



Professionalisation of Evaluation in Australia

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MONASH UNIVERSITY DBA RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) is theoretically and practically focussed. This portfolio includes implications for the study of professions as well as the professionalisation of the occupation of evaluation. As the focus of this research is the professionalisation of an occupation, no implications are drawn for specific workplaces.

- 1. Research Stage One – This stage is a review of the literature on a topic of interest to candidates, and which may not necessarily be related to the key research topic in Stage 3.**

Research Stage One of this portfolio is a review of literature on the sociology of professions to provide a theoretical foundation and framework for Research Stage Three. The main theories of professions examined were social Darwinism, trait theory, feminism and the professional project. These approaches were used to develop a pluralist model that integrates trait theory and the professional project to be used in Research Stage Three to review the professionalisation of evaluation.

- 2. Research Stage Two – This stage is a review of the literature on a topic of interest to candidates, and which may not necessarily be related to the key research topic in Research Stage Three.**

Research Stage Two of this portfolio is a review of literature on the development of evaluation as an area of work. While the main focus is on Australia, literature on the development of evaluation overseas has also been reviewed to provide an international context and identify alternative experiences and approaches that inform options for the further professionalisation of the practice of evaluation in Australia in Research Stage Three.

- 3. Research Stage Three – This stage is a discrete research report, or an extension of Research Stages One and Two.**

Research Stage Three of this portfolio is an extension of Research Stages One and Two. This final paper applies the framework of professions developed in Research Stage One and the understanding of the development of the practice of evaluation developed in Research Stage

Two, to examine the process of professionalisation of the practice of evaluation in Australia. Information is also drawn from other countries to identify alternative models of professionalisation and to provide comparative data to the professionalisation of evaluation in Australian.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This Doctorate of Business Administration portfolio contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other educational institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this portfolio contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where reference has been made in the text to that work.



Cheryl E Reed

8 August 2014

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READING THIS PORTFOLIO

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Referencing. Referencing style used herein is author-date, based on APA 6th edition. The reference management system is Endnote X5.

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- *Filters* have been applied to AES survey data in some tables and figures to exclude some categories of respondents (for example, non-Australian residents or respondents not involved in the conduct or design of evaluations). Where filters have been used, the questions used in the filter have been included at the bottom of the table or figure.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Much of the sociological literature on professions is based on the traditional professions that emerged in the nineteenth century in response to the Industrial Revolution. This Portfolio uses literature from the sociology of professions to examine evaluation as a recently emerged area of work. The implications of this are considered for the further professionalisation of the practice of evaluation and contribution to our understanding of the sociology of professions.

Research Stage One

This Paper considers four theoretical approaches that have made a significant contribution to the sociology of professions literature. First, the work of the social commentator Herbert Spencer (1896) and his social Darwinian approach is reviewed. Spencer's work led to the development of the second approach to be considered, trait theory (Chitty, 1997; Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Greenwood, 1957, 1972). Both of these approaches come from within the structural functionalist school of sociology. In response to trait theory and its focus on the attributes of professions that developed under very specific social conditions, feminist approaches and the professional project concept emerged from the symbolic-interactionist school of sociology (Larson, 1977; Maack, 1997; Macdonald, 1995). While structural functionalists are concerned with how professions function in society, symbolic-interactionists are concerned with how occupations are granted professional status by society. This paper considers these different approaches and develops a pluralist model of professionalisation. This approach is then used in Paper 3 to explore the professionalisation of the practice of evaluation and to suggest how this could be further developed in the future.

Research Stage Two

In the major western economies of the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, evaluation emerged as a distinct area of work in the 1970s as a result of the growth of government spending on social services and a need for public accountability. Evaluation has been described as a *transdiscipline* that serves practitioners from other disciplines (Scriven, 2013) and a *metaprofession* that draws practitioners from other professions to its workforce (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013). It is generally accepted that evaluation is not a profession, but is professionalising (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2004; Cousins & Aubry, 2006). Evaluation offers an opportunity to apply learnings from the sociology of professions literature to understand the process of professionalisation in the modern era and consider the implications of this for both

the future professionalisation of evaluation and the theoretical base of the sociology of professions.

The recent history of evaluation demonstrates a continued process of professionalisation through the establishment of a need for services, the development of a community of practice, the establishment of ethics and development of evaluation specific theories and methods. The process of professionalisation of the practice of evaluation will be considered in Paper 3, using the model developed in Paper 1.

Research Stage Three

Most of the discourse on sociology of professions is derived from research on two professions – doctors and lawyers (Torstendahl, 1990b). While this gap in research has begun to be addressed in recent years with studies on the professionalisation of other groups such as nurses (Chua & Clegg, 1990; Johannisson & Sundin, 2007), librarians (Maack, 1997; Sundin & Hedman, 2004), engineers (Ressler, 2011) and others, there remains an opportunity to further contribute to the growing body of knowledge and theory of professions in general and professionalisation in different social contexts in particular. Similarly, the early studies in sociology of professions were based on initial research in the United Kingdom and the United States, then applied to continental Europe and elsewhere, not as a specific-type but as an ideal-type (Torstendahl, 1990b). This limited the inclusion of many knowledge-based occupations in the field of study (Maack, 1997) and disregarded the impact of the state on the development of professions (Torstendahl, 1990a).

Using the approach developed in Paper 1, which incorporates themes from trait theory and the professional project, this final research stage examines the professionalisation of evaluation since the 1980s, when the first associations were established in evaluation. These associations established academic journals, professional development programs, international conferences and ethical guidelines for members. Evaluation has developed specific methods and is developing its own theories. The weaknesses of the professionalisation of evaluation generally relate to a lack of occupational closure: no qualifications and experience are required to work as an evaluator and evaluation associations accept non-evaluators as full members. Canada is the only country to have in place an evaluation credentialing system. The Canadian model, led by the Treasury Board of Canada, involves a partnership between educational providers, the Canadian Evaluation Association and the Treasury Board's Centre for Evaluation Excellence in order to develop and administer a voluntary evaluator credentialing system (Treasury Board of

Canada Secretariat, 2012a, 2012b). Comparison of the Canadian model with the approach taken in Australia demonstrates the important role of government as the main purchaser of evaluation in generating market pressure for improved quality. The Canadian model also demonstrates the importance of engagement with the educational sector to ensure an academic pathway into evaluation with a consistent national curriculum. While at a practical level this research suggests options to improve the professionalisation of the practice of evaluation in Australia, at a theoretical level the research demonstrates how trait theory and the professional project can be integrated in a pluralist model to advance the professionalisation of an occupation. Furthermore, an occupation, by establishing a deliberate plan for professionalisation that includes goals (or objective traits) linked to outputs and outcomes (or subjective traits), develops a framework to test the logic of the relationships within the model. This resolves the issue of untested causal assumptions that have been one of the main limitations of trait theory. This approach takes a continuous improvement perspective, where professionalisation is both an objective and a process. The award of the title *profession* is controlled by public opinion on the merit and achievements of the goals of the occupation through this process of professionalisation.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AEA	American Evaluation Association
AES	Australasian Evaluation Society
AMA	Australian Medical Association
AMSRS	Australian Market and Social Research Society
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANZEA	Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ANZSOG	Australia and New Zealand School of Government
APS	Australian Public Service
CEE	Centre of Excellence for Evaluation
CES	Canadian Evaluation Society
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DBA	Doctorate of Business Administration
Dept	Department
DIAC	(Former) Department of Immigration and Citizenship
EU	European Union
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
IOCE	International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation
IPPA	Institute of Public Administration Australia
JCSEE	Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation
NS	Not Specified
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory

PIREU	Policy Innovation, Research and Evaluation Unit, Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PM&C	Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Qld	Queensland
SA	South Australia
TAS	Tasmania
TBS	Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
UK	United Kingdom
UKES	United Kingdom Evaluation Society
US	United States
Vic	Victoria
WA	Western Australia

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Research Paper 1 – LITERATURE REVIEW

The sociology of professions

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ABSTRACT

This Paper reviews the sociology of professions literature to provide a theoretical foundation for the later analysis of the professionalisation of the practice of evaluation in Paper 3. The sociology of professions has been part of formal sociological thinking for over a century. This Paper considers four theoretical approaches that have made a significant contribution to the sociology of professions literature. First, the work of the social commentator Herbert Spencer and his social Darwinian approach is reviewed. Spencer's work led to the development of the second approach to be considered, trait theory. Both of these approaches come from within the structural functionalist school of sociology. The third approach to be reviewed, the feminist approach, developed as a response to trait theory and its focus on the attributes of professions that developed under very specific social conditions. The fourth and final model to be reviewed, the professional project, also developed in response to trait theory. Both the feminist approaches and the professional project concept emerged from the symbolic-interactionist school of sociology. While structural functionalists are concerned with how professions function in society, symbolic-interactionists are concerned with how occupations are granted professional status by society. This Paper considers these different approaches and develops a pluralist approach to professionalisation. This approach is then used in Paper 3 to explore the professionalisation of the practice of evaluation and suggest how this could be further developed in the future.

1.1 Introduction

The sociology of professions has been at the forefront of sociological thinking for over a century, despite proclamations of its lack of meaning to sociologists in the 1980s (Hall, 1983), it has attracted a resurgence of interest in recent decades (Macdonald, 1995). Developed in the late 1800s when there was a growing and increasingly specialised working class, the sociology of professions focuses on the relations between occupational groups, knowledge and the possibility for exclusive practice (Sundin & Hedman, 2004). As Pavalko (1972) observed, professions are of particular interest because they are the occupational groups with the greatest concentration of power and influence. Their monopoly over specialised skills and knowledge, in some cases protected by the state, ensures that they are able to command substantial financial and other rewards for their members. Furthermore, most members of society come into contact with professions and need to be able to rely on professions to apply their specialised knowledge and skill to solve problems of everyday life, such as advising in a legal matter, treating a medical condition, reviewing accounts and providing spiritual guidance. Hence the sociology of professions is of interest to both the sociologist and members of the general public who rely on the services of professions.

Throughout its history, professionalism has been seen as a driving force of occupational change and modernisation while also maintaining social order through the formation of institutional structures or traits (Perrin, 1995). Siegrist (2004) contended that the establishment and power of the early professions was supported by the systematisation of knowledge, the emergence of liberal principles, the expansion of the state into social welfare and the nationalisation of society and culture. Pavalko (1972) suggested that, while cloaked in traditional practices, professions are both the repository of the most advanced and sophisticated knowledge and skill as well as the mechanism by which it is advanced.

Reflecting changes in the perspectives of the dominant sociological thinking of the time, the sociology of professions has weathered several major shifts in ideology. The main theories of professions have been trait theory, functionalism, interactionism, Marxism and Foucauldianism (Saks, 2010). A content analysis of publications on professions in leading sociological journals has compared the 1950s to the 1970s. This review found a considerable decline in publications of articles on professions, but an increase in articles on women and gender roles (Hall, 1983). Greene (2002) suggested that, rather than recording the demise of the sociology of professions,

this analysis actually recorded a change in theoretical focus for the study of professions away from structural functionalism to a more flexible approach, where action-based theory played a more prominent role. The growing interest in a feminist model of professionalism may also have been picked up in the growth of articles in the sociology of occupations dealing with women and gender roles. There has been concern that the sociology of professions literature is based on traditional professions that are male dominated and a product of a specific time period that does not reflect the changes made to society in general and the role of women in particular over the last century (Maack, 1997; Volti, 2008).

This paradigm shift away from the structural functionalist approach that Hall's work may have inadvertently captured changed the way in which sociologists studied professions. In the 1970s the sociology of professions literature moved away from looking at how professions function to how occupations are granted professional status by society. One of the leading theories of this period was the concept of the *professional project*. This was developed by Larson (1977) and her reconceptualisation of Freidson's (1970b) work, with Macdonald (1995) later playing a significant role in the modernisation of this concept.

1.1.1 Structure of this Paper

The purpose of this Paper is to review the sociology of professions literature to provide a theoretical foundation for the later analysis of the professionalisation of the practice of evaluation in Paper 3.

This Paper is presented in four sections. The first section considers definitions of *profession* in common usages, those espoused by leading theorists and those used in legislation and national research, in order to develop a working definition of professions to be used in this Portfolio. Paper 3 will reconsider this definition in light of the research.

The second section of this Paper considers the contribution of four approaches or theories to the sociology of professions literature. These are social Darwinism, trait theory, feminism and the professional project.

The third section of this Paper briefly considers other pressures that are currently shaping the development of professions, such as the role of the state, globalisation and the growth of knowledge occupations.

The final section of this Paper develops a framework to consider the professionalisation of an occupation to be applied to evaluation in Paper 3.

1.1.2 Definition of profession

It is important to be clear what is meant by the word *profession* and its grammatical derivatives. The sociology of professions is actually a search for that meaning. Although the term *profession* can be traced to medieval times, until the eighteenth century occupations and professions were not distinguished from each other (P. Abbott & Meerabeau, 1998). According to Harper (2014), the word *profession* is derived from the Latin *professionem* meaning *public declaration*. In the 1200s *profession* was used to denote the *vows taken upon entering a religious order*. By the mid-1300s *profession* was applied to *any solemn declaration*. The application of *profession* to work dates from the 1400s, when it was applied to *an occupation in which someone professes to be skilled*. In the early 1660s *profession* was used to refer to a *body of persons engaged in an occupation*. Thus the etymology of the word demonstrates that the origins of *profession* come from a solemn claim, that later became linked to a claim of skill.

In the late 1900s, *professionalism* and *professional* were used to denote ethical or moral behaviour (P. Abbott & Meerabeau, 1998). In this context *professional* is good and *unprofessional* is bad. Of course, while practitioners of many occupations may *act* in a professional manner, this does not make that occupation a *profession*. This has stretched the common meaning of professional to refer to the quality of work of anyone who is employed (Williams, 1979), or, in the case of sport, anyone who is being paid to participate in sport (Chitty, 1997), in that a professional is the opposite of an amateur (P. Abbott & Meerabeau, 1998; Volti, 2008). As Sawyer (1987) noted, workers who get paid for occupations that are often unpaid use the term *professional* to distinguish themselves: for example, *professional carer*, *professional actor*, *professional dishwasher*. The so-called *learned professions* like doctor, lawyer, or accountant have no need of the prefix of *professional*.

The Oxford Dictionary takes a similar view, defining a *profession* as ‘a paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification’ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2010, noun 1). In a knowledge age, where prolonged training is required for admission to many occupations, this definition would accept many occupations as professions.

In sociology, *profession* is more closely defined. While there is no commonly universal definition despite a long history of academic inquiry (Freidson, 1994; Maack, 1997), generally sociologists agree that professions are occupations that require special knowledge which is central to the needs and values of society. As both Larson (1977) and Hurd (1967) observed, the value of the title *profession* comes from its scarcity: not all occupations can be considered a profession or else the title will lose its meaning. However, the title of *profession* has come to denote an activity of distinction and is coveted by many occupational groups (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001).

One reason for the lack of definitional agreement is that the study of professions intersects with many aspects of sociological inquiry and takes on the framework of that broader inquiry. Initially aligned with class theory and social stratification (Freidson, 1994), more recently the sociology of professions literature has drawn on a plurality of theoretical frameworks, particularly the sociology of work and occupations (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995; Volti, 2008) and feminism (Maack, 1997).

Sociologists like Abbott (1988) have argued that the concept of profession is defined by an occupation's struggle to achieve it, so that the definition of *profession* is fluid. This has led others (for example, Hanlon, 1998) to forgo any efforts to define profession and instead list occupations that are considered to be part of the category of profession.

However, despite the lack of agreement on definitions of professions and some attempts to side-step the notion of a definition altogether, there is a plethora of definitions to draw on:

Abraham Flexner characterised *professional* as the opposite of amateur and a career commitment to full-time practice of an occupation. Thus a nurse enlisted during a war, for the duration of that war, is not a professional. But a nurse with a full-time career interest in nursing may be a professional (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001, p 152).

Eliot Freidson defined professions as occupations that are esoteric, complex and discretionary. These special occupations require theoretical knowledge, practical skill and judgement that most people do not possess, and may not be able to understand or evaluate. Furthermore, professions do *good work* in service of the well-being of individuals or society and their work cannot be solely measured in financial value (Freidson, 1994, p. 200).

Emile Durkheim characterised professions as a moral community based on occupational membership that provide stability in a democracy (Durkheim, 1957).

Magali Larson defined professions as having structural characteristics that vary in importance in different historical contexts. Occupations use these structural elements as resources in their professional projects (Larson, 1977, p. 208). Larson later clarified her definition, stating that profession '...is a name we give to historically specific forms that establish structural links between relatively high levels of formal education and relatively desirable positions and/or rewards in the social division of labour.' (Larson, 1990, p. 30).

Andrew Abbott provides a loose definition that professions are exclusive occupations that apply abstract knowledge to specific cases (A. Abbott, 1988, p. 8).

William Sullivan defined a profession as an occupation with specialised training in a codified field of knowledge usually requiring formal study and apprenticeship, self-regulation of standards of practice and a commitment to the welfare of the public beyond personal financial gain (Sullivan, 2005, p. 36).

There are two subthemes that run through these definitions. One relates to the *professional project* (Larson, 1977), where an occupation focuses on the ownership of esoteric knowledge, so specialised that its standards must be self-regulated and the occupation pursues a quest for market closure and some form of monopoly. The other theme is a humanistic one, where the members of a profession are worthy people, dedicated to public service and offering services that meet the needs and values of society. The former theme arises from the symbolic interactionist movement of the late twentieth century and the influence of writers such as Larson (1977), while the latter is a reflection of an earlier positive perspective on professions as protectors of social ethics and morality and extends feudal notions of *noblesse oblige* into modern society (for example, Durkheim 1956).

An alternate method to examine the definition of professions, adopted by Freidson (1986) and Maack (1997), is to examine legal or technical definitions. Both Freidson and Maack use the legal definition drawn from the *Labor Management Relations Act of 1947* (revised in 1970) better known as the *Taft-Hartley Act* (United States Congress, 1970). This legislation defines a professional employee as one who is engaged in work that is:

- (i) predominantly intellectual and varied in character as opposed to routine mental, manual, mechanical or physical work;*
- (ii) involving the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment in its performance;*
- (iii) of such a character that the output produced or the result accomplished cannot be standardized in relation to a given period of time;*
- (iv) requiring a knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study in an institution of higher learning or a hospital, as distinguished from a general academic education or from an apprenticeship.*

In Australia, the *Commonwealth Professional Employee Award* (2010) covers engineers, scientists and information technologists. This instrument defines level four professionals (the highest category), as follows:

- (a) An employee at this level performs professional work involving considerable independence in approach, demanding a considerable degree of originality, ingenuity and judgement, and knowledge of more than one*

field of, or expertise (for example, acts as their organisation's technical reference authority) in a particular field of professional engineering, professional scientific/information technology field or professional information technology field.

(b) An employee at this level:

(i) initiates or participates in short or long range planning and makes independent decisions on professional engineering or professional scientific/information technology policies and procedures within an overall program;

(ii) gives technical advice to management and operating departments;

(iii) may take detailed technical responsibility for product development and provision of specialised professional engineering or professional scientific/information technology systems, facilities and functions;

(iv) coordinates work programs; and

(v) directs or advises on the use of equipment and materials.

(c) An employee at this level makes responsible decisions not usually subject to technical review, decides courses of action necessary to expedite the successful accomplishment of assigned projects, and may make recommendations involving large sums or long range objectives.

(d) Duties are assigned only in terms of broad objectives, and are reviewed for policy, soundness of approach, accomplishment and general effectiveness.

(e) The employee supervises a group or groups including professionals and other staff, or exercises authority and technical control over a group of professional staff. In both instances, the employee is engaged in complex professional engineering or professional scientific/information technology applications.

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2001, pp. 32-33, Section B 1.11)

The definition of a professional used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the Australian Census, Labour Force Surveys and other data collections is drawn from the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). ANZSCO defines occupations within the professional category as requiring a:

Bachelor degree or higher qualification. At least five years of relevant experience may substitute for the formal qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1); or

Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma or Diploma, or at least three years of relevant experience (ANZSCO Skill Level 2) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013)

The ANZSCO definition also states that experience or on-the-job training may be required by some occupations within the category. Furthermore, some of these occupations may also require high creativity or personal commitment in substitute for or in addition to qualifications and experience.

The legal and technical definitions do not focus on the potentially humanistic aspects of the work of professions – the values, ethics or expectation of public service. The legal definitions focus on the independence, originality and expertise of the members of the profession and how these are brought to bear in complex situations that require an acceptance of responsibility, whether working alone or in a team. The ANZSCO definition does include creative talent and the tasks accomplished by professionals, but it too relies primarily on the application of knowledge in work and does not distinguish knowledge workers from professionals.

Considering all of these definitions, this paper accepts as a working definition that a *profession* is: an occupation that is based on a scientifically proven body of knowledge; that has obtained some form of monopoly over the performance of a service; and where registration to practise is approved by the state. *Professionalisation* is the process whereby an occupation plans to or achieves some or all of the characteristics of a profession. A *professional* is a member of a profession. This definition of profession will be reviewed in Paper 3.

1.2 Theories of professions

Four contributions to the sociology of professions literature will be reviewed in this Paper. Firstly, there is the contribution of Herbert Spencer and his social Darwinism, which established the first modern theory of professions. Spencer's work was very influential on Abraham Flexner, who is one of the founders of the trait approach, the next major contribution to be considered in this Paper. Rejecting the patriarchal power structures in the trait approach, the feminist model of professions attempted to provide a more expansive view of professions, particularly challenging authoritative power in the client-professional relationship, and this is the third approach to be reviewed. The final approach to be considered is the *professional project*, which moved away from attempts to define professions in favour of examining how occupations professionalise.

1.2.1 Social Darwinism

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sociologists were laying the groundwork for sociology and sociology of occupations by developing theories for the social changes of the time, such as an expanding division of labour attributed to population growth and density driving competition and resulting in specialisation of function (Perrin, 1995). While professions were not a core topic for sociologists, social commentators such as Herbert Spencer did direct some of their sociological thought towards understanding professions.

Herbert Spencer (1896), very influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution, was interested in applying biological theory to social systems. Observing tribal societies around the world and his own nineteenth-century England, Spencer postulated that, as a society moves from homogenous to heterogeneous, specialisations naturally occur and keep occurring. He concluded that this is not an artefact or manufacture of government but is a natural act driven by people who come together as a unit. In Spencer's view, ultimately this process leads to the development of occupations, then of professions and specialisations within professions.

Spencer's early work on professional institutions was based on identifying the character of professions and their functions in society to understand what distinguished them from other social groups. His book, *The Principles of Sociology*, was published in 1896 and aimed to explain the structural function of professional institutions in society. He devoted chapters to the physician and surgeon, the dance and musician, the orator, poet, actor and dramatist, the biographer, historian and man of letters, the man of science and philosophy, the judge and lawyer, the

teacher, the architect, the sculptor, and the painter (Spencer, 1896). It is interesting that Spencer was quite liberal in his interpretation of *profession*, with much of the work derived from his commentary restricting the definition of profession (for example, see Flexner, 2001) and subsequent occupations advocating for inclusion (for example, see Maack, 1997).

Spencer (1896) considered modern society to have evolved from the primary specialisation of political and ecclesiastic structures in indigenous societies. He considered all other specialisations to be secondary developments of this primary split. He aligned professions with ecclesiastic social structures as having power over common men; the former's expertise was so far above that of the common man that it was seen as of magical or spiritual origin. Applying this model to the priesthood, Spencer described priests as a 'leisure class' (p.183) above other classes by virtue of knowledge and intellect, and supplied by other classes with their means of living. With no need to work for subsistence, the priest-class then became free to acquire the intellectual labour and discipline that was a cornerstone of Spencer's theory of professions (Spencer, 1896).

Continuing this argument, Spencer (1896) observed that the functions of the priest and the doctor were often invested in the same individual, because indigenous societies, not understanding the nature of disease and illness, perceived supernatural causes that needed supernatural treatments. He considered that, as the society grows, ecclesiastics and the state develop separate structures. While Spencer's writing is emotionally neutral, later sociologists such as Emile Durkheim (1957) saw this separation of state and religion, and later state and professions, as a cornerstone of the protection of the public from forces that threaten democracy. For Durkheim, professions were moral arbitrators, sitting between the public and the state. The benevolent traits sometimes associated with professions, such as values, ethics, self-regulation and public service, developed from these early writings on class theory and the development of social order (Cook, 2004; Durkheim, 1957; Perrin, 1995).

Spencer's (1896) example of the development of the medical profession further illustrates the development of professions and trait theory. Turning his essays to European society, Spencer noted that medicine remained the domain of priests for many centuries. Despite attempts by the Catholic Church to prevent priests from practising medicine as early as the twelfth century, it was not stopped until 1452, when the University of Paris granted physicians permission to marry, a practice forbidden to priests by the Catholic Church. The involvement of the Catholic Church in medicine continued in other ways for some time. For example, until the establishment of the College of Physicians in London in 1518, the power to grant licences to practise medicine was conferred on bishops. In the 1600s, surgeons in England were forbidden to practise until they

had been examined by the Company of Barbers and Surgeons. It was not until the late 1700s that barbers were excluded from surgery and the Royal College of Surgeons was established. Medical schools developed over this period in England to assist students prepare for examination by the incorporated medical bodies (Spencer, 1896). Fellowship of the College of Physicians was only open to graduates of Oxford or Cambridge (Cook, 2004). Sub-specialisations within medicine appeared early in modernisation. The separation of general practice, surgery, obstetrics and apothecary were already well established by the nineteenth century and reflected in teaching schools and associations across Europe and North America (Perrin, 1995; Porter, 1977).

Spencer (1896) also commented on uniting forces that draw specialisations together under the same disciplines. He drew attention to the need for common qualifications between surgeons and medical practitioners, and the establishment of medical journals and magazines as forces uniting the medical profession. This unification through the development of social structures supporting members of the profession has been central to the work of later sociologists like Larson (1977). Spencer noted that, along with unification, there is the need to protect the uniqueness of the profession. Hence, just as priests persecuted heretics, so too does the 'medical priesthood' denounce those without medical qualifications or a license, enforcing occupational boundaries of the profession (Spencer, 1896).

Herbert Spencer developed and applied evolutionary theory to philosophy, psychology and the study of society. He was a founder of the functionalist perspective, which has been one of the major sociological frameworks of twentieth century (Sweet, nd). His work led to the development of trait theory.

1.2.2 Trait theory

Until the late 1970s functionalism dominated the study of the professions, with trait theory the most significant of its contributions. Trait theory has been one of the more enduring approaches that sociologists have used to understand the role of professions in society, particularly traditional professions. Unchallenged for a number of decades, trait theory has largely been replaced by alternative theories in recent decades (Macdonald, 1995). Despite this, the discussion of the traits of professions is crucial in understanding the sociology of professions because many later theories still draw their definitions from trait theory (Sullivan, 2005).

Essentially, trait theorists provide a list of traits that are seen as associated with professions. Trait theorists differ firstly on what characteristics to include in the list, if and how the traits should be ordered, and then on the implications of the results (Krause, 1996). Yet, despite these areas of

departure, there is general agreement on the key features of a profession (Larson, 1977; Volti, 2008). Adams (2010) suggests that the traits frequently cited by theories are the presence of self-organisation, advanced training and education, an esoteric knowledge base, a service orientation and a code of ethics.

For most of the twentieth century sociologists focussed on issues of definition and establishing trait lists that were applied to occupations with professional aspirations in order to determine whether or not they qualified for recognition as a profession (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Flexner's 1915 presentation to the National Conference of Charities and Corrections (reprinted in 2001) on whether social work is a profession is a good example of the style of the time (Flexner concluded that social work did not have the traits of a profession). The traits of traditional professions are applied to aspirant occupations as a mandatory assessment criterion for recognition as a profession. Initially sociologists studied professions to identify the traits or attributes that set professions apart from other occupations. Acknowledged professions such as medicine and law were the subjects of much of this observational inquiry.

Around the middle of the twentieth century sociologists conceived the notion that occupations were moving along a continuum towards professionalisation with different levels of success (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Occupations were defined as ordinary occupations or professions, with occupations that held some characteristics of professions deemed to be semi-professional, para-professional or allied-professional (Volti, 2008). Sociologists depicted occupations as being on a continuum, with professions at the top of the hierarchy (Denzin & Mettlin, 1968; Goode, 1961; 1972). Yet the difficulties of determining the ideal-type at the peak of the hierarchy remained. This hierarchical approach to professions has led many occupations to clamber for inclusion and to contest the definitions (Maack, 1997; Volti, 2008). Thus, rather than the term professional being applied to specialised occupations that arose primarily as part of the specialisation of labour and advancement of knowledge which accompanied the Industrial Revolution, it has come to be accepted as a hallmark of quality for any occupation.

Two proponents of trait theory were particularly influential. These are Abraham Flexner and Ernst Greenwood. Flexner, known for his critical review of medical education, reformed medical education in the US with the publication of the Flexner Report (Beck, 2004). Flexner also co-founded the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University (Axtell, 2006). Flexner developed a list of six traits that he believed defined a profession (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001). Ernest Greenwood's work is considered to be of particular importance to the field of study and

subsequent theorists (Hinings, 2001). Greenwood (1957, 1972) suggested that there are five traits that distinguish professions (Table 1).

Flexner's traits, while developed in 1915, have much to recommend them over the work of his contemporaries such as Greenwood. Flexner's traits are discrete, behaviourally-based and do not rely on assumptions of causation. Conversely, Greenwood's traits are complex, multidimensional and assume causation. For example, Greenwood's traits assume that professional authority is a result of education or that sanction of the authority of the profession by the community grants privileges. The two trait lists are compared in Table 1.

Table 1: Example of traits attributed to professions by theorists

Trait	Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001, p. 156)	E. Greenwood (1972, p. 5)
Authority	Work involves essentially intellectual operations with large individual responsibility	Professional authority which is a result of the education of the professional in the systematic theory imparting knowledge that is not available to lay persons Sanction of authority by the community, which grants privileges such as the right to accredit training providers
Specialised knowledge and theories	Professions derive their raw material from science and learning	Systematic body of theory that supports a fund of knowledge organised into an internally consistent theory
Practical application	Professions apply their work to a practical and definite end	-
Formal qualifications	Professions possess an educationally communicable technique	-
Organisation	Professions tend to self-organization	A professional culture through which the profession operates, including formal and formal groups
Ethics and values	Professions are becoming increasingly altruistic in motivation	A regulative code of ethics that protects the community from misuse of monopoly

Despite the difference in style between the lists advanced by Flexner and Greenwood, they attribute many similar traits to professions, such as authority, specialised knowledge and theories, organisation, and ethics and values.

This section will explore the traits of professions using Flexner's six traits as a framework.

Trait 1: Professions involve essentially intellectual operations with large individual responsibility

In his work on social evolution, Spencer (1896) attributed the development of professions to the ability of priests, freed from the need to work for their own subsistence, to pursue intellectual

knowledge beyond the grasp of most community members. Flexner extended this notion to include 'A free, resourceful, and unhampered intelligence applied to problems and seeking to understand and master them' (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001, p. 154). When dealing with uncertain causality professional reasoning requires inference and judgment based on tacit, experiential knowledge (A. Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 1970b).

Greenwood (1972) describes a distinguishing feature of professions as a reliance on a systematic body of theory. The knowledge of the profession is organised around this body of theory that shapes the professions' interest. Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) argued that it is the application of this knowledge to solve a problem in the real world that confers on the professional a high degree of personal responsibility. The professional must apply discretion and judgement in choosing between alternative methods to address the problem at hand. Ultimately, even when working in a team, the professional is responsible for his/her actions and is not acting on the orders of another. This is congruent with the legal definitions of profession presented earlier. In Flexner's model, it is the application of intelligence that makes the responsibility personal. The client must rely on the professional to make a well-informed decision. Thus a professional does more than apply a technique, however well thought out. The professional makes a personal judgement for the benefit of the client or others who are reliant on their judgement (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001).

Greenwood (1972) takes a similar view, suggesting that professions derive their personal authority from the disparity between their knowledge and that of the layperson. This information asymmetry creates a knowledge dependency. Recognising the difference in the relationship between the provider and purchaser of the service, professions have clients rather than customers. Greenwood also maintained that clients receive some degree of satisfaction from the notion of the profession's authority.

Trait 2: Professions derive their raw material from science and learning

Professions are based on a body of knowledge that is evidence-based and that can be learned, hence the term *learned profession*. Professional knowledge is a necessary requirement for all professions (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). But to prevent the profession coming to rely on accepted facts and becoming routine, the body of knowledge must be continuously evolving and require continuous learning involving a practical element (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001). In addition, many occupations require specialist knowledge, but professions require a more sophisticated, deeper level of knowledge where facts and procedures are given coherence through established theories and concepts (E. Greenwood, 1972; Volti, 2008).

There is general agreement that a profession requires more than a course of study. It requires the learning of common body of knowledge and commitment to ongoing study during practice (Williams, 1979). More than that, a profession has a commitment to evidence-informed practice. The common body of knowledge is established, maintained and extended through research that is based on well-established scientific theories and frameworks to ground practical applications within a coherent argument that can stand up to scrutiny (Volti, 2008).

Knowledge (more specifically, rational, formalised scientific knowledge) is a core generating trait of professions (Macdonald, 1995). Of course, this knowledge must be learned. The learning needs to be specialised, take time and be invested in institutes of higher education that prepare students to be competent practitioners (Volti, 2008). Macdonald (1995) noted that when professions first started to separate from other occupations it was common for a student to learn the specialised knowledge required through a period of indenture or apprenticeship without tertiary training. This was particularly important to control the character of candidates accepted into a profession. For example, in accountancy apprentices were indentured for up to five years without pay. This meant they needed to have the support of a prosperous family and a current accountant willing to take on their education and training. This system ensured that only people from good families with existing connections into accountancy were accepted into practice (Macdonald, 1995). For modern professional aspirants, the level of knowledge required to begin practice is not possible to be taught only through apprenticeship (Volti, 2008). However, some professions still require a period of on-the-job learning or socialisation after formal studies in order to be accepted as a member of the profession. For example, doctors work for a period as registrars and solicitors work for a period as articulated clerks, although law students may now enter practice as a solicitor through a practical legal training course offered at Graduate Diploma level¹.

Although the role of a Master selecting and training the next generation of professionals, with as much eye to the background and social class of the individual as talent and interest in the profession, has passed, to some extent universities have taken on this function, as well as academic training. Through their admission policies and practices, universities act as the first point of screening for would-be professionals (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995). Universities also legitimise professions and the body of knowledge supporting and maintaining the claim of specialisation (Volti, 2008), although the relationship between academia and profession is not necessarily independent. As Heraud observed (1979), early professional associations included social scientists and professionals. For example, the American Social Science Association in 1865

¹ For example, the Leo Cussen Practical Training Course (Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice), which meets the National Competency Standards for Entry Level Lawyers. http://www.leocussen.vic.edu.au/cb_pages/ptc.php.

included social workers and social scientists. It was not until the twentieth century that separate professional bodies emerged. This would still be the case for many professions, where registered members teach in universities and maintain their registration and interest in the profession.

Volti (2008) observed that the level of knowledge of the professional is also important. If the knowledge is too specialised and narrow, it will be possible to learn it in a short focussed period of time, and the practitioner may be more of a technician than a professional. Conversely, a professional with only general knowledge of how to do the work will lack the theoretical knowledge to apply to practice.

Trait 3: Professions apply their work to a practical and definite end

Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) believed that the activities of professionals should have a practical application in the real world beyond theory and academia. He considered that professional activity has an objective and is purposeful, clear and unambiguous. The purpose can be physical (such as the design of a building or cure of a disease) but does not have to be (such as teaching knowledge or development thought processes).

Volti (2008) considered that this purpose has to be of value, both to society and the individual client. So the doctor rids the world of disease and cures the patient. The barrister defends his client and demonstrates that the legal system is fair. Durkheim's (1957) elevation of professionals as sitting between the individual and the state, as the protectors of tradition and upholders of morality, is reflective of the perceived value of the work of professions at a system level.

Trait 4: Professions possess an educationally communicable technique

Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) considered that professions require specialised knowledge that must be acquired through specialised training. Wilensky (1964) cautioned that knowledge that is too easily learned can be misappropriated and applied by other occupations.

Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) suggests that, while they may disagree on the detail, members of the profession agree on the need the profession seeks to fill and the knowledge required by the practitioner to meet that need. So there is agreement among members of the profession on the amount and quality of training, general and special, required and the content and length of the training. This process of education acts both to ensure that those potentially capable are given the best training and that those who are not capable of meeting the requirement of a member are excluded.

As mentioned earlier, while traditionally many practitioners learned their profession through an apprenticeship of some sort, it is now generally accepted that the amount of knowledge required

by professions in the modern era requires formal education, usually through university-based training and some post-graduate internship (Volti, 2008). One of the criticisms of trait theory, when applied as an eligibility test for aspirant professions, is that there is no indication of the time or level of study required (for example, graduate or post-graduate) (Larson, 1977).

In recent years, the knowledge requirement of many occupations has increased and vocational training and higher education have become much more widely expected. Further, historically universities have been a central force in the development of professions. As Spencer (1896) demonstrated in medicine, universities initially played a role in preparing students for admission to a profession. Now universities are much more closely involved with professions and in many cases the attainment of a university degree has replaced the need for independent testing of a candidate's acceptance into practice. Furthermore, the relationship between universities and professions extends beyond professional training. Universities lend legitimacy to professions through authorship and maintaining the currency of the knowledge foundation of the profession. Universities also provide a first level of screening for a profession by assessing candidates' applications to undertake tertiary study. Universities also provide an alternative pathway for professionals outside of direct practice. This further bonds the relationship between the profession and academia (Larson, 1977; Volti, 2008).

Trait 5: Professions tend to self-organisation

Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) observed that professions have a strong internal organisation of members with common goals. From this develops a community of interest. This community has formal leadership structures and operates democratically. While the administration may be democratic, accounts of the development of professional associations in the United Kingdom (UK) demonstrate an elitist process, where new members were invited to join a society by an existing member of high social status, much like a private club. In this way, members were screened for suitability (Macdonald, 1995). Spencer (1896) observed the establishment of professional associations in medicine as a forerunner to the establishment of schools and entry criteria.

In addition to self-organisation being a way that an occupational group distinguishes itself from other groups in society, it is related to another trait associated with professions: self-regulation. Greenwood (1972) argued that professions gain community recognition, which confers power and prestige above other occupations. The benefits include a certain degree of autonomy and self-regulation. Larson (1977) cautioned that where professions obtain extended privileges to

self-control and self-evaluate they run the risk of losing touch with the social forces that maintain their privileged position.

Freidson (1994) suggested that one of the hallmarks of a profession is the ability to control the quality of their work. Volti (2008) presumed that professions earn the right to autonomy and self-regulation through their extensive knowledge (which would be difficult for a non-member to understand) and a high ethical standard that requires the professional to act in the best interests of the client and the public. Freidson (1994) argued that autonomy is achieved through state support to establish a monopoly and may be limited by state bodies that are involved in licensing and regulation, although these bodies are usually comprised of the elite of the profession.

Related to responsibility and authority is autonomy. Autonomy refers to freedom from external control over internal affairs and individual behaviour of members (Rothman, 1987). Freidson (1970a, 1970b) described professions as having technical autonomy, as a result of their control over knowledge. Freidson argued that, if a profession was recognised by society as having control over their own knowledge-base, as able to determine what was correct in this area, then outsiders to the profession could not legitimately oversee their actions. Furthermore, Freidson argued that if another occupation uses the same knowledge-base but does not control it, they are semi-professional.

Autonomy also extends to who is acceptable for admission into the ranks of the profession. University-based professional schools and state registration bodies usually determine admission, but these bodies consist of eminent members of the profession. Hence the profession effectively controls admission (Volti, 2008).

While the early sociologists stressed the independence of professions from the state, the relationship is not that simple. Volti (2008) suggested that the state has a role in legally supporting the monopoly of the members of the profession and usually manages the registration of members of the profession through regulatory mechanisms. The state may also have a direct influence on the model of professionalism adopted by a profession. In some professions, the service is essential to the state and the state is a major purchaser of the products or services of the profession. This involves the state in the activities of the profession. For example, De Beelde (2002) describes how the creation of the Belgian auditing profession in the mid-twentieth century was mediated between the state, the employers and the unions. While accounting associations initially wanted to incorporate auditors within their professional group, the state maintained a separation between the two professions. The key stakeholders in the establishment of auditing as a profession each supported different professional models, depending on their

perspectives on the role of auditors. Ultimately, they favoured an approach modelled on the public service (De Beelde, 2002).

Trait 6: Professions are becoming increasingly altruistic in motivation.

The role of professions in addressing an area of value and in using specialised knowledge conveys considerable power to the professional. According to Weissman (1984), the profession achieves this social trust through long period of training to demonstrate competency and adherence to a set of professional ethics that governs behaviour, quality and adherence to a service ideal above financial gain. Volti (2008) suggested that this power is maintained by social trust.

Clients are generally considered to be passive in this process and lacking sufficient knowledge to question the professional's judgement (such as in the cliché that the patient must follow the doctor's orders). This perceived power of professions is balanced by the (perceived) altruism of the individual professional and the profession as a whole (Volti, 2008). The service ideal of professions requires that, when service interests (that is, the interest of the client) and commercial interest conflict, the service interests prevail (Weissman, 1984). Professions wield considerable power and work for a clientele that usually do not have sufficient understanding of their areas of expertise to question the professional's judgement. Thus it is considered important that professionals put the interest of their clients, and of society as a whole, above their own interests (Volti, 2008).

The standards of ethics and conduct expected of a profession are documented through written guidelines that members agree to uphold. Volti (2008) suggests that, as professions self-govern the ethics and conduct of their members, breaches must be met with severe sanctions to ensure that the reputation of the profession stays intact. This can mean disbarring or deregistering practitioners for serious breaches of ethics.

The Hippocratic Oath is one of the earliest and most well-known code of ethics, taken by the medical profession. It reads as follows (World Medical Association, 2006, p1.):

At the time of being admitted as a member of the medical profession: I solemnly pledge to consecrate my life to the service of humanity;

I will give to my teachers the respect and gratitude that is their due;

I will practice my profession with conscience and dignity;

The health of my patients will be my first consideration;

I will respect the secrets that are confided in me, even after the patient has died;

I will maintain by all the means in my power, the honour and the noble traditions of the medical profession;

My colleagues will be my sisters and brothers;

I will not permit considerations of age, disease or disability, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, social standing or any other factor to intervene between my duty and my patient;

I will maintain the utmost respect for human life;

I will not use my medical knowledge to violate human rights and civil liberties, even under threat;

I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honour.

The Hippocratic Oath demonstrates many of the traits adopted by Flexner and subsequent trait theorists, particularly the service of humanity and patients above self-interest, and the emphasis on ethics, personal responsibility, and the establishment of a *family* of fellow professionals.

Williams (1979) suggested that professionals require ethical standards that transcend external standards, such as regulations required by the state. To meet the minimum requirement is insufficient. Williams considered that members of a profession must pledge themselves to the highest standard of ethical behaviour and conduct. In reality, as government regulations are slow to change, professional ethics need be ahead of current regulations.

After Flexner, sociologists, led largely by Emile Durkheim, elevated professions as the moral foundation for society, a stabilising force in democracy, a source of heritage and tradition. Their lack of critical enquiry was one of the factors that led to a focus on how occupations establish a claim of professional status rather than the traits of the profession *per se* (Macdonald, 1995). While the altruistic motivation of professions is contestable, if not for its existence, then certainly for its strength compared to other motivators such as economic gain, Heraud (1979) notes that at the very least professions responded to social pressure to adapt to the rise of the welfare state and associated policies.

Larson (1977) suggested that the specialisation and high ethical standing that form part of an occupation's claim for profession status can also be controlled by that occupation once they achieve professional status. The profession can claim that only parties with the same specialisation and ethical standing can understand the requirements. Hence in Larson's view knowledge and ethics are used to make a claim for professional status and then to redefine these

attributes independent of external control. Larson suggested that in this way professions can construct their own reality by setting the standards by which their professionalism is determined. Specialisation and ethical standards are part of the tools to persuade the state of the need for professional status. Furthermore, the process of controlling admission to the profession, setting boundaries around practice and determining competence unifies the practitioners.

