develop knowledge and skills that are relevant at work. (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	
Q103.1	Q103. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? The KCL PGL2 has improved the policy capability of those who have taken part in the programme. (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree)	

Appendix 5:

International School for Government, King's College London. Staff Biographies

Dr Roxana Bratu (Senior Lecturer in Public Policy)

Dr Roxana Bratu is Senior Lecturer in Public Policy in the International School for Government, Faculty of Social Sciences and Public Policy, King's College London. Before joining King's in 2022, she was Lecturer in Corruption Analysis at the University of Sussex and postdoctoral researcher at University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies. Her research interests and publications focus on anti-corruption public policies and practices, digitalization and its impact on (anti)corruption, narratives of corruption and integrity development.

Dr Bratu holds a PhD in Sociology from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences. Before embarking on a PhD she was a Chevening Scholar at the Centre for Criminology, University of Oxford.

Alexander Downer (Executive Chair)

Alexander Downer is Executive Chair of the International School for Government at King's College London.

From 2014 to 2018, Mr Downer was Australian High Commissioner to the UK. Prior to this, he was Australia's longest-serving Minister for Foreign Affairs, a role he held from 1996 to 2007.

Mr Downer also served as Opposition Leader and leader of the Australian Liberal Party from 1994 to 1995 and was Member of the Australian Parliament for Mayo for over 20 years.

In addition to a range of other political and diplomatic roles, he was Executive Director of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and the United Nations Secretary General's Special Adviser on Cyprus, in which he worked on peace talks between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. He is currently Chairman of the UK think tank Policy Exchange and a trustee of the International Crisis Group.

Professor Bobby Duffy (Director of the Policy Institute)

Professor Bobby Duffy is Professor of Public Policy and Director of the Policy Institute at King's. He has worked across most public policy areas in his career of 30 years in policy research and evaluation, including being seconded to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.

Professor Duffy sits on several advisory boards including chairing both the Campaign for Social Science and the CLOSER Advisory Board, is a member of the Executive of the Academy of Social Sciences, a trustee of British Future and the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO) and a Senior Fellow of the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto.

His first book, *The Perils of Perception – Why we're wrong about nearly everything*, was published by Atlantic books in several countries, drawing on a set of global studies on how people misperceive key social realities. His latest book, *Generations – Does when you're born shape who you are?*, came out in September 2021 and challenges myths and stereotypes around generational trends, seeking a greater understanding around generational challenges.

Zapryan Dumbalski (Programme Manager)

As the Programme Manager for Online and Executive Education for the International School for Government, Mr Dumbalski supports the team in ensuring key activities are completed in accordance with university timeframes and policies. He is responsible for managing the professional services team (including induction, performance-monitoring, leave records and training), harmonisation of systems and processes, supporting the team in times of high-volume activity, providing procedural advice, and assisting academics in using the Online Programme and Module Approval (OPAMA)/curriculum management system.

He has previous experience working on postgraduate and undergraduate taught programs in the Institute of Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience at King's. He has also worked in the cultural sector as Research Assistant and, subsequently, as Deputy Manager of an exhibition examining life on the Western Front in 1916.

Dr Samantha Gross (Head of Administration at the Policy Institute)

Dr Samantha Gross is Head of Administration at the Policy Institute and a member of its Senior Leadership Team. She leads the operations and resources, research, students and alumni professional services functions for the institute, including the clustered support for the International School for Government and Global Institute for Women's Leadership.

Dr Gross obtained both her PhD and MSc from King's College London and a BA from McGill University in Canada. She originally trained as an academic specialising in addictions, with a particular interest in treatment system design and service quality.

From 2008 to 2014 she was a Senior Researcher at the National Addiction Centre, while serving jointly as Addictions Advisor to the Pilgrim Trust and the J. Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust. Sam has consulted for several statutory and non-statutory organisations in her specialist areas and maintains an interest in drug policy.

Professor Andrew Massey (Academic Director)

Professor Andrew Massey, in his capacity as Academic Director, is the senior academic in charge of planning and curriculum design for the KCL PGL2. As such, he is responsible for leading the academic team and he is also Chair of the Assessment Board, which ratifies the marks for both standalone and program modules. Professor Massey has worked in a range of areas including British, European, and US policy and politics. His main areas of research include comparative public policy, public administration and issues around the reform and modernization of government and governance at all levels in the UK, US, EU and globally. He also has a long-standing interest in energy policy, especially civil nuclear energy, professionalism, and ethics and accountability.