While traits alone may not identify an occupation as a profession, they demonstrate the hallmarks of a profession in a lay view and provide a blueprint for an occupation professionalising (Macdonald, 1995). Generally, it has not been the traits *per se* that have been criticised but the application of traits as assessment criteria for aspiring professions and the interpretation of cause and effect between traits (Larson, 1977). In addition, Adams (2004, 2010) suggests that the expansion of the service sector and *credential inflation* has resulted in an increase in occupations that require education and that have a service orientation, so that the difference between professions and other occupations is relative.

1.2.3 Feminist models

Because the roots of traditional professions originated in an era when males dominated the workforce and the populace largely lacked formal education, it has been argued that the trait approach to professions is based on a masculine model (Larson, 1977; Maack, 1997; Macdonald, 1995; Volti, 2008). Maack (1997) suggested that modern occupations claiming professional status which are dominated by women, such as psychology, social work and librarianship, to name a few, do not hold many of the traits related to power and control set under the traditional masculine trait model. Lacking traits such as an esoteric body of knowledge and legal control over entry to practice, these occupations are usual classified as semi-professional according to traditional trait models (Maack, 1997).

Maack (1997) questioned whether current models of professions have adequately represented the role of the client group in contributing to the status of a profession. The trait theorists focus on the individual professional, functionalists focus on the institutions, and occupational control theorists focus on the reference group. None of these models focuses on the central role of the client as the recipient of the knowledge, skill and judgement of the professional.

Maack (1997) also suggested that there is a link between the social position of the client and the status of the profession. Many of the occupations that have a contested claim to professional status have clientele that is not of high social standing, for example, primary school teachers, nurses and social workers. These occupations also have a high proportion of female

practitioners. Maack argued that the occupations dominated by women do not use the overt power and control paradigm of traditional male-dominated professions, such as regulatory control, authoritative use of knowledge and the power relationship between the practitioner and client. Female-dominated professions tend to have a closer relationship with the client, focus on the client engagement in problem solving and share knowledge. For these reasons, Maack argued that female-dominated occupations have a harder task in achieving their professional aspirations under the models of professionalism based on the traditional male professions that developed in a time when women generally did not have career aspirations and were not considered the equal of men in the workforce (Maack, 1997; Volti, 2008).

Maack (1997) reconceptualised three levels of professional agency (p. 284):

Group 1 – High authority professions that provide directives that the client must follow. Examples of professions in this group given by Maack include law, medicine, dentistry, and the clergy

Group 2 – Indirect or product oriented professions that create products which may serve many clients at once. Examples of professions in this group given by Maack include architects, chemists, engineers, and town planners

Group 3 – Empowering professions that share their expertise with the goal of empowering clients to take control of their own lives or learning. Examples of professions in this group given by Maack include community psychologists, social workers, librarians and information scientists.

Maack's (1997) model focusses on the relationship between the professional and the client rather than the control of knowledge. The goals achieved are based on the outcome of the interaction. However, Maack's model seems better at distinguishing between professions rather than defining a profession.

Under Maack's model, empowering relationships would also apply to occupations that would be unlikely to be considered a profession due to a lack of self-regulation, for example, dental-hygienists or personal trainers. It is also difficult to conceive of a model of professionalism that does not have at its core mastery of an esoteric knowledge-base. This ability to create and control an esoteric knowledge-base is a central tenet in modern understanding of professions (Larson, 1977). In addition, the categorisation of client relationships does not recognise the impact that empowerment models of service delivery have had on professions. For example, doctors are expected to provide patients with education, advice and counselling in areas to promote their well-being (Australian Medical Association, 2010).

None of these arguments negates the important role of empowerment models of service delivery to clients nor the regard in which practitioners should be held. It does demonstrate the significant power of the term *profession* and the value occupations attach to its acquisition. Yet, as Larson's (1970) work demonstrates, professionalisation was a result of the productisation of intellectual work as part of the move from feudal times to the market economies of the nineteenth century. There is a risk, if we try to professionalise all occupations, that we use professional as a surrogate for value and we miss new forms of occupational classes that are emerging and new ways of valuing occupational activity (Wilensky, 1964).

1.2.4 The professional project

Another way of advancing our understanding of professions is to examine how occupations become recognised as professions. In this approach, developed by Larson (1977), occupations have a *project* for recognition as a profession. The *professional project* uses a pluralist approach to draw together different concepts related to professions and examine how professions interact with society, including how they are established and maintained. Larson noted that the professional project is underpinned by the Weberian concept of the occupational group. According to Larson (1977) and Macdonald (1995), Weber conceptualised society as comprising social groups that compete for economic, social and political rewards. One class of competitor is the occupational group. An occupational group is a group of people who lay claim to a social division of labour over which they establish control (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995). The occupational group provides the mechanism for social closure, specialisation and monopoly that are generally recognised as among the core traits of a profession (Freidson, 1994).

Occupational groups aspiring to reach the status of professions have specific goals that must form part of their professional project to reach and maintain that position. These goals include (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995):

Jurisdiction. The occupation must establish and maintain a market for its services. This involves competing successfully with rival occupations and accommodating their interests. To maintain a market for its services the occupation must also establish the legitimacy of the practice with the ruling elite and public.

Producing the producers. The occupation must also establish a system to select, train and socialise potential future members to ensure they have the same skills and values as the occupation group. Universities are a core resource in producing the producers.

Monopolising professional knowledge. The occupation must define and control the knowledge-base of its work and protect it from other occupations. This will involve the control of education process.

Respectability. The attainment of the first three goals helps in the achievement of the fourth, respectability. The type of work, character of practitioners and the quality of knowledge all impact on the way the profession is viewed by society.

Other social agents. The occupation must also negotiate with other social agents to pursue its professional project. This may involve other occupations, sometimes in collaboration and sometimes in competition. These relationships may have market or status consequences. Educational institutions must support the specialist knowledge proposition and authority of the occupation to implement the educational program that will form part of the restrictive entry requirement. The state is also an important agent, particularly in Western democracies, where private monopolies are discouraged, making the state an important stakeholder in supporting the exceptional nature of the area of activity and its need to be recognised and regulated. Such recognition further enhances the status of professions and confers moral status.

Context. This includes negotiating with other social agents in the broader social, political and cultural context in which the project occurs. The context includes legislation, history, morality, power structures, technology and other factors that impact on professional work.

According to Larson and Macdonald, the relative importance of these factors will vary at different points in time and for different cultures. The professional project provides a way to use the traits of professions, embedded in the social values of the time, to examine how an occupation is professionalised. This provides a model of professionalisation that is culturally sensitive while still recognising the centrality of core traits of professions, such as the control of an esoteric knowledge-base that addresses an important area of need for either the individual or society as a whole.

If we move away from a focus on definition, the fundamental issue becomes why a set of traits associated with traditional professions such as law and medicine became the project for a range of other occupations in quite different employment situations (Evetts, 2003). Traits provide occupations with tangible goals for their professional project.

1.3 Challenges for modern theories of sociology of professions

Society is going through a rapid period of change as knowledge occupations increase and globalisation creates new types of workforces. Professions are socially and temporally dependent phenomena and theories and explanations of their agency need to be able to accommodate the impact of these broader social changes. This section briefly explores some current issues that impact on professions and hence the sociology of professions.

1.3.1 Professions in different states

Within the sociology of professions literature, international comparisons have demonstrated clear differences between continental Europe and English-speaking North America and the UK. Evetts (2003) suggested that the English-speaking countries have used the term to apply to a group of occupations that have in common market closure, while in continental Europe the unifying theme is higher education. While the difference is one of emphasis, the European term is more inclusive and admits to the category of profession any occupation that has a higher education prerequisite (Evetts, 2003).

The professions developed differently in continental Europe and English-speaking North America and the UK. While the same modernisation processes were at work, the political systems were quite different. Siegrist (2004) describes traditional professions in much of continental Europe as beginning with a crisis:

In the final decade of the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth century, the autonomous colleges of lawyers and physicians, as well as the independent university corporations, were dissolved in most areas of the continent and the professions subordinated to the state and government. (p. 68)

According to Siegrist (2004), market monopolies and privileges in education and admittance to professional practices ceased in much of Europe, only to be revived later in the nineteenth century in a form adapted to the new 'bourgeois and national society' (p.68). Siegrist describes some similarities with the North American and UK experience, where professions were a driving force of nationalism and progress, forging new markets for new services, while linking to the status of the previous social structure. In Europe, one of the main differences was the proportion of professions that were employed by the state and government agencies and the

development of national identity of educated Europeans that transcended country borders. According to Siegrist (2004), this was only stalled with the advent of World War II and the impact of this on occupational mobility and citizenship. Post-war, the state role in traditional European professions has continued as a model for new professions such as auditing (see for example Ballas, 1998; De Beelde, 2002).

The emergence of professions is a historically dependent phenomenon. Professions produce structural inequality by transforming a scarce resource – knowledge and skill – into social and economic rewards under a capitalist model. So professions use knowledge and skill much like the aristocracy of feudal times used property and lineage in order to claim social status. Professionalisation became a way for the children of the working class to improve their social and economic status. Hence professions are both an occupation group and class at the same time (Larson, 1977).

1.3.2 Globalisation and the professions

There are two types of globalisation that are impacting on professions. The first is the mobility of professionals between countries and the development of cross-country professional associations. The second is the movement of professions away from small practices to work within large multinational organisations.

Transnational professions

Siegrist (2004) noted that, while the European Union (EU), globalisation and open markets in Europe weaken the national dimension of professions, there is now a transnational dimension of professions due to the free movement of workers (including professionals) within the EU. Furthermore, there is a transnationalisation of political and economic regulations, with the European Commission now overseeing the licensing systems of over 100 professions (Fourcade, 2006). These changes have resulted in the federation of professional associations into transnational professional bodies and a homogenisation of training requirements across countries. A similar process is happening in countries like Australia through skilled immigration (for the current list see Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2013). Furthermore, with the commoditisation of education, countries importing skills are often major exporters of education. For example, while Australia has a skill shortage affecting most professions, education accounted for \$16.3 billion in export income to the Australian economy in 2010–11 and Australia was the third largest global provider of international education (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Globalisation also affects the role

and allegiances of professionals working for global corporations (Volti, 2008). Transnationalisation professional associations can play an important role here supporting these professionals who operate across country borders.

Professions within organisations

Gorman and Sanedur (2011) suggest that the members of the traditional professions, such as medicine and law, largely worked as sole traders or in small firms, which afforded them considerable control over the content and economic circumstances of their work. They argue that this decentralisation of practitioners grew strong local professional communities, which used informal methods of socialisation to enforce norms of professional ethics. According to Gorman and Sanedur this ensured that professions were among the most prestigious and best-paid occupations. More recently, the relationship between professionals and the organisations they work for has changed. Some sociologists have suggested that the management of professions within private and public organisations and the need for accountability question whether professions can maintain exclusive access and control over their knowledge and the operational skills and routines that are derived from that knowledge (Lyotard, 1984 cited in Cohen, Finn, Wilkinson, & Arnold, 2002). Other sociologists, however, have suggested that the relationship is more complex, with organisations increasingly using non-bureaucratic work arrangements (such as outsourcing, subcontracting and teams) and changes in the structure of organisations (such as reducing middle management), producing organisational structures for professionals that at least superficially resemble traditional practice models (Leicht & Fennell, 1997).

Cohen et al. (2002) suggest that sociologists have viewed professional-managerial relationships as either fundamentally conflicting or fundamentally cooperative. Conflict theory describes an ideological disconnect between the professional and the expectations of the organisation. Conversely, cooperative theories describe more complex relationships between professionals and organisations, where the role of the professional includes managerial functions.

1.3.3 Knowledge workers and the professions

Larson (1977) described professions as unusual occupations. But even since her writing in the 1970s, the occupational landscape has changed considerably. In the US in 2010, professional and related services constituted the single largest occupational group and were also predicted to grow faster than other occupations (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Furthermore, developments in knowledge and technology have created new expert occupations (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011).

In western societies, the category of professions, whether taken as an occupational group, a class or both, have been threatened by a number of factors. Some sociologists go so far as to suggest that professions are on the decline (Krause, 1996), are restructuring (Broadbent, Dietrich, & Roberts, 1997; Gorman & Sandefur, 2011) or are no longer of interest to sociologists (Hall, 1983). Professions have been described as under threat from organisational employment of professionals, the growth of knowledge-based occupations (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011), increased education of the population, and economic and political changes (R. Greenwood & Lachman, 1996; Reed, 1996). Professions have been described as experiencing reduced autonomy and dominance (Mechanic, 1991), and reduced powers of self-regulation (Freidson, 1994; Macdonald, 1995). Yet the European experience is quite different. Using a broader definition of professions as knowledge-based occupations, sociologists outside English-speaking economies have argued that professions are expanding globally (Frenkel, Korczynski, Donoghue, & Shire, 1995; Lyotard, 1984; Perkin, 1988; Reed, 1996). This is evidenced by the growth of the university sector and general rise in the proportion of populations that are educated. Some European states have deliberately professionalised occupations like auditing to increase the transparency and quality of services offered to government (Ballas, 1998; De Beelde, 2002).

Some sociologists have suggested that in advanced capitalist societies there is underway a fundamental change in the structure of professional work (Adams, 2010; Cohen et al., 2002). Traditional professions are losing their autonomy, status and authority, and new professions have less autonomy and authority than did their predecessors (Adams, 2010).

Since the study of professions had its *golden age* in the twentieth century (Freidson, 2001), professional occupations have grown to encompass a larger proportion of the labour force (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011), reflecting broader changes in society, such as increased specialisation, growth of knowledge workers, corporatisation and globalisation. Given these social changes, it is to be expected that the new professions could develop and operate quite differently from earlier professions. It is therefore not surprising that sociologists are moving away from a focus on definitions in order to study the appeal of professionalisation and how it is achieved by occupations (Evetts, 2003; Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). There is clearly still an appeal for occupations and workers to be considered *professional* (Evetts, 2003), even against opposition from existing professions, as we saw with Flexner's (1915, reprinted 2001) commentary on social workers.

Gorman and Sadefur (2011) have argued that the real social difference now lies between those occupations that require specialised knowledge (based on higher education) and those that do

not. Further, the commonalities between traditional professions and new forms of knowledge-based occupations are more important than the differences, because traits that were once used to determine professional boundaries are now seen as internal variations explained by the different conditions affecting the development of the professions.

1.4 Discussion

Debate may continue on what traits define a profession, and the relationship between traits used to establish a claim for professional status and then to conduct the work of a profession. Irrespective of this, professions play an important role in society. They work largely independent of government political control and are accepted as powerful lobby groups in their area of expertise. Furthermore, as Parson (1954) noted, professions provide the intuitional framework supporting many of our important social functions, including science and liberal learning and their application to medicine, technology, law and teaching.

Spencer's work demonstrates that professions developed in response to changes in the social system, the productisation of knowledge and its increasing specialisation. These changes in society have led some commentators to suggest that all occupations are professionalising. Yet Larson (1977) claimed that at its core a profession is a rare occupation. Distinguishing professions from other knowledge workers then becomes the focus.

While there is general agreement about the core traits of a profession, the traits are so generic that many apply equally to knowledge workers and other occupations. The traits do not include a measure for their attainment (Larson, 1977). For example, traits refer to university training but not the degree level, how performance is assessed or any requirement for lifelong learning. Nor, in modern times, when many occupations require a university education, do they say how the university education of a professional is intrinsically different to that required by other graduates. Additionally, traits are rarely a homogenous group; they operate on different levels. Some traits are objective, others are subjective. Furthermore, some traits assume causality without testing relationships. For example, Greenwood (1972) suggests that professional authority is the result of education of the professional in systematic theory, imparting knowledge that is not available to lay persons.

The feminist approaches to sociology of professions demonstrate the cultural values of professional traits and how these change over time. Similarly, the European experience of the development of professions demonstrates the role of both culture and different models of the state in influencing professionalisation. All of this suggests the need for a flexible approach to understanding professionalisation that can adapt to the social mores of the time and setting. In the end, the term *profession* is an identifying name that is socially awarded through recognition by clients, the general public and the state.

While most theories of professions include a need for evidence-informed practice, the same evidence test has not been applied to definitions of professions. Fundamental assumptions about professions are based on untested propositions: for example, that prestige and autonomy are the result of specialised knowledge and highly ethical standards (Larson, 1977). Many of these ideal-type assumptions about professions are based on the marketing of occupations to attain professional status, rather than on how professions actually function in society.

Additionally, many characteristics assigned to professions in trait models are not unique to professions and are replicated by other occupational groups (Larson, 1977). Many occupations require specialised skills and training or high ethical conduct, but are not considered professions. For example, program evaluation is not a profession (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004) but has many characteristics of a profession:

- There is a professional membership organisation with over 1,000 members (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2011)
- Evaluators have a high level of qualification, with nearly all holding a university degree and most having a post-graduate qualification (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)
- A code of ethics is established and managed through a membership organisation (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013b)
- There is a focus on quality, social contribution and advance of evaluation theory, as demonstrated through the annual provision of awards, conferences, training programs and a peer-reviewed journal (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012).

Trait lists were developed by sociologists in their attempt to understand the established professions, consisting primarily of law and medicine. Other occupations considered professions at the time, like the military and the clergy, were also studied to a lesser extent. As these professions do not transact a service to market in the way of other professions, their contribution to the search for a global theory of professions was more limited (for example, see the explanation given by Larson, 1990 p.26, for her exclusion of the military and clergy from her earlier work to develop a general theory of professions). However, many other occupations exhibit some or all of the traits ascribed to professions. Terms sometimes applied to occupations include semi-professional or paraprofessional. Semi-professional occupations may have some or all (in attenuated form) of the traits of professionals, while paraprofessionals are defined as occupations that support professionals. This term covers many of the allied health occupations.

Modern sociologists like Volti (2008) suggest that, rather than looking at these categories in a linear hierarchical way, they are to be viewed as part of a continuum of professionalism.

An alternative approach is to combine elements of trait theory and the professional project into a pluralist approach that is able to accommodate modern professions. Using a logic-style model, traits can be separated into categories such as objective traits (or goals) and subjective traits (or outcomes). Objective traits could include:

- Self-organisation through professional associations
- Available workforce to meet a market need
- Published ethical codes or guidelines
- Regulation supported by the state
- Specialised body of knowledge
- Tertiary pathway into the profession.

Subjective traits could include:

- Status
- Respectability
- Trust
- Power
- Marketability
- Recognition of expertise.

Of course, the relationship between objective and subjective traits needs to be tested. This approach provides a method for measuring assumptions of causation. It also separates the actions of a profession (within the control of the profession) from the benefits that are attributable to this action (not within the control of the profession). This then provides a framework that can be tested and modified over time and offers an achievable pathway for professionalisation.

An example of how this approach might work is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Example of a simple modified logic model of professional traits

	Observable traits	Mechanisms	Outputs	Outcomes
Self-organisation	Association provides mechanisms to support the development of a community of practice	Association exists Association membership is sustainable Association is not open to those outside of the profession	The association offers services to members	Members are socialised in the values of the profession Members have shared values and beliefs Members feel like part of a community
Workforce	There is a supply to meet demand for services	There is a workforce development plan There is a clear pathway into the occupation There are agreed quality and competency standards in place	Size of the workforce is sufficient to meet demand The workforce is distinguishable from other workforces	Members identify as part of the profession Clients are confident that their future needs for evaluators can be met by an appropriately skilled workforce
Ethics	The provision of the service is governed by rules that protect clients and the general public	Members are bound by ethics Ethics cover important moral issues in the delivery of the service Ethics serve the interests of clients and the general public	Ethical codes and guidelines are published Membership is linked to upholding the publish ethics	Members maintain high ethical standards Clients and members of the general public are protected from harm The profession is trusted
Regulation	There is some form of limitation on who can offer the service	Practitioners must be qualified There is a regulation system in place The state is responsible for enforcement of practice to those not registered	All practitioners are registered	Practitioners are recognised as experts in their field The profession has high status
Specialised knowledge	Has a specialised knowledge based on theories	Knowledge developed and maintained through scientific inquiry Knowledge is tested and revised with evidence-based practise	Universities provide education Knowledge is shared through appropriate academic publications	Practitioners are seen as having a high level of esoteric knowledge The profession is respected
Academic pathway	Entrance is via an academic pathway that includes at a minimum a bachelor degree	There are agreed national competencies in place Education providers are accredited	Education providers deliver a nationally consistent curriculum	Practitioners have high status Expertise is respected
Relationship with the state	The professional association and the state have a working relationship	The association lobbies the state for recognition and support Government and association have a formal working relationship (joint committee, etc)	The state generates demand for the service State provides some form of market protection The state endorses professionalisation activities	The service is respected The state supports a degree of market closure

The occupation sets observable traits as those goals that are desired to be achieved through professionalisation. These observable traits plan the strategic directions of the occupation in the broad areas that are considered important to the occupation in professionalisation: self-organisation, workforce, ethics, regulation, specialised knowledge, academic pathway, relationship with the state and knowledge. There are mechanisms or activities available to the association, as the leader of the professionalisation of the occupation, to achieve the observable traits. Achievement of the observable traits, through whatever mechanisms, delivers desired outputs and outcomes that benefit the members of the association and meet the needs of the state.

The advantage of using a logic-style model is twofold. First, the model can be calibrated by assigning performance indicators or data frameworks to each point (Table 3). This can be used to test the relationships between the different levels (columns) in the model. Hence, by specifying the relationships, this model allows the causal associations between objective traits (or goals) and subjective traits (or outcomes) to be interrogated. In addition, using a model like this, an occupation could plan its professionalisation with its stakeholders so that the objective traits selected are those that are valued by the members and clients of the occupation. In this respect the traits of traditional professions provide examples of objective traits that have secured professions desirable subjective traits in the past. As the aspirant occupation has little control over the subjective traits, the focus for professionalisation and associated strategic planning is the objective traits. Once objective traits have been established, then their measurement could provide a level of the professionalisation of the occupation.

The model integrates professionalisation with workforce planning and provides a practical approach for occupations intent on professionalising. Of course, professionalisation is a process in which all occupations can participate. The end result is increased professionalism. For some rare occupations, the end result maybe social recognition as a profession. Use of this model overtime is likely to demonstrate some mandatory criteria for recognising an occupation as a profession: for example, recognised post-graduate qualifications to entry; control of a body of scientifically proven knowledge, based on theories that can be applied in service settings; and/or compulsory regulation by the state.

While the causal model presented here is linear (Table 2), it is likely that the relationships between traits are more complex and dynamic. The intent of the linear presentation is to provide a simplified model in the first instance that can be applied to the measure the professionalisation of evaluation in Paper 3.

Table 3: Example of data potential measures for objective traits

	Professional traits	Potential measures of attainment
Professional	Associations provide mechanisms to support the development of a community of practice	Number of members Sustainability of members over time Proportion of the profession that are members Range of training activities available Number of training activities available Member participation in activities Non-member participation in activities Number of articles submitted to journals, number of presentations submitted to conferences
Workforce	There is a supply to meet demand for services	Number of workers Qualifications of workers Age of workers Duration of employment in profession Self-identification with the profession Qualifications of the workforce Size of the workforce
Ethics	The provision of the service is governed by rules that protect clients and the general public	There are ethical codes or guidelines for members to follow Ethics protect clients and the general public There is a publically available process to complain about ethical standards
Regulation	There is some form of limitation on who can offer the service	All practitioners hold a recognised qualification or equivalent learning All practitioners are registered Sanctions are applied to non-professionals practising Entry to the profession is controlled through quotas on students or registration
State	State influences the development of the profession	The state uses policy, regulation or legislation to recognise the profession The state has a demand for the service The state restricts practise to those qualified and registered
Specialised knowledge	Has a specialised knowledge based on theories	Delivery of the service improves with experience There is an identifiable body of literature that is grounded in the scientific method The body of knowledge is continually developed
Academic pathway	Entrance is via an academic pathway that includes at a minimum a bachelor degree	There is an agreed national curriculum There are accredited universities that deliver the curriculum A bachelor degree is considered the minimal qualification for practitioners

1.5 Conclusion

While the sociology of professions literature demonstrates the presence of several different approaches to the study of professions, there is an opportunity to bring these approaches together in a new pluralist model. This pluralist model has several distinct advantages. Firstly, it builds on the existing literature, particularly trait theory and the professional project, to provide a clear actionable approach for the deliberate professionalisation of an occupation. Secondly, by separating objective and subjective traits, the model can be used by occupations in their strategic planning process, so that professionalisation can be monitored and relationships between traits tested. Thirdly, by allowing occupations to set their own traits, occupations can focus on those aspects of professionalisation that are desired by their stakeholders. The models used by established professions in their bid for professionalisation serve as an evidence-tested bank of ideas for other occupations. This model allows emerging professions to adapt to the social values and context of the time. It also supports the emergence of new forms of professions or classes of occupation, as the occupational group controls the direction of *professionalisation*. While ultimately the general public determine whether or not the traits selected and achieved by an occupation embody the ideal of a profession, this approach makes professionalisation a deliberate act of strategic planning that is controlled by the occupational group.

APPENDIX 1A: References

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A recent history of evaluation

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ABSTRACT

Paper 1 provided an introduction to the sociology of professions literature and concluded that professions are a construct of the social context in which they emerged; the social forces of the time shape the traits and characteristics of the new profession. Traditional professions such as law and medicine developed in response to the Industrial Revolution and the resultant specialisation of labour. Control of the knowledge-base that drove this specialisation of labour resulted in these professions using knowledge to establish a monopoly and protect it through educational, regulation and social closure. The modern social era has been shaped by the further specialisation of labour and commercialisation of knowledge. In addition, a much higher proportion of the population is tertiary-educated and occupations are increasingly requiring a tertiary qualification for admission. The professionalisation of occupations in this new era, including evaluation, is likely to be quite different from earlier eras.

The purpose of this second paper is to explore the history of evaluation to inform a review of the professionalisation of evaluation in Paper 3. Specifically, this paper will define evaluation, its theoretical base and recent history.

2.1 Introduction

Scriven (1991) declared that anything can be evaluated. It is therefore not surprising that the role of evaluators is broad. Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (2004) suggested that evaluators may be required to collect, analyse, interpret or communicate information about the conceptualisation, operation or effectiveness of a social program. Evaluators make informed judgements related to the social need addressed by a program, and the appropriateness, design, impact and effectiveness of the program in meeting that need (Fink, 2005).

There is no common agreement on what evaluation is and how it should be described. Scriven (2013) noted that there is a false belief amongst evaluators that evaluation is not research, that research is focussed on the acquisition of new knowledge, while evaluation is focussed on the application of knowledge for decision making. Scriven argues that, while this may be true of basic research, applied research is used to understand practical problems that affect people, organisations, communities and societies. Consistent with this, Donaldson (2009) noted that applied research can be descriptive in order to improve understanding and provide solutions for practical problems, or evaluative in order to improve or determine the effectiveness of actions aimed to address areas of social need.

Scriven (2013) argues that evaluation is not *just* an applied science but a *transdiscipline*, like statistics, not tied to a particular area of study but serving other disciplines. Similarly, the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) (2013a) describes evaluation as a *metaprofession*, attracting professionals from a wide range of backgrounds. Hence evaluation is multidisciplinary and recruits practitioners and tools from other occupations.

Given this transdisciplinary or metaprofessional status, it is not surprising that evaluators are drawn from a range of backgrounds and professional affiliations. Much evaluation practice is sector-specific, evolving out of the unique characteristics of the sector. Shadish, Cook and Levton (1991) observed that evaluators from different discipline backgrounds tend to gravitate towards different professional associations. For example, among evaluators in the US, psychologists and educators are more likely to be aligned with the American Evaluation Association (AEA), economists and political scientists are aligned with the American Association of Public Policy and Management, and health researchers are more likely to be aligned with various health associations that reflect their academic training. The different interests and affiliations of evaluators may affect the cohesion of evaluation as an occupational group. A

survey of practicing evaluators in Canada found that 70% became evaluators without intending to, 50% would describe their profession as evaluator if asked, and 45% felt they belonged to a community of evaluators (Borys, Gauthier, Kishchuk, & Roy, 2005).

Despite the lack of cohesion of evaluators as an occupational group, in Australia and overseas there is a movement towards the professionalisation of evaluation. This movement resulted in the establishment of professional association in the UK, Europe, and Australasia in the 1980s and 1990s, leading to the first international conferences on evaluation during the same period (Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Sharp, 2003).

Industry standards for evaluation are also well-established in Northern America (Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson, & Cruthers, 2011) and the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) has established a credentialing system to ‘contribute to the professionalization of evaluation’ (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2013). In Australasia, the need to promote the standing of evaluators has been included in the AES Strategic Plan and a Committee has been established to develop an AES Professional Standards document and to review the applicability of the CES accreditation system to Australasia (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012).

While traditional professions such as law and medicine have their roots in the specialisation of labour that resulted from the Industrial Revolution (Spencer, 1896), occupations more recently attaining professional status such as nursing (Chitty, 1997) and accountancy (Macdonald, 1995) can also trace their origins back to the Industrial Revolution. Evaluation is a much more recent phenomenon. Modern evaluation is generally acknowledged as dating from the 1960s or later (Mackay, 2004; Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Shadish et al., 1991). Thus evaluation offers the opportunity to understand the professionalisation of a recently established occupation.

2.1.1 Structure of this paper

The purpose of this second paper is to explore the history of evaluation to understand how it has developed over time. This will be used in Paper 3 to inform review of the professionalisation of evaluation.

This remainder of this paper is presented in four sections. The first section considers definitions of evaluation and provides the definition that will be used in this Portfolio. The second section considers theories of evaluation and identifies the Program Evaluation Tree as the theory that will be used to guide this Paper. The third section chronicles the recent history of program evaluation from the early 1900s until the present period. The concluding section develops a model to be applied to the professionalisation of evaluation in Paper 3.

2.1.2 Defining evaluation

There is no agreed definition of evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004). The AEA (American Evaluation Association, 2004) notes that practitioners define evaluation differently, based on their training, professional experience, and work setting.

Definitions of evaluation provided by governments and their agencies tend to emphasise a systematic approach and accountability for public expenditure:

...the systematic assessment of the appropriateness, effectiveness and/or efficiency of a program, or part of a program (ANAO Report No. 3, 1997-98, p. xi).

...systematic gathering of credible information to demonstrate the performance, results and cost-effectiveness of programs, for the purpose of senior management decision-making on program improvement and, where relevant, resource allocation (Comptroller General of Canada, 1994).

...systematic studies conducted periodically or on an ad hoc basis to assess how well a program is working...typically examines achievement of program objectives in the context of other aspects of program performance or in the context in which it occurs (United States Government Accountability Office, 2005)

...a systematic way to improve and account for public health actions by involving procedures that are useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one of the 13 major operating components of the US Department of Health and Human Services, Milstein & Wetterhall, 1999).

In their definitions, theoreticians and practitioners of evaluation commonly reference the application of research methods, a need for evidence and a systematic process. While some authors focus on activities or procedures, others focus on program impacts or outcomes:

...the systematic application of social science research tools to analysis of the impact of public sector programs (Greene, 2002).

In program evaluation, we are concerned to establish the merit, worth, quality, or value of programs, in whole or in part, at the request of some client or clients, and for the benefit of some audience (Scriven, 1999, p57).

The use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environments and are designed to inform social actions in ways that improve social conditions (Rossi et al., 2004). P 29

In Australia, there has been no broadly accepted definition of evaluation since the ANAO definition given earlier (ANAO Report No. 3, 1997-98, p. xi), which had a focus on efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness that is reflective of the report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare (1979) and later referred to by McPhee, a former Auditor-General for Australia, in his address to the Canberra Evaluation Forum in 2006 (McPhee, 2006).

For the purposes of this research, the definition of evaluation adopted is drawn from the North American Evaluation Standards, developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE), which refer to evaluation of programs where a program is a mechanism to address an area of need identified by policy and implemented using a systematic application of resources. The aim of the program is to deliver defined results for the target audience, guided by a theory or logic. A program can provide the supporting framework for a number of activities or projects. Programs consist of multiple elements and any of these elements can be the subject of an evaluation (Yarbrough et al., 2011). Both the AEA and the CES are sponsoring organisations of JCSEE (see Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2014). In Australia, the Evaluation Standards are referred to by the AES as a source of review for conflicts over the implementation of the AES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct of Evaluation (2013b). The AES has not published a definition of evaluation.

2.2 Evaluation theory

Evaluation is a recent area of work. It has undergone rapid growth since the 1960s and has continuously evolved since this period (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Initially evaluators borrowed theories from other fields, particularly the fields in which they were academically trained. For the last 20 years evaluators have been developing their own concepts and methods that are informed by a theory of evaluation (Shadish et al., 1991). *Theory* is used to refer to approaches and models of evaluation, as is the convention in the evaluation literature (Alkin, 2013a). There have been a number of approaches to categorising evaluation theory (see Alkin, 2013a, p. 6). The categorising is important, because the categories potentially draw on different historical antecedents and frame how we see the professionalisation of evaluation.

Category systems provide a way to contain and segment the phenomena under investigation. Of the four category systems presented in Table 1, the first two provide advice to program managers to determine what questions they need addressed when commissioning an evaluation. The remaining two systems reflect stages in the historical development of evaluation. For this Paper, since the area of interest is the development of evaluation over time, the focus is on category systems that are amenable to that discourse. Therefore the Fourth Generation evaluation and the Evaluation Theory Tree will be explored in more detail.

Table 1: Example of categorising systems for evaluation

Categorisation	Description
Formative and summative evaluation (Scriven, 1967)	Summative and formative evaluations reflect the point in the funding cycle of the program being evaluated. Formative evaluations focus on program implementation and improvement while summative evaluations focus on program learning and achievements.
Appropriateness, effectiveness, effectiveness and meta-evaluation (Australian Government Department of Finance, 1994)	This categorisation reflects the policy cycle. <i>Appropriateness</i> identifies the need for a program, <i>efficiency</i> examines how well inputs are used to deliver outputs, <i>effectiveness</i> examines the value of the programs achievements and <i>meta-evaluation</i> examines the evaluation process and use of results.
Fourth Generation Evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989)	Fourth generation evaluation categorises evaluation based on historical changes in the development of evaluation from a focus on measurement, description, judgement to negotiation.
Evaluation Theory Tree (Alkin, 2004, 2013a, 2013b; Alkin & Christie, 2004; Christie & Alkin, 2008, 2013)	The evaluation tree categorises evaluators and evaluation approaches based on their primary focus on methods, use or value.

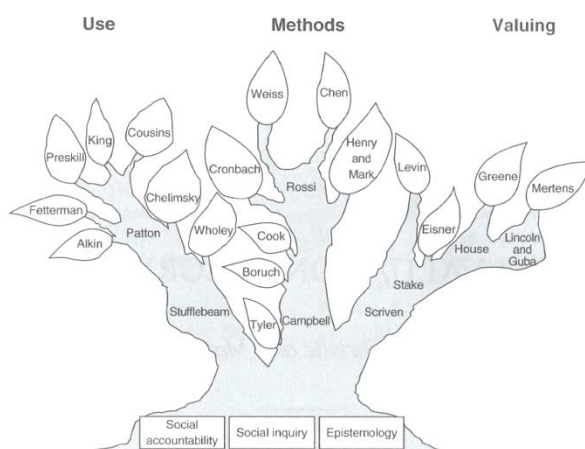
2.2.1 Fourth Generation evaluation

Using an epistemological approach, Fourth Generation evaluation advocated by Guba and Lincoln depicts a historical and conceptual movement of emphasis in evaluation from measurement (first generation), description (second generation), judgement (third generation) to negotiation (fourth generation) (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 8). While this categorisation does provide some insight into the historical development of evaluation, it has been strongly criticised as an over-simplification of evaluation and not fully recognising that all generations of evaluation are present within different points in history (Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Roberts & Coutts, 2007; Stame, 2013). It has been argued that this category system is overly dismissive of the value of quantitative data and potentially divisive in the evaluation community (Stame, 2013). Such criticisms are based on the notion that each generation in the categorisation rejects, rather than builds on, the previous generation.

2.2.2 Evaluation Theory Tree

The second category system developed by Alkin and colleagues, the *Evaluation Theory Tree*, reflects the historic development of evaluation in a pluralist approach (Alkin, 2013b; Alkin & Christie, 2004; Christie, 2003a, 2003b; Christie & Alkin, 2008, 2013). Alkin's current book, *Evaluation Roots: A Wider Perspective of Theorists Views and Influences* (2013b), has contributions from 37 leading evaluators from across the globe. The evaluation tree uses the metaphor of a tree to visually categorise evaluation theorists into three branches depending on their primary area of focus. The three branches of the evaluation tree are methods, use and value. The roots of the tree are social accountability, systematic social inquiry and epistemology (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Evaluation theory tree



Source: Christie and Alkin (2013, p.12)

Methods and social inquiry

There is a relationship between the branches and foundations of the Evaluation Theory Tree. The central column of the tree is *methods*, which has its roots in social inquiry. Social inquiry is defined as the systematic study of the behaviour of groups of people (Christie & Alkin, 2013, p. 15). While the beginnings of social inquiry in the Western world are found in the writings of social commentators in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, empirical social research has its foundations in the writings of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century sociologists such as Herbert Spencer (1896), Emile Durkheim (1957) and Max Weber (1976). While some early sociologists made extensive use of statistics and other data to inform their judgements about social life, it was the psychologists that introduced experimental design to test treatment effectiveness (Christie & Alkin, 2013). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs are hallmarks of many of the modern method theorists such as Donald Campbell (Shadish & Luellen, 2013). Anthropology also lent skills to the method theorists, particularly in the form of ethnographic inquiry, which has had a substantial impact on empowerment evaluation (for an overview of empowerment evaluation see Fetterman, 2013).

Value and epistemology

The *value* branch of the Evaluation Theory Tree has its roots in epistemology. *Valuing* in this context refers to placing a value on the subject (or *evaluand*) of the evaluation. The value may relate to the internal experiences of social agents (individuals or groups) or the measurement of externally observable events. Whether using subjective or objective values, ultimately the evaluator is making judgements about the merit or worth of the subject of the evaluation (Christie & Alkin, 2013). This valuing branch is rooted in epistemological theories about the nature of knowledge in evaluation. The areas of epistemology that are most influential in evaluation are the positivists' views about the nature of truth and its measurement, constructivists' perspectives that reality is constructed from subjective experiences and beliefs, and the pragmatists' perspectives that sit between the positivists and constructivists (Christie & Alkin, 2013). Christie (2013) notes that in a practical sense epistemological considerations influence views about cause and effect, independence, development of methodology and the control of influencing factors in evaluation.

Use and social accountability

The *use* branch of the evaluation tree has its roots in social accountability. In this context *use* refers to a focus in the evaluation towards assisting program stakeholders with the decision making process.

While there are several types of public or social accountability, most evaluations have a strong focus on goal accountability to assist program or policy decision making. Social accountability legitimises the role of evaluation in generating systematic information for decision makers (Alkin & Christie, 2004).

Social accountability is closely related to public audit. Pat Barrett, a former Auditor-General of Australia, described the role of public audit as to ‘scrutinise and review government operations...to ensure that Ministers and departments are held accountable for their use of funds on behalf of the general public’ (Barrett, 2001, p. 2). For government accountability, independent, external review has long been recognized as important to audit (Barrett, 2001) and evaluation (Christie & Alkin, 2013). Barrett notes that, while public audit initially focused on providing quality assurance on government’s financial management and reporting, public audit now provides an independent view of the performance and accountability of government agencies and entities, providing an assessment of administrative performance as well as identifying better practice. Hence, with the movement of public audit to performance measurement, evaluation and public auditing share similar objectives, approaches, research methods and techniques (Barrett, 2001). In describing the differences between evaluation and audit, Barratt noted that evaluation usually focuses on policy and is able to make a qualitative judgement of effectiveness, while performance audit is focused on evaluating economy, efficiency and effectiveness of administration. Furthermore, audit is always independent, while evaluation is not necessarily so, and there are differences in reporting lines to government and expectations of public reporting.

2.3 A history of evaluation

In a broad sense, the origins of evaluation may be traced back to the beginnings of seventeenth-century development of social research methods (Rossi et al., 2004). There are accounts of social research as early as 2200 B.C. in China (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). While there has been evidence of program activity over the last 200 years (Shadish et al., 1991), evaluation as a systematic activity is a young discipline that developed in response to the rise of government expenditure on social programs early in the twentieth century (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

2.3.1 The early years of evaluation (to 1935)

Two important factors shaped the emergence of evaluation in the twentieth century. The first was the intellectual and methodological developments in psychology, sociology and education; the second was the post-World War I boom of government investment in social programs and the need for public accountability (Shadish et al., 1991).

As early as 1897, Rice (cited in Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 23) was demonstrating the importance of evaluation in educational assessment. Rice used evaluation to demonstrate that assessment of student performance alone did not provide evidence of the effectiveness of a program. In large-scale research on the US education system, Rice showed that the amount of time dedicated to spelling did not relate to a child's level of spelling achievement because teaching methods were inefficient. By improving teaching methods, Rice was able to make room in the US school curriculum for the introduction of liberal arts and other topics previously considered non-essential. Guba and Lincoln note that around this same time the French were also investigating the use of educational assessment to stream students, based on intellectual performance, and this ultimately led to the development of the Stanford-Binet IQ test, which is still used today. In the first quarter of the twentieth century there was a strong focus on assessment of students for classification and system improvement (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Continued interest in educational assessment for system performance measurement is evident in the introduction of the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2008 in Australia to assess the skills of students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in reading, writing, language conventions and numeracy. NAPLAN provides benchmarks to assess individual students and school performance over time and against year level (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2011; Queensland Education, 2013).

As a sector, education maintained a strong interest in evaluation. Prior to World War I the US health and education portfolios were employing systematic evaluation of programs in areas such as literacy, occupational training and public health initiatives (Rossi et al., 2004). By the 1930s the rigorous application of social research methods to evaluate programs in the US was becoming commonplace (Freeman 1977 in Rossi et al., 2004). Most of these early evaluations were single studies of large programs. Contrary to this pattern, Tyler introduced the concept of continuous monitoring to education in order to measure student achievement of educational objectives. Tyler also developed partnerships between teachers and researchers to improve the curriculum and assessment process (Madaus, 2013).

Evaluative practice in Australia dates from around the same time period, with the use of independent experts in the McLachlan Royal Commission on Public Service Administration (1918-19) and the Royal Commission to Consider and Report Upon the Public Expenditure of the Commonwealth of Australia (1918-21) (Rogers & Davidson, 2013; Sharp, 2003).

Before the changes resulting from the Royal Commission on Public Service Administration, the *Public Service Act 1902* divided the Australian Public Service (APS) into four Divisions—the Administrative (including all Secretaries and other senior positions), Professional, Clerical, and General Divisions. The Royal Commission on Public Service Administration recommended changes to recognise the significant role played by a small group of senior employees supporting agency heads and Ministers. The result was the passing of the *Public Service Act 1922*, which created the position of assistant secretary (Australian Public Service Commission, 2010), a role very important in driving portfolio efficiency and accountability.

2.3.2 Evaluation and the impact of World War II (1935-1959)

In the US, World War II gave a significant boost to the development of evaluative research because evaluators like Stouffer were employed by the US Army to develop procedures to monitor soldier morale, personnel policies and propaganda techniques (Rossi et al., 2004). During the same period, the US Office of War Information was conducting surveys to monitor civilian morale (Stouffer, et al in Rossi et al., 2004).

It was during this period, termed the second generation in the Guba-Lincoln categorisation, that evaluation and social research were developing processes to describe the achievements of programs against predetermined goals (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Ralph Tyler's longitudinal work in continuous monitoring of education to measure student achievement of educational objectives is an example of this focus (see Madaus, 2013).