He is currently Editor in Chief of the journal *International Review of Administrative Sciences* and Editor for the former Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) journal *Public Money and Management*. He is also a member of the Council of Administration of the International Institute for Administrative Sciences.

In the recent past he has been Vice President of the European Group for Public Administration, a Trustee of the UK's Political Studies Association and Chair of the UK's Joint University Council.

He has worked in a variety of jobs on secondment, including the Department of Energy and on projects for the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury (author of the "Massey Report"). He has worked with or advised at some time the National Audit Office and a wide range of UK public sector bodies and International Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

Professor Linda McKie (Executive Dean)

Professor Linda McKie commenced her role as Executive Dean for the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy in January 2022 and is Professor of Social and Public Policy in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine.

She was previously Dean/Head of School at the University of Edinburgh School of Social and Political Science from 2017. Prior to that, she was Head of the School of Applied Social Sciences at Durham University, from where she graduated with a PhD in Sociology in 1989.

In 2004, she was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences (FAcSS) and in 2010, appointed a member of the Research Excellence Framework 2014 (REF), Sub-panel 23: Sociology.

From 2007 to 2014, she was part of the evaluation panels commissioned by the Greek Government to review research centres in Historical, Mediterranean and Social Sciences. From 2006 to 2010, she was a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Hanken School of Economics, Helsinki.

Between 2012 and 2021, she chaired a range of Academy of Finland funding award panels. She has also undertaken funding award work for various EU panels (COST, Horizon 2020, and Marie Curie) and the Irish and Norwegian Research Councils.

Professor McKie's research focuses on gender, care and work, older workers and the care sector and evidence and policy analysis. She is Principal Investigator on the UKRI project 'Healthier working lives and ageing for residential care workers: developing careers, enhancing continuity, promoting wellbeing' (£1.4 million). She is co-investigator on the UKRI project 'Beyond the 10,000 steps: Managing less visible aspects of healthy ageing at work' (£1.9 million). Both projects run to February 2024 and are part of the [Healthy Ageing program](#).

She is also a member of the Knowledge Network for the Person in Context work package of the Advanced Care Research Centre at University of Edinburgh (funded by a £20 million donation from Legal and General).

Dr Daniela Serban (Lecturer in Public Policy)

Dr Daniela Serban was a Lecturer in Public Policy in the International School for Government at King's College London from October 2020 to January 2023. In May 2023, she was appointed as Associate Professor at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid.

Before joining King's, Dr Serban was a Postdoctoral Fellow of the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science, researching new forms of international development cooperation at Waseda University in Tokyo. Her research was published in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* and the *European Journal of Development Research*. Prior to becoming an academic, she worked in international development and crisis management, in think tanks and the public sector.

Dr Serban has a PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick, and a master's degree in Diplomacy and International Relations from the Diplomatic School of Madrid, where she was a Fellow of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Dr Olga Siemers (Senior Lecturer in Public Policy)

Dr Siemers is a Senior Lecturer in Public Policy in the International School for Government at King's College London. Before joining King's in 2019, she worked at the University of Oxford and Open University as a Research Fellow and Tutor in Political Economy. In her research role, she was conducting randomised controlled trials evaluating public policy impact on behaviour and attitudes towards personal finance in the UK. Prior to her academic career, Dr Siemers was a research assistant to an MP in German Parliament responsible for conducting research and policy analysis.

Her research and teaching interests include public policy, European Union and global studies, international migration and the labour market. Dr Siemers has a PhD in Employment Research from Warwick University and MA in Politics from Freie Universität Berlin.

Appendix 6: KCL PGL2 Steering Group Extraordinary Meeting Minutes

The following Minutes and Actions are from the extraordinary KCL PGL2 Steering Group meeting held on Tuesday, 25 April 2023 (1.30–3 pm), during Dr Chris Walker's UK visit as part of the evaluation exercise. The meeting focused on emerging findings from ANZSOG's independent evaluation of the KCL PGL2, both the survey and follow-up focus groups and consultations. The meeting was hybrid, held in the Department for Education London office and online.