Rossi et al. (2004) noted that in the US World War II provided a second impetus to the expansion of evaluation with the launch of government funded programs in urban development, education, occupational training and preventative medicine. Rossi et al. suggest that this era also saw a focus on international programs to provide humanitarian aid and rebuild cities and communities affected by the war. Evaluation was used to monitor the use of public expenditure on these large investments. Rossi et al. contend that within a few decades evaluation became a common practice in public programs.

Another contribution of this period to evaluation was the development of the institutional foundations which led to evidence-based policy. As Head (2009) has commented, in the early 1940s Australia's post-war reconstruction policy forced a need for high-quality information, professionals skills in data analysis and policy evaluation, and provided political incentives for using evidence-based analysis and advice in governmental decision-making processes. According to Head, the progress of the evidence-based policy movement stalled under successive government until the 1970s.

2.3.3 The emergence of modern evaluation (1960 – 1975)

Modern evaluation is generally acknowledged as dating from the 1960s or later (Mackay, 2004; Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Shadish et al., 1991). The 1960s saw a dramatic increase in the rise of articles and books published on evaluation. According to Rossi et al. (2004), in the US by the early 1970s evaluation was emerging as a distinct speciality in the social sciences. In 1971 the first regular university course in evaluation was established in Australia after a successful BA Honours seminar in evaluation at the University of Sydney (Sharp, 2003). As with the US experience, fields like education and agriculture were at the forefront of the rise of evaluation in Australia and New Zealand (Lunt & Trotman, 2005; Sharp, 2003). Evaluation was also incorporated in planning at the federal and state levels in Australia (Rogers & Davidson, 2013).

Barrett (2001), a former Auditor-General with the ANAO, described the advancements in audit and evaluation in the 1960s as follows. The audit and evaluation framework in the Australian public sector was revised and clarified during this period. With a focus on *value for money*, large-scale evaluations were undertaken by the Treasury. These evaluations included investment appraisals and independent reviews by external research organisations, such as the then Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Bureau of Transport Economics, and the Tariff Board. As Barratt described it, these organisations were often affiliated with universities and had university staff working on evaluations as consultants or on secondment. It was also during this period that efficiency audits commenced within the ANAO. The Public Service Board was responsible for

recruitment, pay and conditions in the public service. The Public Service Board continued efficiency improvements, effectively a form of process evaluation, across the Australian Public Service (APS). The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet directly oversaw evaluation of government programs, often involving policy analysis (Barrett, 2001).

But evaluation was still *ad hoc* in many areas of government in Australia in the 1960s. With a lack of systematic evaluation practice, evaluation was often used in response to a program or policy failure. For example, in 1963 the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee was established in response to recognition that therapeutic compounds, such as Thalidomide, have both potential benefits and risks for public health. The Australian Drug Evaluation Committee was established as an independent committee to advise on the safety of new drugs being imported into Australia and to formulate measures for the evaluation of possible adverse effects of drugs that were already in use in Australia. The Committee continues to operate and is now established in the Therapeutic Goods Regulations (Therapeutic Good Administration, 2003).

Shadish (1991) noted that during the 1960s and 1970s there was a massive global investment in social policy. In the US, as a proportion of gross national product, investment in welfare programs rose by 600% (adjusted for inflation) between 1950 and 1979. Shadish et al. maintain that this increase in expenditure raised concerns about the need for Congress to be accountable for federal funds and also to demonstrate the achievements of funded programs. There were also political concerns that some programs were not being implemented in line with federal government policies. Funding bodies needed a way of influencing program managers to stay on track. Furthermore, Shadish et al. note that the rapid increase in social programs outstripped the skilled workforce needed to deliver them, giving rise to concerns about poor performance by program managers. There were workforce issues in evaluation, too. The public service lacked the infrastructure and workforce to support internal evaluation functions. The beneficiaries of this outsourcing were private accountants working in auditing, management consultants working on improving organisational performance, and researchers working in marketing and product development. All of these factors pushed the US federal government towards investment in evaluation, which was eventually assured with the passing of federal legislation supplying funding in the 1960s (Shadish et al., 1991).

Earlier in the twentieth century, evaluation was strongly focussed on counting or measuring results (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). By the 1960s the US General Accounting Office initiated a focus on *performance* audits that soon moved to other countries such as Australia and Canada (Barrett,

2001; Greene, 2002). These audits are generally accepted as having a well-developed framework of evaluation methods and techniques and a sound analytical approach (Barrett, 2001).

During the 1960s the US implemented a number of social programs under the banner of the *War on Poverty* and the *Great Society* (Rossi et al., 2004). These programs were often seen as lacking sufficient planning and being poorly implemented and administered. This perception of poor program management, increased social spending and rising fiscal constraint in the 1970s heralded an emphasis on program financial accountability, particularly cost-benefit analysis, through evaluation activities (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Hence social research into specific education and correctional policy grew into an evaluation movement that extended into other social sectors (Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Rossi et al., 2004).

Interest of policy makers, program planners and administrators in evaluation, and the high proportion of evaluations they commissioned in the US, resulted in a changing audience and direction of evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004). However, the US experience is different to the Australian experience and this influenced the character of the evaluation in Australia. While in the US evaluations responded to the needs of large scale but short-term social programs, in Australasia evaluation focussed on ongoing programs and was seen as improving corporate management and financial accountability (Rogers & Davidson, 2013).

The 1970s saw a renewed interest in evidence-based policy, which brought evaluation to the forefront (Head, 2009). Given the global focus on evidence, it is not surprising that during this time evaluation was particularly focused on assigning causality to prove program success or failure. This is the *judgement* stage of Fourth Generation evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs were borrowed from the laboratory and applied in social settings as the gold standard for evaluation. By the 1970s in other disciplines this positivist dominance of social science was being questioned. This epistemological debate about the nature of knowledge did not reach evaluation until at least another decade (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

2.3.4 Evaluation in the last quarter of the twenty century (1976 – 1999)

Evaluation in the US during the last quarter of the twentieth century was widespread but lacked central direction. Shadish et al. (2013) estimated that in the 1970s the US federal government funded tens of thousands of evaluations across portfolio areas and that the range of evaluative activities within these programs was so diverse that they seemed to share few commonalities. While these differences may have reflected the backgrounds of the evaluators, they may also have reflected the inconsistency of evaluation commissioners in their definition and expectations

of evaluation. This diversity continues through to the present, despite overarching theories that have tried to integrate the different methods and approaches of evaluation into a common body of knowledge in order to improve practice and clarity of design (Shadish & Luellen, 2013). Some of the evaluation methods and concepts introduced during this period included the definition of formative and summative evaluation to help program managers clarify the areas of a program that will be the focus of an evaluation (Scriven, 2013) and program logic which documents the program theory (Taylor-Powell & Henert, 2008).

Shadish et al. (1991) observed that the US juggernaut of evaluation stalled in the 1980s. Evaluation funding and activities declined under the budget cuts of the Reagan administration. The Department of Education's Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation had a budget cut of 62% in the evaluation area. The number of federally funded government evaluations dropped from 114 in 1980 to just 11 in 1984. By the late 1980s the decline in spending on evaluation had slowed, but the result was a severely depleted evaluation workforce. Shadish et al. found that the result was not entirely negative. When federal government funding was reduced, evaluators moved into other jurisdictions such as state and local government. This increased the acceptance of evaluation across different levels of government (Shadish et al., 1991).

The second blow to evaluation during this period resulted from what has been described as the 'paradigm wars' (Caracelli, 2000). To summarise the debate, the heart of the paradigm war is about the nature of knowledge, whether it is constructed (based on the experience of the agent) or discovered (as an independent fact). The former supports the use of qualitative methods and participatory engagement, the latter supports the use of quantitative methods from the hard sciences (like experimental design) and independence of the evaluator as the discoverer of evidence. This division polarised the evaluation community. The result, towards the end of the twentieth century and early in this century, was the emergence of a pluralist approach to evaluation and the development of methods that bridge the theoretical divide, such as realist evaluation and systematic review (Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Stame, 2013). The effects of the paradigm war are still being felt in evaluation (Stame, 2013).

In Australia, by the 1970s evaluation practices were being applied to areas such as health, social work and industrial relations. According to Sharp (2003), the Australian Schools Commission, in restructuring the school system, included a focus on self-evaluation. In 1977, the Australian Government Department of Employment and Industrial Relations published its report *Evaluating the Helping Services* and the Australian Council of Social Services established an Evaluation and Accountability Taskforce to facilitate evaluation practices in the non-government sector.

However, Sharp notes that, despite these and other early introductions of evaluation, government commitment to evaluation was not assured until the government conducted two inquiries into public administration in the 1970s, the Coombs Report and the Baume Report.

The Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration of 1974, known as the Coombs Report or Coombs Commission, was a watershed in Australian public sector reform. According to Sharp (2003), the Coombs Report recommended systematic evaluation and is generally credited with paving the way for government-endorsed evaluation. Completed over 30 years ago, Sharp notes that the Coombs Report was considered to be the first independent, wide-ranging inquiry into Australian Government for over 50 years. The Coombs Report recommended extensive changes to the structure and direction of public administration. The Report called for increased responsiveness to the elected government, improved efficiency and effectiveness of services with a focus on results and greater community participation in government (Australian Policy Online, 2014; Briggs, 2005).

The proceedings of the Report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare (Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, 1979), known as the Baume Report, was the second watershed in the development of evaluation in Australia during this period (Sharp, 2003). While the Baume Report was a review of evaluation in health and welfare services, it had a broad impact and included a recommended definition of evaluation as the process for reviewing the 'efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of any program or groups of programs' (Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, 1979, p. 5).

The Baume Report, in its review of evaluation activities since Federation, found little evidence of systematic evaluation activity in Australia prior to the 1970. The report also noted that, where evaluation had occurred during these early years, it was not always systematic (Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare, 1979). However, Sharp (2003) noted that early evaluations like the Royal Commission on Public Service Administration (1918-1920) or the Royal Commission to Consider and Report Upon the Public Expenditure of the Commonwealth of Australia (1918-1921) had at least some of the criteria noted by Baume as required to constitute systematic planning and evaluation. Sharp further argues that the Baume Report, by focusing on the health and welfare sectors, missed some of the work noted earlier in agricultural extension and education.

The Baume Report highlighted that the approach to evaluation in Australia was fragmented and lacked a consistent framework. Similarly, Sharp (2003) comments that, while evaluation was not supported by a whole-of-government approach until the late 1980s, formative evaluation was a

widely implemented practice in agricultural extension, state primary schools and TAFE much earlier. The interest in evaluation in the 1980s was a direct response to the economic downturn in Australia during this period (Di Francesco, 1996).

Agriculture has contributed much to the development of statistical methods and evaluation. Indeed, some of the statesmen of evaluation, like Michael Quinn Patton, commenced their careers in agriculture before transferring their evaluation practices to other areas such as human services (Sharp, 2003). More recently, the Most Significant Change Technique, widely used in participatory and empowerment evaluation, was developed in the agriculture sector (Dart, 2013) and is now widely applied in education, health, and development programs in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and Australasia (Davies & Dart, 2005).

Towards the end of the twentieth century in Australia, evaluation became a crucial element in the budgeting process (Aucoin, 2005). It was this integration of evaluation into the budgetary approach that is largely attributed the success of evaluation in Australia (Barrett, 2004). At this time, the Australian government's focus shifted from inputs to outcomes, with a greater emphasis on improved management, reduced financial risk, clearer accountability and comparative performance information (Barrett, 2001; Lunt & Trotman, 2005; Rogers & Davidson, 2013). In Australia in the 1970s and 1980s, the growth of the public sector, the changing role of government administration and increased government expenditure led to calls for increased efficiencies and value for money. This increased pressure from within government, Parliament and public opinion drove a focus on not just processes but results (Barrett, 2001). The *Audit Act 1901* of the Commonwealth of Australia was amended in 1979 to allow the Audit Office to undertake efficiency audits ("Audit Act 1901," 1979), a type of process evaluation (McPhee, 2006).

During the 1980s, the centralised Portfolio Evaluation Program was established to integrate evaluation with the central budgetary processes to provide a focus on outcomes and cost effectiveness, rather than inputs and processes (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). In 1983 the Review of Commonwealth Administration, commonly called the Reid Report, promoted the introduction of management by objectives and performance control, which led to the establishment of the Financial Management Improvement Program. Responsibility for programs was devolved from central agencies to the service delivery interface, while promoting the importance of evaluation and internal audit and focussing on tighter budgetary accountability (Mackay, 2004). Central agency evaluation capability was strengthened by the establishment of the then Public Service Board's Evaluation Unit. Some

agencies developed their own in-house audit and evaluation capability and the first centralised arrangements for procuring external evaluation were established (McPhee, 2006).

The Financial Management Improvement Program evaluation strategy mandated annual program evaluation plans and reports for all Commonwealth-funded programs. However, central agencies had concerns about the ability of agencies to manage their performance and in 1987 Cabinet agreed that all budget spending proposals (new policy proposals) should include a statement of objectives, performance measures, and proposed arrangements for their future evaluation (McPhee, 2006). Mackay (2004) noted that, due to continuing concerns from central agencies about the ability of departments to management performance, in 1988 Cabinet endorsed an evaluation strategy that mandated departments to submit to the Department of Finance plans for regular evaluations, to include evaluation arrangements in policy statements, and to publish evaluation reports where there was no conflict in doing so. The Department of Finance was also given the opportunity to have input into evaluation plans and evaluation terms of reference to ensure their consistency with government-wide policies and priorities, as well as some capacity to participate directly in selected evaluations (Mackay, 2004). Mackay (2004) also pointed out several limitations with this early evaluation strategy, including a lack of attention to data collections and use and reporting of performance information. In 1995, Cabinet endorsed a three-year program to review the program objectives and performance information of all programs in all departments, to be conducted jointly by the relevant department and the Department of Finance. Theses reviews heralded an increased focus on performance measurement.

Internationally, the evaluation movement continued to grow towards the end of the twentieth century, with the major English-speaking evaluation associations being established:

- 1981 - Canadian Evaluation Society (Greene, 2002)
- 1986 - Australasian Evaluation Society (Sharp, 2003)
- 1986 - American Evaluation Association (with the merger of the Evaluation Research Society and Evaluation Network)(Kingsbury, 1986)
- 1995 - United Kingdom Evaluation Society (Quesnel, 2006).

While early membership figures are not available for the AES, the membership of the AEA started with about 3,000 members and annual meetings with attendance of over 500 members (American Evaluation Society, 1986 in Shadish et al., 1991). By 2014, the AEA membership had more than doubled to 7,700 members (American Evaluation Association, 2012). This period also

saw the introduction of evaluation national and international journals and conferences on evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997; Sharp, 2003).

2.3.5 Evaluation at the start of the twenty-first century (2000 – present)

At the end of the twentieth century there was movement away from a centralised evaluation function within the Australia Government to devolving this function to its departments (Mackay, 2004). This occurred because evaluation was seen as resource-intensive, unsustainable, discouraging of innovation, and lacking a skilled workforce. The mandate for change in performance measurement and evaluation was supported through the 1997 Outcomes and Outputs Framework and the revised 2009 Programs and Outcomes Policy (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). However, the adoption of a decentralised system has not been a panacea, with some high-profile public servants questioning whether a devolved model had resulted in a robust, effective measurement and evaluation framework (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). This post-2000 period has seen a movement away from centralised evaluation functions, with a focus on supporting the budgetary process, to a focus on the provision of information to Parliament about program performance, particularly outcomes (McPhee, 2006). The Secretary of the Department of Finance and Deregulation, Mr David Tune, described the Australian Government approach to evaluation as devolved with a few central reviews (Tune, 2010).

McPhee (2006) has suggested that in the early years of this century evaluation was underpinned by a focus on performance management set in the Australian Government's outcomes and outputs framework. The intent of the framework was to shift public sector management from a focus on inputs and processes to results. More recently, the focus has further shifted from reliance on outputs to outcomes and their relationship with outputs. Furthermore, McPhee noted that in recent years there have been several reports from Parliamentary committees, the Australian National Audit Office and the Department of Finance arguing that improved practice is required in the specification and measurement of outcomes (McPhee, 2006).

From 2004 an evaluation was required to extend the funding of lapsing programs (where the program is expected to continue but funding has not yet been allocated) or terminating programs (those that have a specified end date). For ongoing programs, the focus is on continuous performance monitoring and periodic evaluations (generally within a five-year period). Under revised arrangements introduced in the 2005-06 budget, lapsing programs can be evaluated through either a major review with Central Agency involvement (where significant investment is

required) or an internal departmental review (where programs are of small scope or significance to the government's priorities) (McPhee, 2006).

In 2008, the then Australian Prime Minister Rudd announced a focus on an evidence-based policy process (Head, 2009). Later that year, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed a reform agenda 'to improve the wellbeing of Australians now and into the future' (COAG Reform Council, 2012, para. 1). Underpinning this reform agenda was an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on Federal Financial Relations, which commenced on 1 January 2009. Under the IGA the COAG Reform Council reports to the Prime Minister (as the Chair of COAG) on performance against COAG's agreed reform agenda.

A recent review of the APS (Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government Administration, 2010) proposed changes to the way in which the APS works. This included transformation of the APS into a strategic, forward-looking organisation, with an intrinsic culture of evaluation and innovation. The Review noted a need for data collection measures to be put in place to build a robust evidence base for future evaluations and a focus on citizen engagement in evaluation and service delivery. Related to this was a need for increased partnership across government and with private enterprise and the not-for-profit sector.

The IGA sets out six principles that guide its operation. These are (Council of Australian Governments, 2011):

- Primary responsibility for service delivery
- Focus on improving the well-being of Australians
- Coordinated federal action
- Accountability
- Financial support
- Greater incentives for economic and social reform.

The descriptions used within the principles clearly demonstrate a new direction in performance management that will have a flow-on effect to evaluation. While under earlier arrangements there was a focus on programs being appropriate, efficient and effective (ANAO Report No. 3, 1997-98), now programs are required to demonstrate quality, efficiency and effectiveness (Council of Australian Governments, 2011). While appropriateness included the potential to link to both best practice and policy alignment, use of quality rather than appropriateness may limit the potential for ideological considerations to inform evaluations. In addition, the principles also

clearly commit COAG to a focus on the measurement of outcomes rather than the earlier focus on outputs in service delivery and timely provision of publicly available performance information (Council of Australian Governments, 2011).

The IGA is implemented through a range of instruments, including National Agreements and National Partnerships. These National Agreements are supported by a public accountability and performance reporting framework. This framework sets an expectation of simple, standardised and transparent public performance reporting. The roles and responsibilities of different levels of government are specified so that the public will know which level of government is accountable for the delivery of a service and whether a policy or program is efficient, effective and reaching its target audience (Council of Australian Governments, 2012).

2.4 Discussion

In major English-speaking countries such as Australia, Canada, the UK and the US, evaluation developed in the twentieth century in response to increased government investment in social services and a need to measure the success of those investments. Initially, the tools of evaluation were drawn from the hard sciences and accountancy, which suited the early requirement for accountability through measurement of activity. While evaluation was certainly present in the early part of the twentieth century, it was not present as a systematic requirement of the work of government or as a distinct occupational category. With an early focus on financial accountability, the work of evaluation was the province of accountants and auditors.

Since that time, evaluation has become increasingly specialised in methods, theory and purpose, distinguishing it from other occupations. In the mid-twentieth century the focus of evaluation expanded to include evaluation of program processes and outcomes. This required specialised methods and new approaches to understand program theory. Specialist evaluators emerged as a category of worker. The 1980s saw the establishment of professional associations, professional journals and university programs in evaluation. This may also be considered the start of the professionalisation of evaluation, which has been continued this century with a focus on standards and credentialing of evaluators.

Evaluation has borrowed much of its methods from other fields (Alkin, 2004; Christie & Alkin, 2013; Rossi et al., 2004), particularly its early methods. Earlier in the twentieth century, evaluation responded to a massive increase in social programs (such as compulsory schooling) by measuring program activities (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Rossi et al., 2004). Evaluation is credited with the development of educational assessment processes (Madaus, 2013). In the second half of the twentieth century, evaluation moved from measuring intervention success to providing program managers and funders with information about outcomes and impacts (Roberts & Coutts, 2007). Hence the role of the evaluator shifted from a focus on processes and outputs to a focus on outcomes and impacts of a program.

While the focus on the need for objective evidence, that is, the *positivist paradigm*, dominated evaluation until the middle of the twentieth century, in the later decades of that century the burgeoning question was the level of evidence needed to make a determination about the efficacy of a program, the *judgement* stage in Guba and Lincoln's Fourth Generation evaluation (1989). The focus of evaluation also started to shift from a simple understanding of what worked

to how and why it worked, so that success could be transferred to new programs. The positivist influence was still in the background, with some evaluators such as Gendreau and Ross (1987, in Pawson & Tilley, 1997, p. 12) only including experimental research in their evaluative reviews.

A chronology of events in the development of evaluation in Australia (Table 2) illustrates how reviews of Commonwealth government efficiency in the early twentieth century led to the implementation of an evaluation program by Treasury in the mid-1960s, although systematic evaluation was not introduced until after the Coombs Report, using the definitions established in the Baume Report. The development of university courses and the establishment of the AES were reactions to an increasing government interest in evaluation. While that interest has continued, the focus has moved under successive policies and government administrations to the present interest in program quality, efficiency and effectiveness implemented through the IGA on Federal Financial Relations (Council of Australian Governments, 2011).

Table 2: Chronology of events in the development of evaluation in Australia

Date	Events
1919	Royal Commission on Public Service Administration
1921	Royal Commission to Consider and Report Upon the Public Expenditure of the Commonwealth of Australia
1922	<i>Public Service Act</i> passed which included the introduction of assistant secretaries, an important role in providing policy advice to department heads and Ministers and in overseeing the efficiency and accountability of the portfolio
1960	Large scale evaluations in Australia undertaken by Treasury with a focus on value for money
1971	First regular university program in evaluation established in Australia
1974	Coombs Report recommends wide range of changes to the APS and the introduction of systematic evaluation
1979	Baume Report reviews evaluation in health and welfare services and defines evaluation as the process for reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of a program or groups of programs
1979	The <i>Audit Act 1901</i> was amended in 1979 to allow the Audit Office to undertake efficiency audits
1983	Reid Report recommended the introduction of management by objectives and performance control which led to the establishment of the Financial Management Improvement Program
1986	Australasian Evaluation Society established (Sharp, 2003)
1987	Cabinet requires that all budget spending programs include arrangements for evaluation
1988	Cabinet establishes an evaluation strategy mandating departments to submit finance plans for regular evaluation, to include evaluation arrangements in policy statements and to publish evaluation reports where there is no conflict of interest

A recent history of evaluation

Date	Events
1995	Cabinet endorsed a three-year program to review all program objectives and information measures to be conducted by the Department of Finance with the relevant department
1997	Outcomes and Outputs Framework published, supporting performance measurement and evaluation in federal government programs. Programs are required to demonstrate appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness
2004	Evaluation of ongoing programs is recommended to take place every five years and specific arrangements are in place for evaluation of lapsing and termination of programs
2008	The then Australian Prime Minister Rudd announced a focus on an evidence-based policy process
2009	Programs and Outcomes Policy continues the decentralisation of performance measurement and evaluation with a focus on providing information to Parliament on program performance, particularly outcomes
2009	Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations established to measure performance of COAGs reform agenda and focusses on program quality, efficiency and effectiveness
2010	Advisory Group on Reform of the Australian Government Administration proposes changes to the APS including introducing a culture of evaluation

2.5 Conclusion

The very recent appearance of evaluation as an area of work provides an excellent opportunity to understand its professionalisation using those objective traits identified in Paper 1 that have been associated with the traditional professions. As discussed in Paper 1, the characteristics of these traditional professions are considered to be a product of the social context of their development. Hence we would expect the professionalisation of evaluation to reflect the current social context and depart from these traits. Understanding the professionalisation of evaluation to date will provide insight into the future professionalisation of evaluation in Australia and contribute to the refinement of the definitions and model of professionalisation proposed in Paper 1.

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Research Paper 3 – RESEARCH REPORT

Professionalisation of evaluation in Australia: A research report

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the forces that establish and maintain professions has been of interest for as long as professions have existed. As a formal area of study the sociology of professions dates from the specialisation of labour in the Industrial Revolution when professions emerged as a distinct, powerful class (Hall, 1983; Spencer, 1896). It is therefore not surprising that the study of professions has been dominated by the professions that developed during this period. However, as we saw in Paper 1, professions are a product of the society and of the times in which they operate. Hence an examination of the development of a profession, such as evaluation, which has emerged in the current era, presents an opportunity to further our understanding of the professionalisation of evaluation and to contribute to the sociology of professions knowledge-base.

Evaluation as a systematic activity is a young area that developed in the 1980s with the establishment of the first evaluation association. Evaluation has emerged in a time of globalisation, where there is professional cooperation between different evaluation associations to share information and approaches. Evaluators can be members of an evaluation association in their country of residence and/or elsewhere. In addition, while most evaluation associations have emerged at a similar point in the twentieth century, their professionalisation has been influenced by local issues. Understanding these different patterns of development can assist in understanding the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia and contribute to the development of modern theories of professions. Therefore, this Paper will focus primarily on the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia and the other English-speaking western democracies of Canada, the UK and the US.

It is generally accepted that evaluation is not a profession (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2004). Globally, there has been a push from within the evaluation community to increase the professional standing of evaluators. This movement has seen the establishment of standards for evaluators in Northern America (Canadian Evaluation Society, 1993, 2006; Yarbrough, Shulha, Hopson, & Cruthers, 2011) and the introduction of a credentialing system in Canada (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2013; Canadian Evaluation Society, 2010, 2013). In Australia, the need to promote the standing of evaluators has been included in the AES Strategic Plan. It is also supported by an AES Committee established to develop an AES Professional Standards document and review the applicability of the CES accreditation system to Australasia (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012b). Thus, with all of this interest in improving the professional standing of evaluators, this Paper will review the steps taken by evaluation on the

path to professionalisation and the implications this has for the future professionalisation of evaluation and what it can contribute to the knowledge-base of the sociology of professions.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Paper examines the process of professionalisation of evaluation using the theoretical perspective derived from the sociology of professions literature.

3.1.1 Research foundations and topic

Most of the discourse on sociology of professions is derived from research with just two professions – doctors and lawyers (Torstendahl, 1990b). While this gap in research has begun to be addressed in recent years with studies on the professionalisation of other groups, such as nurses (Chua & Clegg, 1990; Johannisson & Sundin, 2007), librarians (Maack, 1997), engineers (Ressler, 2011) and others, there remain opportunities to further contribute to our understanding of the professionalisation process of modern occupations. Similarly, early studies in the sociology of professions were based on initial research in the UK and the US, then applied to continental Europe and elsewhere, not as a specific-type but as an ideal-type (Torstendahl, 1990b). This limited the inclusion of many knowledge-based occupations into the field of study and neglected the role of the state in influencing the process of professionalisation for a given occupation.

As a result, the foundation of our knowledge of professions is a contested field. This is seen in Flexner's questioning of whether social work was a profession in the early 1900s (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001) and more recently in calls for greater consideration to be given to female-dominated occupations such as the allied health professions that generally do not use the control paradigms prevalent in the traditional, male-dominated professions (Maack, 1997). Evaluation is a very recently emerged knowledge-based area of work. It has been described as a transdiscipline by the Australasian Evaluation Society (2013d) and a transprofession by Scriven (2013a). These factors, along with evaluation's global community of interest, provide the opportunity to gain a unique insight into the professionalisation of a new area of work in the twenty-first century.

Despite the influence of different theoretical perspectives in the sociology of the professions presented in Paper 1, there are consistent themes that emerge. Firstly, professional associations play a role in developing a community of interest that becomes an occupational group (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995; Piemonte & Redman, 1997). Professional associations act as a representative group for an occupation to perform functions that the members could not achieve on their own, including the launch of a professional project. For this reason, the presence of a representative professional association is a necessary precursor to professionalisation of an occupation. The ability of the professional association to attract and maintain members over

time also demonstrates that the occupation meets an ongoing need for products or services. Professional associations are particularly important, as they provide a tangible demonstration that an occupation is professionalising. The professional association also plays a significant role in the establishment and implementation of the professional project for the occupation through its activities. Therefore, the viability of the professional association is essential to the successful professionalisation of the occupation. The viability of the professional association also demonstrates that a continued need exists for the occupation and that there is a community of practitioners able to respond to that need. Hence the sustainability of the professional association over time provides one measurement of an ongoing need for the service. This raises the question: **Does evaluation have professional associations?**

The professional association draws together the **workforce** of the occupation. It provides a central point for understanding the development of the workforce and its capacity to professionalise. However, as we have seen in the case of several professions, for example, Spencer's (1896) account of the medical profession and Macdonald's (1995) depiction of accountancy, professional associations start life with a broad membership and a pluralist workforce. As the membership grows and the knowledge is refined, the membership focus is narrowed. In some cases, such as the medical profession (again see Spencer, 1896) specialisation develops within the profession and is accommodated through the professional association. In other cases, membership is withdrawn from some groups (for example, the separation of pharmacists and barbers from the medical profession, see Spencer, 1896). Professional workforces share some characteristics. Members are highly skilled, tertiary-qualified and self-identify as members of the profession (Larson, 1977). The literature also suggests that the profession should be a fulltime career (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Macdonald, 1995). In addition, if the workforce is addressing an ongoing need of the state (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995), it should be sustainable and able to adjust to changing economic conditions. This raises the following question: **What are the characteristics of the evaluation workforce?**

The professional association plays a key role in protecting the integrity of its members and building the confidence of clients by publishing codes and guidelines of **ethics** for members. While ethics have been used to demonstrate the moral superiority of professions and protection of the general public against unfettered democracy (Durkheim, 1957), alternative views suggest that ethics provide a degree of surety for clients where services are so specialised that those outside of the profession could not judge the quality of the service or where the service is largely intangible until the product or service is delivered (Macdonald, 1995). For evaluation this raises

the following question: **To what extent do ethical codes or guidelines published by evaluation associations protect the interests of clients and the general public?**

Essentially, professions are offering a knowledge-based service to the market. To demonstrate that practitioners are competent in this knowledge, professions usually have some form of **regulation**. To encourage support for regulation, the process must deliver some advantage to those registered. This is usually some form of improved market position (in the case of voluntary self-regulation) or right to work in an area of monopoly (in the case of mandatory regulation). The voluntary registration of market researchers in Australia through the Qualified Practicing Market Researcher program (Australian Market and Social Research Society, 2014) is an example of the former and the registration requirements of the medical profession (Medical Board of Australia, 2014) is an example of the latter. For evaluation this raises the following question: **How is the practice of evaluation regulated?**

The **state** also plays a role in professionalisation. This role varies across professions, over time and under different socio-political systems. In some cases, the state creates a profession that did not previously exist (for example, auditors, see Ballas, 1998; De Beelde, 2002), or creates a market through establishing a legislative requirement (for example, accountants, see Macdonald, 1995). In other cases, the support of the state may be limited to that of a client or purchaser of the services of the profession. This raises the following question: **What role has the state played in the professionalisation of evaluation?**

Professionals are knowledge workers. The **knowledge** that professionals possess needs to be so specialised and unique that the common person could not attain it without specific training. As Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) observed, knowledge also needs to be practical, so that it can be applied to problems presented by clients. Larson (1977) suggested that professions transform this special knowledge and skills into social and economic rewards. The rewards are protected by maintaining the scarcity of the knowledge and skills through a monopoly or near-monopoly. Larson showed the importance of different systems, for example, the education system, in maintaining the social and economic position of professions by protecting the entry point to gaining knowledge. Perhaps even more so now than in the time of Larson's initial writings, knowledge has become a commodity. Hence gaining professional status is particularly important for occupations that need market closure to protect their product or service. Equally, securing market closure is not a simple task nor unique to professions. As Parkin (1971) noted, occupations with high expertise generally try to preserve the scarcity of that expertise. This raises the following question: **Does evaluation have a specialised body of knowledge?**

While traditionally many practitioners learned their profession through an apprenticeship of some sort, it is now generally accepted that the amount of knowledge required by professions in the modern era requires a **tertiary qualification**, usually through university-based training and some post-graduate internship (Volti, 2008). In addition, professional associations usually require that members have met a minimum level of competency to join (for example, see the membership requirements for the Australian Medical Association, 2014). The training and testing in the competency is invested in academia and certified through the attainment of a recognised and portable qualification. Larson (1977) identified that an advantage of this model is that academia provides the first level of vetting for would-be professionals through the selection process. The profession needs to be based on a body of knowledge that can be taught and learned (Volti, 2008). This usually requires postgraduate qualifications delivered by providers that have met some form of accreditation to deliver an approved curriculum in order to ensure consistent standards and portability of qualifications. The result is that members of a profession have a recognised tertiary qualification, usually at the postgraduate level. This raises the following question: **Is there a recognised tertiary pathway into evaluation?**

Evaluation has a unique perspective to offer the sociology of professions. Firstly, it is a young area of work. Evaluation has its foundation in the Knowledge Revolution rather than the Industrial Revolution. Secondly, Scriven advocates that evaluation is a core science, on the basis that evaluative decisions are required to accept the fundamental principles of science. This gives evaluation and its evaluative methods a unique role as validator of other sciences. Hence, rather than being on the periphery of the natural sciences, evaluation is at the core (Scriven, 2013b). While this view might be extreme, it does encourage evaluators and sociologists to consider the value base of evaluation. Finally, Heraud (1979) suggested that professions have a role as participants in the initiation and implementation of social policy and in monitoring outcomes for their clients as the end-consumers of such policy. While Heraud was referring to professions in general, this would seem an apt description of the applied sociological role of evaluation.

3.1.2 Issues of interest and research purpose

Evaluation is an area of practice that has become increasingly important as governments around the world are called to account for the economic and social value of programs delivered through public funds. Yet evaluation is not a profession. Its practitioners come from varied backgrounds, and with no qualification or registration required to be an evaluator, the quality of the products and services they produce is not assured. However, there are clear signs that evaluation is professionalising.

Research objectives

This research has two fundamental objectives:

1. to understand how evaluation has professionalised since the establishment of the first professional associations in the 1980s; and
2. to understand how evaluation may continue to professionalise in the future.

In addressing these aims, the research will answer seven questions that relate to the key areas of professionalisation identified in Paper 1:

1. Does evaluation have professional associations?
2. What are the characteristics of the evaluation workforce?
3. To what extent do ethical codes or guidelines published by evaluation associations protect the interests of clients and the general public?
4. How is the practice of evaluation regulated?
5. What role has the state played in the professionalisation of evaluation?
6. Does evaluation have a specialised body of knowledge?
7. Is there a recognised tertiary pathway into evaluation?

3.1.3 Research methodology

There is no existing body of research on professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. Therefore the methodology for this research was designed as an environmental scan of data and documents to make efficient use of information that already existed in the area and identify gaps in available information to be addressed by future research.

Using the definition of Morrison, Renfro and Boucher (1984), the principal method used was active scanning. In this definition, active scanning involves focussing attention on specific information sources that represent different views of the environment. For the purpose of this research, the environment of interest is the conduct of evaluation. Therefore the information sources used relate to the supply and demand for evaluation services. Several types of information sources were identified in the environmental scan:

- Government contracts for evaluation
- Databases of journals, university courses and published contracts
- Raw survey data of industry surveys

- Published results of industry and conference surveys
- ABS data collections
- Professional association membership statistics
- Professional association documents (including ethics guidelines, strategic and business plans, membership criteria, etc.)
- Websites and student handbooks of units and courses of study.

Generally, documentary data were coded to allow comparisons between sources. Where quantitative data were available across time periods trend charts have been created. Survey data have been reported descriptively due to a lack of random sampling and different methods of data collection and sampling between surveys. More information about the methodology for this study is provided in section 3.2 Methodology (below).

3.1.4 Practical and theoretical significance of the research

This research is the first study that examines the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia using a sociological framework. The practical significance of this is twofold. Firstly, the research reviews the professionalisation of evaluation and identifies future actions required to further enhance professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. Secondly, this research identifies a potential model of professionalisation that could be adopted by occupations professionalising. Of theoretical significance, this research demonstrates the value of integrating trait theory with the professional project to demonstrate how an occupation can plan its professionalisation. Furthermore, the research suggests that some professional goals may be necessary to professionalisation and form a core part of a professional project.

3.1.5 Overview of this research report

This chapter introduced Paper 3, which is the main research stage of this portfolio. This chapter also presented the issues driving the research, its purpose and objectives, the overview of the methodology and the practical and theoretical significance of this work. The remainder of this report is divided into four sections. The first is the methodology (section 3.2). This section provides a more detailed description of the research method, justification of the methodological framework and sources of data used. The second section is the findings (section 3.3). This presents the findings of the research on the topics related to the seven research questions: professional association, evaluation workforce, ethics, professional regulation, the state, professional knowledge, and qualifications. The third section is the discussion (section 3.4). This

section uses the findings from each of the seven topics to gauge the level of professionalisation of evaluation in each area. This section also includes a broader discussion of evaluation as an occupation as a condition of professionalisation. The final section is the conclusion (section 3.5). The conclusion presents the practical and theoretical implications of this work. The conclusion also provides an overview of the limitations of this study and an agenda for future research on this topic.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 Introduction

This section provides an introduction to the research method, including the research approach and design, and the data sources used in the research.

3.2.2 Research approach and design

There is no existing body of research on professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. Therefore, formative research was conducted using an environmental scan of primary and secondary data sources in order to provide a situational analysis of evaluation in the seven areas of professionalisation identified in Paper 1.

Environmental scanning is:

The process of taking stock and involves thorough examination of both the internal status of [a phenomenon] and the external context in which it is situated. (Keeley, 2005, p. 6)

Generally considered a futures methodology, irregular environmental scanning has application to understanding the historical and current context of a phenomenon (Lang, 1995). The environmental scan will be used to conduct a situational analysis of the program evaluation in each of the seven areas covered by the research questions.

This approach was taken to make efficient use of information that already existed in the area and to identify gaps in available information to be addressed by future research. The principal approach used for environmental scanning was active scanning (Morrison et al., 1984). Active scanning involves focussing attention on specific information sources to address predefined questions, in this case, the research questions. For the purpose of this research, the environment of interest was the conduct of evaluation. The information sources scanned therefore relate to the internal and external environments that impact on the conduct of evaluation. Several types of information sources were identified in the environmental scan:

Quantitative data

- Closed questions from survey data (where a unit record file is available)
- Published results of industry surveys
- ABS data collections
- Professional association membership statistics

Qualitative data

- Open questions from survey data (where a unit record file is available)
- Databases of journals, university courses and published contracts
- Professional association documents (including ethics guidelines and membership criteria)
- Websites and student handbooks of units and courses of study.

The qualitative data in this research report have been analysed using content analysis in order to provide quantitative data. Where a unit record file was available or constructed, quantitative data have been analysed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations.

Content analysis

Content analysis is an observational technique used to analyse text and other materials with a communicative function into meaningful units, using systematically applied rules (Aaker, Day, & Kumar, 2004). Content analysis is unobtrusive; it allows the processing of unstructured data within the social context of its production (Krippendorff, 2004), and as such it is ideally suited to use in analysis of data that may vary between states.

Conscious or unconscious messages within texts can be explored using content analysis, based on the quantification and analysis of the presence, meanings and relationships of words and concepts. Content analysis may make inferences about the authors, the audience, the culture or the historical context (Bowling, 2002). Content analysis allows the same material to be analysed in different ways for different purposes. In this Paper some materials, such as lists of statements in ethical guidelines, have been analysed in several ways, firstly, thematically to quantify the mention of specific topics, and secondly, based on the agent protected in each statement.

Content analysis is distinguished from other forms of inquiry by its focus on analysing texts, not as representations of phenomena of interest but as phenomena of interest in themselves, which must be analysed in the context of their use (Krippendorff, 2004). This is particularly important in the sociology of professions, where the literature emphasises the importance of context in the determination of the meaning of *profession* at different points in time and between different states.

Formal definitions of content analysis vary, reflecting the perspective of the definer. Krippendorff (2004) provides a functional definition of content analysis:

Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful data) to the context of the user. (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 18)

Rosengren (1998) described qualitative content analysis as including a range of methods from impressionistic and interpretive approaches to the systematic analysis of nominal data. Quantitative analysis is defined as involving the aggregation of nominal cases analysed at an ordinal, interval or ratio level. However, this division of content analysis is not universally accepted. Krippendorff (2004), while questioning the worth of such a division when the basic analysis of data is qualitative, irrespective of its later translation or ascendance into a numeric form, observed that this qualitative perspective has produced some benefits by expanding the approaches used to systematically explore texts to include discourse analysis, social constructivist analysis, rhetorical analysis, ethnographic content analysis and conversation analysis.

Theoretical Influences

Content analysis can be informed by any number of theoretical approaches, particularly those in the social sciences where content analysis has a long history of application (Mastro & Stern, 2003; Palmquist, 2004). While linguistic and cognitive approaches are commonly used in content analysis, in this Paper the sociology of professions literature is used as the theoretical basis of the content analysis.

Methodological issues in content analysis

An important aspect of content analysis is identifying the unit of interest in the analysis. This process involves identifying those elements in the data (such as words, images, agents or meanings) to be included in the analysis. It is important when selecting units that the information desired is in the actual units rather than the relationship between units, as this is not encoded into the data (Krippendorff, 2004).

The choice of the unit depends on the theoretical assumptions of the analyst and the nature and structure of the data reviewed. For example, some analysts recommend the use of sentences as the basic unit of analysis if the task is to infer meaning from written text (Gray, Kouhy, & Lavers, 1995; Milne & Adler, 1999). Conversely, other analysts suggest that a paragraph is a more appropriate unit of measurement than either a sentence or word count, as people establish and clarify meaning through paragraphs rather than smaller units of communication (Guthrie, Johanson, Bukh, & Sanchez, 2003). In this Paper, ethical statements and titles of units, courses, and contracts were used as the unit of analysis. When search engines were employed, such as when searching journals databases and articles for the presences of terms related to evaluation theory or knowledge, the title, description and key words associated with a document was the unit of interest.

Ultimately, the unit of analysis will reflect the research questions and the theory of extraction adopted. If the analyst wishes to identify emotional concepts explicit in a text, then affect extraction may be used. These concepts are usually culture- and time-sensitive and are often analysed in a quantitative manner (Palmquist, 2004). Cultural relevance is important in this Portfolio, as Paper 1 demonstrated cultural context is importance to professionalisation. Results are therefore reported separately when analysing data from different countries. The results of the content analyses reported in this text were analysed quantitatively, using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations.

Sampling in content analysis

A key issue in research design is the amount of information which will be needed to answer the research questions and whether this will necessitate the use of a census or sample. In part, this depends on how the population is defined and the purpose of the research (Lacy, Riffe, & Randle, 1998).

While sampling in quantitative content analysis allows the analyst to reduce the population of interest to a manageable set (Krippendorff, 2004), if the intent is to make inferences back to the population, the question of what constitutes a sufficient sample to provide the required level of certainty must arise (Lacy et al., 1998). In this Paper, all content analyses were conducted using a census to avoid issues of sample reliability.

Coding

Once chosen, the text must be reduced or coded into manageable content categories suitable for analysis. Coding is essentially a process of selective, directed reduction. By reducing the text to categories consisting of a word, set of words or phrases, the analyst can focus on, and code for, specific words or patterns that are indicative of the research question. Coding can also create durable images of what may be transient phenomena (such as spoken words) (Krippendorff, 2004; Palmquist, 2004).

As with other research methods, the selection of codes guides the ways and extent to which inferences can be drawn from the data. Codes need to be specific enough to provide meaningful data and broad enough to cover the possible range of options of interest (Palmquist, 2004).

In this Paper, code frames were developed based on the literature reviews presented in Papers 1 and 2. The text was then reviewed to ensure the code frame was accurate.

Reliability and Validity

The data included in content analysis may vary greatly, from written texts and documents, to online resources, images conversations or even numbers, so long as they have meaning for an

audience. Irrespective of the subject matter, as a research method, the same issues of reliability and validity required of other research methods apply to content analysis.

To ensure results are replicable, and to allow inferences to be made from the data, content analysis needs to demonstrate both reliability of the methods and accuracy of the results. The reliability of content analysis refers to three factors: stability, reproducibility and accuracy. Stability is the ability of coders to consistently code the same data in the same way over a period of time. Reproducibility is the ability of a team of coders to classify category membership in the same way. Accuracy is the extent to which the results of the content analysis are related to a standard or norm statistically (Krippendorff, 2004; Palmquist, 2004).

Krippendorff (2004) argued that reliability is essentially a function of the level of agreement achieved by coders or instruments. Using a measurement theory concept of reliability, Krippendorff suggests that a research procedure is reliable when it responds to the same data in the same way, irrespective of its conditions of implementation. Similarly, in their efforts to advance the scientific rigour of content analysis, Rourke and Anderson (2004) also concluded that quantitative content analysis is a form of testing and measurement. They argued that this positioning of quantitative content analysis makes available a range of procedural tools upon which to base inferences and interpretations that are theoretically and empirically defensible. They argued that using existing measures would contribute to the accumulating validity of that measure, and contribute to a growing database of normative data. An example of this approach can be seen in Guthrie and Petty's (2000) review of annual reports for the 20 largest Australian listed companies, using a framework developed by Sveiby (1997, in 2000).

Other methods to increase the reliability in coding and analyses of data using content analysis include establishing a reliable coding instrument with well-specified decision categories and decision rules, and demonstrating the effectiveness of coder training by showing that coding decisions made on a pilot sample have reached an acceptable level of agreement – usually around 80% (Gottschalk, 1995; Guthrie et al., 2003; Milne & Adler, 1999).

Krippendorff (2004) also noted that the members of a sample in content analysis are usually past events, recorded or transcribed in some way to record the *voice* of the author in perpetuity (for example, television commercials, radio transcripts, websites, focus group discussion transcripts, judicial findings). In such cases, where the initial event is no longer available for scrutiny, there is an assumption that the available record is accurate. The focus of reliability is on the level of agreement about the uses, interpretation and content of the given subject matter within the community of interest. Irrespective of the approach taken to reliability, the fundamental issue is

the same: the ability to gain the same results under different conditions, whether those conditions involve different researchers, different samples of text or different measurement tools.

The validity of concept classification in content analysis, particularly when a concept spans multiple words or units (for example, the identification of a passage as violent, if it pairs the expression of a negative emotion with a physical act, such as ‘angrily threw’), is usually accomplished by the use of multiple classifiers to arrive at an agreed-upon definition of the category (Palmquist, 2004). In implementing such an approach, Guthrie, Johanson, Bukh and Sánchez (2003) further suggested that disclosure categories should be well-grounded within the relevant literature and clearly defined.

In contrast to reliability, validity cannot be established by repetition or duplication but must link to sources of ‘truth’ external to the research for validation (Krippendorff, 2004). The validity of content analysis refers to the relationship between the categories of analysis and the conclusions. To generalise the results to theory, validity must be established (Palmquist, 2004). However, it should not be interpreted that reliability and validity are unrelated. Indeed, if data are found to be unreliable, their chance of being valid is considerably reduced. Conversely, establishing reliability does not guarantee validity (Krippendorff, 2004).

In this Paper, the author conducted all coding and analysis. While this eliminates unreliability related to differences in results between coders, it introduces the possibility of systematic error. As previously mentioned, code frames were developed through a review of data and consideration of the issues raised in the sociology of professions literature. For content analysis with small samples the coding was conducted using Microsoft Word Excel, with each item reviewed and assigned a code by the researcher. All results (100%) were reviewed for accuracy by the researcher. For coding of data from databases, coding was automated using search term functions. In these cases, at least 10% of results were reviewed by the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the search. Where necessary, search terms were revised to achieve more accurate results.

Implications for this research

Content analysis can be informed by any number of theoretical approaches, particularly those in the social sciences, where content analysis has a long history of application. This study uses the sociology of professions as a theoretical framework for the content analysis.

In selecting the unit of analysis in content analysis it is important that the content contains the item of interest. The choice of the unit depends on the theoretical assumptions of the analyst

and the nature and structure of the data reviewed. This research uses naturally occurring passages of text as the unit of analysis: for example, ethical statements, subject titles, contract descriptions.

A key issue in research design is the amount of information which will be needed to answer the research questions and whether this will necessitate the use of a census or sample. While it may not be practical to conduct a census of the population of interest due to the number of observations involved, sampling must demonstrate representativeness to allow inferences to be drawn back to the population. This research employs a census approach of an identified population. Restriction was placed on the population identification rather than the sample selection. For example, to identify units and courses in evaluation from Australian universities, the population of universities was identified as those Australia universities that are within the top 400 universities worldwide, as determined by the Australian Education Network in 2013 (Australian Education Network, 2013). This reduced the population to 18 universities. From this population, a census of subject units and courses were searched, using the word *evaluate* (and its derivatives). There are no inferences drawn to the broader population of Australian universities. This approach to identification of the population and sampling is provided in section 3.2.4 Detailed description of primary data sources (below).

Coding is used to reduce data into manageable units for analysis. In this research, code frames were developed through the reviews of literature in Papers 1 and 2 and a review of raw data. Frames were iteratively revised to ensure accuracy. Where search terms were used for automated coding (such as in searching journal databases) 10% of the population was reviewed by the researcher to ensure that the search returned results as intended and that all items of interest in the sample were identified. All results (100%) were reviewed for accuracy.

Reliability in content analysis is usually based around the level of agreement achieved by coders or instruments. In this study, there is a single researcher. While this may reduce the impact of factors such as training and interpretation of between coders, it does introduce the possibility of systematic bias because the analysis is directly from one point of view. To some extent, using a theory to guide coding and analysis helps protect against this bias. In addition, the method descriptions provide sufficient details to allow the research to be replicated. Where available, automated search functions were used for coding in order to limit any possible bias introduced by the researcher. This approach is likely to underrepresent the phenomena of interest, as coding was based on a narrow list of terms rather than a search for meaning. This approach was adopted to reduce the impact of the researcher in interpreting that meaning. It is also

acknowledged that the research is a first exploratory step into the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia, presented here for further discussion and research.

3.2.3 Overview of data sources

The data sources used in this research have been divided into primary and secondary data. Primary data include those sources where the researcher directly collected and analysed the data for the purposes of this research. Secondary data include those sources where the data were primarily collected for another purpose but available to this project in either aggregated or unit record form.

To provide comparison to the Australian context, data on evaluation were initially sought from Australia and three other English-speaking jurisdictions: Canada, the UK and the US. Data were primarily available from the US and Canada. Data available from the UK were limited to local association membership figures and some association documents. In the case of Australia, some data include New Zealand, as the local professional association, the AES, represents Australasia. Where possible, AES data were filtered to Australia residents. New Zealand was not included in this international comparison as New Zealand residents account for just 10% of AES members (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013g) and there was a lack of alternative information available about evaluators in New Zealand.¹

The data sources available by country are listed in Box 1, followed by a more detailed description of the method for the primary data sources. How these data sources have been used to answer the research questions is depicted in Table 1.

¹ In addition to the AES, New Zealand evaluators can join the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA). However, the ANZEA does not publish data on member profiles, membership surveys or information such as codes of ethics.

Table 1: Sources used to address research questions

	AES survey data	Review of AusTender panel and contracts	Review of university programs and units	Review of membership criteria for associations	Review of ethics guides	Conference survey data	CES survey	Association membership data	Conference sponsorship data	Review of evaluation journals	Review of first publication
Does evaluation have professional associations?	✓							✓			
What are the characteristics of the evaluation workforce?	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			
To what extent do ethical codes or guidelines published by evaluation associations protect the interests of clients and the general public?	✓			✓	✓						
How is the practice of evaluation regulated?	✓			✓							
What role has the state played in the professionalisation of evaluation?	✓	✓							✓		
Does evaluation have a specialised body of knowledge?	✓									✓	✓
Is there a recognised tertiary pathway into evaluation?	✓		✓			✓	✓				

Box 1: Data sources by jurisdiction

Australia/ Australasia:

Primary

- AusTender data on awarded evaluation panel / Standing Offer Notices from All Active and Retired Agencies contracts between the period January 2008 and January 2014.
- AusTender data on evaluation contracts awarded from All Active and Retired Agencies contracts between the period January 2008 and January 2014.
- Review of Australian university courses and units in evaluation.

Secondary

- Data on awarded evaluation contracts by the Department of Health and Ageing reported in annual reports between 2000 and 2005 (C. Reed & Spicer, 2006).
- Membership numbers and characteristics reported in AES annual reports (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2011a, 2012a).
- AES survey data (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a), provided de-identified in SPSS format.
- Surveys of attendees to the AES international conferences in 2011 and 2012 (Turner, 2011, 2012).
- Reports from the conference organiser for the AES international conferences in 2011 and 2012 to the AES board (McLeod & Duda, 2012).

Canada:

Secondary

- Survey of members of the Canadian Evaluation Society (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2004).
- Survey of evaluators in Canada (Borys, Gauthier, Kishchuk, & Roy, 2005).
- Canadian Evaluation Society membership figures (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2011).

United States:

Secondary

- Surveys of attendees to the AEA International conferences in 2002 and 2004 (Mason et al., 2005; Swindler et al., 2002).
- Survey of AEA members in 2001 (American Evaluation Association, 2001).

United Kingdom:

Secondary

- UKES membership figures (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2013b).

International:

Primary

- Review of membership criteria for AES, AEA, CES and UKES.
- Review of ethical guidelines from AES, AEA, CES and UKES.
- Review of first publication of evaluation journals
- Review of first publication of evaluation methods and theories

3.2.4 Detailed description of primary data sources

This section provides more detail on the primary research methods used in this Paper.

AES survey data

The AES conducted an online survey of its members and others with an interest in evaluation in 2013. At the AES International conference held in Adelaide in September 2013, the Society offered access to this database to members. In November 2013, the researcher contacted the AES data custodian for permission to obtain a de-identified unit record file of responses to the AES survey specifically for this Doctorate. Permission was granted on 26 November 2013.

On 2 December 2013, the AES provided to the researcher a de-identified SPSS.sav file and a confidential copy of the 16-page questionnaire. This SPSS file included 326 variables and 339 cases.

The questionnaire included 73 questions. According to the information provided, AES members and others on the AES central contact database were emailed a link to an online questionnaire. The link was open, so recipients were invited to forward the email to their colleague who might have an interest in evaluation. In total, 339 people with an interest in evaluation completed a questionnaire. The number of email invitations distributed is not known, hence the response rate cannot be calculated. We do know that the AES has 894 members (2013g), and 219 of the respondents to the survey (or 89% of the sample) were current members of the AES. This gives a population response rate of 25% for this sample of the database. However, 92 respondents did not provide their AES membership status. Were the rate of membership from these non-responders to be the same as for responders, the actual population response rate would be 34%. This is in the average range for online surveys (Nulty, 2008). The sample size gives an estimated sample error of between 5.8% (for 219 respondents) and 4.6% (for 301 respondents), for a proportion of 50% at the 95% confidence interval.

As a measure of the external validity of the sample, the characteristics of the AES members responding to the survey were compared to the known characteristics of the AES membership (Table 2). The only characteristic available for this was geographic location. The two sets of results were compared using z-scores to test a subgroup against the population. Only the results for the ACT and Victoria were found to have a significant difference between the survey (subgroup) and membership figures (population). Given that historically the AES office was based in Canberra and moved in 2012 to Melbourne, it is possible that the difference in these two results reflects a changed relationship with the AES.

Table 2: Comparison of AES membership and AES members responding to the survey

Region (Base)	AES Membership figures ¹ (894)	Survey results ² (339)	Significant difference
Other NZ	2%	2%	-
Wellington	8%	10%	-
ACT	15%	8%	P >.01
NSW	20%	16%	-
NT	3%	3%	-
QLD	11%	11%	-
SA	7%	4%	-
TAS	1%	0%	-
VIC	24%	33%	P >.01
WA	7%	7%	-
Other	4%	4%	-

Source: ¹AES membership figures reported in the Annual Report (2013g)

²AES survey (2013a), filtered to AES members

Questions: H1 You said earlier you live in Australia. Which State or Territory do you live in?

H2a You said earlier you live in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Whereabouts do you live?

Three main filters were applied to this data and reported descriptively as appropriate. These are:

Australia residents: Question A2 Where do you live? ... Australia

AES members: Question E7 You said you have been a member in the last few years, to the best of you knowledge, is your membership up to date? ...Yes

Evaluators: Question B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation? ...Designing or conducting evaluations

Limitations

The AES survey data are accepted as a self-selecting, purposeful sample. As no expectations of random selection are held of the data, statistical analysis has not been performed on the data. In addition, as the link to the survey was not password-protected (so that evaluators could forward the survey link to their colleagues in evaluation), it is not possible to assert that all respondents only completed the survey once, although a review of data did not identify any obvious repetition in qualitative response or patterns of responses to open ended questions. Furthermore,

as this survey was not constructed specifically for the purpose for which it is used here, the analysis of the data has been limited. For the purposes of this research, it is not intended that the results apply to a broader population other than the respondents.

The survey results are presented throughout this report.

AusTender data on evaluation contracts awarded

The publically available AusTender database (www.AusTender.gov.au) was searched for awarded consultancy contracts from All Active and Retired Agencies, published between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2012. This five-year period was selected as contracts are only consistently publically available from the 07/08 financial year onward (AusTender, 2013).

A review was conducted of project descriptions contained in the AusTender database in order to identify the appropriate terms to be used to search the database for contracts that relate to evaluation. This clerical review identified that three terms were consistently used for these projects: evaluate (and its derivatives), review and consult (and its derivatives). Consult was also used for contracts that did not appear to include evaluation. For this reason, the search terms were limited to review and evaluate (and their derivatives).

The results were downloaded to Microsoft Excel for analysis and charting. In total, AusTender published notifications for the award of 18,643 contracts for consultancies during this period (AusTender, 2012). Consultancies, the category which includes evaluation tenders, accounted for just 5.5% of all awarded published contracts. In total, 2,994 consultancy project titles were identified that met the selection criteria. This is 16% of consultancy contracts.

The results of this analysis are presented in section 3.3.5 Role of the state in evaluation (below).

Limitations

One limitation of this analysis also reflects a broader issue with how the AusTender contacts system records evaluation projects. Evaluation contracts are not easily identifiable within the AusTender database. This is because of inconsistency in coding contracts. Evaluations can be coded under numerous categories. Table 3 demonstrates 19 different categories that have been used to code evaluation contracts within the AusTender system².

² This information is presented as an example. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of potential codes.

Table 3: AusTender categorisation of evaluation contracts

Contract number	Project title	Agency	Category	Contract End Date
CN224418	Development of DIAC Evaluation Framework	Department of Immigration and Citizenship	Accounting and auditing	30-Jun-09
CN526532	Development and implementation of an evaluation framework for suicide prevention activities	Department of Health and Ageing	Business intelligence consulting services	31-Jul-13
CN248710	Services for Phase 2 Evaluation of the Community Partnerships for the Human Rights Program	Australian Human Rights Commission	Community and social services	30-Jun-10
CN354317	To Conduct a Summative Evaluation of the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists & General Practitioners Program	Department of Health and Ageing	Comprehensive health services	31-Mar-11
CN1032781	Evaluation of the Malaria Control and Prevention Community Trust Fund	AusAID	Disease prevention and control	31-Oct-12
CN184427A1	Evaluation of the Residential Medication Management Program	Department of Health and Ageing	Drugs and Pharmaceutical Products	31-Dec-09
CN373522	Independent monitoring and evaluation services for the Coordinated Veterans' Care Program	Department of Veterans' Affairs	Economic or financial evaluation of projects	30-Jun-14
CN162089	AusLink Evaluation	Department of Infrastructure Transport Regional Development and Local Government	Economics	30-Jun-09
CN285501	Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Evaluation of Operational Effectiveness	Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts	Environmental management	31-May-10
CN205817A1	Evaluation of the Medication Review Accreditation Incentives Program	Department of Health and Ageing	Healthcare services	30-Nov-09
CN113921	Evaluation of Indigenous Solution Broker	Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts	Human resources services	20-Jun-08
CN98443	Provision of Evaluation of Humanitarian Settlement Services	Department of Immigration and Citizenship	Humanitarian aid and relief	5-Sep-08
CN164537	Market analysis and evaluation of SAN storage solutions	Federal Court of Australia	Information technology consultation services	31-Mar-09
CN451342A1	Evaluation of indigenous justice programs	Attorney-General's Department	Project management	14-Oct-13
CN176099	Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework	Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts	Public administration and finance services	6-Jun-09
CN98536	Provisions for evaluation of human settlement location	Department of Immigration and Citizenship	Regional or location studies for projects	12-Sep-08

Contract number	Project title	Agency	Category	Contract End Date
CN572632	Dad and Partner Pay evaluation	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	Research programs	31-Mar-14
CN427154A2	Evaluation of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transition	Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations	Strategic planning consultation services	31-Dec-13
CN166289	Provision of independent evaluation	Department of the Environment Water Heritage and the Arts	Water resources development and oversight	30-Apr-09

Source: AusTender (2013)

The AusTender database does not have a separate code for evaluations. In addition, government budget schedules do not include evaluation as a line item, so that there is no external source against which to validate this data. Therefore the data derived from AusTender provide an estimate only of published contracts using the specified search terms. As evaluations that used the term *consult* (and its derivatives) were excluded, it is likely that the figures reported from the AusTender data underrepresent the size of the evaluation market.

Similarly, as there was little information available on each project in the AusTender database, no attempt was made to further screen contracts on eligibility, because this had the potential to introduce further error.

AusTender data on awarded evaluation panel / Standing Offer Notices

Establishing panels of government suppliers streamlines procurement for fund administrators by providing a supply of pre-qualified and capable evaluators. A search was conducted of the AusTender database (www.AusTender.gov.au), for Standing Offer Notices from All Active and Retired Agencies contracts between January 2008 and January 2014 that used the terms previously identified: *review* or *evaluate* (and its derivatives).

This search identified the establishment of the following evaluation panels:

- 2005-2014 Panel of Evaluators and Reviewers managed by the Department of Health
- 2006-2010 Audit and Evaluation Services Panel managed by Centrelink
- 2006-2008 Expert Evaluation Panel managed by the Department of Industry
- 2007-2011 Social Policy Research and Evaluation Panel managed by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

- 2007-2011 Social Policy and Evaluation Panel managed by the Department of Family and Community Services
- 2008-2011 Panel of Consultants for Evaluations and Audits of Indigenous Programs managed by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO)
- 2008-2016 Research, Evaluation and Analysis Panel (REAP) managed by the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations Research, Evaluation and Analysis Panel
- 2009-2012 Panel to provide economic analysis and modelling and/or expert input into evaluations, across a range of disciplines for the Department of Industry
- 2009-2012 Monitoring and Evaluation Support Services Panel managed by AusAID
- 2010-2016 Health Services Evaluation Panel managed by the Department of Health
- 2010-2015 Participatory Planning, Research, Evaluation & Training Panel managed by the Department of Social Services
- 2011-2014 Panel for the Provision of Health Economic Services managed by Department of Health
- 2012-2015 Panel of Program Evaluation Service Providers managed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection
- 2013-2016 Research, Evaluation and Analysis Panel managed by Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations

The results of this analysis are presented in section 3.3.5 Role of the state in evaluation (below).

Limitations

There are several limitations to this method of identifying panels relevant to evaluators. The first is the use of the terms *evaluate* and *review* may be too restrictive and exclude panels that are of relevance to evaluators. The second limitation is that panels may be extended without being recorded in the AusTender database. It is not possible to identify whether or not this has occurred. These limitations do not affect the quality of the data provided but rather their completeness.

University courses and units in evaluation

To determine the role of universities in producing evaluation graduates in Australia, a search of the myfuture course database (myfuture, 2012) was conducted using *evaluate* and its derivatives as the key search term. myfuture is a joint initiative of the Australian Government and state and territory governments to support intending students to identify courses of study of interest to them (myfuture, 2013).

This search identified two universities that offered a total of four postgraduate courses which included evaluation in the title. These were:

- The University of Melbourne's Master of Evaluation and Post Graduate Certificate of Evaluation through the Melbourne Graduate School of Education
- Flinders University's Master of Education (Educational Research, Evaluation and Assessment) and Graduate Certificate in Public Health Research and Evaluation.

No undergraduate evaluation courses were identified in the myfuture search.

A further search was conducted of the websites of Australia's top universities as determined by the Australian Education Network (2013). In 2013, 18 Australian universities were in the top 400 universities worldwide (Table 4).

A search was conducted of each university's website in 2013 for courses that contained the term *evaluate* (or its derivatives). This search yielded no additional courses.

As there are just four formal courses of a study available in Australia, units of study offered in 2013 at each of the 18 universities were searched for those with titles that included *evaluate* (or its derivatives). Evaluation is a term that has application outside of policy and program evaluation. Units were excluded if the subject matter related to any of the following topics:

- Individual clinical outcomes
- Individual educational outcomes
- Marketing or advertising campaigns
- Structural integrity in engineering or building applications.

Unit lists were accessed online, through student or faculty handbooks. Units were coded against faculties (see Appendix C). In total, 166 units relating to evaluation were identified.

The results of this analysis are reported in section 3.3.7 Evaluation qualifications (below).

Table 4: 2013-2014 Times Higher Education World University Rankings - Australian University Rankings

Aust rank ¹	University	World rank
1	University of Melbourne	34
2	Australian National University	48
3	University of Queensland	63
4	University of Sydney	72
5	Monash University	91
6	University of New South Wales	114
7	University of Western Australia	168
8	University of Adelaide	201-225
9	The University of Newcastle	251-275
10=	Macquarie University	276-300
10=	Queensland University of Technology	276-300
10=	University of Wollongong	276-300
13=	Deakin University	301-350
13=	Murdoch University	301-350
13=	University of South Australia	301-350
13=	University of Technology Sydney	301-350
17=	Charles Darwin University	351-400
17=	Swinburne University of Technology	351-400
17=	University of Tasmania	351-400

Source: Australian Education Network (2013)

¹Where universities were ranked within the same band they are listed alphabetically

Limitations

There are several limitations with this method. Firstly, because the population of units across the universities was too high to manually identify relevant courses, search functions were used to reduce the number of units to those that included the term *evaluate* (and its derivatives) in the unit title or description. These results were then individually reviewed based on the information available online from the university. It is possible that search functions varied in accuracy and fields searched between universities. In addition, it is also possible that some units in the field of evaluation did not include that search term within the unit description.

Review of membership criteria for evaluation associations

In February 2014 the membership criteria for the AES, AEA, CES and UKES were collated from membership application forms and policy documents available online from each of the professional associations.

The results are reported descriptively in section 3.3.1 Membership of professional associations (below).

Limitations

A limitation with this component of the research is the generality of evaluation association membership criteria. No evaluation associations have prerequisite criteria for membership or identify groups that are ineligible. Membership is generally stated as open to all with an interest in evaluation.

Review of ethical guidelines and codes of ethics

The ethical guidelines and codes of ethics from the AES, AEA, CES and UKES were analysed in two different ways. Firstly, a content analysis was conducted of the statements in the documents to determine the nature of the direction they provide to evaluators and the consistency of this advice across sources. Secondly, a content analysis was conducted to identify the agent (other than the evaluator) protected by each statement. This section provides a description of the method used for each of these content analyses.

Thematic analysis

The ethical guidelines from the AES, AEA, CES and UKES were compared to identify the nature of the direction they provide to evaluators and the consistency of this advice across sources. The sources used for this analysis were:

- The AEA's Guiding Principles for Evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2004)
- The AES's Code of Ethics (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h) and Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)
- The CES's Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2012; Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)
- The UKES's Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

In total, there were 79 items across these ethics guidelines. The number of standards in each document varied, as did the domains in which they were presented:

- The AEA Guiding Principles for Evaluators has 25 standards, broken into five domains:
 - systematic inquiry
 - competence
 - integrity/honesty
 - respect for people
 - responsibility for general and public welfare.
- The AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations has 24 standards, broken into 3 domains:
 - commissioning and preparing for an evaluation
 - conducting an evaluation
 - reporting the results of an evaluation.
- UKES Guidelines has 19 standards, not broken into content domains³.
- CES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct has 11 standards, broken into three domains:
 - competence
 - integrity
 - accountability.

To allow comparison between guidelines, the individual statements and existing domains were examined to develop a common code frame. This resulted in the identification of four common domains:

- Values (including integrity, honesty, fairness, recognising IP, and consent)
- Competency (including skill, quality and commitment to professional development)
- Project management (including process issues such as contractual and working arrangements)

³ However, UKES produces different sets of guidelines for different stakeholder groups, including evaluators, commissioners, participants and self-evaluations United Kingdom Evaluation Society (2003).

- Reporting and communication (including dissemination of findings, communication with clients).

Each statement was then coded into one of these domains. Where a statement had potential membership of more than one domain the best fit was selected.

Agent protected

The statements in the AES Code of Ethics were reviewed to identify the agents intending to be protected. As all statements related to the conduct of the evaluator, and the focus of ethics is on the protection of others, the evaluator was not included as an agent in this analysis. In addition, some items did not include specific reference to an agent being protected and it was not possible to reasonably infer the intended agent protected by the statement. For example, statement eight:

8. *Evaluators should be accountable for their performance and their product.* (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h)

This statement could intend to protect a range of agents, including the commissioner, the general public or the subject of the evaluation. In such cases, these statements were coded as Not Specified (NS). Agents identified as specifically protected by the AES Code of Ethics were:

- society at large / public interest
- evaluators (including non-members)
- professional association, including its reputation, policies and procedures
- other members of the professional association
- commissioner
- evaluation participants
- other stakeholders⁴
- special interest groups.⁵

This list of agents was used as a frame to code statements. One statement could be coded against multiple codes⁶. This same process was then used to code the ethical statements in the ethics documents for the AEA, CES and UKES.

⁴ Other stakeholders included non-specific references to *stakeholders* and *contributors*.

⁵ Special interest groups included sub-samples of the population by race, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual ability, religion, socio-economic or ethnic background.

Additionally, to provide a comparison with a traditional profession within the same country, the Australian Medical Association Code of Ethics was coded, using this same process and compared the AES ethics documents. The AMA Code of Ethics was also compared to the aggregated analysis of AEA, CES and UKES ethics documents.

The results are reported in section 3.3.3 Evaluation ethics (below).

Limitation

The thematic and agent content analysis were conducted by the researcher. It is possible that an alternative coder would make different decision related to the development and application of code frames to the data.

Review of first presentation of published journals in evaluation

To determine when evaluation journals first became available, the Monash University A-Z eJournal database was searched using the term *evaluation*. The database includes 7,402 entries. The search returned 79 results of which 17 were rejected for not containing dates and 24 were rejected for being out of scope (such as not referring to journals or identifying journals on other topics). This identified 62 journals. Using the Monash University A-Z eJournal database and web searches, the date of first publication for each journal was identified.

The results are reported in section 3.3.6 Evaluation knowledge-base (below).

Limitations

The population for this analysis is the Monash University A-Z eJournal database. It is not possible to know the extent to which this database represents the population of all journals in evaluation. However, as this database includes journals available through numerous independent and publishers' journal databases, the results are likely to be comprehensive.

Review of first mention of evaluation methods and theories in the American Journal of Evaluation

The publication of theories and methods in evaluation journals were reviewed to identify the first inclusion of different methods and theories of evaluation in the literature. To select the appropriate journals to be used in this analysis, the journals associated with each of the main English-speaking evaluation associations were reviewed for the years available, total articles published and impact factor, using the Monash University online eJournal A-Z database as a portal (Table 5). Based on this review, it was decided to use the American Journal of Evaluation

⁶ It is important to note that this analysis is designed to measure the agent/s protected by a statement, not the degree of protection.

(AJE) to conduct this search because of its longevity, the number of articles published and its high impact score. Including more than one journal was not desirable in a date-based analysis because this has the potential to produce multiple dates that reflect the year of establishment of the journal and differences in market and editorial preference.

Table 5: Comparison of evaluation journals

Journal	AES Australasian Journal of evaluation	AEA American Journal of Evaluation	CES Canadian Journal of program evaluation	UKES Evaluation
First year available ¹	1986	1981	1986	1995
Last year available ¹	2013	2014	2014	2014
Total articles available ¹	134	2113	666	697
Impact factor ^{2, 3 7}	NA	1.13	0.36	0.82

Source: ¹Monash University (2014)

²SCImago (2007)

³Based on average citations per document in a two-year period

A list of search terms to cover evaluation methods and theories was identified based on the items included in the AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013b, question B8). Additional items were added to cover an extended range of topics or provide more focussed terms for searching. To improve the presentation and analysis of data the search terms were split into two groups around method and theory. For the purposes of this paper, *methods* include tools and techniques and *theories* include models and approaches to evaluation. There is some overlap between these two groups. The categorisations applied have been based on popular use. The source and categorisation of search terms is shown in Table 6.

For each item, an *all fields* search was conducted of the AJE and results sorted by date. From each search, 10% of articles were reviewed online to ensure that the results returned were accurate. In the case of *process evaluation*, a systematic error was identified. Upon searching all cases, five articles were removed as out of scope as the term was split across sentences ('...process. Evaluation...').

The results are reported in section 3.3.6 Evaluation knowledge-base (below).

Table 6: Development of search list for evaluation methods

AES survey items	Search list
Method	
Most Significant Change	Most Significant Change
Inferential statistics, analysis of 'big data'	Inferential statistics
Case study methods	Case study methods
Economic evaluation methods (e.g., Cost Benefit Analysis, Social Return on Investment)	Cost Benefit Analysis Return on investment
Action research	Action research
Longitudinal studies	Longitudinal studies
Other quantitative methods (e.g., surveys)	Quantitative methods
Other qualitative methods (depth interviews, focus groups etc)	Qualitative
Ethnography	Ethnography/ ethnographic
Indigenous methodologies	-
Theories	
Experimental design	Experimental design
Participatory evaluation	Participatory evaluation
Realist evaluation	Realist evaluation/ realist synthesis
Developmental evaluation	Developmental evaluation
-	Empowerment evaluation
-	Formative
-	Fourth generation evaluation
-	Impact evaluation
-	Needs analysis
-	Outcome evaluation
-	Process evaluation
-	Program logic
-	Summative

Limitations

This method has several limitations. Firstly, the need to search using specific terms that appear in the text may have reduced the number of articles citing a topic, as some topics may be described using multiple terms. Secondly, it was not possible to identify the centrality of the method or theory to an article; thus any mentions were accepted. Finally, inclusion of methods and theories may be influenced by editorial preference and cannot be used to determine incidence or prevalence in the marketplace.

3.3 FINDINGS

This section presents the research findings on each of the seven research questions.

3.3.1 Membership of professional associations

Professional associations act as a representative group for an occupation in order to perform functions that members could not achieve on their own. Professional associations play an important role in professionalisation through establishing the occupation as a collective social agent that can initiate a professional project. Professional associations also can provide the infrastructure that supports the development and implementation of professionalising activities such as educational programs, voluntary regulation programs, quality standards and ethical guidelines. Paper 2 identified that evaluation associations were established from the 1980s. This section examines the membership of those associations.

Introduction to professional associations

In the context of this paper, it is important to clarify the use of the term *professional* in professional association. Merton (1958) described a professional association as a membership-based organisation of practitioners who have judged one another as competent and who join together to perform social and political functions they could not perform as individuals. Thus *professional* is used in a colloquial sense to imply skill. Furthermore, as both Macdonald (1995) and Spencer (1896) observed, the emergence of professional associations occurs when an occupation is forming to distinguish it as a distinct area of work. Many occupations have professional associations to represent their collective interests, but are not necessarily professions.

Furthermore, the establishment of a professional association does not mean that the membership is unified. Heraud (1979) suggested that it is more likely that the professional association manages and mediates between segments of the community with diverse interests and views. Within professional associations there is a hierarchy whereby the elite members of the group establish the objectives for the occupation and a plan for their achievement. The individual members of the association may not be completely aware of these objectives but are sufficiently aligned such that their work supports the achievement of the group objectives (Macdonald, 1995).

While state bodies usually control formal licencing, professional associations usually self-regulate members' conduct to ensure public confidence in the quality and availability of services through the profession (Piemonte & Redman, 1997). This may involve providing a licence to practice, the

conduct of qualifying examinations, the establishment and enforcement of standards of practice, and political lobbying on behalf of the group (Heraud, 1979).

In 2006, Elliot Stern, the former President of the International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation (IOCE), demonstrated how evaluation associations (both formal and informal) function at the level of the profession and state:

Evaluation associations, societies and networks are also a means to ensure the independence and authority of evaluators. Whether in stable or emerging political systems, values of openness, democratic accountability and adaptability—the willingness to learn and improve—must always be cherished and sometimes defended. (Stern, 2006, p11)

Stern's language focuses on evaluation as a profession. Independence is a focus of legal definitions of a profession (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001), while authority was included by trait theorists such as Greenwood (1957, 1972). The perception that evaluators hold the state to account for values of openness, democratic accountability and adaptability revives the Durkheimian view that professions protect the public from the state (see Durkheim, 1957). The focus of the IOCE on supporting democratic accountability is interesting, given that the IOCE has a focus on developing countries (Quesnel, 2006) and that only 18% of developing countries were governed through a free election process in 1999 (Boix, 2011).

Membership of evaluation associations

In 2005 there were an estimated 60 evaluation associations and networks worldwide (Quesnel, 2006). Individual membership of four professional bodies included in this Portfolio for 2011/12 was as follows⁸:

- American Evaluation Association (AEA): 7,300 members (American Evaluation Association, 2012)
- Canadian Evaluation Society (CES): 2,016 members (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2011)
- Australasia Evaluation Society (AES): 1,041 members (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2011a)
- United Kingdom Evaluation Society (UKES): 153 members (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2013b).

⁸ Membership figures for the European Evaluation Association were not available and administrative staff declined requests to provide details.

There are no statistics available on the proportion of evaluators who are members of these evaluation professional associations. Additionally, there is no requirement for an evaluator to be resident in a country or region to be a member of a particular association. An evaluator may choose to have multiple memberships. Furthermore, some associations offer discounted membership to applicants who are members of other affiliated evaluation associations (Table 7).

Table 7: Fees and discount arrangements between evaluation associations

	Standard annual membership fee	Associations that receive a discount			
		AEA	CES	AES	UKES
American Evaluation Association	US\$95	NA	21%	-	-
Canadian Evaluation Society	C\$165	25%	NA	25%	-
Australasian Evaluation Society	AU\$195	-	50%	NA	-
United Kingdom Evaluation Society	£84	-	-	-	NA

Source: AEA membership details (American Evaluation Association, 2011, 2014b)
CES membership details (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2007)
AES membership details (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012c)
ANZEA membership details (Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association, 2013)
UKES membership details (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Analysis conducted on the AES survey data (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a) revealed that the likelihood of respondents paying their own AES membership fees varied by type of employment. Overall, 66% of AES members paid their own membership fees, with 34% receiving support from someone else, presumably an employer. Government and university employees were more likely to pay for their own AES membership than respondents employed in not-for-profit or private organisations (Table 8).

Table 8: Payment of AES fees by employer type

(Base)	Government (56)	Not-for-profit organisation (31)	Private company (75)	University or other educational institution (36)	Other (9)
Pay for own AES membership	70%	52%	61%	75%	100%
Someone else pays for AES membership	30%	48%	39%	25%	0%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions B4 Is this role in...? Government

F2 Who pays your AES member fees?

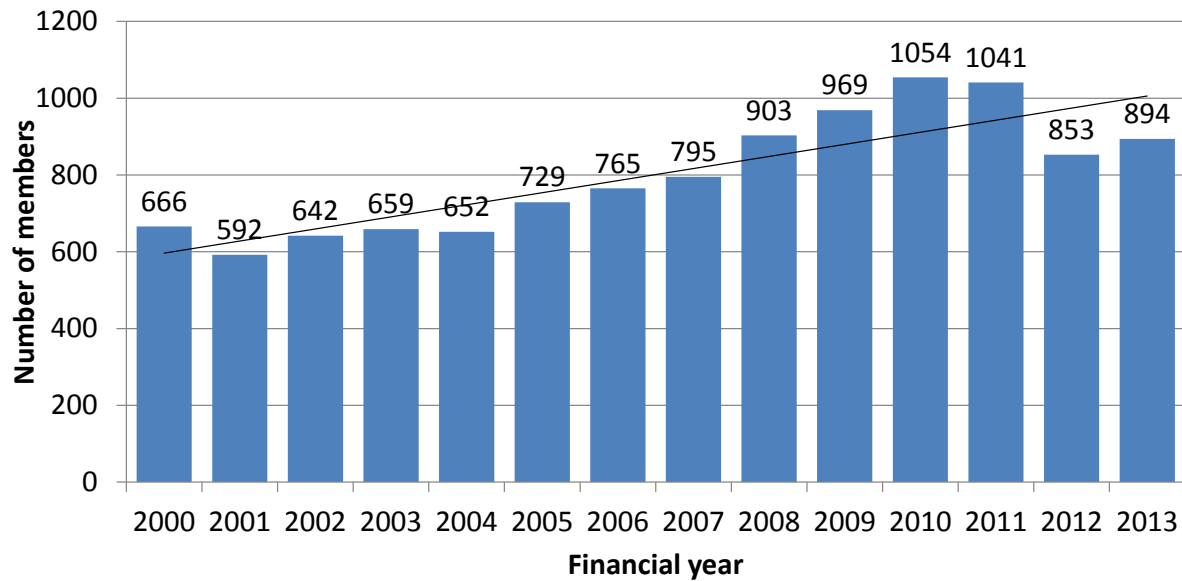
Filters Australian residents

Many evaluators are also members of other professional associations. Shadish et al. (1991) observed that evaluators from different discipline backgrounds tend to gravitate towards the associations of those disciplines. According to Shadish et al., of evaluators in the US psychologists and educators were more likely to be aligned with the AEA, economists and political scientists were aligned with the American Association of Public Policy and Management, and health researchers were more likely to be aligned with various health associations that reflect their academic training. Larson (1977) argued that the uniqueness of professions draws members together through their shared experiences to become ‘real’ communities supported through professional associations. The different discipline backgrounds and allegiances of evaluators presents a potential obstacle in drawing evaluators together as an occupational (and subsequently, professional) group; however, the AEA has demonstrated strong growth in membership since its inception. According to the AEA (2014c), its membership grew from just over 3,000 members in 2001 to over 7,700 in 2014. This is an increase in membership of over 150%. The AEA has members from every state in the US and over 60 foreign countries.

Charting the AES membership figures from 2000⁹ to 2013 showed a generally positive trend, with the number of members rising from 666 in 2000 to 894 in 2013 (an increase of 34% in 13 years) (Figure 1). It has been postulated that the dip in membership in the 2011–2012 financial year is due to a combination of factors (including significant changes to the organisation in 2011, such as a change in governance structure, relocation of the AES office, change in administration systems and appointment of a new administration team) that limited the resources available for member services during this financial year (C. Reed, 2012).

⁹ Data was not available for earlier periods.

Figure 1: Total annual AES membership



Source: Australasian Evaluation Society (2013g)

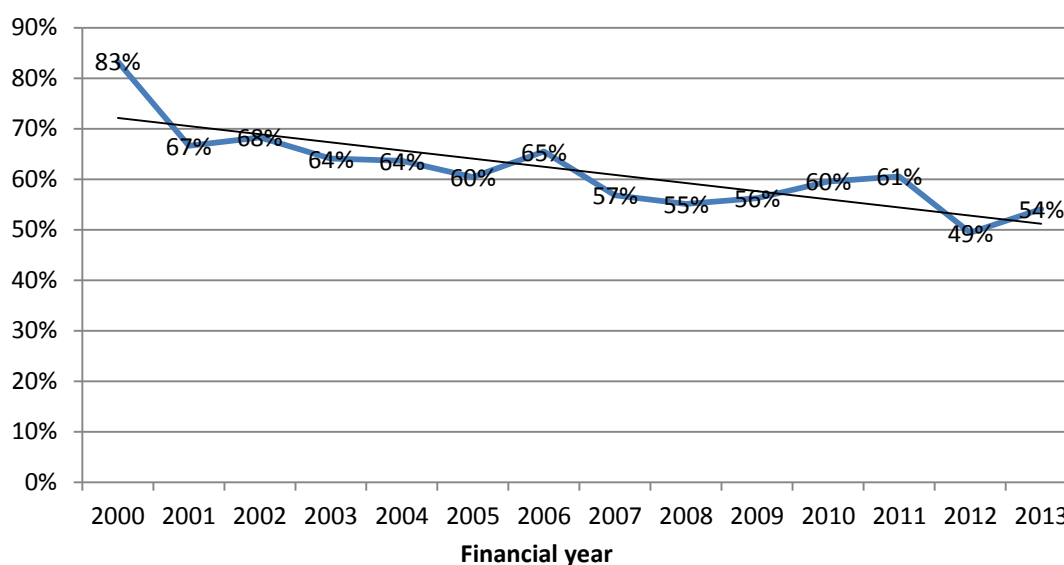
Hawkins (2006) suggested that turnover of membership has been a problem for the AES, with some members only staying for a few years then leaving the Association. While data were not available, Hawkins postulated that the membership churn reflects the movement of *occasional* evaluators in and out of the occupation. Martz (2007) suggested that the consistent growth of AES membership at least demonstrates a growing interest in evaluation and its growing importance in Australasia.

Using data from the AES Annual Report (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013g), a rate of continuing membership was constructed to identify the stability of membership over time. This rate was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Rate} = \left(\frac{\text{new members} + \text{non renewals}}{\text{non renewals} + \text{current members}} \right) \times 100$$

Plotting the results demonstrates a decline in the rate of continuing AES members since 2000 (Figure 2). The average rate of continuing members was 62%. This finding is consistent with Hawkins' (2006) view that AES membership figures are affected by occasional evaluators moving in and out of the occupation. The results also suggest that the proportion of these occasional evaluators is increasing.

Figure 2: Rate of continuing AES members



Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

There is evidence from the AES and AEA that membership of evaluation associations has been growing since their establishment. However, from the AES membership data it appears that there is a high degree of turnover in membership. This is consistent with Hawkins' (Hawkins, 2006) suggestion of a movement of *occasional* evaluators in and out of the occupation. In addition, Shadish et al. (1991) suggested that evaluators may also be members of other associations that represent their discipline backgrounds. This group may form part of the occasional evaluation membership. Thus these association members may move between occupations. For these members, evaluation may be seen as an activity associated with a particular role rather than an occupation. Some commentators, such as Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001), suggest that, to be part of a profession, members must see their occupation as a full-time, longer-term career. Under this definition, these occasional evaluators would not hold the title of professional evaluator, even if evaluation was recognised as a profession. Perhaps more importantly, this group of the workforce are unlikely to self-identify as evaluators. Self-identification is explored in section 3.3.2 Evaluation workforce (below).

The presence of an occasional workforce suggests that evaluation has not achieved occupational closure. Fundamentally, professions are 'uncommon occupations' (Larson, 1977, p. x). In a traditional model of professions, evaluation must meet the criterion for being an occupation as part of its professionalisation. Macdonald (1995) points out that an occupation is not just a social group but an active agent that must establish, maintain and work at enhancing its identity to separate it from other occupations that compete with it for members at its boundaries.

Evaluation has not yet achieved this occupational closure. This may reflect the relatively recent appearance of evaluation and its immaturity as an occupation.

3.3.2 Evaluation workforce

Fundamentally, professionalisation aims to change workforce structures to create a workforce that fits the socially determined construct of a profession for that time and in that state. From this perspective, understanding the characteristics of a workforce provides both a measure of the level of professionalisation that has been achieved and a direction for future professionalising activities. Furthermore, as shown in Paper 2, evaluation in Australia has been criticised in recent decades for lacking a skilled workforce (Mackay, 2004). This section will examine several areas related to the characteristics of the evaluation workforce, including the size of the workforce, employment characteristics, and the impact of globalisation and self-identification of the workforce.

Size of the evaluation workforce

Identifying the size of the evaluation workforce is problematic. Evaluators do not need formal credentials or registration in any country in order to practise. Hence, unlike regulated occupations, there is no central registry of evaluators that can be used to determine workforce size. This section explores several different approaches to identifying the size of the evaluation workforce from existing data sources.