Chair

Lorraine Wall (PPU) – Extraordinary Chair
David Kennedy (DEFRA) (apologies)

Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)

Dr Chris Walker (Deputy Dean and Academic Director)

PGL2 Steering Group

Ellen Brown (DEFRA) (apologies)
Rob Wellens (HSE) (apologies)
Christopher Warner (WG) (apologies)
Anthony Morris (SG) (apologies)
Katherine Sirrell (HMT) (apologies)
Liam Izod (DENZ)
Edmund Hair (HMRC) (apologies)
Alex Scott (CPS) (apologies)
Jenny Hall (DCMS)

Student Representatives

Geileis Cotter (HO) (apologies)
David Whitaker (HMT) (apologies)

Alumni Representatives

Adwoa Debrah (HO) (apologies)
Daniel Grubb (MoD) (apologies)
Alex Paul (MoD) (apologies)

King's College London (ISfG Team)

Alexander Downer (ISfG Executive Chair)
Andrew Massey (Academic Director) (apologies)
Roxana Bratu (Senior Lecturer in Public Policy) (apologies)
Daniela Serban (Lecturer in Public Policy)
Olga Siemers (Senior Lecturer in Public Policy) (apologies)
Zapryan Dumbalski (Programme Manager)
Samantha Gross (Head of Administration) (apologies)
Emma Glasscock (Head of Business Development)

Secretariat (Policy Profession Unit)

Rebecca Butler (Accredited Learning Manager)
Naomi Clothier (Skills and Capability Lead)
San Kundi (Accredited Learning Officer)

Timings	Item	Lead
1.30–1.35 pm	1. Welcome	Chair – Lorraine Wall
1.35–1.45 pm	2. ISfG Program Overview	ISfG Team
1.45–1.55 pm	3. ANZSOG Review Progress Update	Dr Chris Walker
1.55–2.40 pm	4. ANZSOG Survey Results	Dr Chris Walker
2.40–2.50 pm	5. ANZSOG Draft Report Structure	Dr Chris Walker
2.50–2.55 pm	6. Next Steps	Dr Chris Walker
2.55–3.00 pm	7. AOB	Chair – Lorraine Wall

1. Welcome (Lorraine Wall)

Notes:

- The steering group only meets quarterly however this extraordinary KCL PGL2 Steering Group meeting was held to share findings from – and obtain steering group feedback on – the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) independent peer review of the King's Postgraduate Learning Offer (KCL PGL2).
- The Chair introduced Dr Chris Walker (Deputy Dean and Academic Director, Australia and New Zealand School of Government), who is visiting the UK until Thursday, 27 April to hold focus groups and consultations as part of the evaluation.
- Apologies were received from David Kennedy, Katherine Sirrell, Edmund Hair, Alex Scott and Andrew Massey. Andrew Massey apologised on behalf of the wider King's team, many of whom were unable to attend due to a clash with the Jersey Government program teaching schedule.

2. ISfG program overview (ISfG team)

Notes:

- King's presented a short Program Overview Report (**Paper 1**) of past and present student enrolment numbers, withdrawals and completion rates. King's presents this annually to the steering group.
- Since the program launched in May 2020, 791 students have enrolled on a total of 989 standalone modules, 152 students have enrolled on the postgraduate certificate, while 188 students have enrolled on the postgraduate diploma.
- The success rate is high for those who complete the program. The external examiner commented on the high proportion of distinctions, with just one failure overall.
- The completion rate for modules is 82%. This is slightly lower than for a standard university course, possibly due to working students not recognising the full commitment involved. King's cited student workload as the main reason students give for withdrawing from modules.
- King's highlighted that students on the longer programs can take a break from certain teaching periods to focus on work. Exceptionally, students can also request an 'interruption of study'.

Actions:

- King's will log the reasons for student withdrawals and share this with PPU to inform organisational funders of where additional support may be needed.
- King's will monitor the number of student interruptions for each learner agreement.
- PPU will present Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data for the 2022–23 academic year in the next steering group meeting (anticipated July 2023).
- PPU will share EDI data with ANZSOG to inform its report.