Estimating evaluation workforce size based on government labour force statistics

In Australia, the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) establishes the classification of occupations. A search of the ANZSCO database revealed that there is no separate category for evaluators but there is a referral to Occupation 224412 Policy Analyst. Policy Analysts are defined by ANZSCO as those developing and analysing policies that guide the design, implementation and modification of government or commercial operations and programs (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013b). Data were not available from the 2011 census for Policy Analysts. However, data were available from the 2006 census for the previous title of the occupation: Policy and Planning Managers. This code had a national workforce of 15,072 persons (7,614 males and 7,458 females). The proportion of these workers that are evaluators is not known. In addition, as Australian Census data are self-reported, it is possible that evaluators have used other codes to describe their work. The CES online survey of Canadian members in 2003 (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2004) suggests that evaluators may not identify with an occupation that focusses on policy. Of the 689 respondents

to the CES survey, the majority described their role as researcher (26%), manager (26%) or consultant (24%), with just 15% identifying their work as relating to policy development. Other occupation codes in the Australian Census that could be seen as relating to evaluation include 224711 Management Consultant, 224712 Organisation and Methods Analyst or 272499 Social Professionals Not Elsewhere Classified. Therefore ABS data collections based on the ANZSCO do not allow estimation of the evaluation workforce size.

Estimating evaluation workforce size based on organisations requiring evaluators

In an alternate approach to estimating workforce size, Rossi et al. (2004) constructed an estimation of the size of the evaluation workforce in the US by identifying the number of organisations that required evaluative activities. The estimate derived from this calculation was 50,000 to 70,000 full- and part-time workers. Rossi et al. do not identify how the number of evaluators assigned to each organisation was determined but suggest that the figures are conservative and may actually be three times higher. There is no way of validating Rossi et al.'s estimate for the US market.

Estimating evaluation workforce size based on association membership

Another method of estimating the size of the evaluation workforce is to extrapolate from evaluation association membership numbers. While the number of members of evaluation associations is known, the proportion of evaluators that are members of evaluation associations is not known, so that membership figures alone cannot be used to estimate workforce size. Conference attendance data give an indication of the percentage of non-members of evaluation associations that attend conferences. Attendance figures for recent conferences reveal that:

- 36% of attendees to the 2012 AES International Conference were non-members (based on attendance registration forms) (McLeod & Duda, 2012).
- 10% of attendees to the 2004 AEA annual conference were non-members (based on a survey of conference participants) (Mason et al., 2005).

The proportion of non-members attending conferences is considerably different between Australia and the US. This may reflect the different methods of data collection used or market differences. The US figures are based on a survey of attendees, while the Australian figures are based on registration data. It may be that AEA members were more likely to respond to the survey than were non-members. Conference attendance data were not available for other countries or years outside those reported.

There are several limitations with using association membership figures to estimate the size of the evaluation workforce. Firstly, not all association members are evaluators. As discussed in section 3.3.1 Membership of professional associations, evaluation association members typically include commissioners and others with an interest in evaluation. Secondly the level of membership of evaluation associations within the workforce is unknown. Even in the case of association members who are evaluators, they may not have been members for their entire evaluation career. Using the data from the AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a), the date when respondents first joined the AES was compared to the years they had worked in evaluation (Table 9). This analysis demonstrated that, on average, evaluators had worked in evaluation up to twice as long as they had been a member of the AES.

Table 9: Years' experience when first joined the AES

First joined the AES (Base)	Median years in evaluation (237)
Within the 2 years	7 years
3-5 years ago	10 years
6-10 years ago	13 years
More than 10 years ago	22 years

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions B2 When did you first get involved with evaluation?

F1 When did you first join up as an AES member?

Filters Australian residents

It is therefore not surprising that the AEA found that a substantial proportion of their new members were already moderate to very experienced evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2008).

Each of the potential methods of estimating the evaluation workforce size has substantial limitations. It is therefore not possible to reliably estimate the size of the evaluation workforce from currently available data.

Employment characteristics

Risley (2006) suggested that compared to evaluators in the US, Australian evaluators come from more diverse academic and professional backgrounds and are much less likely to be associated with a university and much more likely to be employed by a government agency.

To test this assumption, employment data were reviewed for the US, Canada and Australasia (Table 10). The US employment data were based on AEA membership figures reported in Rossi et al. (2004), which potentially includes non-evaluators, as AEA membership is not restricted to

evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2014b). The Canadian data were based on reported survey results for *producers* of evaluations, that is, evaluators. To provide the most accurate comparison, the AES survey data for Australian residents were filtered to both AES members and evaluators. This demonstrated that there were no noteworthy differences between employment of AES members and evaluators in Australia. However, the results demonstrate that Australia and the US have different employment arrangements in relation to evaluation, with Australia having a higher reliance on government employed evaluators than academic evaluators. But the biggest difference between the two countries is the high proportion of AES members and AES producers who are employed by private companies. The data also reveal a similarity between Canada and Australia, with both countries having a strong reliance on government evaluators and less reliance on academic evaluators than the US. Rates of engagement of evaluators in not-for-profit and private organisations were relatively consistent across the countries.

The employment arrangements in Australia are different to both the US and Canada. While the US has a higher proportion of employment in universities, and Canada has higher employment in government, in Australia there is higher employment in private companies. This demonstrates the underlying models used in each country. The Canadian federal government has had a significant role in shaping the professionalisation of evaluation in Canada (see section 3.3.5 Role of the state in evaluation). In Australia, the government has adopted a decentralised approach to evaluation (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). With no centralised support for evaluation, supply has moved to the private sector. The US history of evaluating large-scale but short-term social programs (Rossi et al., 2004) may have fostered evaluation experience in the academic sector due to the complexities of the analyses required.

The Canadian study (Borys et al., 2005) also found that producers of evaluators were more likely to be internal to the organisation (42%) than external (26%)¹⁰ and spent an average of 57% of their professional work life working on evaluations. In addition, the Canadian producers of evaluation generally held senior roles with nearly three quarters of respondents describing their current employment role as either management (35%) or senior officer/consultant (38%). Fewer than one quarter described their role as intermediate (18%) or junior (3%).

¹⁰ Other respondents used evaluation results (15%), worked as researchers on evaluations (10%), or had other roles (7%).

Table 10: Employment of evaluators

	AES 2013 survey¹ Producers*	AES 2013 survey¹ Members*	AEA membership database² Members	CES survey³ Producers
(Base)	(194)	(234)	(883)	(647)
Government	22%	26%	13%	55%
Private business	41%	39%	18%	22%
College or university	18%	17%	36%	7%
Not-for-profit	16%	13%	17%	13%
Other	4%	5%	9%	2%
Unknown	NA	NA	8%	NA

NA denotes field not available to respondents

*Filtered to Australia residents

Source: ¹AES Survey data (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

²Membership figures reported in Rossi et al. (2004)

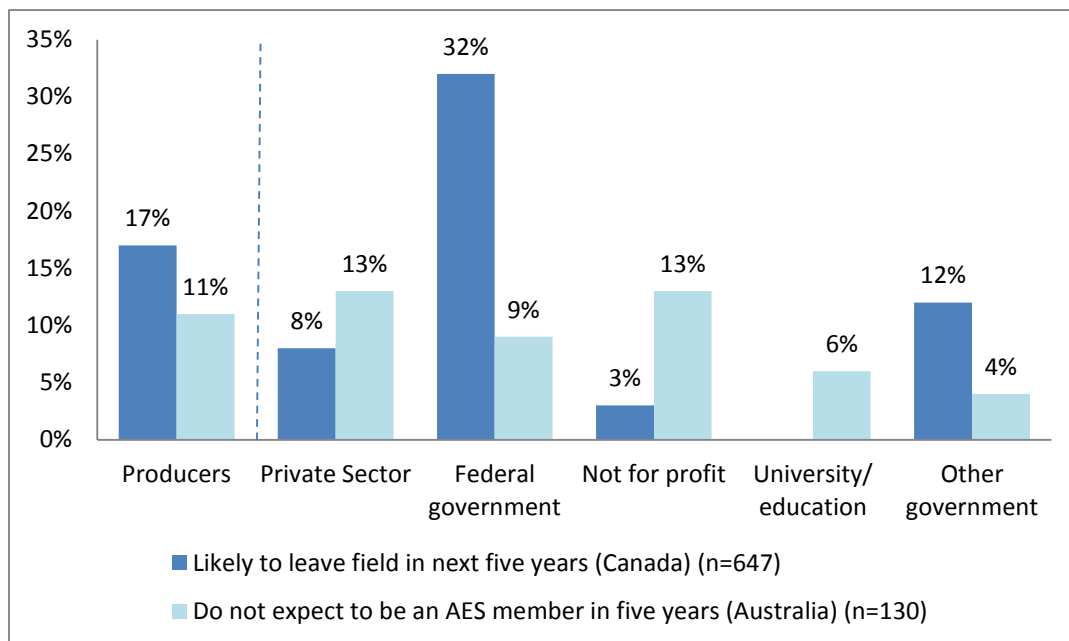
³Canada – survey results reported by Borys (2005)

Evaluation workforce retention

Workforce retention is an important issue for the sustainability of workforces that rely on highly skilled labour. Both the CES and AES surveys included questions on retention. The AES survey asked respondents their intentions about remaining a member of the AES for the next five years. The Canadian survey asked respondents about their intentions to leave the field of evaluation in the next five years. Comparing the results revealed that overall both groups were expecting low turnover in the next five years. By employment sector there was more variability in the Canadian data, with higher turnover expected in the federal government sector and low turnover in the not-for-profit sector (Figure 3).

The AES survey data were also interrogated to compare producers of evaluation with other respondents. Other respondents included commissioners of evaluations, program managers, teachers of evaluation and other people who use evaluation findings. The results show that the expected level of membership retention was consistent across groups (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Workforce retention over the next five years (producers)



Source:

Australia: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a).

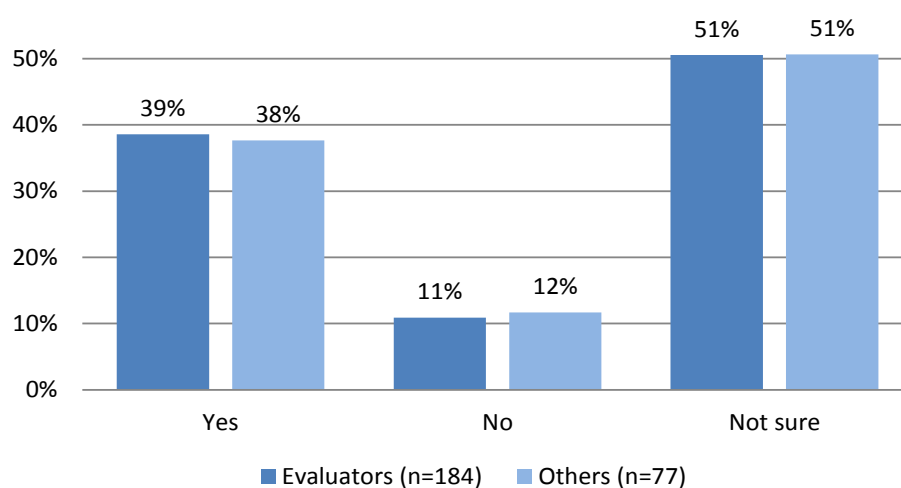
Question G1 Do you expect to be an AES member...five years from now? (Filtered to 'No').

Question B3 At present, what is your main involvement in evaluation? (Filtered to 'Designing or conducting evaluations')

Filtered to Australian residents

Canada: Borys et al. (2005, p. 25)

Figure 4: AES membership retention based on role (Australian residents)



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a).

Questions: G1 Do you expect to be an AES member five years from now?

B3 At present, what is your main involvement in evaluation?

Filter: Australian residents

Based on analysis of the AES survey data (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a), the mean age of Australian resident respondents expecting to retain their AES membership in the next five years was 46 years, compared to a mean age of 52 years for those respondents likely to leave the AES. This is likely to reflect the higher probability of older people retiring within the next five years.

The overall rate of expected turnover within the evaluation workforce was quite low in both Canada and Australia. For those Canadian producers who were considering changing careers, the CES survey may help explain some of this movement. The survey found that satisfaction with the career pathways was not high among Canadian evaluators, with just 43% satisfied with their opportunities for promotion within the evaluation sector (Borys et al., 2005). This is a perennial problem for senior workforces. A bigger issue for the workforce is likely to be pathways into evaluation. As Borys et al. (2005) found in Canada, many evaluators (70%) become evaluators without conscious intent. Applying this to Australia, without a protected pathway into evaluation, evaluation as an occupation is dependent on career movements in other occupations. If these occupations improve their workforce retention or if the supply to these workforces is reduced, evaluation may lose this pathway for transprofessional entry.

In addition, data available about the demographic characteristics of evaluators in Australia, the US and Canada suggest evaluators are more likely to be female, over forty years of age and have a high level of experience in evaluation (Table 11)¹¹. In Australia, 49% of respondents to the AES survey were aged 50 years or older. While this potentially presents issues for the sustainability of the evaluation workforce, it may be a reflection of the success of evaluation in attracting experienced workers from other occupations. Analysis of the AES survey data revealed that the mean age of Australian resident evaluators describing their level of evaluation expertise as beginner was 32 years. The older age of the evaluation workforce may reflect the need for more experienced practitioners, some of whom have had a career in another occupation before moving into evaluation. Longitudinal data are not available to ascertain the stability of the age of the workforce over time.

¹¹ Conference surveys for the AES (Turner, 2012, Turner, 2011) and the AEA (Mason et al., 2005, Swindler et al., 2002) do not collect personal characteristics of attendees, such as age and gender. Similarly, publicly available membership data for these two organisations and the CES do not include these characteristics.

Table 11: Demography of evaluators

	(Base)	AEA members survey ¹ (2,619-2,652)	AES survey ² (252)	Canada survey ³ (861)
Gender	Female	67%	73%	60%
	Male	33%	27%	40%
Age range	20s or 30s	33%	29%	Under 30 6%
	40s	24%	22%	30-54 71%
	50s	29%	34%	55+ 24%
	60s or older	14%	15%	
Years' experience in evaluation	Less than 5 years	33%	26%	Mean of 21 years.
	6-10 years	24%	19%	Breakdown not available
	11-15 years	16%	23%	
	16 or more years	27%	32%	

Source: ¹American Evaluation Association (2008)

²Australasian Evaluation Society (2013a), filtered to Australian residents

³Borys et al. (2005)

Impact of globalisation

Globalisation is emerging as an important issue in the professionalisation of workforces. Working within large organisations, professionals are increasingly taking on global roles (Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2012). While a number of studies have focussed on globalisation of professions and the corporate globalisation of personal service firms (Boon & Flood, 1999; Morgan & Quack, 2005), evaluators bring a different perspective to what Hannerz (2002) termed 'transnationalism'.

Analysis of data from the AES survey revealed that 85 evaluators (or 25% of the sample) worked in at least two countries at the time of the survey. This group included 67 respondents who were Australian residents. Further analysis of this sample of Australian respondents who worked locally and overseas revealed that they were more commonly working in overseas countries that were not developed according to the UN classification¹² (United Nations Statistics Division, 2013) (Table 12).

¹² The UN classification is based on common classifications in applied to countries and regions, as there is no agreed protocol for distinguishing the level of development between countries or regions (United Nations Statistics Division, 2013).

Table 12: Other regions where Australian evaluators currently work

Country or region of work (other than country of residence) ¹ (Base)	Percentage of Australian residents working offshore (283)
Least Developed	
Pacific Islands	7%
Subtotal least developed nations	7%
Developing	
Papua New Guinea	5%
Other Asia	4%
Africa	4%
South America	1%
South East Asia	9%
Subtotal developing nations	23%
Developed	
Europe	2%
North America	2%
New Zealand	3%
Subtotal developed nations	6%
Do not work outside of Australia	
Subtotal do not work outside of Australia	76%

¹Evaluators could work in multiple regions. Percentages are based on the number of respondents

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: A2 Where do you live?

A3 Where does your evaluation work take you?

In addition to their work in Australia, on average these evaluators worked in 2.4 countries.

Analysis of this data by the total number of survey responses revealed that:

- 23% of Australian respondents worked in developing countries or regions
- 7% of Australian respondents worked in the least developed countries or regions
- 6% of Australian respondents worked in other developed countries or regions.

Analysis of the primary roles of these transnational Australian respondents revealed that they were most likely to be designing or conducting evaluations (75%) (Table 13).

Table 13: Role of Australian respondents by work location

Role (Base)	Work outside Australia (66)	Do not work outside Australia (213)
Designing or conducting evaluations	75%	68%
Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects	6%	8%
Running programs or projects that get evaluated by other people	0%	4%
Reading / using evaluation reports and findings	6%	7%
Teaching evaluation methods or theory	6%	2%
Studying or learning about evaluation methods	3%	6%
Other	3%	4%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: A2 Where do you live?

B3 At present, what is your main role in evaluation?

Working outside of Australia was most common for respondents who were either employed by a private company (45%) or a not-for-profit organisation (20%) (Table 14).

Table 14: Employer of Australian respondents by work location

Employer (Base)	Work outside Australia (66)	Do not work outside Australia (213)
A private company	45%	27%
A not-for-profit organisation	20%	16%
Government	14%	35%
A university or other educational institution	11%	20%
Other	11%	2%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: A2 Where do you live?

A3 Where does your evaluation work take you?

B4 Is this role in...

Company employees were mostly likely to be sole traders or working for small companies (Table 15). This may be because one of the main funders of overseas work at the time, the former AusAID, had established a remuneration framework for consultants that was quite low (Tapp, 2011). Therefore larger companies with higher overheads and higher charge-out rates may have been less likely to apply for AusAID funding.

Table 15: Company size of employer for Australia respondents by work location

Company size (number of employees) (Base)	Work outside Australia (30)	Do not work outside Australia (58)
Just me, sole trader	47%	19%
1-5	27%	28%
6-20	20%	36%
21-100	7%	10%
100+	-	7%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: A2 Where do you live?

A3 Where does your evaluation work take you?

B4 Is this role in...a private company

B5c How many employees does this company have?

The global motility of evaluators has implications for how power inequity is managed between donor and recipient countries for foreign aid. As evaluation in Australia is not regulated, the monitoring of the quality of the evaluation services is the responsibility of the practitioner and the client.

As Heraud (1979) described, professions mediate the relationship between social policy and its ultimate beneficiaries, through participating in the initiation of social policy and monitoring its effects. Certainly evaluators, including those working in developmental evaluation, are demonstrating Heraud's professionalism. If we accept Heraud's definition, then evaluation is the quintessential profession, because evaluative tools, methods and knowledge are required to monitor social policy. Furthermore, professions as a social construct are built on the notion that there are inequities in power between occupations and those that are most privileged have the title *profession*. This level of privilege requires some safeguards to protect the client and general public from abuse. When a western workforce is engaged in evaluating programs supporting less developed nations this raises particular concerns about how these inequities in power are managed in a non-regulated system. In addition, evaluation has at its core *valuing*. In cross-country evaluation, how differences in value between the two states are addressed is an important consideration.

Professional self-identification

Evaluators are drawn from a range of backgrounds and professional affiliations. Much evaluation practice is sector specific, evolving out of the unique characteristics of the sector. In addition,

some evaluations are conducted by academics, social and market researchers, management consultants and subject matter experts, among others (C. Reed & Spicer, 2006).

The different interests and affiliations of evaluators may affect the cohesion of evaluation as an occupational group¹³. A survey of practicing evaluators in Canada (Borys et al., 2005) found that just 45% of producers felt they belonged to a community of evaluators. This may also reflect the broad range of roles of evaluation association members. A survey of AEA members found that just 39% considered their main professional activity to be evaluation and 15% identified themselves as researchers (Rossi et al., 2004) (Table 16).

Table 16: Professional identification¹⁴

	AES 2011 conference survey (Sydney)¹	AES 2012 conference survey (Adelaide)²	AEA membership database³	Canadian study⁴
(Base)	(323)	(230)	(883)	(861)
Evaluator	37%	39%	39%	68%
Researcher	18%	25%	15%	10%
Policy analyst	7%	4%	NA	NA
Project officer / project manager / consulting	16%	12%	10%	NA
Manager / Administration	11%	9%	10%	NA
Other	11%	11%	27%	22%

NA denotes field not available to respondents

Source: ¹Turner (2011)

²Turner (2012)

³Rossi et al. (2004)

⁴Borys et al. (2005)

There are no directly comparable figures available about the self-identification of evaluators in Australia. However, there are data available from the survey of attendees at the AES International Conferences in 2011 and 2012, which found that just over one-third of attendees described their occupation as evaluator (Turner, 2012). This suggests that people who have a significant enough interest in evaluation to attend a conference or join a professional association may still not identify their primary occupation as evaluator.

¹³ According to Larson (Larson, 1977) professions are first occupations.

¹⁴ This question was not asked in the Canadian CES or Australasian AES studies.

In its recent survey, the AES used a slightly different classification system (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a). The AES survey asked respondents to identify their main role in evaluation. This could be quite different to their occupation or main role at work. Analysis of this survey found that most respondents (69%) were involved in designing or conducting evaluation. Other roles of respondents in evaluation included:

- 7% commissioned or contracted out evaluation projects
- 6% read or used evaluation reports and findings
- 5% were studying or learning about evaluation methods
- 3% ran programs or projects that were evaluated by other people
- 3% taught evaluation methods or theory
- 4% had another role
- 2% were not currently involved with evaluation.

Implications for professionalisation of evaluation

Without inclusion as a separate occupation in the ANZSCO data collection set, and no other central structures, it is not possible to reliably estimate the size of the evaluation workforce in Australia. Estimates of workforce size are also hampered by the potential for evaluators to identify with other professions and consider evaluation to be one of their roles rather than their occupation.

While available workforce data suggest that evaluation has a mature workforce, given that the average age of beginner evaluators is over 30 years, this does not necessarily present a problem in workforce sustainability. Longitudinal data are required to determine the stability of the age of the evaluation workforce over time.

That some practitioners do not self-identify as evaluators, or may work part-time in an evaluation role, supports the conclusion that evaluation has not achieved occupational closure and that some practitioners may see evaluation as a role rather than an occupation. This presents difficulties for professionalisation, as these different practitioners may not form a cohesive community of interest with common goals and aspirations for the occupation of evaluation.

3.3.3 Evaluation ethics

Ethical conduct has been seen as among the core defining features of professions by sociologists – none more so than by Emile Durkheim, who claimed that ethics and independence enabled professions to maintain order and protected democracy (Durkheim, 1957). After Durkheim, the focus has been more on ethics as part of a regulative process that protects the state from misuse

of monopoly or restricted trade by professions (Greenwood, 1972). This is a moral protection that does not have the same burden of proof applied to legal protections that may be covered in the contract for service between a professional and a client or other protections provided by law.

Members of the traditional professions, such as medicine and law, largely worked as sole traders or in small firms which afforded them considerable control over the content and economic circumstances of their work. This decentralisation of practitioners grew strong local professional communities, which used informal methods of socialisation to enforce norms of professional ethics (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Ethics have a role here, providing explicit rules to govern the conduct of members of a professional association and develop shared values for members that transcend competition in the market place.

For occupations like evaluation that do not have formal admission pathways or regulative control, ethics can serve an important function, protecting commissioners, practitioners and the general public from poor quality and unethical practices. This is particularly important in evaluation, as the quality of the evaluation may not be fully assessed until near the completion of a project, with the delivery of a report or other outputs. Thus ethics provides another layer of quality assurance for a product that is somewhat intangible during the conduct of the work, even though the evaluator may work closely with the commissioner.

Internationally, professional organisations representing evaluators have developed ethical guidelines or equivalent documents for the conduct of evaluations. In some cases, specific documents are developed for different stakeholders (for example United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003). In most cases the guidelines are more generic and designed to be applied across a range of evaluation stakeholders, evaluation methods, context and subject matter (for example American Evaluation Association, 2004; Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j; Canadian Evaluation Society, 2012).

Ethical instructions provided to evaluators

The ethical guidelines from the AEA, AES, CES and UKES¹⁵ were compared to identify the nature of the direction they provide to evaluators and the consistency of this advice across sources.

The number of standards in each guideline varied, as did the domains in which they were presented.

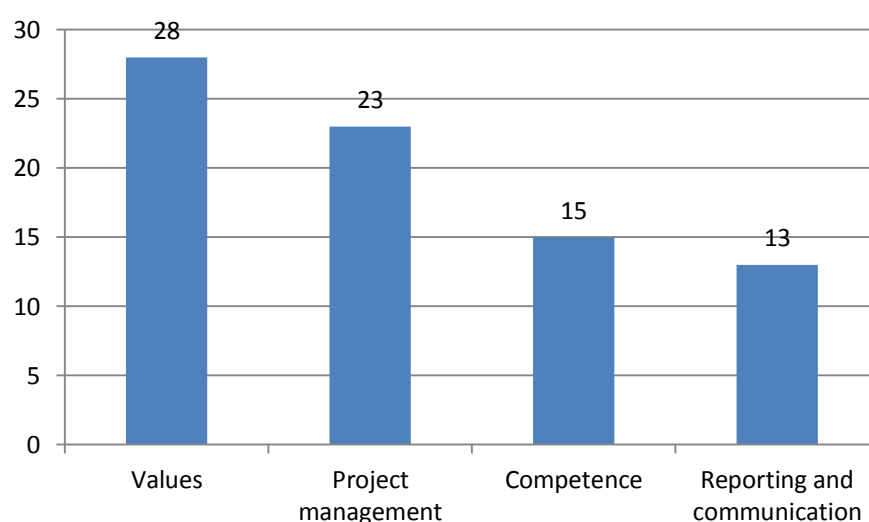
¹⁵ For UKES, the Guidelines for Evaluators were used in this analysis (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

In total, there were 79 statements across these guidelines. To allow comparison between guidelines, the individual statements and existing domains were examined to develop a common code frame. This resulted in the identification of four common domains:

- values (including integrity, honesty, fairness, recognising IP, and consent)
- competency (including skill, quality and commitment to professional development)
- project management (including process issues such as contractual and working arrangements)
- reporting and communication (including dissemination of findings, communication with clients).

Each statement in the guidelines was then coded into one of these domains. Where a statement had potential membership of more than one domain the best fit was selected. Given that the focus of the documents reviewed was on ethics, it is not surprising that the values domain had most statements (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Evaluation association ethics guidelines: Total items by domain



Source: Based on content analysis of the:

Guiding Principles for Evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2004)

Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)

Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)

Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

It is surprising that a greater number of items is devoted to project management in evaluation than competence, although this may be due to the separate coverage of competence through documents such as the North American Standards (Yarbrough et al., 2011).

Reviewing statements by the associations (Table 17), it can be seen that the AES and AEA have a higher proportion of statements in the value domain than in other domains, while UKES gives a higher proportion of statements to project management. CES gives equal emphasis to project management and competency. While these differences no doubt reflect the slightly different purposes of the documents, these are the primarily documents guiding members in ethical evaluation practice.

Table 17: Comparison of professional codes of ethics for evaluators (by publisher)

Base (total number of items)	AES ¹ (24)	CES ² (11)	AEA ³ (25)	UKES ⁴ (19)
Values	38%	18%	44%	32%
Project management	33%	36%	12%	42%
Competence	8%	36%	32%	5%
Reporting and communication	21%	9%	12%	21%

Source: Based on content analysis of the:

¹Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)

²Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)

³Guiding Principles for Evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2004)

⁴Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

The evaluation associations examined demonstrated different priorities in evaluator behaviour. Interesting, for the AEA, which was heavily involved in the development of the Program Evaluation Standards (Yarbrough et al., 2011), and the CES, which has the only evaluator credentialing system (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2013), both had a higher proportion of ethical statement in the competency domain. This suggests that the focus of ethical statements may reflect the broader priorities and emphases of these associations.

The Australasian Evaluation Society's Code of Ethics

In addition to the Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations, the AES also has a Code of Ethics. The AES is the only evaluation association reviewed that publishes a Code of Ethics. While the AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations provides ethical directions for the practice of evaluation that can be adopted by organisations or individual (members and non-

members), the Code of Ethics provides specific ethical requirements for members (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013e).

The AES Code of Ethics includes 18 items (see Appendix 3B for a full list). Of these, nine relate to conduct within the evaluation community, including the professional body, its members and the field of evaluation:

- AES and its policies

1. When commissioning, conducting or reporting an evaluation, members should strive to uphold the ethical principles and associated procedures endorsed by the AES in the Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations.

10. Members should at all times act in ways that maintain, promote and enhance the aims, objectives and reputation of the AES.

13. In the course of their professional activities, members are entitled to state their membership of the AES, offices held, and awards received. Beyond this, any use of the name and logo of the AES, or claims of AES endorsement of activities and events, should only be made with the approval of the Board.

16. Members should utilise the resources of the AES with due care, and the Executive Officer should act in accordance with the policies and role statements determined by the Board.

17. Members involved in making decisions for or providing advice to the AES should identify and declare any potential conflict of interest associated with such decisions or advice.

18. In establishing the AES policies, members and the Board should have due regard to the reputation and objectives of the AES

- Other AES members

14. Members have diverse backgrounds, and the range of their needs, interests and contributions should be respected in terms of their perspectives.

15. Members should not disclose or allude to privileged information about other members without their express permission.

- Field of evaluation

12. Members should only use reasonable criticism and should not damage the professional reputation, practice or prospects of others in the field of evaluation.

The statements in the AES Code of Ethics were reviewed to identify the agent/s intended to be protected by each statement. As all statements relate to the conduct of the evaluator, and the focus of ethics is on the protection of others, the evaluator was not included as an agent in this

analysis. In addition, some items did not include specific reference to an agent being protected and it was not possible to reasonably infer the intended agent protected by the statement. In such cases, these statements were coded as Not Specified (NS). Agents identified as specifically protected by the AES Code of Ethics were:

- society at large/public interest
- evaluators (including non-members)
- professional association, including its reputation, policies and procedures
- other members of the professional association
- commissioner
- evaluation participants
- other stakeholders¹⁶
- special interest groups.¹⁷

This list of agents was used as a frame to code statements. One statement could be coded against multiple codes¹⁸.

This coding revealed that the highest proportion of the statements in the AES Code of Ethics (33%) related to protecting the AES as an organisation (including its reputation, policies and procedures) (Figure 6). Next most frequently mentioned were non-specified stakeholders of the evaluation and other members of the AES (each 11%). Only one statement (6%) specifically related to the general public, considering the interests of the general public in an evaluation.¹⁹

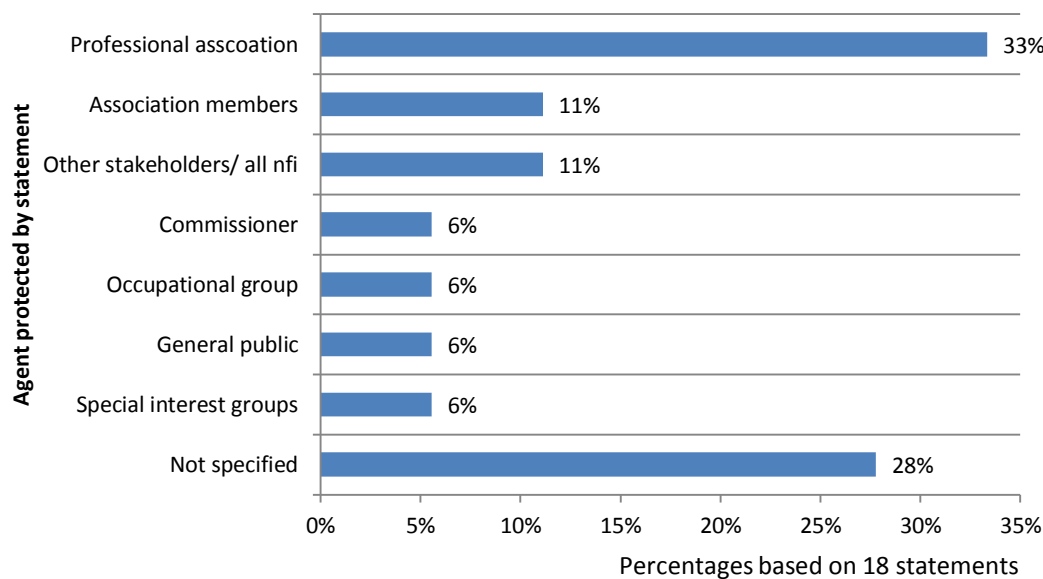
¹⁶ Other stakeholders included non-specific references to *stakeholders* and *contributors*.

¹⁷ Special interest groups included sub-samples of the population by race, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual ability, religion, socio-economic or ethnic background.

¹⁸ It is important to note that this analysis is designed to measure the agent/s protected by a statement, not the degree of protection.

¹⁹ Statement 2. 'Members should consider the interests of the full range of stakeholders in their evaluation work, including the broader public interest, and in particular, the potential impacts of differences and inequalities in society' (p. 2) (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h).

Figure 6: Agent benefiting from each statement in the AES Code of Ethics



Source: Based on content analysis of the AES Code of Ethics (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h)

Weissman (1984) suggested that overemphasis on the role of an association, a guild or union would serve to reduce the credibility of an altruistic claim. For the AES, where the Code of Ethics provides high emphasis on self-protection, this could affect the credibility of a claim for professional status, if a traditional model of professionalism was applied, where altruism has high value. Extending this concept, over-emphasis on self-protection could also be counter-productive to the purpose of the AES Code of Ethics, which includes promoting the AES as a trusted organisation:

Through this Code, the AES aims to promote ethical evaluation practice, support member rights, and maintain the AES as a trusted organisation within the field of evaluation in Australasia.
(Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h, p1)

Similarly, Maack (1997) emphasises the importance of the client relationship in determining a claim for professional status in more progressive views of professions. Again in this area the AES Code of Ethics provides little protection to commissioners of evaluation, with just one statement (or 6% of all statements) directly protecting the interests of evaluation commissioners.

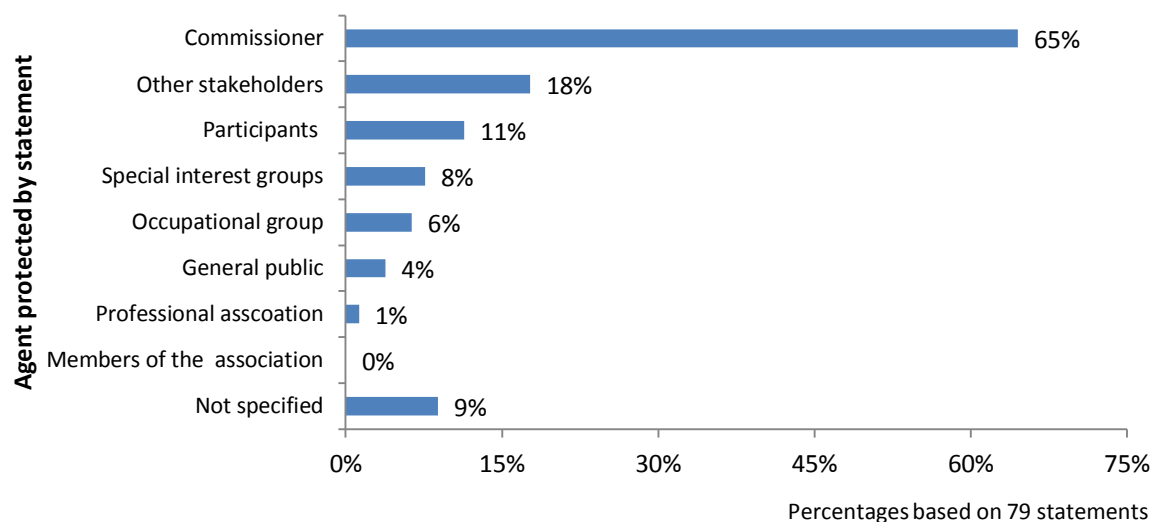
Agents protected through guidelines for the ethical conduct of evaluations

To determine the intended beneficiary/ies of statements in the ethical guidelines used by evaluation associations, these documents were recoded based on the agent (if any) protected by

each statement. The same procedure previously described for the AES Code of Ethics was applied.

Across the guidelines used by AES, AEA, CES and UKES, most statements (65%) protected the interests of the commissioners (Figure 7). Dependent groups, such as evaluation participants (i.e., research participants), special interest groups and the general public were directly protected by 20% of statements. Other stakeholders were protected by 18% of statements. Vested interests such as the professional association as an organisation and members of the association were specifically protected by just one statement.

Figure 7: Agent/s benefiting from statements in AEA AES, CES and UKEs ethical guidelines



Source: Based on content analysis of the:

Guiding Principles for Evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2004)

Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)

Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)

Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

Examining the agents protected by statements (Table 18) revealed that the AES was the only association to have a statement protecting its own organisation. Additionally, while all associations gave primary protection to the interests of commissioners, the CES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct had the highest proportion of statements protecting commissioners (82%).

Table 18: Agent/s benefiting from statements in ethical guidelines

(Number of statements)	AES ¹ (24)	CES ² (11)	AEA ³ (25)	UKES ⁴ (19)
Commissioner	67%	82%	64%	53%
Other stakeholders	17%	-	28%	16%
Participants	17%	-	16%	5%
Special interest groups	13%	9%	8%	-
Occupational group of evaluators	17%	-	4%	-
General public	-	-	4%	11%
Professional association	4%	-	-	-
Other members of the association	-	-	-	-
Not specified	4%	9%	4%	21%

Source: Based on content analysis of the:

¹Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)

²Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)

³Guiding Principles for Evaluators (American Evaluation Association, 2004)

⁴Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

Comparison with traditional professions

Comparison of guidelines and codes for ethical standards between evaluation associations provides an understanding of values and their priorities within the global evaluation community. While the strong focus on protecting the interests of commissioners of evaluation seems consistent with expectations of professionals, there is no actual evidence to support this conclusion. Similarly, the focus of the AES, through both of its ethical documents, seems to overemphasise the protection of the association. To explore these issues a comparative view is required.

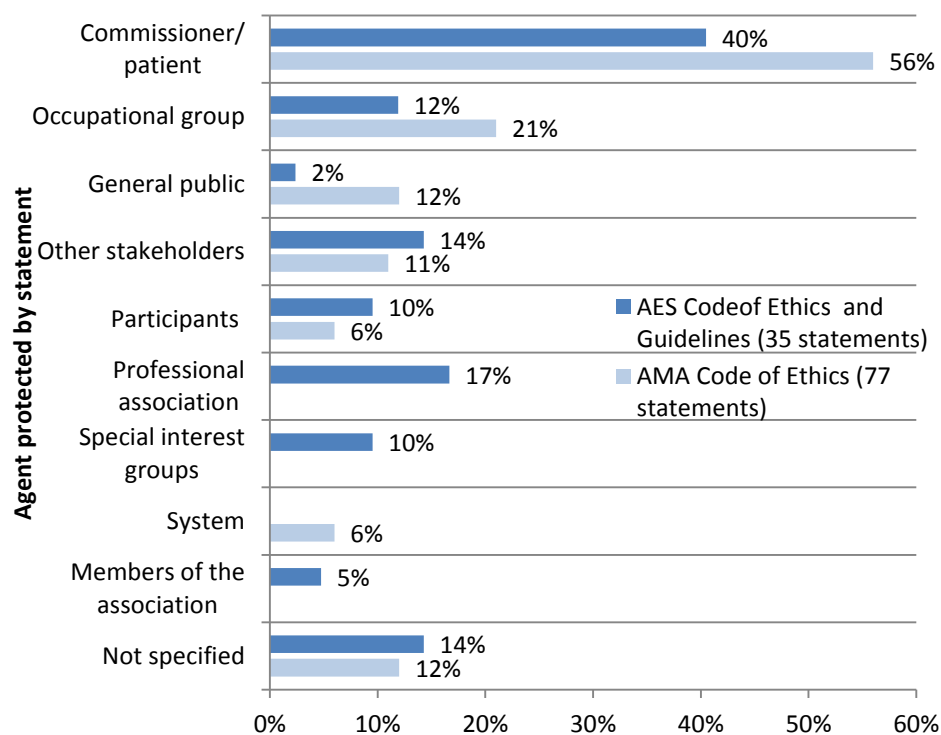
The two most recognised professions are medicine and law (Larson, 1977). Medicine, law and evaluation share a common work structure, where commissioners or clients are not necessarily employers. However, only medicine and evaluation use scientific methods of inquiry to generate evidence-based knowledge that contributes to both theory and practice. In addition, the law has the unique requirement to protect a social construct (justice) that is given effect through a social institution (the legal system). This creates unique ethical issues and relationships for the legal profession. For these reasons, medicine was chosen as a preferred ethical comparison to evaluation.

We know that professions respond to different political and social contexts (Larson, 1977), and thus the comparison was restricted to Australia. In Australia, the peak body for providing ethical

directions to doctors is the Australian Medical Association (AMA), which produces a Code of Ethics (Australian Medical Association, 2006). To avoid semantic differences in the naming of documents, the AMA Code of ethics was compared to a combined AES Code of Ethics and AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Figure 8).

A greater proportion of statements in the AMA Code of Ethics was focussed on protecting the commissioner/patient, the occupational group, the general public and the health care system. The AES ethical documents had a greater focus on internal ethics, such as protecting the professional association and the members of the association.

Figure 8: Comparison between AMA and AES ethics statements



Source: Based on content analysis of the:

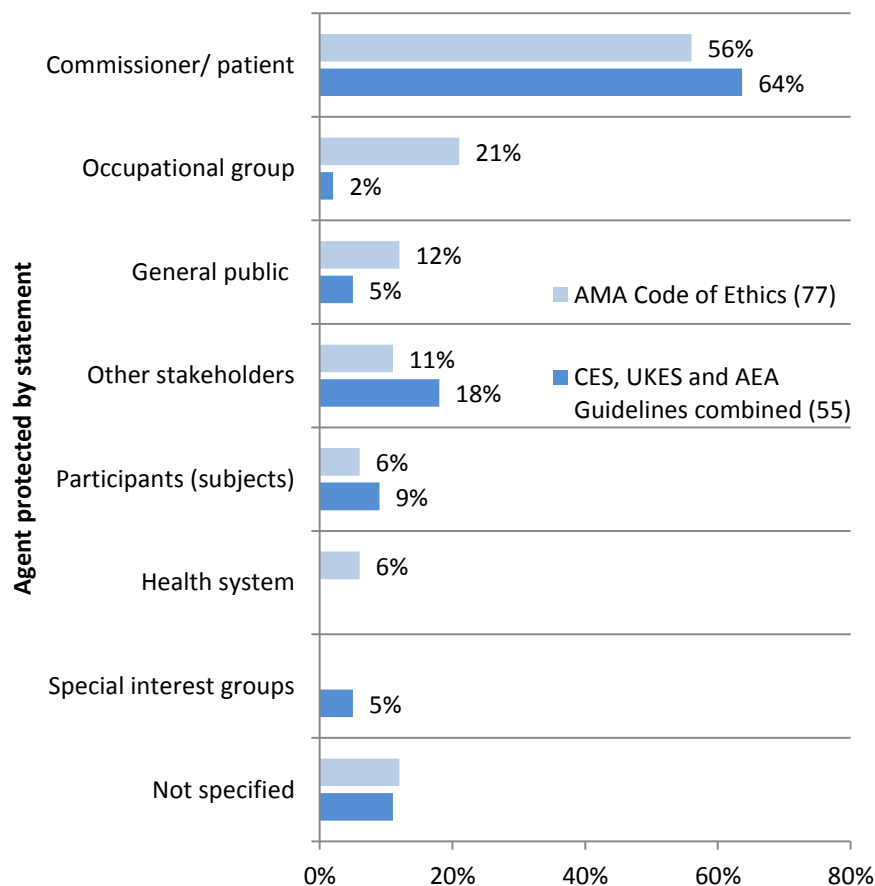
AES Code of Ethics (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h)

AMA Code of Ethics (Australian Medical Association, 2006)

To determine if the differences observed between the AMA Code of Ethics and the AES ethics documents were also evident with the other evaluation associations from other countries, the AEA, CES and UKES ethical guidelines were compared to the AMA Code of Ethics (Figure 9). While the AMA and evaluation associations had similar emphasis on protection of the

commissioner or patient (56% compared to 64% respectively), the AMA gave a much stronger focus to the protection of the occupational group (21% compared to 5%).

Figure 9: Comparison between AMA Codes of Ethics and Guidelines from the AEA, the CES and the UKES20



Source: Based on content analysis of the:

Code of Ethics (Australian Medical Association, 2006)

Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j)

Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (Canadian Evaluation Society Ontario Chapter, 2012)

Guidelines for Good Practice in Evaluation (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2003).

The differences between the AMA, AES and the other evaluation associations may reflect the levels of maturity of each association and suggest the order in which evaluation is acquiring professional characteristics. As the association of a mature and established profession, the AMA does not need to focus on statements that protect the reputation of the association or its

²⁰ The AES Code of Ethics and the AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations are not included in this chart.

members. The AMA is protected through the inferred status of the medical profession. Conversely, the AES is an association of a recent occupational group that is unlikely to be recognised (and hence respected) by the general public and whose occupational boundaries are still being defined (as evidenced by the movement of other occupations into evaluation). Similarly, the AES's focus on considering the needs of special interest and cultural groups may reflect a political need to demonstrate equity in the values and structures of the organisation which, in a more mature association, have been incorporated into the main ideology. Supporting this interpretation, up until 2012 the AES had an Indigenous Subcommittee, a member of which held a position on the AES Board. With the restructuring of the governance arrangements, this subcommittee and Board seat were removed. These arrangements were changed on the basis that a focus on Indigenous issues had raised awareness to the point where the needs of this group were seen as being better supported by a focus on Indigenous issues across the range of AES business rather than through a separate structure. To support the communication between evaluators with an interest in Indigenous evaluations, a special interest group was established. Special interest groups are a community of practice and do not form part of the governance structures of the AES (for more information on AES structure see the Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013d).

According to its website (Australian Medical Association, 2009), the Federal AMA is responsible for policy and activities. It is governed by a Federal Council of 34 Board members comprised of:

- the Office Bearers (President, Vice President, Chairman of Council and Treasurer), one nominee from each State/Territory AMA
- a nominee from each of six geographic areas (NSW/ACT, VIC, SA/NT, WA, QLD, TAS)
- a nominee from each of thirteen Craft Groups (Anaesthetists, Dermatologists, Emergency Physicians, General Practitioners, Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Ophthalmologists, Orthopaedic Surgeons, Paediatricians, Pathologists, Physicians, Psychiatrists, Radiologists and Surgeons)
- a nominee from each of two Special Interest Groups – Doctors in Training and Salaried Doctors
- a nominee from the Australian Medical Students' Association.

The AMA also has five standing committees that are formed by and report to Federal Council:

- Audit Committee
- Finance Committee
- Constitution and Policy Review Committee
- Fellowship Committee
- Ethics and Medico-Legal Committee
- Other Committees are formed from time to time and relate to issues affecting members of the Association.

At this level, the AMA has a Taskforce on Indigenous health to inform the Board.

From this we can see that how the AES works with its Indigenous evaluators and stakeholder has moved to a model that is similar to the AMA, where special interest groups or topics have an avenue to provide information to the Board, but are not part of the formal decision-making processes of the organisation.

Another difference between the AES and AMA is their relationship with practitioners. The AMA has restricted its membership to registered practitioners and current students studying towards registration (Australian Medical Association, 2014). Clients/patients and other stakeholders are not eligible to join the AMA. Thus AMA ethical statements are all focussed on the conduct of practitioners. Conversely, the AES encourages membership from anyone with an interest in evaluation, whether or not they are practitioners of evaluation (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012c). The AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations are for

...all those who commission, prepare, conduct and use evaluations, as well as those who research, teach and publish about evaluation. (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013j, p.2-3).

Similarly, UKES membership material has a broadly focus on the field of evaluation:

Membership currently includes evaluation professionals, practitioners and evaluation commissioners from national and local government, the research community, independent consultancies and the voluntary sector, representing a range of inquiry fields including social services, economic development, education, science and technology, health care management and policy. (United Kingdom Evaluation Society, 2013a, para. 1)

Based on membership requirements, there are also no occupational restrictions on who can join the AEA (American Evaluation Association, 2001) or CES (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2007).

The AMA, by focusing its Code of Ethics on the practitioners of the profession, is setting a standard for the service ideal for the profession. The evaluation associations, by focussing on the field of evaluation, are attempting to represent potentially conflicting interests, for example, both parties to an evaluation contract (commissioner and practitioner). It also provides equal voice to the practitioner and commissioner (and other-non practitioners) in matters that affect the governance of the occupation.

Professional associations have been defined as ‘...a group of people in a learned occupation...’ (Harvey, 2004). So the evaluation associations, at this point in time, operate more as a community of interest than a professional association that restricts its membership to practitioners.

Evaluation as an area of practice emerged much more recently than medicine or other traditional professions. This inclusive style of membership may be the early efforts of an occupation to establish its identity, where practitioners and commissioners can be equally important in creating a market. A similar pattern is evident in the establishment of accountancy as a profession in the mid-nineteenth century. According to Macdonald’s (1995) account, the early history of accountancy as a profession in Britain shows that membership of professional associations was not restricted to accountants but included others with an interest in ensuring the quality and reputation of the emerging profession. Membership included lawyers who engaged accountants in bankruptcy proceedings and the landed gentry who were potentially both employers and clients of accountants. While Macdonald postulates that this broadened membership contributed to the reputation and respectability of accountancy through association with existing groups of high status, it also provided a mechanism for powerful groups to contribute to the development of the profession and protect their interests.

Member perceptions of ethical guidelines

The AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a) collected some information about the awareness and use of the AES Code of Ethics and the AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations. Analysis of the data found that nearly all AES members responding to the survey were aware of the AES Code of Ethics (94%) and the AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations (92%). Seventy-five per cent of AES members who responded to the survey had read the AES Code of Ethics in the last two years. While over three quarters of respondents

considered the Code to be either very beneficial (37%) or of some benefit (50%), 12% saw little or no benefit to their evaluation practice arising from the Code²¹.

To determine if role impacts on perceptions of the benefit of the AES Code of Ethics, the data were analysed based on the role²² of the respondent. Due to the small sample sizes available, just two roles were compared: respondents involved in the design or conduct of evaluations (evaluators) and respondents involved in commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (commissioners). Evaluators clearly saw more benefit from the AES Code of Ethics than did commissioners (Table 19).

This raises broader issues about how evaluation associations can represent quite different interests and the impact of this on professionalisation.

Table 19: Perceived benefit of the AES Code of Ethics

	Designing or conducting evaluations (248)	Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (26)
Very beneficial	40%	15%
Some benefit	52%	46%
Little or no benefit	7%	38%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions: B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

E5 Over the last few years (say, since the start of 2011), how beneficial have you found the following, in support of your evaluation practice? ... The AES Code of Ethical Conduct

Base: All respondents

Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

While ethics are only one aspect or trait of professions, the review of ethics documents has demonstrated that ethics provide a means for associations to document expectations of the members, demonstrating not only the priorities of the organisation but also those areas that are the focus of professionalisation. It is likely that some ethical statements are time-limited either because they relate to the achievement of specific objectives or because they represent the maturity of the organisation and the profession. In the case of the AES, the focus on protection of its policies, objectives and members reflects an organisation (and market) that is still developing. Evaluation is also an occupation where reputation is important because of its

²¹ Respondents to the AES survey were not asked if they had read the AES Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations nor its level of benefit (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013b).

²² The survey did not collect data on occupation specifically, so that role was used as the best measure available.

transdisciplinary nature and the need to attract practitioners from other occupations. That is, evaluation is competing to attract and retain its practitioners from other occupations. For an established profession like medicine, where the occupational boundaries are clear, where the nature of the work performed is protected at law, and the reputation of the profession is established, the professional association receives its status from the established reputation of the profession. The focus then moves from establishing its reputation to maintaining its reputation, which is again achieved by protecting the reputation of the profession rather than the association. This is evidenced by the AMA ethical statements related to restricting practices such as advertising services and products, which affect the credibility and reputation of the profession rather than the association.

Using the AMA again as an example of an association representing a mature profession, we see a greater emphasis on protecting the general public and the healthcare system (including quality, equity and access). While protecting the healthcare system as the social institution that gives rise to the protected position of the medical profession does have an air of self-interest, like the protection of the general public it also demonstrates what earlier sociologists described as the continuation of *noblesse oblige* or the benevolence of a profession. As mentioned earlier, some writers have suggested that the hallmark of a profession is a focus on the public interest above self-interest (or at least the perception of this). This may reflect the greater credibility of a mature profession's claim to protect the public interest and the greater immediacy of the risk posed to the public through unethical medical practice rather than unethical evaluation practice.

Evaluation associations, by including competing interests in their membership (commissioners and practitioners) also run the risk of attempting to meet the needs of very different interests. History suggests that this is a practice used by occupations during their establishment to ensure a market for services and this reinforces evaluation as a new area of knowledge work.

3.3.4 Regulation of evaluation practice

Identifying an occupation as a profession implies a competency that has been proved by an agency independent of the employer or client (Sawyer, 1987). The analysis of English-speaking Western professions puts strong emphasis on self-regulation, autonomy and control of professions with the state supporting the establishment of a monopoly through legislation and regulation (Pavalko, 1971). As Freidson (2001) observed, few if any occupations have full control over their work; occupations that come close are generally referred to as professions. Additionally, professions usually have some form of control over access to qualification

pathways which restricts who can practice and ensures scarcity of the services provided (Larson, 1990).

Evaluation association membership requirements

One way that associations can self-regulate is through their admission criteria for membership. Review of the membership requirements of evaluation associations found no minimum entry requirement in relation to qualifications or experience. Most evaluation associations require agreement to maintain ethics or standards (Table 20).

With some exceptions, requests for tender issued by the Australian Government for evaluations do not require applicants to be a member of the AES or to agree to uphold the AES Code of Conduct (see for example Australian Government Department of Health, 2013).

Table 20: Evaluation association requirements

Evaluation associations	Minimum qualifications	Minimum experience	Other conditions of membership
AES¹	No	No	Agree to uphold the Society's constitution and abide by the code of ethics
CES²	No	No	Adhere to the Canadian Evaluation Society Standards of Ethical Guidelines and Joint Committee Program Evaluation Standards
AEA³	No	No	Open to any individuals interested in the purposes of the Association
UKES⁴	No	No	Nil

Source: ¹Australasian Evaluation Society (2012c)

²Canadian Evaluation Society (2007)

³American Evaluation Association (2011)

⁴United Kingdom Evaluation Society (2013a)

Regulation of evaluation

The professionalisation of evaluation and self-regulation of evaluation is a topical issue internationally. In December 2005, the Canadian Treasury Board Secretariat commissioned the University of Ottawa to develop a discussion paper to recommend strategies to advance the professional development of evaluators to improve evaluation quality. This paper found that the lack of certification or licensure processes, lack of criteria for determining membership to professional associations, and lack of accredited pre-service training programs for evaluators had limited the capacity of evaluation to reach the standard to be considered a profession. The evaluation community faces further barriers in its professionalisation, including issues relating to practitioners (such as the use of non-evaluators in evaluation practices, an unstructured career

path, and lack of support for certification), as well as broader issues in the field (such as the lack of an accepted definition of evaluation and cost of implementing a certification program) (Cousins & Aubry, 2006). However, work in areas such as the core competencies of evaluators is continuing to improve the professionalisation of evaluation (Zorzi, McGuire, & Perrin, 2002). Competencies for evaluators have been developed by several organisations, including the AES, ANZEA, CES, International Development Evaluation Association, and the European Evaluation Society (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013i).

Registration is one mechanism for professions to recognise qualified practitioners and ensure that they commit to ongoing learning to maintain their expert knowledge. This is usually demonstrated by some form of compulsory professional development linked to registration. Weissman (1984), writing on psychology as a health profession, emphasised the importance of professional licensure, the credentialing process for speciality areas and national training standards in maintaining professional credibility. For example, since 2010 in Australia there has been a National Law which mandates that registered health practitioners²³ undertake continued professional development to maintain their registration (Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel, 2010). The professional development requirements of each health profession is determined and published by a National Board and forms part of the Registration Standards for that profession. The requirements specify the minimum commitment of practitioners each year to recognised professional education activities in order to retain registration (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, 2013). Internationally, there are no states where evaluators are required to register to practise.

For occupations where there is no state requirement for registration to practise, the professional association may undertake the establishment and operation of a credentialing program for its members. For example, eligible members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society can apply to be Qualified Practising Market Researchers. Registration is renewed annually and requires participation in recognised professional development activities (for more information see Australian Market and Social Research Society, 2014).

Across evaluation associations, the CES is the only association to have a certification program. The CES *Credentialed Evaluator* program is a voluntary certification program available to CES members who have attained the education and experience required by the CES to be designated

²³ Registered health practitioners include Chiropractors, Dental Practitioners, Medical Practitioners, Nurses and Midwives, Optometrists, Osteopaths, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Podiatrists, Psychologists, Chinese Medicine Practitioners, Occupational Therapists, Medical Radiation Practitioners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners.

a competent evaluator. The program also requires demonstration of professional development equivalent to 40 hours of learning every three years (for more information see Canadian Evaluation Society, 2013).

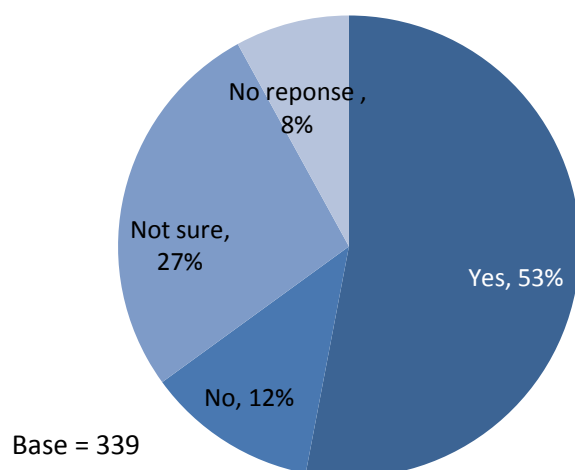
Certification alone is not sufficient to deem an occupation a profession (Sawyer, 1987). Many occupations that would not be considered a profession have a registration or certification process, for example, trades. But it is certainly a necessary condition to claim professional status.

The AES 10 Year Plan (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2010) includes a requirement for the organisation to:

Initiate a process of exploring the merits and consequences of developing and implementing an Evaluator Accreditation Scheme as a part of a broader framework of professional guidance, including practice standards, professional ethics and agreed evaluation competencies. (p. 7)

The 2013 AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013b) included two questions on the value of developing an evaluator credential. While the majority of respondents supported an evaluator credential (53%), over one-third of respondents were either unsure (27%) or unsupportive (12%) (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Worthwhile developing an evaluator credential



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: G5b Do you believe it would be worth developing an 'evaluators' credential?

Base: All respondents

The data were further analysed to identify the perceived value of an evaluator credential by respondent characteristics (Table 21). The results revealed that the credential was generally preferred by respondents with less evaluation experience and lower qualification.

Table 21: Support for credentialing by qualification

	Highest qualification				Self-rated level of experience				Experience (Years)
	Diploma/ Certificate (17)	Bachelor (55)	Master (111)	PhD (68)	Beginner (45)	Intermediate (125)	Advanced (101)	Expert (40)	Mean (328)
Support credentialing	65%	56%	59%	57%	51%	63%	56%	53%	12
Don't support	6%	4%	16%	21%	4%	10%	16%	25%	18
Not sure	29%	40%	25%	22%	44%	26%	28%	23%	12

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: G5b Do you believe it would be worth developing an 'evaluators' credential? ...yes

Base: All respondents

Furthermore, respondents not supporting an evaluator credential were more likely to be employed by a private company. Although the sample size is small, a high proportion of commissioners were unsure of the value of a credentialing program (Table 22).

Table 22: Support for credentialing by employment

	Sector of employment					Role in evaluation	
	Government (91)	Not-for-profit organisation (51)	Private company (96)	University/ other education institution (53)	Other (14)	Designing or conducting evaluations (217)	Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (22)
Support credentialing	60%	55%	50%	72%	50%	57%	55%
Don't support	10%	10%	18%	15%	14%	16%	5%
Not sure	30%	35%	32%	13%	36%	27%	41%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: G5b Do you believe it would be worth developing an 'evaluators' credential?

B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

B4 Is this role in...?

Base: All respondents

Respondents to the AES survey were also asked to explain their reason for either supporting or not supporting an evaluator credential, using a free-text field. A response was provided by 179 respondents. The data were reviewed by the researcher and a code frame developed.

Coding the data against this frame found that supporters cited the following advantages of an evaluator credential:

- 59% improved quality and competency of evaluators
- 27% enhanced professionalisation, professionalism or similar derivatives
- 23% gives credibility and accountability of evaluators
- 21% restricts practice to evaluators and differentiate from other occupations
- 16% improved respect / status / recognition / confidence
- 8% helps to market evaluation and improve communications with target audiences
- 4% shows a commitment by evaluators to their profession
- 3% builds public / commissioner confidence
- 3% other.

This list of benefits shows that respondents considered that accreditation could help evaluation acquire many of the attributes of a profession. Respondents not in support of accreditation were concerned about a range of practical issues:

- 39% evaluation is too broad to set standard competencies / areas in evaluation are still developing
- 24% there is a lack of supporting structures to set, assess and monitor standards
- 20% the concept is elitist and exclusive practice / competitive
- 17% works against part time / occasional / internal evaluators
- 12% evaluation is multidisciplinary / members have other professional accreditations
- 10% clients can tell if you have done a good job / track record more important
- 7% no recognised higher education courses or higher competency framework
- 7% costs outweigh benefits
- 5% promotes AES products and training
- 7% other.

These issues question the timing for implementing a certification program and other priorities in the professionalisation of evaluation. These respondents identify that additional work is needed to support a credentialed evaluator program in Australia, including the development of an academic pathway into evaluation. The other critical element is establishing a market for credentialed evaluators so that credentialed evaluators are recognised as preferred suppliers.

The Canadian approach to accreditation involved a partnership between the state, universities and the CES to establish evaluation standards and a national training curriculum (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012a) as a precursor to credentialing. In a report to the Canadian Treasury Board Secretariat's Centre of Excellence for Evaluation (CEE), Cousins and Aubry (2006) concluded that:

Based on the state of the research on the professionalization of program evaluation, it is concluded that there is a clear and important role for the federal government to play in developing the professionalization of evaluation and enhancing quality assurance in evaluation within government and beyond. It would seem prudent to continue with efforts within the professional development approach towards certification that would capitalize on the fine work in the development of evaluator competencies that has been completed to date. Implicated would be government support for the development of a credentialing system that would provide some basis for deciding whether those responsible for carrying out evaluations have sufficient background training and experiences to conduct evaluations that meet a high standard of quality and effectiveness. (pp. 2-3)

This is the approach that was adopted by the Canadians in the development of the Credentialed Evaluator (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2010, 2013).

Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

The practice of evaluation is not regulated in Australia. However, there is support for an evaluator credential in Australia. Some members of the evaluation community were unsure of their support for an accreditation system or questioned whether the necessary infrastructure and resources were available to support such a system. This suggests a need for further information and discussion on the topic, particularly for commissioners of evaluation, who were the most unsure.

Admission to evaluation associations reviewed, in Australia and overseas, is not restricted to evaluators and does not include any minimum qualification or experience. Standard requests for tenders issued by the Australian Government for evaluations do not require applicants to be members of the AES or to agree to uphold the AES Code of Ethics.

The Canadian Credentialed Evaluator program demonstrates the importance of partnership with government as the main commissioner of evaluation in developing and implementing an accreditation system. Without state engagement the credential may not have a commercial value and may be less attractive to practitioners.

3.3.5 Role of the state in evaluation

The state has an important role in the recognition of professions and granting some form of monopoly, such as a protected or sheltered market for services (Freidson, 1986; Larson, 1990). Other knowledge-based occupations also commonly have some form of official acknowledgement to certify their position (Torstendahl, 1990b). The relationship between the professions and states is complex and has taken different forms between states and over time (De Beelde, 2002).

The role of the state is not as straightforward as recognising that an occupation has achieved a particular level of specialisation or skills. In some cases, the state has used its powers to create a profession that did not previously exist in order to fill a gap in the market for a technical specialisation (for example, the case of auditors in Belgium cited in De Beelde, 2002), to recognise a technical speciality that already existed (for example, the case of accountancy in nineteenth century England in Macdonald, 1995) or to sanction an occupation before it has a technical specialisation (for example, the case of medicine in France in Ramsey, 1984).

In continental Europe states tend to intervene more directly in the establishment and control of professions. Some professions are more likely to garner stronger state oversight as essential services to government. De Beelde (2002) identified the Belgian government's involvement with the establishment of the auditing profession as an example of state involvement in a service essential to government. Evaluation could also be considered an essential service. The Canadian government is certainly leading the direction of evaluation in that country through the Centre for Evaluation Excellence (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012a).

A market for professional services has to be both created and protected (Larson, 1990). This role usually falls to the state. Datta (cited in Cousins & Aubry, 2006) conducted an analysis of the relationship between evaluation and government in the US and identified eight ways in which government influences evaluation:

- (1) demand for internal evaluation within government
- (2) demand for internal evaluation for recipients of federal funds

- (3) demand for external evaluation for recipients of federal funds and requirements for impact evaluation
- (4) influences on evaluation methods, designs and measures
- (5) development of evaluation as a profession
- (6) employment opportunities for evaluators
- (7) leadership in evaluation
- (8) influences on evaluation capacity.

Cousins and Aubry (2006) suggest that most of Datta's categories of influence also apply to evaluation in Canada. While there is also evidence of similar state influences in Australia, there is no doubt that the state has played a much more active role in the professionalisation of evaluation in Canada than elsewhere. The Canadian approach to the development of evaluation bears similarities to the continental European style of developing professions and serves as a potential model of state involvement in other countries.

The Canadian government has contributed to the development of evaluation through creating demand for evaluation, promotion of evaluation as a professional activity and developing evaluation capacity. Canada's Federal Accountability Act and Action Plan of 2006 requires that every department review the relevance and effectiveness of ongoing grants and contributions at least once every five years (Cousins & Aubry, 2006). As previously mentioned, in 2005 the CEE commissioned a discussion paper to foster advanced professional development for evaluators and enhance quality assurance of evaluations. In that report, Cousins and Aubry (2006) found that establishment of the CES in 1981 and the subsequent establishment of its peer-reviewed journal were linked to federal government concerns about ensuring a qualified evaluation workforce. Furthermore, the establishment of the CEE in 2001 made a major contribution to evaluation capacity building. Cousins and Aubry's report to the CEE suggested the establishment of a graduate certificate and credentialing system through the CES as a step towards certification of evaluators in Canada. Following this report, with the support of its members at the 2009 Annual Conference, the CES Credentialed Evaluator program commenced in 2010 (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2010, 2013).

The policy situation is similar in Australia, although the Australian Government approach to evaluation is more devolved to the departments, with a few centralised reviews of flagship programs (Tune, 2010). Under revised arrangements introduced in the 2005-06 budget, lapsing programs can be evaluated through either a major review with Central Agency involvement

(where significant investment is required) or an internal departmental review (where programs are of small scope or significance to the government's priorities) (McPhee, 2006).

In the US, government support for evaluation has been strong. According to Cousins, this has included support for degree programs and professional development, the establishment of two university-based evaluation centres and support for the development of evaluation standards. In Canada, the federal government's main contribution to capacity building has been through the 2001 establishment of the CEE to provide 'functional leadership, including advice and guidance in the conduct, use and advancement of evaluation practices across the federal government' (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012a, para. 3).

Government demand for evaluation in Australia

It is difficult to determine the level of demand for evaluation in Australia through expenditure reporting. Where evaluations are commissioned directly by government the cost of the evaluation is a government expense. In the public sector, there is a nationally agreed framework (the Uniform Presentation Framework) for the presentation of government financial information, based on the Australian Accounting Standards Board Standard AASB 1049 (Australian Government, 2013). Evaluation is not a separate item in the accounts and is carried under program costs. Alternatively, when outsourcing, the government can also include the cost of evaluation in a program's funding and service agreement. In such cases, the fund recipient (usually a not-for-profit body) may commission an external evaluation. In 2011, to reduce the regulatory and administrative reporting burden, COAG agreed a National Standard Chart of Accounts for the not-for-profit sector (Australian Government Department of Finance and Deregulation, 2011). The National Standard Chart of Accounts is an agreed list of account categories and a data dictionary for Australian governments to use when requesting financial information from not-for-profit organisations. In this Standard Chart of Accounts, evaluation is included in account 6-0090 Business Planning, Reporting and Evaluation Costs. This account includes a range of non-evaluative activities:

This account represents the costs of preparing and drafting submissions, business plans, marketing plans, volunteer management plans, risk management and operational plans, as well as the costs of feasibility studies. This account is specifically for administration costs incurred by the organisation (not related to service delivery objectives). This account includes both pre- and post- program or project costs and evaluation, development and research that occurs within an organisation. Ongoing "execution" costs such as reporting and evaluation of Risk Management are included in this account. (p. 31)

Therefore, when not-for-profits conduct or commission evaluations, the number and costs of evaluation is also not calculable.

It is possible to identify government support for evaluation in different ways. These include examining government sponsorship of events and reviewing AusTender information about evaluation contracts for *ad hoc* evaluations and evaluation panels.

Australian Government national financial sponsorship

According to Datta (cited in Cousins & Aubry, 2006), the US Government had an active role in the development of evaluation as a profession, through activities such as including influential evaluators in government, sponsorship of early conferences on evaluation, and encouraging networking, which led to the establishment of the Evaluation Research Society (which later merged with the Evaluation Network to form the AEA). Similarly in Canada, the establishment of the CES in 1981 and the later publication of the peer-reviewed *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* were driven by Federal government interests in evaluation (interview with J. Hudson cited in Cousins & Aubry, 2006).

In Australia, the state has also played a role in building capacity and demand for evaluators, though not as direct or significant as the North American experience. While not actively engaged with the university sector to promote evaluation, Australian governments have demonstrated support for the professional development of evaluators through sponsorship of training activities. For example, the 2012 AES International Evaluation Conference held in Adelaide received \$69,650 in sponsorship. Most of this sponsorship was derived from government (McLeod & Duda, 2012):

- 59% was contributed by government
 - \$18,000 Office of Development Effectiveness – AusAID
 - \$18,000 Government of South Australia
 - \$5,000 Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- 35% was contributed by private evaluation companies
 - \$3,000 KPMG
 - \$3,000 The Allen Consulting Group
 - \$3,000 Urbis
 - \$3,000 Coffey International Development Pty Ltd
 - \$3,000 Grosvenor Management Consulting
 - \$3,000 Clear Horizon

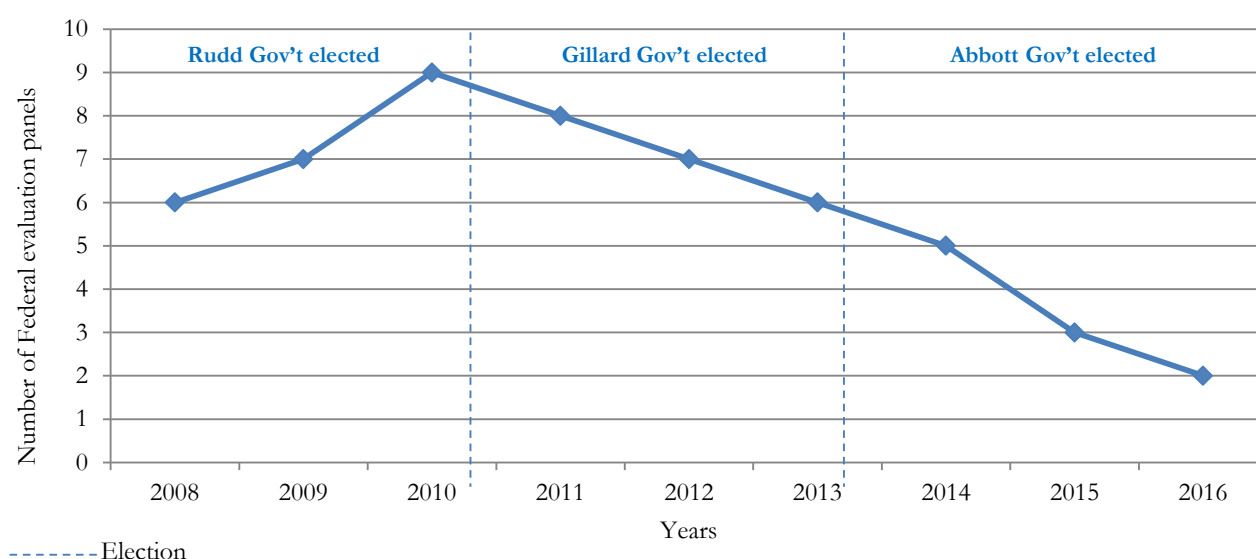
- \$3,000 ARTD
 - \$3,000 Ipsos Social Research Institute
 - \$650 Sustineo.
- 6% was contributed by the university sector
 - \$4,000 Carnegie Mellon University Australia.

Australian Government evaluation panels

Another way government demonstrates demand for a profession is through their purchasing behaviour. Panels demonstrate government commitment to an area by the investment of resources to prequalify suppliers. To determine Australian Government establishment of panels of evaluation suppliers, a search was conducted of the AusTender database (www.AusTender.gov.au). Standing Offer Notices (panels) from All Active and Retired Agencies contracts commissioned between January 2008 and January 2014 were searched using the terms *review* and *evaluation* (and its derivatives).

Plotting the number of panels that were active in each year (that is, the years between the start and end dates of the contract) shows that the number of panels increased until 2010 to 2011 then fell to the present period (Figure 11). While the number of panels in operation does not necessarily relate to the number of evaluations tendered to market or the total government expenditure on evaluation, it does provide some evidence of the planning and development of infrastructure to support the commissioning of evaluation. As panels operate for several years, it is also likely that the downturn in evaluation may reflect a response to the Global Financial Crisis, which had its biggest impacts on the Australian economy in late 2008 and early 2009 (McDonald & Morling, 2011). While there may be some policy impacts on the importance of evaluation under different administrations, it is too early to gauge whether the apparent recent decline in evaluation panels will continue under the Abbott administration.

Figure 11: Number of Federal evaluation panels operating each year



Source: AusTender data (AusTender, 2013)

Australian Government approaches to market for evaluation services

To determine the number of evaluation tenders let by the Australian Government, the publicly available AusTender database was searched for awarded consultancy contracts from All Active and Retired Agencies published between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2012 that used the terms *review* and *evaluate* (and its derivatives). This identified 2,994 published awarded contracts containing the search terms. The mean value of evaluation contracts was \$105,114, slightly less than the mean value of other consultancies (\$121,471) (Table 23).

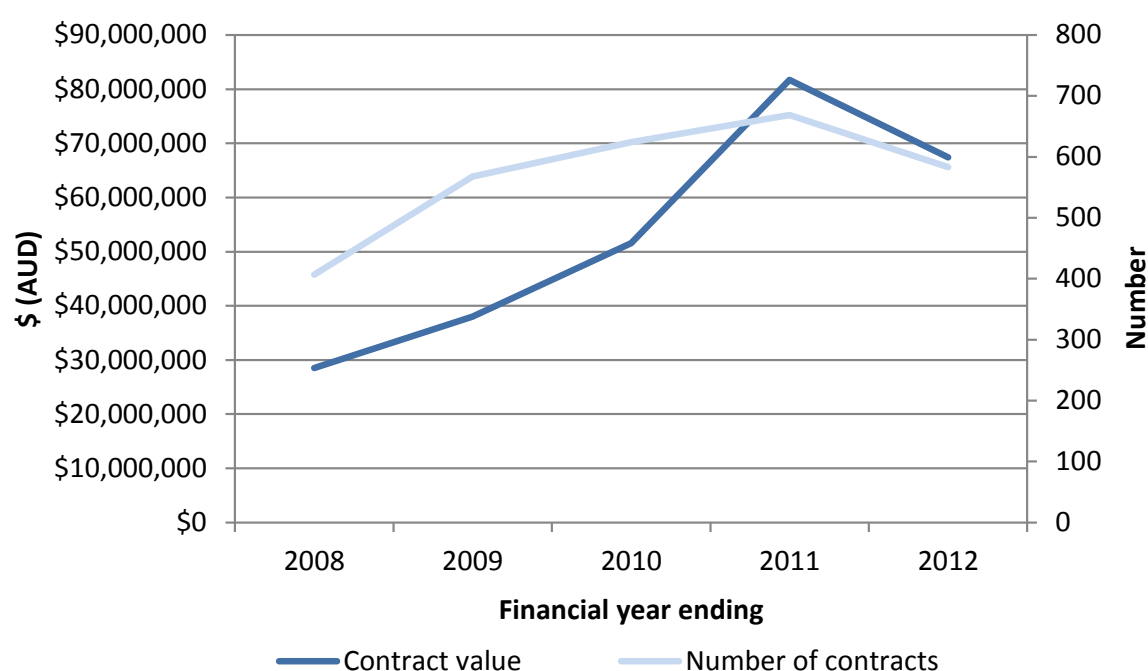
Table 23: Awarded contracts (published 01 January 2008 to 31 December 2012)

	Count	% of total contract	Value (AUD)	Mean value per contract	Mean number of contracts per year
Consultancies					
- Evaluations	2994	0.8%	\$314,712,170	\$105,114	599
- Other consultancy	18643	4.7%	\$2,264,588,051	\$121,471	3729
Other contracts	375131	94.6	\$197,459,169,155	\$526,374	75026
All published contracts	396768	100%	\$200,038,469,376	\$504,170	79354

Source: AusTender (2013)

The number and value of evaluation contracts was tracked over time to identify any trends in awarding of evaluation contracts. The results are similar to those found for the award of evaluation panel contracts (Figure 12), with a trend up to 2011 followed by a drop of contracts in 2012.

Figure 12: Trend in number and value of contracts awarded (2007-2012)



Source: AusTender (2013)

This suggests that there was a contraction in the federal government evaluation market between 2011 and 2012.

Government engagement in shaping evaluation methods

Government policy and practice have also influenced evaluation practices. In the US, Datta (cited in Cousins & Aubry, 2006) argues that US federal government requirements played a role in the evolution of evaluation methods over time. We saw in Paper 1 the impact of the paradigm wars on evaluation in recent decades, linked to government requirements for evidence-based policy. The US Department of Education's privileging Random Control Trials demonstrated a preference for quantitative scientific research and certainly fuelled the debate and shows the influence of government on evaluation methods and practices (Cousins & Aubry, 2006). More recently, in Australia and elsewhere there has been a movement towards a more pluralist model (Pawson & Tilley, 1997) and greater reliance on program logic models and evaluation frameworks as management tools in evaluation practice. The Victorian Auditor-General's Office has consistently recommended use of program logic models to government departments. Where

departments do not use program logic models, the Auditor-General has recommended their use to strengthen monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes (see recommendation to the Department of Primary Industries p. 136 in Public Accounts and Estimates Committee, 2009).

Governments also influence evaluation methods by the level of prescription or preference given to specific methods in their approach to the market. For example, a recent Request for Tender to establish a program review and evaluation panel by the Australian Government Department of Health specified that applicants require expertise in the:

...design and implementation of a range of data collection methods including but not limited to: questionnaire surveys; focus groups; and individual interviews (Australian Government Department of Health, 2013, p. 25).

According to the T.K. Gussman and Associates report to the CEE, the UK government has supported the use of advanced methodological approaches to evaluation that are not in common practice in Canada. These approaches include:

randomized control trials; regression discontinuity designs; single group pre-and-post test designs; interrupted time series designs; and regulatory impact assessments (T. K. Gussman Associates Inc, 2005, Lessons Learned from Other Jurisdictions, para. 4).

Cousins and Aubry (2006) argued that federal government policy in Canada may privilege outcome or impact evaluation, because accountability frameworks encourage the integration of evaluation with performance measurement to the detriment of understanding program implementation with the goal of improving performance and results.

Use of evaluation by Government

Harder to demonstrate is the use of evaluation by government in decision making, not just about current program performance, but also in future planning of programs. Evaluation can generate evidence about program effectiveness, public responsiveness and financial responsibility (Cousins & Aubry, 2006). Aucoin (2005) argued that the primary benefit of evaluation is its ability to measure program effectiveness, an area that has had varying levels of importance for the US government. Cousins and Aubry (2006) also considered that Canada has not given program effectiveness as much prominence as public responsiveness and financial responsibility due to changes in government management and decision making policies over the years. Cousins and Aubry suggested that the policy structure, in Canada at least, provides the opportunity for evaluation to be at the heart of public administration.

While evaluation has long since been considered an important function for government (Cousins & Aubry, 2006), in a project commissioned by the CEE, Breen and Associates (2005, in Cousins & Aubry, 2006) reported that Deputy Ministers in the Canadian Federal government were concerned about a lack of feedback loops to ensure that evaluation findings were used in policy and program development and management. Subsequently, Cousins and Aubry (2006) suggested that the management framework recently adopted by the federal government at that time and the Federal Accountability Act and Action Plan increased the opportunities to integrate evaluation into government decision making. This opportunity was further strengthened in 2009 with the adoption of the *Policy on Evaluation*. The object of this policy is to:

create a comprehensive and reliable base of evaluation evidence that is used to support policy and program improvement, expenditure management, Cabinet decision making, and public reporting (Objective 5.1, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012b).

In Australia, the place of evaluation in public policy has varied. As Mackay (2004) has described, initially a centralised part of the federal government in the 1990s there was a movement to devolve evaluation to departments. Mackay suggests that this occurred because evaluation was seen as too resource-intensive, unsustainable, discouraged innovation, and lacked a skilled workforce. The mandate for change in performance measurement and evaluation was supported through the 1997 Outcomes and Outputs Framework and the revised 2009 Programs and Outcomes Policy (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). However, the adoption of a decentralised system has not been universally accepted, with some high-profile public servants questioning whether a devolved model had resulted in a robust, effective measurement and evaluation framework (Australian Government Information Management Office, 2011). The focus of evaluation in Australia has moved away from a purely budgetary role to the provision of information about program performance, particularly outcomes (McPhee, 2006). This outcome-focussed, results-based approach is consistent with the Canadian model.

How federal departments in the Australian Government have managed evaluation functions differs. Some departments, for example the Department of Health, situate evaluation within a performance management framework, with branches reporting through corporate structures (Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, 2010). Other departments have established specific units to build evaluation culture, capacity and competence, for example, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's²⁴ Policy Innovation, Research and Evaluation Unit (PIREU). The vision of PIREU, as stated in Building Evaluation Capacity in

²⁴ This department was formerly known as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

DIAC 2010-2013 (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2010), is to:

Develop an effective and sustainable evaluation system and culture in DIAC so that:

- *evaluation is part of our core business and there is a shared understanding about what it offers, what it takes to do it well and how it can be used*
- *our people have the knowledge, skills and support they need to design, implement and/or manage effective evaluations*
- *programs are well-designed with clearly stated outcomes, an understanding of how those outcomes will be achieved, and evaluation plans*
- *the results of evaluations are used to inform decision making in policy development, program management and delivery, and contribute to future strategic planning.* (p. 1)

Building Evaluation Capacity in DIAC 2010-2013 (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2010) also includes an evaluation capacity building strategy. The Strategy identifies five areas of focus:

- *Organisation – improving coordination and management of evaluation*
- *Culture – embedding a strong and sustainable evaluation culture*
- *Capability – developing the individual evaluation capabilities of our people*
- *Support – ensuring access to the support and resources needed to undertake effective evaluations*
- *Quality – enhancing the quality of program management, policy development and decision making through effective use of evaluation.* (p. 2)

While there is evidence of evaluation leadership within some government departments, there are no clear mechanisms that link these functions back to the Central Agencies in the Australian Government or to broader evaluation community. There are no working groups between any levels of government and the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2012b). Despite employing 24% of AES members (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013d), there are currently no members of the Australian government on the AES board (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013c).

Perception of quality of evaluation in Australia by government

Much of the role of the state in professions is driven by a desire to protect the quality of an essential service. The service can be essential for the health of citizens (such as in the case of the medical profession) or for administration of the state (such as in the case of the legal profession or auditors). This is the cornerstone of the justification for the establishment and protection of a monopoly or partial monopoly. Understanding how government views the quality of evaluation provides information on one determinant of potential government support for the protection of the evaluation market.

The AES survey (2013) provides an opportunity to examine the views of respondents employed by government in relation to their experience of the quality of evaluation.

Of the 339 respondents to the AES survey, 82 were employed by an Australian government department and 69 provided their residential location. These respondents were more likely to be employed by a state government (61%) than the federal government (39%)²⁵. The regions with the highest representation in the sample were Queensland (26%) and Victoria (22%) (Table 24).

Table 24: Geographic distribution (government respondents)

(Base)	State government (48)	National government (21)	Total (69)
Queensland	35%	5%	26%
Victoria	25%	14%	22%
ACT	-	43%	13%
South Australia	15%	5%	12%
NSW	13%	5%	10%
Western Australia	8%	-	6%
Northern Territory	2%	5%	3%
Tasmania	-	5%	1%
Other	2%	19%	7%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions: B4 Is this role in...? Government

B5a What tier of government is this role in? State government, National Government

H1 You said earlier you live in Australia. Which State or Territory do you live in?

Filter: Australia residents

Irrespective of whether they were employed at the state or national level, government respondents were more likely to describe their main role as designing or conducting evaluations (50%), rather than commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (20%) (Table 25).

The data were filtered to government respondents to the AES survey who commissioned or used evaluations in their work. In relation to the average quality of the evaluations they see, the highest rating provided by respondents was *good* (Table 26). Although the sample size is small,, federal government employees were generally more critical than their state/territory colleagues. This suggests that current evaluations are not meeting the expectations of government users, either through an issue of quality or expectation. However, government employees rate their own evaluation work higher, with 45% suggesting a rating of outstanding (7%) or very good

²⁵ There was only one case in local government. Therefore that case was removed from this analysis.

(38%). Furthermore, just 5% of respondents rated their own work as fair. Irrespective of the potential for a biased self-rating, government respondents did not rate highly the quality of evaluations they see as part of their work.

Table 25: Main involvement in evaluation (government respondents)

(Base)	State government (59)	National government (23)	Total (82)
Designing or conducting evaluations	51%	48%	50%
Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects	19%	22%	20%
Other	31%	30%	30%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions: B4 Is this role in...? Government

B5a What tier of government is this role in? State government, National Government

B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

Filters: Australian residents

Table 26: Perceived quality of evaluations by government respondents involved in commissioning or using evaluations

(Base)	Average quality of evaluations seen			Quality of own work in evaluation (42)
	State government (20)	National government (7)	Total (27)	
Outstanding	-	-	-	7%
Very good	-	-	-	38%
Good	20%	43%	26%	50%
Fair	65%	29%	56%	5%
Weak	10%	29%	15%	-
Very weak	5%	-	4%	-
Appalling	-	-	-	-

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions: B4 Is this role in...? Government

B5a What tier of government is this role in? State government, National Government

X2c On average, most evaluations I see are ...

Filters: Australian residents

Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

The Australia Government has influenced the development of the evaluation workforce by creating demand for evaluation through policy. However, the size of that demand is difficult to estimate without a budget line item or separate reporting requirement for evaluation contracts.

There is also some evidence that the Australian Government demand for external evaluation services has declined in recent years. While the cause for the decline is unknown, possible influences include the Global Financial Crisis and change in government administration. How the evaluation community reacts to this is important. Shadish et al. (1991) described how a reduction in the US federal funding for evaluation in the 1980s led to a severe contraction of federal employment opportunities. However, Shadish et al. found that the result was not entirely negative, with federal evaluators moving into state and local government. In the long term, this opened up new markets for evaluation and increased the acceptance of evaluation across the different levels of government (Shadish et al., 1991).