3. ANZSOG review progress update (Dr Chris Walker)

Notes:

- ANZSOG provided a progress update on its peer-review evaluation of the KCL PGL2, including a methodological overview (**Paper 2**).
- ANZSOG and the Policy Profession Unit (PPU) have a reciprocal working relationship, with ANZSOG previously reviewing the Executive Master of Public Policy (EMPP) in 2020 and PPU, in turn, reviewing ANZSOG's Executive Master of Public Administration (EMPA).
- ANZSOG received overwhelmingly positive feedback from students and graduates of the KCL PGL2, which is delivering value. The evaluation has been constructive in terms of the high level of engagement: focus groups and consultations showed that students and graduates are willing to give back to the KCL PGL2.
- ANZSOG spoke with Tamara Finkelstein (Civil Service Head of Policy Profession), who has a high level of enthusiasm for the KCL PGL2 and discussed how to fulfil her ambition to grow and expand it.
- On ANZSOG's, methodology the steering group suggested that in the longer term, it would be useful to ask ministers whether they feel that they are getting better advice from policy professionals who have undertaken the KCL PGL2.
- In the short term, the steering group advised consulting the Institute for Government (IfG), which has done extensive research on the skills policy professionals need. PPU responded that previous efforts to engage IfG in the evaluation had been unanswered.

Actions:

- PPU will reapproach the Institute for Government to discuss policy professionals' skills needs in the context of the KCL PGL2 evaluation.

4. ANZSOG survey results

Notes:

- ANZSOG shared the main findings from its survey of KCL PGL2 stakeholders (Paper 3).
- Students regularly commented that the KCL PGL2 had contributed to their intellectual critical thinking about policy, that they had learned some contemporary approaches to policymaking and developed a more strategic understanding of the context of their policy work.
- Students were generally satisfied with the breadth of modules, feeling that they had obtained core learning relating to the professional standards but also optionality to develop deeper knowledge of policy domain areas.
- On coverage, King's explained that the program prioritises skills-based over issues-based modules because it is hard to develop topic-based modules without rebranding the KCL PGL2 as a public policy program with a particular specialism, thereby competing with other suppliers. This is despite pressure from some organisations with higher student numbers, who want to see their policy domain reflected. Exceptionally, King's developed two issues-based modules on Climate Change and Understanding Multi-level Government at the steering group's request.
- Assessments were topically relevant, organised and pitched at the right level, enabling students to apply their professional experience.
- 85% of students surveyed felt that concepts studied were relevant to their work, consistent with King's internal evaluation report in June 2021 (83%).
- Students highly valued the co-design and co-delivery of the KCL PGL2. Practitioner guest speakers were unanimously praised in the focus groups, King's noted that the impending move of the programs team to the Policy Institute will have implications for access to practitioners and suggested that a link to the IfG might help with speaker recruitment. ANZSOG advised drawing on Tamara Finkelstein's network for core module speakers.

- On the relationship between the KCL PGL2 and the Policy Profession standards, qualitative survey feedback suggested that the alignment between the learning offer and the standards needed to be more explicit.
- On role relevance, the survey findings were less positive about the balance between theory and practice. However, focus groups articulated more clearly the applicability to the workplace (both position in the policy field and wider profession).
- On the delivery model, the evaluation found online learning more convenient (in terms of location and asynchronous engagement) and accessible. However, online learning has a downside in terms of student engagement.
- On audience, students had two conflicting understandings. While some valued gaining an international understanding of policy from public access students, others raised issues about being able to speak frankly on open-access modules. ANZSOG encouraged due consideration when selecting senior Civil Service practitioners to speak on modules.
- On workload, all students commented that reading lists were overly long and that it was difficult to balance study alongside work and other commitments. ANZSOG acknowledged that the work-study balance was largely the responsibility of organisations and that King's should avoid compromising the intellectual rigour of the KCL PGL2. ANZSOG suggested nudging line managers to agree to the course expectations before enrolling or perhaps holding an induction for line managers.
- On support, King's teaching staff were commended for solving student problems and offering excellent guidance. However, ANZSOG cautioned that lecturers were perhaps doing the work of administrative staff in this respect.
- All evaluation participants sought clarification on the learner journey, both through the nomination and enrolment process and through the program content in terms of module connections.
- ANZSOG advised that there would be universal benefits from making the administrative process clearer. ANZSOG questioned whether the central admissions process was necessary and appropriate for each standalone module. If so, the language of university administration needs to be simplified for students to have documents ready to upload. King's expects that the impending move to the larger Policy Institute will enable greater support for the program administration.
- On the program completion rate, ANZSOG advised prioritising supporting students' first module experience as the first six weeks of the program are key for retention.
- On scalability, King's and the Policy Profession were aligned in wanting to upscale the program, if there is sufficient demand. Students felt that upscaling could provide more optionality in terms of webinar timetabling and module rotation. Working Level Contacts (WLCs) were more sceptical about the value of increasing the scale of the KCL PGL2, possibly due to administrative load or budgetary concerns. As funders, WLCs were also less positive about the program cost, which learners perceived to be good value for money.
- ANZSOG advised that the steering group would need to consider the implications of upscaling on pricing, revenue, and impact on the learner experience.