The main influence of the Australian Government on evaluation has been through purchase of evaluation services (either internal or external) and the sponsorship of events. The size of the government investment in evaluation is unknown because of current accounting practices. While there is policy support for evaluation, the engagement with the evaluation sector has mostly been through indirect methods such as sponsorship of events and demonstration of method preferences through inclusion in requests for tender.

While there has been little direct influence of the Australian Government in evaluation, the poor perception of evaluations by government employees responding to the AES survey suggests a need for greater involvement to ensure consistently high standards in evaluation.

3.3.6 Evaluation knowledge-base

The importance of knowledge as a necessary condition for a claim of professional status has been consistent in the sociology of professions literature (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Larson, 1977; Spencer, 1896; Torstendahl, 1990b). The theory of professions is concerned with how knowledge is transferred, whether as social capital or for solving a problem presented by an employer or client (Torstendahl, 1990b). Sociologists have generally focussed on rational, formal scientific knowledge as their starting point for analysis of knowledge in professions (Macdonald, 1995). But ultimately, the theory of professions concerns how knowledge (and/or skill) is used by the profession as social capital beyond its immediate practical application (Torstendahl, 1990b).

Larson (1990) stated that:

..all professional or professionalizing phenomena must be theoretically linked to the social production and certification of knowledge... we should nevertheless always find within professional phenomena practices and codes of behaviour which are justified by reference to 'learned' or 'knowledgeable' discourse (p25).

However, Larson concedes that individual professionals and groups have different levels of capacity and authority to authorise this discourse.

While professionals need an esoteric body of knowledge to draw on, that knowledge needs to have application to meeting needs in the real world (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Freidson, 1994). Evaluation draws on theory but is essentially a practical discipline (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

The subject matter of evaluation is vast. Scriven asserted that everything from A to Z in the dictionary can be evaluated (Scriven, 1980). This presents difficulties in refining the practice of evaluation, if the subject matter is too broad, evaluators run the risk of lacking depth of knowledge and mastery (Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

Evaluation theory

As Torstendahl (1990b) has described, professions pose and solve problems in a conceptual framework. How these concepts are used (and not used) and their relationship to each other and their application are defined by convention. Within the knowledge-base, the use of these frameworks forms part of a discourse for those insiders who have the education or training to understand the framework. This framework provides a common understanding that is shared by the group and not by outsiders. In this way the conceptual framework helps the profession's pursuit of occupational closure.

There are a number of conceptual frameworks used in evaluation. These include:

- Scriven's (1967) formative and summative evaluation
- Alkin and Christie's evaluation tree, with use, methods and valuing branches (Alkin, 2004, 2013a, 2013b; Alkin & Christie, 2004; Christie, 2003a, 2003b; Christie & Alkin, 2008, 2013)
- Trochim's (2006) depiction of four models of evaluation: scientific-experimental, management-oriented systems, qualitative-anthropological and participant-oriented
- Shadish, Cook and Leviton's (1991) model, with social programming, knowledge use, valuing, knowledge construction, evaluation practice.

Fundamentally, a theory is a body of knowledge that helps organise, categorise, describe, predict and understand a topic (Shadish et al., 1991), much like these conceptual frameworks. According to Shadish et al., the ideal evaluation theory would describe and justify why particular evaluation practices lead to particular results. Evaluation is a methodological specialisation; its theories are not just about methods but also about choice of method, evaluation design and decisions made in the course of an evaluation. Shadish et al. (1991) argue that it is its theory that makes evaluation more than applied research and bridges the different disciplinary backgrounds of evaluators.

Alkin (2013a) questions whether evaluation has theories, principally because research has not been conducted to test what pass as theories in evaluation. Alkin suggests that theory is a term applied to approaches in evaluation through convention. But as Shadish et al. have explained (1991), evaluation is a young discipline and its practice is evolving. This evolution forms the basis of the theory of evaluation, explaining what has worked and what has not. Hence perhaps the kindest description is that evaluation has developed methods of organising, categorising and describing its activities and with research this may provide the basis for a theory of prediction and abstraction.

Evaluation methods

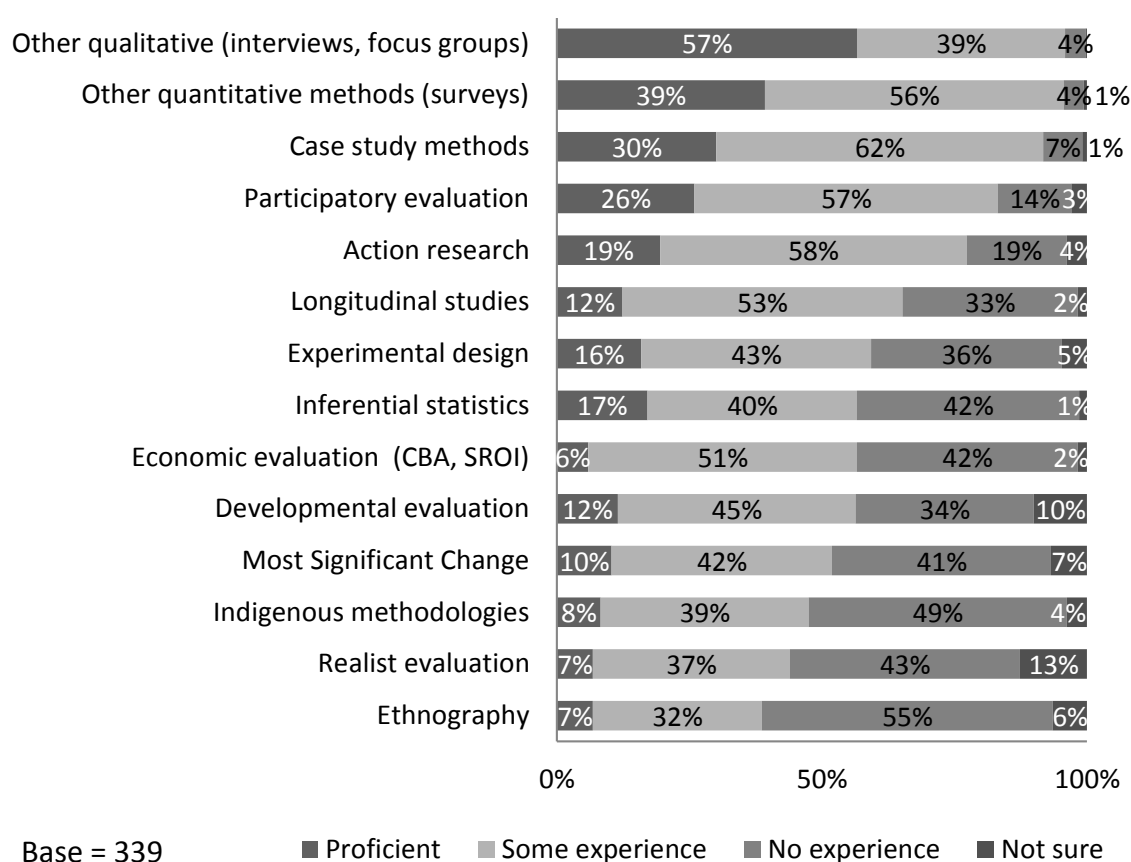
It is not only important that professions have knowledge but that they also have practical knowledge (Freidson, 1994). To the evaluator, this practical knowledge is embedded in the methodology of evaluation. Evaluation uses a range of methods, either specific to evaluation or borrowed from other disciplines. The Canadian membership surveyed considered the following activities to be very or extremely important to their work (2004):

- Outcome/impact studies (i.e., evaluating a program in terms of results and examining whether the results are because of the program or for some other reason) (75% very or extremely important)
- Evaluation methods and techniques (i.e., using the kinds of methods and procedures typically found in the tool kit of a professional evaluator) (70% very or extremely important)
- Stakeholder involvement studies (i.e., ensuring all relevant stakeholders are involved in the evaluation process) (67% very or extremely important)
- Needs assessment (i.e., evaluation focussed on identifying the real needs to be serviced by a program) (49% very or extremely important)

- Evaluability assessment (i.e., assessing a program or policy to determining its *readiness* for evaluation and the best methods to use) (37% very or extremely important)
- Efficiency studies (i.e., comparing the value of program outputs and other results with their cost, for example, cost-benefit analysis, etc.) (35% very or extremely important).

The AES survey (2013a) asked respondents their experience with a range of evaluation *methods, tools and approaches*. Of the 21 items presented, at least half of the respondents had some experience with 18 of the items (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Experience with evaluation methods tools and approaches



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: B8 Do you have any experience with the following evaluation methods, tools or approaches?

Base: All respondents

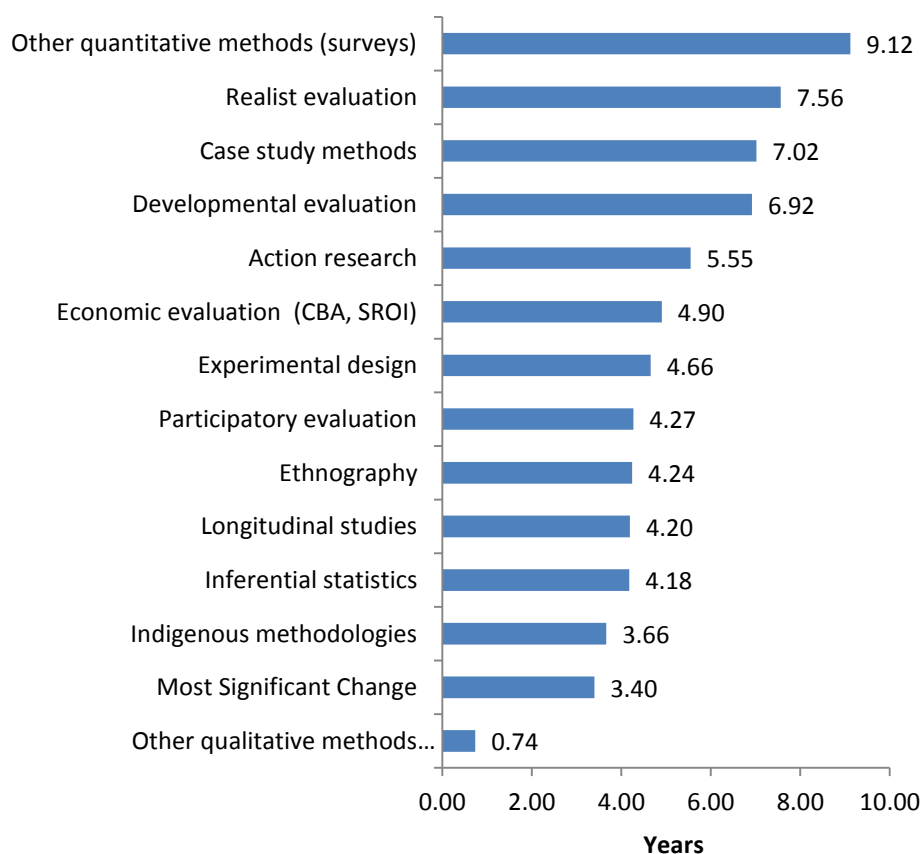
Knowledge is recognised as an important characteristic of professions in most definitions (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001; Freidson, 1986; Larson, 1977; Luthans, 1976). But to prevent the profession from coming to rely on accepted facts and becoming routine, the body of knowledge must be continuously evolving and require continuous learning involving a practical element

(Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001). It is thus to be expected that professions increase their skills with years of experience.

To test this, for each method, tool or approach presented in the AES survey, the mean years of experience for those who had *no experience* was subtracted from those who were *proficient* at the requirement. In this simplistic model, a positive result demonstrates proficiency that may be attributed to years of experience.

The results demonstrate that evaluators do increase in proficiency as a result of their years of experience as a practitioner (Figure 14). This suggests that the knowledge-base of evaluation can be learned.

Figure 14: Difference in years' experience with evaluation based on level of experience with each Method, Tool or Approach



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: B8 Do you have any experience with the following evaluation methods, tools or approaches?

B2 When did you first get involved with evaluation?

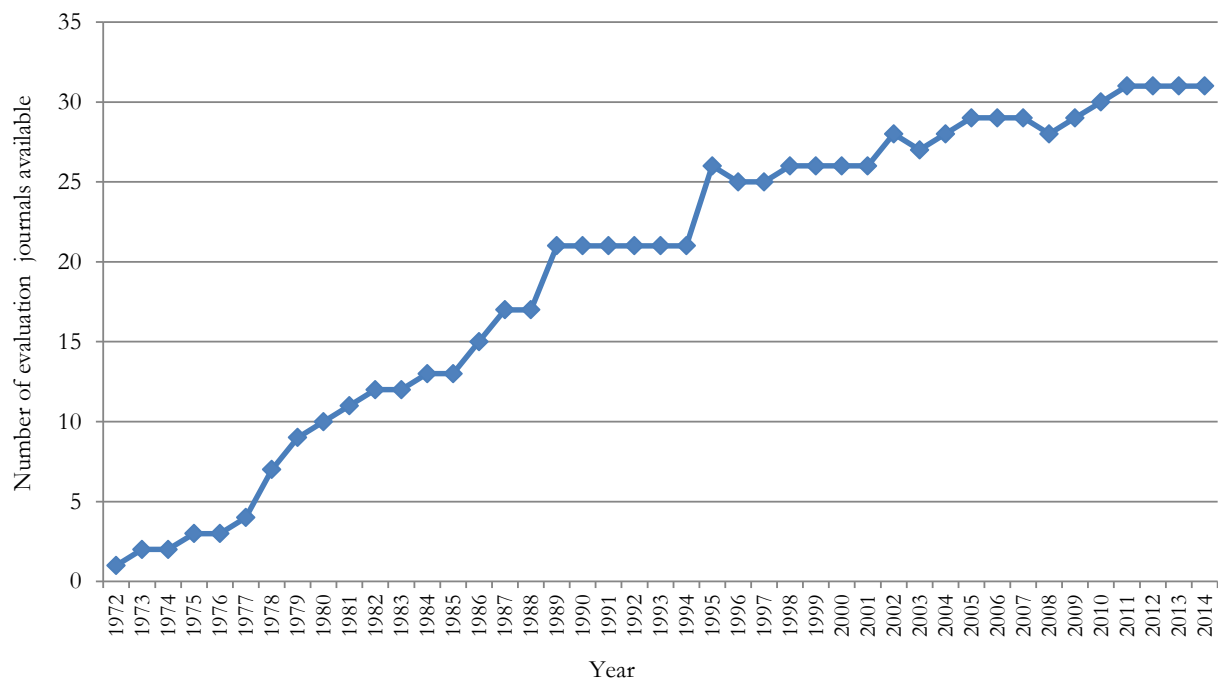
Base: All respondents

While professions have a common body of knowledge, not all members have the same level of knowledge. As Larson (1990) observed, the unequal capacity to command authority within a profession distinguishes between leaders and followers. It is also apparent from the experience gaps between those proficient and those with no experience that some evaluation methods are more specialised than others (resulting in a larger mean difference in years), for example, other quantitative methods, realist evaluation, case study methods and developmental evaluation.

Publication of journals in evaluation

The establishment of academic journals provides tangible evidence of how professions maintain and communicate their knowledge-base to members and others. To determine when evaluation journals first became available, the Monash University A-Z Journal database was searched, using the term *evaluation*. The database includes 7,402 entries. The search returned 79 results, of which 17 were rejected for not containing dates and 24 were rejected for being out of scope (such as not referring to journals or for identifying journals on other topics). This left 38 evaluation journals. The years these journals were available was plotted on a line chart (Figure 15). The results reveal that since 1972 there has been a constant growth in the availability of journals from one journal in 1972 to 31 journals in 2014.

Figure 15: Number of evaluation journals available by years from the Monash University



Source: Monash A-Z ejournals (2014)

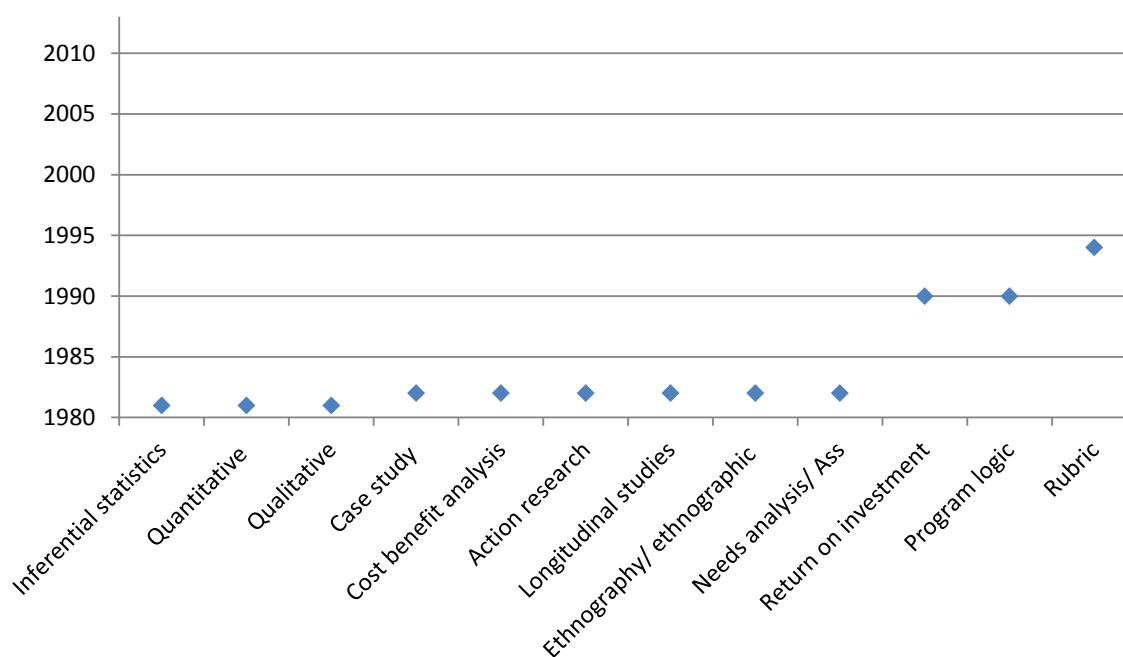
Inclusion of methods and theories in evaluation: American Journal of Evaluation

As the presence of methods and theories in evaluation demonstrate evaluation's specific knowledge, and are a core claim for its quest for professionalisation, a journal was selected to identify the first publication of different methods and theories of evaluation in the literature.

To select the appropriate journal to be used in this analysis, the journals associated with each of the main English-speaking evaluation associations were reviewed for the years available, total articles published and impact factor, using the Monash University online ejournal database as a portal. Based on this review, it was decided to use the AJE to conduct this search because of its longevity, number of articles published and high impact score.

Plotting the year of first mention for each method revealed that in the 1980s, at the time the AJE was first published, evaluation relied on the methods already available through the social sciences. It was not until the 1990s that evaluation-specific methods were published, with return on investment, program logic and a rubric approach to scoring (Figure 16).

Figure 16: First mention of methods in the American Journal of Evaluation



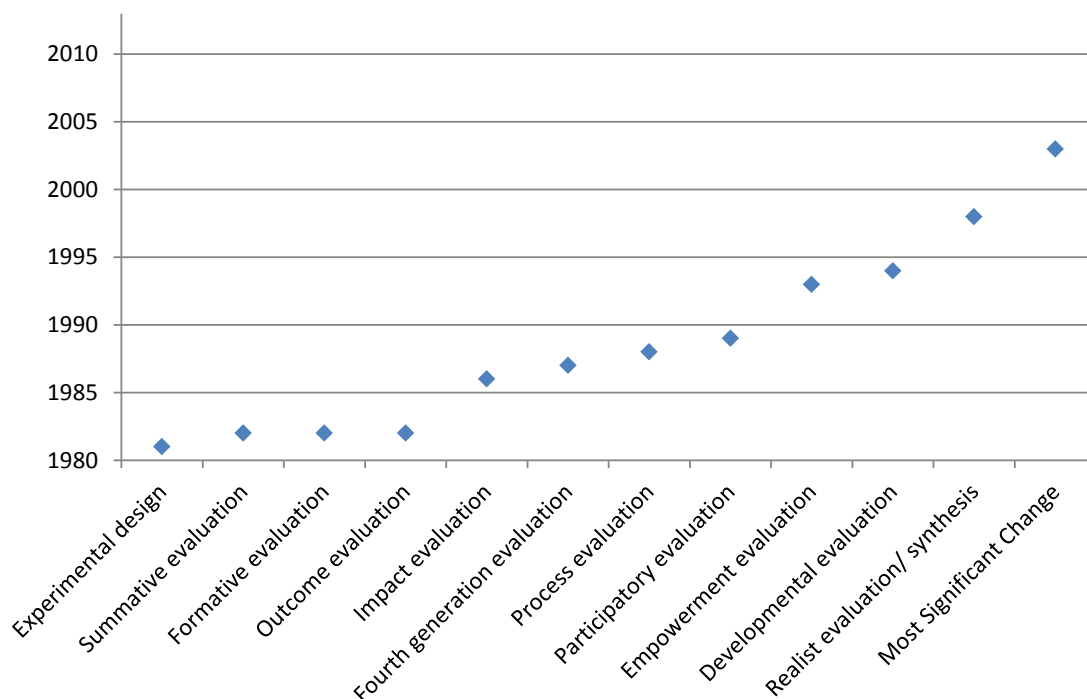
Source: American Evaluation Association (2014a)

The search results for evaluation theory reflect the consistent work of evaluators in this area (Figure 17). From the first publications of the AJE in the 1980s, categorical systems, such as Scriven's formative and summative evaluation (Scriven, 1967) are presented, along with borrowed approaches from natural sciences, such as experimental design. These early editions of

the AJE also heralded some of the future directions of evaluation. The publication of outcome evaluation in 1982 reflected the change in performance measurement in public administration from processes to results in the latter part of the twentieth century (for discussion of results-based management in public administration see Barrett, 2001; Lunt & Trotman, 2005; Rogers & Davidson, 2013).

Figure 17 also reveals that in the 1990s the AJE for the first time published a number of approaches that demonstrate an inclusive agenda: fourth generation evaluation, participatory evaluation and empowerment evaluation; these are approaches that are often employed in Indigenous or developmental evaluation. In Australia and New Zealand these inclusive-styles of evaluation have a strong presence. Rogers and Davidson (2013) argue that this is due to the egalitarian nature of the Australasian cultures and devolved management structures in government, giving more decision making to frontline staff, who are likely to want a more hands-on role in evaluation. Also driving this movement in Australasia was the recognition of native title. In New Zealand, legislative reform (such as the *Treaty of Waitangi Act* 1975) paved the way for Maori evaluation of Maori programs. This has resulted in a Maori evaluation workforce and the development of culturally specific evaluation practices (Rogers & Davidson, 2013).

Figure 17: First mention of theories in the American Journal of Evaluation



Source: American Evaluation Association (2014a)

Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

Like many professions, the knowledge-base of evaluation is vast and not all evaluators will be proficient at all forms of evaluation. While approaches that organise and categorise evaluation knowledge have been present since the first publication of the AJE in the 1980s, evaluation-specific methods were not published until the 1990s. Although the approaches to evaluation have not been validated through research and therefore do not formally constitute a theory of evaluation, the knowledge of evaluation is being developed and tested through practice. This may be the formative stage to developing theory.

Evaluation does have knowledge that can be learned. Perceptions of proficiency increase with years of experience. Similarly, some methods are clearly more specialised than others, increasing the gap between those who are proficient and those who have no knowledge of the area.

3.3.7 Evaluation qualifications

Qualification is an essential characteristic of a profession. Qualification is the means the profession uses to establish a system to select, train and socialise potential future members to ensure that they have the same skills and values as existing members (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995). It is generally assumed that this involves lengthy training (Greenwood, 1972) and a university qualification, and probably a postgraduate qualification (Sawyer, 1987). It is also common in traditional professions for formal study to be followed by a period of on-the-job training before a licence is granted to practise independently (Macdonald, 1995). While this is still true of lawyers and doctors (although both now have pathways where additional study can replace the need for articles or internship), it is perhaps an historic legacy of a period when professionals were largely self-employed with limited formal education and access to collegial support.

Evaluation qualifications

There are no states where evaluators have to meet a minimum standard to practice or to join a professional association. However, even without the requirement, evaluators may meet the qualification expectation of a profession. Analysis of the AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a) identified that 98% of AES members surveyed held a tertiary qualification. While the proportion of members with tertiary qualifications was not available from other evaluation associations, data on the highest qualification obtained by survey respondents reveal a high level of education (Table 27). Most respondents with a tertiary qualification held postgraduate qualifications. To put this in context, a recent ABS survey found that just 5% of the Australian adult population held a postgraduate degree as their highest qualification (Australian Bureau of

Statistics, 2013a), compared to 71% of AES respondents, 94% of AEA members and 77% of evaluation producers responding to the Canadian survey.

Table 27: Highest education qualifications of evaluators

Highest qualification ¹ (Base)	AES 2013 survey (251)	AEA members survey (2,537)	CES survey (Producers) (638)
Bachelor	22%	7%	20%
Master	44%	42%	61%
Doctorate	27%	52%	16%
Other	6% ²⁶	-	-

Source: ¹ Data were not available for UKES members

² Australasian Evaluation Society (2013a), filtered to Australian resident members of the AES

³ American Evaluation Association (2008)

⁴ Borys et al. (2005)

Of course, there is an assumption that the professional is qualified in an area relevant to their practice. For example, to practise medicine in Australia it is required that an entrant holds a specific qualification from providers accredited by the Australian Medical Council and has completed an internship and other professional activities in order to be registered by the Medical Board of Australia²⁷ (Medical Board of Australia, 2014).

While there are no data available on the disciplines of evaluators in Australia, the AES survey did ask respondents if their qualifications included specific training in evaluation, though this did not include information about the level or duration of training. Overall, just 50% of respondents reported that their qualifications included specific training on evaluation methods or theory. A breakdown of the data by main occupation showed some differences in results, with commissioners, students of evaluation and teachers of evaluation being more likely to have specific training in evaluation than respondents involved in the design or conduct of evaluation (Table 28).

In relation to the level of specific training on evaluation methods or theory in qualifications, analysis of data from the AES survey found that just 18% of qualifications undertaken by AES members had *extensive* coverage of evaluation methods and just more than half (51%) had *hardly any or no* coverage of evaluation (Figure 18).

²⁶ Includes diplomas, certificates and postgraduate certificates and diplomas without an undergraduate degree.

²⁷ Some other pathways are recognised for international medical graduates.

Table 28: Qualifications included training specifically in evaluation by main role

	Main role						
	Designing or conducting evaluations (224)	Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (23)*	Reading / using evaluation reports and findings (22)*	Studying or learning about evaluation methods (17)*	Teaching evaluation methods or theory (10)*	Running programs or projects that get evaluated by other people (8)*	Other (12)*
(Base)							
Yes	50%	61%	36%	65%	70%	38%	33%
No	48%	35%	59%	35%	30%	63%	67%
Not sure	2%	4%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%

* Low base

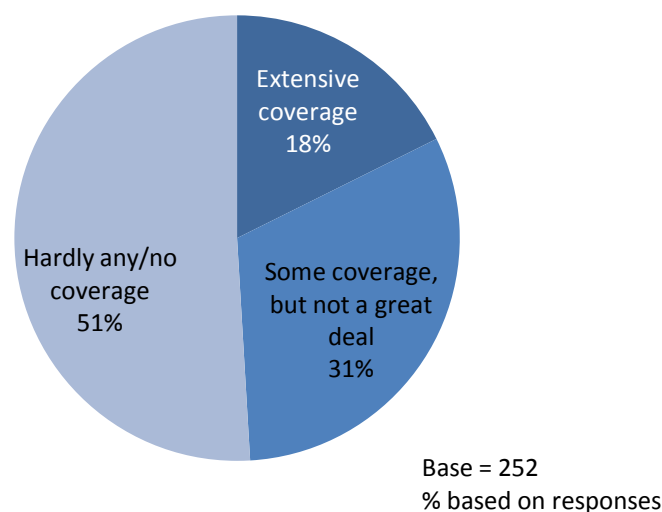
Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

C2 Did any of these post-school qualifications provide you with training specifically in evaluation methods or theory (as opposed to general research methods, for example)? Includes current study

Base: All respondents

Figure 18: Coverage of evaluation theory and methods in post school qualifications



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Questions: S2a Please list each of your post-school qualifications / degrees on a separate row. (Includes current study.)

S2b Which of these qualifications, if any, have provided you with training or experience in evaluation methods or theory (as opposed to general research methods, for example)?

Base: All respondents

Information was available on the main discipline of study from the AEA members database and the CES survey. The results demonstrate that across North America this cohort is trained in the social sciences – largely education/humanities, psychology and sociology/politics (Table 29). According to Rossi et al. (2004), in North America there are few courses that have evaluation as a subject major. Most evaluators are trained in the social sciences or professional schools that offer applied social research courses. Furthermore, education is the largest employer of evaluators in America (Rossi et al., 2004), which may also explain why evaluators were almost twice as likely to identify their primary discipline as education rather than evaluation.

Table 29: Disciplines of evaluators

	AEA membership database	CES survey (producers of evaluation)
(Base)	(883)	(825)
Education/ Humanities	22%	19%
Psychology/ health	18%	26%
Evaluation	14%	NA
Statistical methods/ Maths	10%	2%
Sociology/ Economics/ Politics	12%	22%
Organisational development/ Business administration	3%	14%
Other/ unknown	21%	12%

NA denotes field not available to respondents

Source: ¹Rossi et al. (2004)

²Borys et al. (2005)

Teaching evaluation

Universities act as the first point of screening for professions by reviewing applicants for admission. Through the development and maintenance of the profession's knowledge-base, universities also legitimise professions and their claim of specialisation (Volti, 2008). From this it could be expected that teachers of evaluation have a higher level of expertise and attainment of postgraduate qualifications than non-teachers. This issue was explored using data from the AES survey (2013a).

Just 11 respondents (3%) identified their main role as teaching evaluation theory or methods and 147 (43%) identified that they had taught evaluation theory or methods at some point. However, as teaching was not defined, teaching could include running a one-off event for an internal

audience. This is less likely where teaching is identified as the person's main role. Due to the lack of clarity in the group with previous teaching experience, the profile of evaluation teachers was compared to those who had never taught and this demonstrated that teachers of evaluation (Table 30). The results confirm that, compared to non-teachers, teachers of evaluation were more likely to report that they have studied evaluation theory or methods, have a high level of evaluation expertise, hold a PhD and have worked in evaluation longer.

Table 30: Experience teaching evaluation methods or theory

	(Base)	Main role is teaching (11*)	Have taught at some point (147)	Have never taught (190)
Post school qualifications that include evaluation method and theory	Yes (includes current study)	70%	55%	47%
	No	30%	43%	51%
	Not sure	-	2%	2%
Level of evaluation expertise	Beginner	-	1%	26%
	Intermediate	36%	29%	48%
	Advanced	36%	45%	23%
	Expert	27%	26%	3%
Highest qualification	Diploma/ Cert	-	9%	5%
	Bachelor	-	17%	26%
	Master	33%	38%	49%
	PhD	67%	37%	20%
Current employer	Government	18%	24%	36%
	Not-for-profit	-	11%	21%
	Private company	18%	40%	25%
	University / educational institution	55%	19%	16%
	Other	9%	7%	3%
Evaluation experience	Mean years	12	15	10

* Low base

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: B1 Have you ever... Taught evaluation methods or theory?

B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

Base: All respondents

While the sample is small, respondents who identified their main role as teaching evaluation theory or methods did report a higher level of educational attainment and evaluation experience than did respondents who had never taught.

Education pathways into evaluation

Universities are an essential adjunct to a profession, ensuring a supply of screened, trained and socialised graduates ready to commence their professional career.

Evaluators have a high level of education achievement, with most practitioners having a Master's degree or higher (Section 3.3.2 Evaluation workforce). Given this, and the general expectation that professionals hold university qualifications, preferably postgraduate qualifications (Sawyer, 1987), universities play an important role in what others have called *producing the producers* (Larson, 1977), in addition to less tangible benefits such as conferring status and respectability by association. While Weissman (1984) emphasised the importance of accreditation of academic institutions and a single national standard of training for the professionalisation of psychology, evaluation's relationship with educational institutions is still in a formative stage.

Canada provides an example of the development of a partnership between government, an evaluation association and the higher education sector. Supporting the pathway to the Canadian credentialing system (the Credentialed Evaluator), in 2008 a *Consortium of Universities for Evaluation Education* was established as a collaborative partnership between universities, government and the CES for the purpose of building capacity in graduate-level education and training in Canada (Consortium of Universities for Evaluation Education, 2013).

Evaluation courses in Australian Universities

To determine the role of universities in producing evaluation graduates in Australia, a search of the myfuture course database (myfuture, 2012) was conducted, using *evaluate* (and its derivatives) as the key search term. This search identified two universities that offered a total of four postgraduate courses which included evaluation in the title. These were:

- The University of Melbourne's Master of Evaluation and Post Graduate Certificate of Evaluation through the Melbourne Graduate School of Education
- Flinders University's Master of Education (Educational Research, Evaluation and Assessment) and Graduate Certificate in Public Health Research and Evaluation.

No undergraduate evaluation courses were identified in the myfuture search.

Evaluation units in Australian Universities

A further search was conducted of the websites of the 18 Australian universities that were included in the top 400 universities worldwide in 2013 by the Australian Education Network (Australian Education Network, 2013). In total, these 18 universities had 166 units that included

the term *evaluate* (or its derivatives) in the unit title. The units were most commonly associated with health (65 units or 39% of all units) and education (37 units or 22% of all units) (Table 31). The high number of evaluation units within the education sector reflected the two evaluation courses at the University of Melbourne both of which are within the education faculty. In relation to level, most units were at postgraduate level (132 units or 80%). This is consistent with the higher academic attainment expected of professionals suggested by Sawyer (1987).

Table 31: Level and discipline of evaluation units

	Health	Education	Economics/ Business	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Social work/ Community	Engineering/ IT/ Building/ resource management	Other	Total
Postgraduate Units	53	30	13	11	11	9	5	132
Undergraduate Units	12	7	6	3	2	2	2	34
TOTAL	65	37	19	14	13	11	7	166

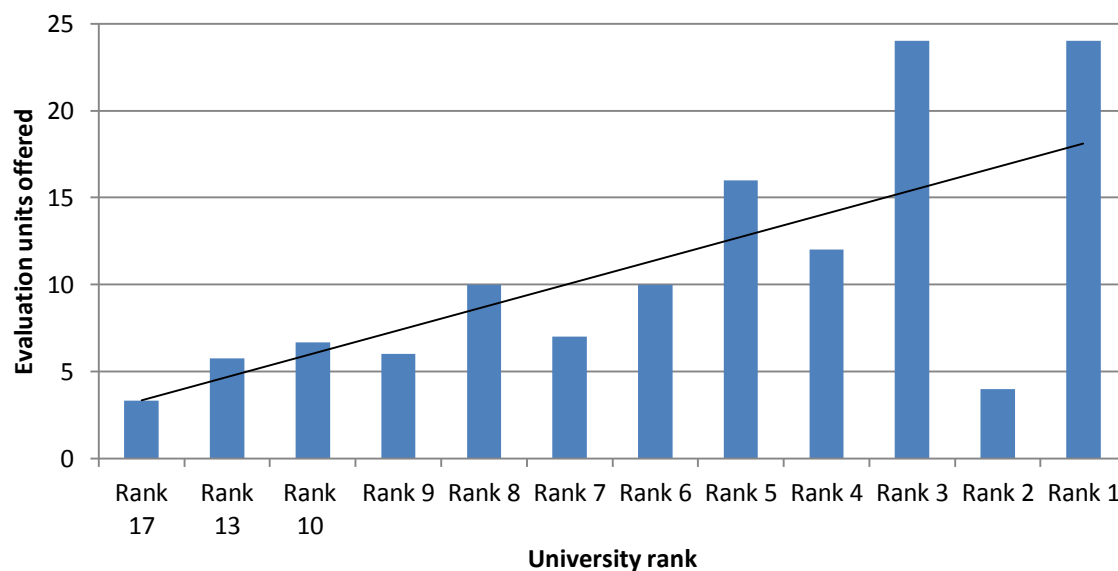
Source: Constructed from university unit guides

Torstendahl (1990b) suggested that the standing of professions has been affected by the level of prestige of the universities and the level of specialisation of the universities offering the qualification. Therefore evaluation as a future profession is afforded more respectability and credibility if it is associated with universities that are recognised as of higher rank than with those that are not. If university rank is an accurate measure of quality, then a greater number of evaluation units at higher ranked universities gives evaluation more respectability and credibility. To measure this, the average number of postgraduate evaluation units was calculated for each rank of university and plotted on a column chart. The chart was then fitted with a linear trend line to show the distribution of results (Figure 19). The trend line reveals that there is a positive association between university rank and the number of evaluation units on offer.

University rank includes a composite of factors such as student ratings, reputation with employers, citations, and other factors (Australian Education Network, 2013). Another factor that could affect the number of evaluation units on offer is the number of enrolments, as more enrolments could result in more units on offer. To control for this effect, the number of enrolments at each university (including local and international students) was divided by the number of evaluation units on offer. This was then plotted on a column chart and fitted with a linear trend line (Figure 20). The Figure reveals that the ratio of students to evaluation units

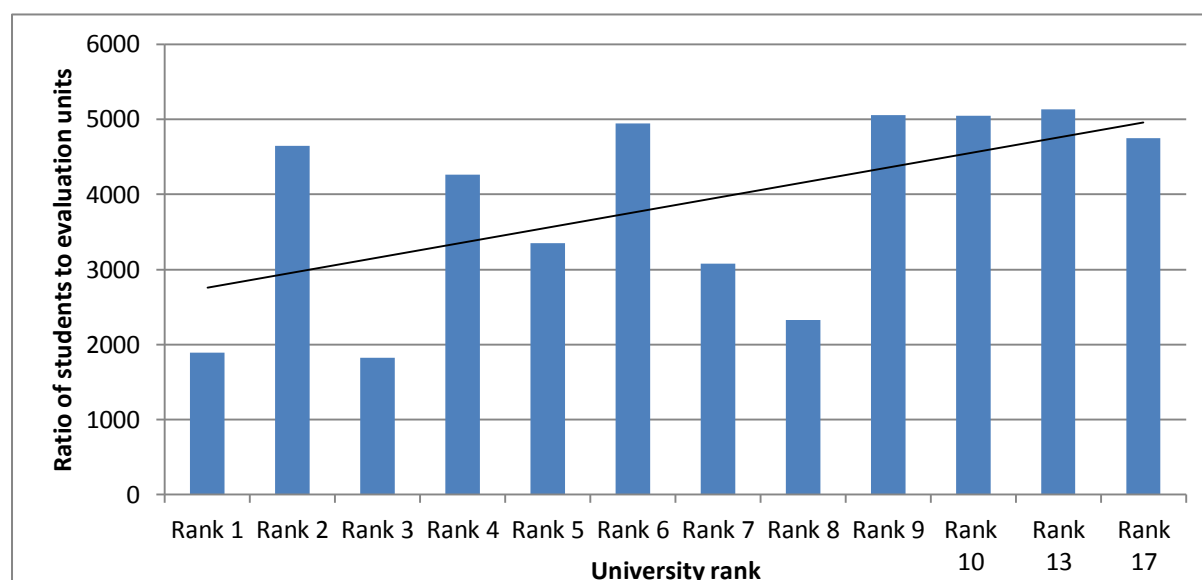
decreases with the higher rank of the university. This suggests that higher ranked universities offer more evaluation units per student.

Figure 19: Number of postgraduate units by university rank



Source: Constructed from university unit guides

Figure 20: Number of enrolment for each evaluation unit on offer by university rank



Source: Constructed from university unit guides

Professional development

Professional standing requires not only that the professional has learned a common body of knowledge but has also demonstrated a commitment to ongoing study during practice (Williams, 1979). Therefore we would expect to see a high rate of participation in professional development in a profession.

There are two sources of information available about evaluators' participation in professional development. One is the 2013 AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a); the other is the 2005 Canadian survey of evaluators (Borys et al., 2005).

Types of training undertaken by Canadian evaluators included (Borys et al., 2005):

- professional development courses and workshops (90%)
- on-the-job training (68%)
- undergraduate courses (27%)
- graduate courses (41%).

Nearly half of Canadian evaluators were found by Borys et al. (2005) to be dissatisfied with their level of training to do their job. Most identified they either *needed* more training (52%) or *wanted* more training (71%) to do their job. Time and availability of courses were identified as the most significant barriers to further education by Canadian evaluators.

Analysis of the data from the AES Survey (2013a) found that respondents had received evaluation-specific training in theory or methods at some point in their career from the following providers:

- professional associations (71%)
- in-house or private trainers (60%)
- Australasian universities and education institutions (43%)
- universities and education institutes outside of Australasia (9%).

Fewer than one in ten evaluators (9%) responding to the survey had never done any training on evaluation methods or theory. On average, respondents had received training from 2.8 providers.

In relation to participation in training by individual providers (Table 32), the AES was the most cited training provider, having trained two-thirds of respondents (67%) at some point in their career. The AES training program includes free monthly seminars (of one to two hours' duration) on topics of interests to members in most of its regions (see seminar programs

available through Australasian Evaluation Society, 2014a). In the two years preceding the survey, 70% of respondents to the AES survey had attended an AES event, workshop or seminar in their state/region (which includes book clubs, discussion groups and other small-scale activities). Other training commonly accessed by respondents at some point in their career included in-house training from a colleague (42%) and training from a private consultant (36%) or private company (21%).

The University of Melbourne, through its Centre for Program Evaluation and Centre for Health Program Evaluation, trained more respondents than any other higher education institution in Australasia or overseas.

Table 32: Source of training specifically on evaluation methods or theory

	(Base)	% of Cases (339)
Australasian Evaluation Society (AES)		67%
In-house training from one of your colleagues		42%
A consultant who provides training		36%
University of Melbourne		21%
A private company that runs training courses or conferences		21%
Another Australasian education institution		16%
American Evaluation Association (AEA)		13%
No, I have never received any (other) training on evaluation methods or theory		9%
Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA)		8%
Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA)		8%
Another education institution from outside Australasia		6%
Another professional association		6%
Massey University		5%
Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS)		4%
Other		4%
Victoria University of Wellington		3%
RMIT University		3%
Claremont Graduate University		2%
University of Auckland		1%
Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)		1%
Western Michigan University		1%
University of Minnesota		0%

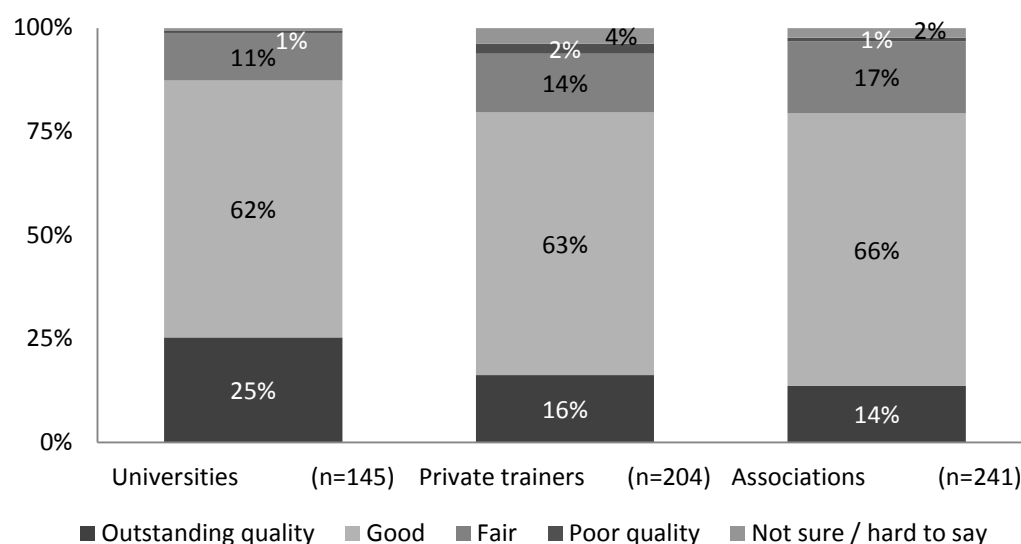
Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: C3 Have you ever received training *specifically on evaluation methods or theory* (as opposed to general research methods, for example) from any of the following sources?