Actions:

- PPU will undertake another mapping exercise of the KCL PGL2 against the standards as part of the broader Capability Program.
- King's will work to improve its induction to better highlight sources of information to students.
- PPU will develop an infographic of the learner journey from nomination to enrolment.
- King's will analyse completion data in relation to EDI data for this subset of students.

5. ANZSOG draft report structure (Dr Chris Walker)

Notes:

- ANZSOG shared the draft report structure (**Paper 4**) with the steering group for comment.

6. Next steps (Dr Chris Walker)

Actions:

- PPU will share the draft report with the steering group for comment in the next meeting (anticipated July 2023).
- PPU will present the final report to the Policy Profession Board in the summer.

7. AOB (Lorraine Wall)

Actions:

- PPU will send a follow up email to recruit 3 more panellists to evaluate postgraduate diploma students' Policy Skills Projects (4 May).
- PPU will email to recruit a volunteer or receive speaker recommendations for a panel on cross-departmental policy making on The Policy Process core module (7 June).

Actions Log:

Action	Agenda point	Owner
Log the reasons for student withdrawals and share this with PPU.	ISfG Program Overview	KCL
Monitor student interruptions for each learner agreement.	2. ISfG Program Overview	KCL
Present 2022–23 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data in the next steering group.	2. ISfG Program Overview	PPU
Share EDI data with ANZSOG to inform its report.	2. ISfG Program Overview	PPU
Reapproach the Institute for Government to discuss policy professionals' skills needs.	ANZSOG Review Progress Update	PPU
Map the KCL PGL2 against the refreshed standards.	ANZSOG survey results	PPU
Improve the induction to better highlight sources of information to students.	4. ANZSOG survey results	KCL
Develop an infographic of the learner journey from nomination to enrolment.	4. ANZSOG survey results	PPU

Action	Agenda point	Owner
Analyse completion data in relation to EDI data.	4. ANZSOG survey results	KCL
Share the draft ANZSOG report with the steering group in the next meeting.	6. Next Steps	PPU
Present the final report to the Policy Profession Board.	6. Next Steps	PPU
Send a follow up email to recruit 3 more panellists for the Policy Skills Project (4 May).	7. AOB	PPU
Send an email request for a speaker on cross-departmental policy making on The Policy Process core module (7 June).	7. AOB	PPU

Appendix 7: ISfG Overview Report (April 2023)

Student enrolment data has been extracted from SITS Client, the student management system used by King's College London, assessment data has been provided by the Registry Services assessments team and merged with local records provided by UK Civil Service (UKCS) to gain an overview of students to date. The admissions portal, King's Apply, is a separate system and therefore students who were nominated and did not apply or withdrew within the admissions stage will not be included.

Total number of UK CS students (individual people) who have taken standalone module(s).
791 students have taken or enrolled on standalone modules to date.

Total number of UKCS students who have taken or are taking the postgraduate certificate.
152 students have enrolled on the postgraduate certificate to date with 10 student withdrawals.

Total number of UKCS students who have taken or are taking the postgraduate diploma.
188 students have enrolled on the postgraduate diploma to date with 11 student withdrawals. 2 postgraduate certificate students are currently in the process of transferring enrolment to the postgraduate diploma.

Number of postgraduate certificate students who completed their programme in the first cohort (started spring 2020).

Of the 27 students in the 2020 cohort, 17 have been awarded. There were 2 students who transferred to the postgraduate diploma. 8 students withdrew.

Number of postgraduate students who completed their programme in the second cohort (started spring 2021).

Of the 32 students in the 2021 cohort, 25 have been awarded. There were 2 students who transferred to the postgraduate diploma. 3 students have delayed completion due to either interrupting their studies, deferred assessment or re-assessment. 2 students withdrew.

Number of postgraduate certificate students who completed their programme in the third cohort (started spring 2022).

Of the 35 students in the 2022 cohort, 7 have been awarded. 28 are on course to complete their studies later this year.

Number of postgraduate diploma students who completed their programme in the first cohort (started spring 2020).

Of the 70 students in the 2020 cohort, 41 completed in time for results to be ratified at the July 2022 Assessment Sub Board with a further 10 by the November board. 10 withdrew with 1 of those having enough credits to be awarded the postgraduate certificate. 9 students have delayed completion due to either interrupting their studies, deferred assessment or re-assessment.

Expected number of postgraduate diploma students who will be completing their programme in the second cohort (started spring 2021).

Of the 55 students in the 2021 cohort, 36 are expected to complete in time for the results to be included in the July 2023 Assessment Sub Board. 5 have withdrawn. 14 students have delayed completion due to either interrupting their studies, deferred assessment or re-assessment.

Total number of module instances taken by all UKCS students

791 students have taken 989 standalone modules. To calculate all module instances would involve extracting and merging a large number of data sets.

Scottish Agencies

Have had 77 instances of standalone modules with 2 withdrawals. Identified 1 postgraduate certificate student and 2 postgraduate diploma students, both of whom had previously taken a standalone module.

Additional numbers provided for the ANZSOG evaluation

Currently enrolled on each of the learner agreements (standalone modules, postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma).

89 postgraduate certificate students, 121 postgraduate diploma students and 57 standalone module students

Previously enrolled on each of the learner agreements (standalone modules, postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma).

Postgraduate diploma – 67 (completed and withdrawn)

Postgraduate certificate – 62 (completed and withdrawn)

Standalone modules – 989 instances of modules recorded between the beginning of the learning agreement and the January 2023 teaching period (inclusive).

The completion rate for each of the learner agreements (i.e., what % of the students who enrol on the programmes complete them).

Postgraduate certificate – 44% of the 91 students enrolled on this programme in 2020–22 have completed it; 5% of students withdrew; 1% of students failed. Numbers for 2022–23 are excluded as these students are still current.

Postgraduate diploma – Roughly 32% of students who enrolled on this programme in 2020–22 have completed it; 1 student out of 158 downgraded from the postgraduate diploma to obtain a postgraduate certificate; roughly 6% of students have withdrawn; the remaining students are still current.

Standalone modules – Roughly 82% of students have completed the standalone modules they took; roughly 2% of students failed the modules they took; roughly 3% of students withdrew from their modules; the rest of the students are still current or resitting assessments.

Appendix 8: King's Student Evaluation Questions used in Client Reports

"The lecturer has been good at explaining the subject"

"The lecturer has made the subject interesting"

"The lecturer has been well prepared for their classes"

"The module was intellectually stimulating"

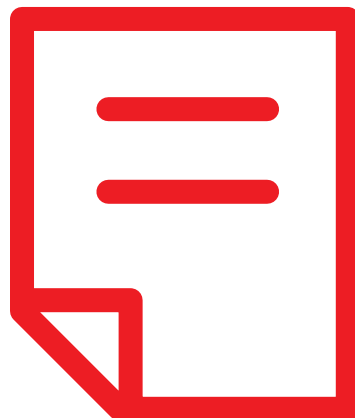
"The criteria used in assessment for this module have been made clear in advance"

"I have felt included in this module through having been encouraged to ask questions and/ or participate in discussions"

"Staff value my views and perspectives in this module"

"This module has helped to broaden my knowledge and/or skill set"⁵

"Overall, I am satisfied with this module"



⁵ This replaced the earlier statement – "This module has helped me develop knowledge and skills which will be of use to me in the future" – as of September 2022.

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