Base: All respondents

Respondents to the AES survey were asked to rate the quality of the training they received. By provider type, university training was more likely to be rated as of outstanding quality (25%) than was training through a private provider (16%) or association (14%) (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Quality of training by training provider type



Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question C4a How would you rate the quality of training you received from these sources?

C3 Have you ever received training *specifically on evaluation methods or theory* (as opposed to general research methods, for example) from any of the following sources?

Base: All respondents

Training by universities included under- and postgraduate degrees that require a considerable financial, personal and time investment. Training by private providers and associations is less likely to involve the same level of investment or coverage of topics. Data were not available to compare quality of training by cost, duration or type of activity. However, it was possible to identify the quality of training by individual provider (Table 33). The results revealed that²⁸:

- of the professional associations, the AEA received the highest ratings of outstanding (23%).
- of the Australasian universities and education institutions, Massey University received the highest ratings of outstanding (53%)

²⁸ Figures are not provided for universities outside of Australasia due to the small sample size.

- of the other training providers, in-house training from colleagues received the highest ratings of outstanding (20%).

Table 33: Proportion of training providers rated as outstanding by trainees

Training provider (Base)	Proportion outstanding (339)
Professional associations	
American Evaluation Association (AEA)	23%
Australasian Evaluation Society (AES)	13%
Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (ANZEA)	12%
Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA)	12%
Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS)#	0%
Australasian universities and education institutions	
Massey University	53%
University of Melbourne	28%
University of Auckland#	25%
Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG)#	25%
RMIT#	22%
Victoria University of Wellington	10%
Other training providers	
In-house training from colleagues	20%
Consultant who provides training	16%
Private company that runs courses	10%

Low sample size (less than 20 cases)

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question C4a How would you rate the quality of training you received from these sources?

C3 Have you ever received training *specifically on evaluation methods or theory* (as opposed to general research methods, for example) from any of the following sources?

Base: All respondents

Most people involved in evaluation have completed some professional development training in evaluation. While most training is conducted by professional associations, universities were seen as offering higher-quality programs. This may be due to differences in the nature of the programs offered.

Conference attendance

Conferences are another form of development available to professionals. The AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a) found that nearly all respondents (98%) were aware of the AES annual conference. Seventy percent of respondents had attended a conference at some

point and 46% of respondents had attended an evaluation conference in the last two years (Table 34).

Table 34: Awareness and participation in conferences

	Aware of AES conference (320)	Ever attended an evaluation conference (339)	Attended an evaluation conference in last two years (318)	Ever presented at a conference or seminar (339)
Yes	98%	70%	46%	48%
No	2%	30%	54%	52%

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: E3 Have you ever heard of... AES Conference?

B1 Have you ever... Attended an evaluation conference?

E4 In the last few years (say, since the start of 2011), have you... Attended an AES Conference?

B1 Have you ever... Presented at an evaluation conference or seminar?

Base: All respondents

Exploring conference participation by main role in evaluation found that teachers of evaluation were very likely to have attended an evaluation conference at some point (91%) or presented at an evaluation conference or seminar (91%), but less likely to have attended an AES conference in the last two years (44%) (Table 35). Commissioners were also very likely to have ever attended an evaluation conference (80%) or an AES evaluation conference in the last two years (61%). Commissioners of evaluation were the least likely group to present at an evaluation conference or seminar (40%). Respondents involved in designing or conducting evaluations had lower rates of ever having attended an evaluation conference compared to the other groups, although the level of participation was still high (73%). Evaluation designers and conductors were more likely than commissioners to present at a conference (51%), but slightly less likely to have attended an AES conference in the last two years (48%).

Table 35: Awareness and participation in conferences by main role in evaluation

	Designing or conducting evaluations (234)	Commissioning or contracting out evaluation projects (25)*	Teaching evaluation methods or theory (11)*
Ever attended an evaluation conference	73%	80%	91%
Presented at an evaluation conference or seminar	51%	40%	91%
Attended an AES Conference in the last two years	48%	61%	44%

*Low base

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: B3 At present, what is your MAIN involvement in evaluation?

B1 Have you ever... Attended an evaluation conference?

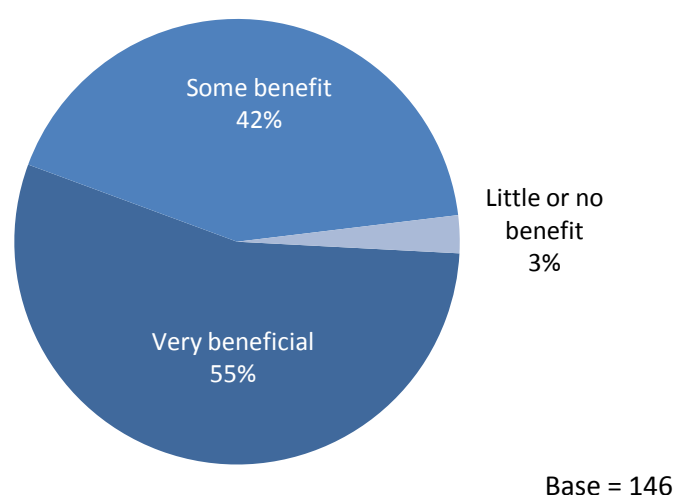
E4 In the last few years (say, since the start of 2011), have you... Attended an AES Conference?

B1 Have you ever... Presented at an evaluation conference or seminar?

Base: All respondents

Respondents who had attended an AES conference in the last two years were asked to rate the level of benefit they received from their attendance. Just 3% of respondents saw little or no benefit from attending (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Benefit from attending the AES conference



Base = 146

Source: Data provided by the AES (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a)

Question: E5 Over the last few years (say, since the start of 2011), how beneficial have you found the following, in support of your evaluation practice? ... The AES Conference

Base: All respondents

The importance of community is a recurring theme in the sociology of professions literature. Flexner (1915, reprinted 2001) observed that professions develop from a community of interest. Spencer (1896) made similar observations about the development of the medical profession, as did Macdonald (1995) about the development of the accountancy profession. The forerunner of a profession is the development of a community, defined by occupation, that comes together to share their unique experiences and knowledge. Conferences are one demonstration of this community. People attending the AES conference report benefit. The AES conference also provides a means to socialise potential members with over a third of participants not current members of the AES, according to the conference statistics presented by McLeod and Duda (2012).

Implications for the professionalisation of evaluation

While evaluators in Australia have a high level of academic qualification, much of their formal study is not in evaluation theory and methods. In fact, just two Australian universities offer degree programs in evaluation, with evaluation units offered as components of other programs, largely in education and health sciences. There was a positive correlation between university standing and the number of postgraduate units offered in evaluation.

Evaluators have high participation in professional development activities. However, the quality of the training was variable, with universities generally seen as providing better training programs than professional associations, private trainers and others. This result may reflect differences in the levels of programs, duration, and cost between providers.

While evaluators are highly qualified, most evaluators do not have a high level of qualification in evaluation. This lack of specific, formal qualification in evaluation is a potential barrier to the recognition of evaluation as a profession and demonstrates a lack of occupational closure.

3.4 DISCUSSION

This section discusses the progress of the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. This discussion is structured around the topics underpinning the research questions: association; workforce; ethics; professional regulation; state support; professional knowledge; and qualifications.

3.4.1 Professional characteristics and evaluation

Evaluation is professionalising. This is most evident in the global interest in accreditation of evaluators – an important step in self-regulation. But professionalisation, for the most part, is an unconscious activity of an occupation, resulting in incremental change. To determine the state of professionalisation in evaluation, evaluation was considered in relation to those topics that are considered important to professions. The topic list borrows concepts from trait theory (Flexner, 1915, reprinted 2001), the professional project (Larson, 1977; Macdonald, 1995), and other theorists such as Maack (1997). From this literature seven topics were identified (in Paper 1), with twenty potential measures. The professionalisation of evaluation was considered in each of these areas. A determination was made on whether evaluation had met the measure fully, partially or not at all (Table 36). Topics and measures are presented as a guide only and are not intended to imply that an occupation must fully achieve all measures to be considered a profession, nor that achievement of all measures would identify an occupation as a profession. As discussed in Paper 1, aspiring occupations should work with their community and stakeholders to identify the topics and measures that they value in their professionalisation. The list presented here has been developed from a review of literature, in the absence of a formal professionalisation framework for evaluation in Australia.

Table 36: Comparison of evaluation in Australia to topics in the sociology of professions literature

Measures	Evaluation compliance in Australia	Justification
Professional association		
Provides activities associated with the development of a community of interest – journals, conferences, professional learning	Fully	Regular publications of peer-reviewed journal and newsletter Annual conference and ongoing paid and free professional development opportunities available in regions
Limits its members to the occupational group	Not at all	Anyone with an interest in evaluation can join the AES

Measures	Evaluation compliance in Australia	Justification
Evaluation workforce		
Practitioners identify with the profession	Partially	Evaluators do not necessarily identify as evaluators and may have other professional interests
There is a clear pathway into the profession	Not at all	There are no prerequisite courses of study in evaluation and only two universities offer award programs.
Ethics		
Ethics protect consumers from poor practices	Fully	AES ethics include strong value statements
Ethics protect the interests of stakeholders (commissioners, service consumers, etc.)	Fully	AES ethics include strong value statements
Ethics include a concept of service above self-interest	Partially	This is only included indirectly by not mitigating quality by reference to factors such as cost or capacity
Ethics are no self-serving	Not at all	Some of the AES ethics statements potentially limit a member's ability to discuss AES policies, procedures and competency of colleagues.
Professional regulation		
Ability to practise is restricted to those qualified	Not at all	Anyone can practise as an evaluator
Ability to practise is maintained through regular participation in professional development activities	Partially	There is no requirement for professional development but there is a recommendation and high voluntary participation
State influence		
The state identifies the service as important	Fully	Numerous policy documents confirm the importance of evaluation to government accountability
The state provides some form of protected shelter or monopoly	Not at all	There is no restriction on who can offer services to market
Professional knowledge		
The profession is based on a specialised body of knowledge	Fully	Evaluation has developed specialised knowledge, tools and methods
The knowledge can be taught and learned	Fully	Evaluators improve their competency as a result of experience demonstrating learning. Evaluation units are taught in most of the top 17 Australian universities
The theoretical base of the profession is tested using the scientific method	Partially	Theoretical base of evaluation is only tested through practice
The knowledge is applied to solve a practical problem that is presented by a third party (employer, client, commissioner)	Fully	Evaluator is appoint to address specific questions determined by internal or external clients
Qualifications		
There is a nationally agreed set of competencies in place	Partially	In late 2013 the AES developed internally a competency framework which has been released for discussion with the evaluation community. It is expected to be revised and reviewed based on feedback
Tertiary providers deliver accredited courses of study against an agreed curriculum	Not at all	There are no such relationships with academic institutions in place
Members have a recognised qualification on entry to the profession	Not at all	There are no entry qualifications in place; while members have a high level of educational attainment, it is not necessarily relevant to evaluation nor is it necessarily acquired prior to entry
Members may be required to complete a graduate year or some form of on-the-job training to be able to practise independently	Not at all	There are no requirements of evaluators

Overall, evaluation in Australia has made substantial achievements in most of the seven topic areas identified in the literature as important in professionalisation. Workforce, regulation and qualification stand out as the areas where evaluation is the least professionalised. These areas also all relate to occupational closure. The workforce is drawn from a range of occupations, and practitioners may not consider themselves to be evaluators; while evaluators have a high level of qualification, their formal training in evaluation is low; and evaluation is an unregulated practice and some government commissioners in Australia and Canada have questioned the quality of the work produced by evaluators. Conversely, evaluation has demonstrated a high degree of professionalisation in its control of knowledge. The knowledge-base of evaluation has grown quickly in recent decades, establishing evaluation-specific methods and approaches.

The performance of evaluation in Australia is discussed below within each of the seven topics.

Professional association

The AES, like the other evaluation associations reviewed, does not limit membership to practitioners; anyone with an interest in evaluation is encouraged to join. This includes commissioners who may have no other link to evaluation and consider their profession and identity to be tied to another occupation²⁹. There is a potential conflict of interest here with commissioners and other parties who are not evaluator. Firstly, when evaluators and commissioners are parties to a contract for service, they have competing interests. The AES, through its Policy on the Application of the Code of Ethics (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2000), refers unresolved complaints about a possible breach of the Code of Ethics by a member to its Board. In the case of a dispute over a contracted service, the AES may have both the commissioner and evaluator as members. Secondly, where commissioners are members of other professional associations and consider these associations to be their primary membership association, those associations may be in competition with the interests of AES. For example, the alternative association may compete with the AES financially (for government sponsorship, revenue from training programs, conference or membership fees) or through promotion of different values (through codes of ethics or conduct, strategic priorities and directions).

This open membership policy is contrary to the arrangements for most professions, where there is a clear focus on practitioners of the profession. As mentioned previously, this broad approach to membership of evaluation associations may be reflective of a young occupation, building a market and establishing a financially viable community of interest. It is not a sustainable model

²⁹ Or course, commissioners can also be highly skilled evaluators and should qualify for association membership on that premise.

for professionalisation, because the competing interests will become more apparent as the association lobbies the state for support in protecting its market and supporting its activities.

Evaluation workforce

Evaluators are drawn from a range of backgrounds and professional affiliations. As Rossi et al. (2004) noted, evaluators may have other professional backgrounds, association memberships and allegiances. Some evaluations are conducted by academics, social and market researchers, management consultants and subject matter experts, among others (C. Reed & Spicer, 2006). In addition, some practitioners conduct evaluation as a role, not an occupation; they move in and out of evaluation. Hawkins (2006) made this observation about the high annual turnover in AES membership. The different interests and affiliations of evaluators may affect the cohesion of evaluation as an occupational group. A survey of practising evaluators in Canada (Borys et al., 2005) found that just 45% of producers felt that they belonged to a community of evaluators, and only 50% would identify themselves as an evaluator if asked what work they do. A survey of AEA members found that just 39% considered their main professional activity to be evaluation and 15% identified themselves as researchers (Rossi et al., 2004). Hence not all practitioners identify as evaluators. This is not just a function of diverse membership of evaluation associations but also the use of evaluation as a role not as a dedicated occupation. Macdonald (1995) noted that part of the professionalisation project of accountants in Scotland was to require members to be dedicated to the occupation, as plurality of work was seen as detracting from professionalism. While this is extreme, it does make the point that professional membership should require dedication to that profession.

This different backgrounds and professional allegiances of evaluators is a recurring issue. Fundamentally this stems from different academic pathways. There are only two universities offering postgraduate qualifications in evaluation. There is no agreed national curriculum and no approved tertiary providers. Analysis of data from the AES survey (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013a) found that just 18% of qualifications undertaken by respondents included extensive coverage of evaluation methods, and just over half (51%) had little or no coverage of evaluation. Furthermore, in Canada Borys et al. (2005) identified that 70% of producers became evaluators unintentionally. The result is that there are no clear pathways into evaluation and at least part of the workforce is temporary.

Ethics

The AES has established a strong ethical foundation for evaluation in Australia. Ethics provide protection for the general public and stakeholders. However, the AES's ethics documents are

unique among evaluation associations and divergent from the AMA in the presence of statements that protect the interest of the organisation, its policies and procedures. This may reflect the immaturity of the organisation, unique aspects of its history or a need to protect its developing market. It does weaken a claim of altruism in the development of ethics and in the provision of services.

In addition, while the radical altruism that Durkheim (1957) accorded professions has rightly been rejected, there is an expectation the professions focus on a service ideal above immediate economic self-interest. There is only indirect support for a service ideal in the AES ethics documents by way of statements that support rigour of evaluation.

Professional regulation

There is no restriction on the practice of evaluation to those qualified in Australia or in any other jurisdiction. Moreover, there is no notion of what constitutes a qualified evaluator in Australia³⁰. There are no requirements for evaluators to undertake ongoing professional development nor any recommendation about the minimum amount of professional development that is desired. The AES Code of Ethics (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h) does include a statement about remaining competent:

Statement 3. Members should remain competent ... striving to keep abreast of current and emerging practices. (p. 2)

However, while there are no standards on professional development, the AES does have a professional development policy (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2014b) that provides encouragement and opportunity for members to participate in professional development.

State support

The importance of evaluation to the Australian Government was established early in the twentieth century through reviews of the functioning of the public service (Barrett, 1996, 1997; Briggs, 2005). The main roles of the Australian Government in evaluation have been in establishing demand for evaluation through policy (ANAO Report No. 3, 1997-98; McPhee, 2006), sponsorship of events, and creating internal workforce capacity within departments as part of a decentralised model. However, the size of the demand is difficult to estimate without a budget line or separate reporting requirement for evaluation contracts. The size of the external

³⁰ In Canada the work of the CES, the Treasury Board and the Consortium of Universities for Evaluation have defined quality in evaluation for that market (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012a).

investment could be estimated by a change in the reporting of awarded contracts in the contract management system to include evaluation as a separate category.

The Australian Government also has no apparent formal links to the AES or other mechanisms to influence workforce development.

Professional knowledge

Evaluation has undergone rapid growth since the 1960s and has continuously evolved since this period (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Shadish et al. (1991) describe how evaluators initially borrowed theories from other fields, particularly the fields in which they were academically trained, but for the last 20 years they have been developing their own models or frameworks of evaluation.

While evaluation has conceptual models and frameworks that organise and structure knowledge, as Alkin (2013a) notes, evaluation does not have theories, because these concepts and frameworks have not been validated through research. However, Shadish et al. (1991) reasoned that evaluation is a young discipline, its practice is evolving and this evolution forms the basis of the theory of evaluation, explaining what has worked and what has not.

The subject matter of evaluation is vast (Scriven, 1980). This presents difficulties in refining the practice of evaluation, if the subject matter is too broad, evaluators run the risk of lacking depth of knowledge and mastery (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Evaluation does have knowledge that can be learned. An evaluator's self-perceptions of proficiency increase with years of experience. Similarly, some methods are clearly more specialised than others, increasing the years of experience between those who are proficient and those who have no knowledge of the area.

It is not only important that professions have knowledge but also that they have practical knowledge (Freidson, 1994). To the evaluator, this practical knowledge is used to answer evaluation questions and meet evaluation objectives presented by clients.

Qualifications

While evaluators in Australia have a high level of academic attainment and qualification, much of their formal study is not in evaluation theory or methods. In fact, just two Australian universities offer degree programs in evaluation, with evaluation units offered as components of other programs, largely in education and health sciences. In addition, there is no agreed national curriculum for evaluation or approved tertiary providers.

While evaluators have high participation in professional development activities, the quality of the training was variable, with universities generally seen as providing better training programs than

professional associations, private trainers and others. However, this may reflect differences in the levels of programs, duration, and cost between providers.

In late 2013 the AES released a competency framework for evaluators. Further work is intended to finalise the competencies (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013i).

3.4.2 Evaluation as a profession

It is apparent from Table 36 that evaluation in Australia cannot be considered a profession, although it has acquired some of the characteristics that may be associated with professions. The main gaps in the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia relate to establishing a secure workforce, regulation and qualification. These issues all relate to occupational closure (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Occupational closure



Traditionally, occupational closure in professions is achieved through a series of interrelated activities. Usually universities are accredited to deliver an industry-agreed standard national curriculum. These approved universities work with stakeholders to establish selection criteria and quotas for admission to study for candidates, and setting standards and procedures for assessment of learning and graduation. Associations then restrict membership to graduates and students of approved university programs. Some of these graduates may undertake further study

or internships to become eligible to practise in their profession. Admission to practise is formally acknowledged by the establishment of a registration body that reviews applications to practise in the profession against the qualifications and competencies of the applicant. Usually, registration is managed independent of the profession. However, in the absence of independent registration, professional associations may operate a self-regulation system, as seen in the case of the CES. To be successful, the self-regulation must give members a competitive advantage over non-members (such as increased remuneration or greater access to employment opportunities) and offer some added value to clients (such as access to a higher-skilled workforce).

Evaluation as an occupation

Occupations provide a way of looking at work based on the structure and type of activity performed (Watson, 2011). As we saw in Paper 1 in the emergence of specialised divisions of labour and modern professions in response to the Industrial Revolution, occupations have implications for the way in which society is structured and in the way this structure changes over time. For this Paper, occupations are important as the foundations of professions. Fundamentally, professions are ‘uncommon occupations’ (Larson, 1977, p. x), so that, in a traditional model of professions, evaluation must meet the criterion for being an occupation as a necessary condition to being a profession.

An occupation is not just a conceptual construct but a social group that exists in the real world. As Watson (2011) observed, the occupation must be recognised by both those who undertake the work and by the wider public. It is doubtful that the wider public would be aware of evaluation as an occupation. But putting this in context, it is perhaps more important that the market for evaluation recognises the occupation so that there is a demand for services.

Evaluation is a young area of activity with a diverse pedigree. Evaluation has its roots in social inquiry and other disciplines (Alkin, 2004) and it has been described as a transdiscipline (Scriven, 2013a) or metaprofession (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013d). Levin-Rozalis and Shochot-Reich (2009) commented that evaluation has been able to adapt to a wide variety of subjects and programs because of the diverse backgrounds of its practitioners, but that this has led to a lack of coherence in the nature of evaluation, its aims, roles, *modus operandi*, and professional standards. Hence, while there are benefits arising from this flexibility, it also has the potential to inhibit the development of a community and occupational identity.

While professions can deal with diversity, the level of diversity in evaluation may present additional challenges. Macdonald points out that an occupation is not just a social group but an

active agent that must establish, maintain and work at enhancing its identity to separate it from other occupations that compete with it for members (Macdonald, 1995).

Within the medical profession, different backgrounds and interests of members have been accommodated through the development of medical specialty streams, although this is not always the case. As Spencer (1896) commented, earlier in its history other occupations (such as barbers and pharmacists) were excluded from the medical profession. This division between pharmacy and medicine is still evident today in debates over the scope of practice of pharmacists (for example, in relation to granting pharmacists permission to administer injections see the medical view presented by Rollins, 2013).

The development of the occupation is fundamentally built around the notion of monopoly for skills and expertise increasing economic success and status in the social order (Weber, 1976). Often an action serves both the objectives of monopoly and status (Larson 1977). For example, if an occupation sets a university degree as required for entry, this serves to limit the practice of the occupation to qualified graduates and raises the social standing of the occupation (Macdonald, 1995). This association with a degree also creates another career pathway for elite practitioners, as academics, and links to an occupational group (academia) that has a vested interest in maintaining the monopoly and social standing of the occupation upon which it is predicated (Larson, 1977). In addition, social standing and economic success have an added bonus for knowledge-based occupations, as they provide a tangible demonstration of quality, building trust with consumers for a service that Macdonald (1995) noted may otherwise be intangible. Macdonald (1995) also observed that, if the occupational group is seen as respectable, it can attract more business, and the more business it attracts the more of the external vestiges of respectability it can afford, and so on.

Establishing a monopoly for services is at the heart of an occupational group. However, most occupations have a limited monopoly. This is true even of the traditional professions. For example, there is blurring of boundaries between health professions with nurse practitioners and pharmacists being increasingly used to manage chronic conditions. In most areas of Australia, nurse practitioners are able to prescribe some medications and pharmacists are able to write repeat prescriptions for medication and monitor diabetes, blood pressure and give vaccinations; areas that were previously the domain of the general practitioner (M. Reed, Reed, Roose, & Forwood, 2008). For other occupations, such as the trades, there are some aspects of the work that are protected by a monopoly. Even in the area of electrics, where certificates of electrical safety can only be issued by a licensed electrician, there are exceptions, such as the installation of

electrical smart meters by non-electricians (Smart Meters, 2014). But generally it is accepted that the work is performed better when conducted by a member of the occupation.

Understanding the work of evaluators is complex because the work is not restricted to a sector or discipline. According to the AES (2013d), evaluation occurs in a broad context and across many different sectors. Academic institutions, national, state and local governments and the not-for-profit sector commission evaluations. These evaluations include all areas of social policy to varying degrees, such as international development, arts, health, education, community services, and employment. Evaluation is multidisciplinary, in that it recruits practitioners and tools from its boundary partners, that is, occupations or professions that have some overlap with evaluation (such as social researchers, policy analysts and management consultants, among others). Scriven (2013b) compared evaluators to statisticians, providing services to other professions. Yet there is another complexity on top of this. A statistician may work in different fields but still be working as a statistician. Evaluators may work in other professions where they are not evaluators. For example, a professor of medicine might teach medicine at university and evaluate government programs. Thus, not only is evaluation a metaprofession or transdiscipline, so too are its practitioners.

These broad definitions do not help to identify the occupation of evaluation. But they may reflect the stage of development of evaluation as an occupational group. We have seen from Macdonald's (1995) work how accountants in nineteenth-century Britain had weak occupational boundaries initially before focussing on accountancy as a specialised activity requiring a dedicated practitioner. In Spencer's (1896) account of the early development of medicine a similar pattern is described. Similar is De Beelde's (2002) account of the separation of auditors from accountants. Hence the early development of professions starts with a community of practitioners who have similar occupational interests. As the knowledge-base increases, so does the need for practitioners to become more specialised. As the occupational group forms, and specialised knowledge and skill are accumulated, those former colleagues who did not keep pace with that knowledge and skill (for example, because other work interests occupied their time) are squeezed out, and this act, by restricting their occupational activities, forces them to specialise in other areas. Thus the occupational restriction of one group creates a new occupation or reshapes other existing occupations.

Evaluation is on the cusp of this process. It is currently a practice conducted by a broad range of practitioners, many of whom work temporarily in evaluation. Some practitioners identify themselves as evaluators and some do not. Some within the community of evaluators are

pushing for specialisation (through credentials and through excluding boundary partners), others favour a broad practice. Some members of the evaluation community argue that evaluation itself is a broad practice and invite this collective approach. Yet history demonstrates that since the Industrial Revolution labour has continued to specialise. Professions have developed, continued to refine their skills and knowledge and, when needed, split or developed internal streams to accommodate new specialisations. The market for a profession's services shrinks in scope and expands in specialisation as knowledge accumulates. Practitioners meet new demands or leave the profession.

Occupational boundaries of evaluation

To consider the merits of evaluation as an occupation, it is necessary to define the area of work and identify the workforce. While the definitions of evaluation vary, Scriven has provided a good definition through his attempts to separate evaluation from other occupations. In Scriven's definition, evaluators

...are concerned to establish the merit, worth, quality, or value of programs, in whole or in part, at the request of some client or clients, and for the benefit of some audience (Scriven, 1999, p57).

Scriven's definition provides some direction for identifying the unique character of evaluation. Evaluation involves:

- **Evaluative judgement.** Merit, worth, quality or value implies the need for a determination of relative benefit against alternative real or ideal types. Collecting and reporting data, however useful, are not sufficient. Evaluative judgement is required to place that data in context. This implies a theory of how programs are expected to operate and a standard against which to measure observed operation.
- **A client who commissions the work.** Evaluators work to answer questions or solve problems that are presented by a client or commissioner. This person may be internal or external to the employing organisation of the evaluator.
- **An audience, other than the client, who benefits from the work.** The work of the evaluator has social significance beyond its immediate application.

If we apply this criterion to evaluation's boundary partners, many fail because they service clients with commercial interests, and there may be no other audience that benefits from the work (Table 37). Other partners may not use evaluative judgement in the provision of the service, but rather describe a situation, its trends over time or its implications for a target audience.

Most boundary partners, at a simplistic level, make evaluative judgements of some kind during the course of their work, usually by comparing an observation against an accepted benchmark.

For example, an accountant might make a judgement about organisational cost efficiency based on a comparison of administrative to program costs. A market researcher, working on product development, may make an evaluative assessment of which product should go to market. The exception is social research. Social researchers usually present data on issues of social importance. This may be based on a single-source method (e.g., an opinion poll), and in some areas (such as political polling) the exclusion of evaluative comment is considered to be important for impartiality or neutrality of the researcher.

The requirement for professionals to have a client excluded boundary partners such as academic researchers, funded through either grants or university tenure, as they do not work specifically to answer the questions raised by clients (this point was made by Torstendahl, 1990a). Program evaluators, whether internal or external to the organisation, are working for clients.

Serving the interests of an audience other than the client excludes statisticians, management consultants, accountants and financial auditors. Generally, these services focus on the internal operation of an organisation. While this may benefit another audience (for example, through improved efficiency or services), the relationship is indirect. In the case of statisticians, while their work may service another audience, it is usually through an intermediary, such as a social researcher, policy analyst or evaluator. As Scriven (2013b) observed, statisticians are metaprofessionals, largely providing their services to other professionals. Market researchers may make evaluative judgements about their subject matter, but the audience served is a commercial interest that may have no (or even a negative) social interest.

Of course, the focus of this alignment is theoretical, based on the intent of the occupation. The ability of an occupation to live up to this intent is a separate matter. For example, Pawson and Tilly argue that evaluation has not lived up to its promise to improve society through research driven policy making. This is due to a number of factors, including difficulties in distinguishing between program success and failure, and determining how much success is enough to justify the continuation of a program. In addition, there is no mandate for the program to accept the recommendations of an evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997). Despite this, evaluation is distinguishable as an occupation from its boundary partners.

Table 37: Evaluation activities conducted by boundary partners

Boundary partners	Conduct evaluations or work on evaluation teams	Trained to make evaluative judgements about merit or worth	Have a client who commissions the work	Have an audience, other than the client, who benefits from the work
Academic researchers	✓	✓	✗	✓
Social researchers	✓	✗	✓	✓
Market researchers	✓	✓	✓	✗
Economists	✓	✓	✓	✓
Statisticians	✓	✓	✓	✗
Management consultants	✓	✓	✓	✗
Accountants	✓	✓	✓	✗
Auditors	✓	✓	✓	✗

Occupational closure

There are signs that evaluators are attempting to close the market and exclude other professions from conducting evaluations. The occupation that has been most targeted in these activities is social research. Social research, as shown in Paper 2, forms part of the foundation of evaluation through a focus on social inquiry and the development of social research methods. It is therefore not surprising that evaluation as an occupation should attempt to differentiate itself from social research. An analysis of evaluation suppliers to the Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Ageing for the years 2000 to 2005 found that the suppliers were equally likely to be affiliated with the Market and Social Research Society of Australia or the Australasian Evaluation Society (C. Reed & Spicer, 2006). It is therefore not surprising that social researchers are seen by evaluators as competitors. Several evaluators have authored papers pointing out the differences between researchers (including social, academic and market researchers) to evaluation commissioners (Davidson, 2010, 2012; Emery, 2012; Hoefer, 2010; Rogers & Davidson, 2012).

Evaluation as a formal activity is a very new area, dating from the latter half of the twentieth century. It is therefore not surprising that we see a continued effort towards occupational closure. Evaluation also has the added complexity of being a transdiscipline or metaprofession, which in itself is also a new way of working that reflects the commoditisation and increasing complexity of knowledge. This results in evaluators working in partnerships with boundary partners to cover specialised discipline knowledge. Accordingly, in a structure where it is

common for evaluators to work on teams with other professionals, it is not surprising that many people working in the area of evaluation do not identify themselves as evaluators.

A similar pattern was seen in the foundation of accountancy as a profession. From Macdonald's (1995) account, while Royal charters were granted to local associations of accountants in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the 1850s and twenty years later in Liverpool and London, key legislation driving the need for these services around bankruptcy and company law did not recognise accountancy skill as the sole providence of accountants and permitted others to execute accountancy roles, including merchants, lawyers and auctioneers. Evaluation as a field currently justifies its own plurality as reflective of a transdiscipline or metadiscipline. In fact, these boundary partners may provide the training for evaluators and hence be part of the supply chain of evaluators.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This section provides the implications of the research for practice and theory, and suggests a further research program.

3.5.1 Implications of the research for the practice of evaluation

Evaluation is not a profession. Furthermore, the lack of occupational closure questions whether evaluation is an occupation. It could be argued that evaluation is a role that can be performed by many occupations, such as social researchers, management consultants, policy analysts, and experts in the program content. But this argument does little to enhance the quality of evaluation or further research into its theory and practice. It is also possible that, in a knowledge era, the knowledge required by some occupations is so diverse and specialised at the same time that a transdiscipline approach is required which may prevent occupational closure. In such cases the key issue might not be how the occupation protects its knowledge base, but how the occupation manages quality with a multidisciplinary, potentially temporary, workforce. Irrespective of the issue of occupational closure, there is clear evidence that evaluation is professionalising, or, to use the terminology of Larson (Larson, 1977), evaluation has commenced a professional project.

Professionalisation of evaluation

Informally, the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia can be traced back to the 1970s and 1980s. This period saw a flurry of professional activities in evaluation, including establishment of the AES, introduction of the first university courses, production of the first academic journals, and the first international evaluation conference in Australia.

Formally, the AES demonstrates its commitment to professionalisation by including *enhanced professionalisation* as one of its four strategic goals (see Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013d). Early results of this focus on professionalisation have included the establishment of evaluator competencies and review of credentialing (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2010, 2013b, 2013d, 2013i).

While there are no doubt many paths that professionalisation could take, the AES has been particularly interested in the knowledge-based model adopted in Canada (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2010). Using the Canadian model and literature from the sociology of professions, a simple knowledge-based model of professionalisation can be developed (Figure 24). This model identifies that three foundations are needed for professionalisation.

These are:

- **Need.** The service must fill a need of the state. This need is evidenced by the establishment of a market for services.
- **Community.** The members of the occupation must be part of a community. That is, they must share values, commitment and ideals, so that they can work together to further professionalisation goals. This community is formalised by the establishment of a professional association to represent the collective interest of members.
- **Authority.** The state must give authority to the occupation over the area of work. If the state does not grant authority, then the project will not gain a market shelter or preferred-supplier status and will have no commercial value by which to encourage supplier participation. Authority is demonstrated by regulation of services providing a monopoly or protected shelter for the occupation.

Figure 24: Model of a knowledge-based professionalisation



Evaluation performs well on two out of three of these foundations. As demonstrated in Paper 2, in Australia and elsewhere evaluation clearly fills a government need for accountability that is supported through policy. Additionally, a community of evaluators has formed an association offering training, advocacy and other services to the evaluation community (Australasian

Evaluation Society, 2013f). However, authority is less evident. While the Australian Government primarily supports evaluation through policy that generates demand for services, there is no apparent government leadership of the evaluation community. Supporting this, there is no formal relationship between the AES as the only Australian evaluation association, the tertiary sector and government.

As a significant purchaser of evaluation services, the government would be expected to have a significant role in the development of evaluator competencies, establishment of a national curriculum, accreditation of education providers, and certification of practitioners for these initiatives in order to change government purchasing behaviour and give a market advantage to credentialed evaluators. The AES has recognised the importance of engagement with government by incorporating this into both its Ten Year Strategy (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2010) and its Implementation Plan (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2011b). The professionalisation of evaluation is in the early stages of development in Australia and the benefits of these efforts may be more evident in the future.

While there are many ways an occupation can professionalise, some activities imply an order of implementation. Before the implementation of certification or other forms of regulation, there needs to be a recognised, formal educational pathway in place to achieve the competency standard.³¹ The direct educational pathway may involve tertiary programs delivered through accredited educational providers, with a curriculum based on agreed national competencies to ensure consistency and portability of qualifications. If certification occurs without a recognised academic pathway in place, then to gain certification evaluators must work to achieve competencies. This ensures a pool of unqualified evaluators working towards accreditation at any given time and maintains an unqualified entry point to the practice of evaluation. In addition to the issues of quality management of evaluative services, this keeps evaluation accessible as an occupation to non-qualified practitioners and means that evaluation will remain dependent on other occupations to train and supply its workforce. Should workforce retention increase in those occupations, then evaluation could have a workforce shortage. Similarly, evaluation as a sector has no control over the training standards or curriculum of these other occupations. A change in their education arrangements could result in a reduced knowledge of research methods, policy or evaluative practice, decreasing the quality of the evaluation workforce. In short, reliance on other occupations to provide a workforce presents a risk to the future supply and availability of a skilled workforce. While evaluation has relied on other occupations to

³¹ Transition arrangements and alternative entry pathways may be available to recognise prior learning or experience.

provide its workforce in the past, alternative pathways should be in place to improve the long-term quality of the evaluation workforce, control the training of new entrants and provide a risk management strategy if the cross-professional workforce supply of new evaluators should change in capacity or quality.

The Canadian model provides an excellent framework for professionalisation. This model demonstrates the importance of developing a partnership between the evaluation community, education providers and the state. In the Canadian model, the approach has been underpinned by strong leadership from the federal government. There are some existing structures in place within the Australian system that could support these partnerships. Within the university sector, the Group of Eight (<http://www.go8.edu.au>) is an association between leading Australian universities, which includes the existing providers of postgraduate evaluation programs in Australia. The Group of Eight has a committee structure around areas of academic interest that could support an interest in evaluation within a public policy context. Similarly, the Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) has already been identified by the AES as an important Central Agency in evaluation, due to its leadership in evidence-based policy (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2011b). PM&C, through the Cabinet Implementation Unit, provides resources for monitoring, review and evaluation as part of its brief to provide ‘whole-of-government advice on implementation and delivery, with a focus on capability building, implementation assessments and progress reporting’ (Cabinet Implementation Unit, 2013, p. 1).

In Canada, the federal government has a history of engagement with the evaluation sector to improve the quality of evaluations (Cousins & Aubry, 2006). More recently, this has been through the establishment of the CEE and the Credentialed Evaluator program (Canadian Evaluation Society, 2010, 2013; Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2012a). In Australia, with little history of government leadership in the evaluation sector, it may fall to the evaluation community to engage with the state to improve the quality and professionalisation of evaluation.

Implications for practice

In summary, this research demonstrates that evaluation has commenced a professional project but has not achieved occupational closure. This lack of occupational closure inhibits the ability of the sector to control the quality and size of its workforce as pre-entry training is controlled by boundary occupations. This lack of occupational closure is maintained by limited direct

educational entry pathways into evaluation and current membership structures of professional associations such as the AES that allow non-evaluators to join.

To improve the quality of evaluations, the adoption of an evaluator credentialing system needs to have mechanisms that recognise the experience and expertise of practising evaluators (at least during its initial implementation), as well as recognising academic pathways to achieve credentialed status. If there is no direct academic pathway into the occupation, then practitioners must always commence practice without the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the requirements for registration as a qualified practitioner of evaluation. This does not present a positive image of the quality of evaluators and their services.

The Canadian experience presents a knowledge-based model of professionalisation that uses a partnership between the evaluation community and education providers to develop academic and experience-based pathways to recognise qualified evaluators. While still in the implementation stage, by preferencing Credentialed Evaluators in commissioning evaluations, the Canadian government has the opportunity to give a market advantage to Credentialed Evaluators, which should generate demand for the program amongst evaluators in future years.

3.5.2 Implications of the research for the sociology of professions

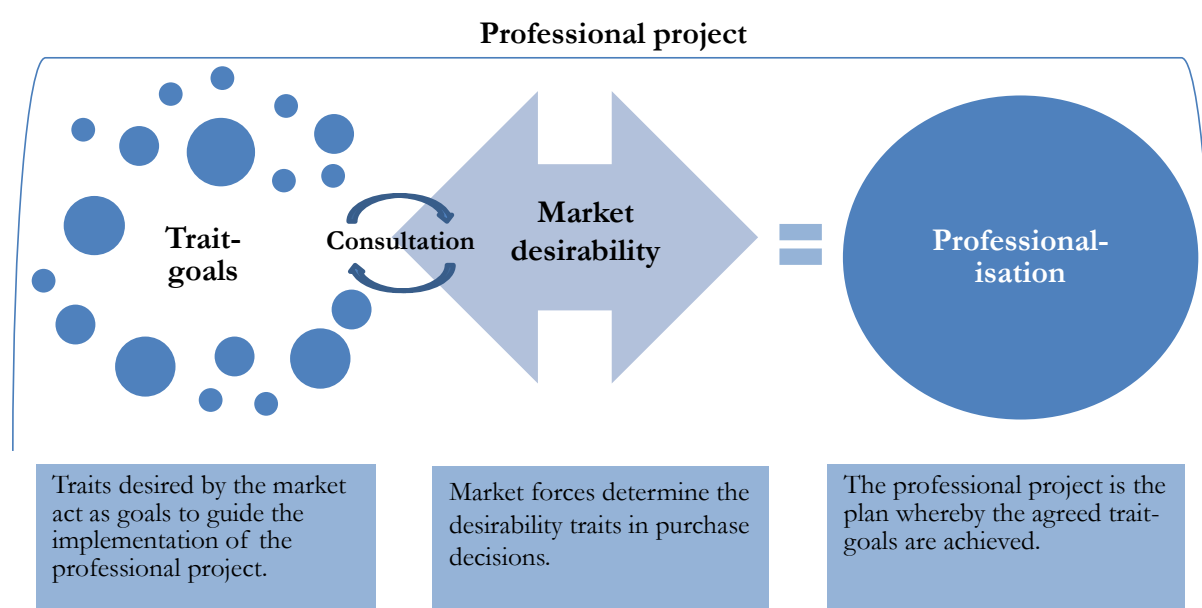
Unchallenged for the first half of the twentieth century, trait theory has largely been replaced by alternative theories in sociology, particularly the professional project concept (Macdonald, 1995). Despite this, the trait approach has continued to influence discussion of other theories (Sullivan, 2005). Generally, the traits have not been called into criticism, but rather the application of traits as an assessment criterion for professions and the interpretation of cause and effect between traits (Larson, 1977). Some authors have also suggested that traits promote masculine models of professionalism by favouring command and control styles of leadership over engagement and education models (Maack, 1997; Volti, 2008).

This research used trait theory, feminism and the professional project to understand the professionalisation of evaluation. These theories were combined to provide an example of how a pluralist model can be used to consider the professionalisation of an occupation.

Using the case of evaluation demonstrates how traits can be used as goals for professionalisation (see Table 36 in section 3.4 Discussion). Thus, rather than a professionalisation being an unconscious, unstructured process whereby an occupation professionalises over time, incorporation with trait theory allows an occupation to actively choose those trait-goals that are important in its professional project. Such a model also has the advantage of allowing the

occupation to test the importance of the trait-goals selected with its stakeholders (Figure 25). This may aid in selecting or prioritising trait-goals. By developing trait-goals that are of value to the stakeholders of the occupation, this process is reactive to the current context of the occupation and needs of the state (as a major stakeholder), thereby avoiding some of the criticism levelled against trait theory, particularly that of disregard for empowerment and client engagement models of work employed by some female-dominated occupations.

Figure 25: Relationship between trait theory and professional project



An advantage of this integrated model of professionalisation is that, by directly engaging the market in choosing the trait-goals and activities for professionalisation, the model is behaviourally-based and socially relevant. Hence the place of values (such as reputation, status, altruism) in the theory of professions is an outcome of activity, rather than a goal to be achieved in its own right. An example of how a trait-goal may generate project activity and lead to outcomes is shown in the Table 38.

Table 38: Example of how trait-goals could be used in a professional project

Trait-goal	Project activity	Project outcome
Establish self-regulation	<p>Work with stakeholders to develop and implement a credentialing system.</p> <p>Market credentialled practitioners as preferred suppliers.</p>	Credentialed practitioners have higher status than non-credentialled practitioners.

This integrated theory of professions could be used in two ways. Firstly, it could be developed to provide strategic guidance to occupations professionalising. Using a participatory model to develop trait-goals as part of a professional project has the advantage of ensuring stakeholder engagement and socially relevant and valued goals. It also provides a list of trait-goals and activities to be incorporated into business planning.

Secondly, professional projects could be analysed to identify trait-goals and actions to improve understanding of the process of professionalisation, to categorise different models of professionalisation and to identify whether there are consistent trait-goals that suggest some criteria may be mandatory in professionalising.

This approach locates professionalisation in quality improvement – any occupation can *professionalise*. The determination of which occupations are successful in generating social recognition as a profession is only within the control of the occupation, to the extent that they choose socially desirable trait-goals or successfully market their trait-goals as socially desirable. This has always been the case with the term *profession*; it is a socially assigned label. Attainment of the title *profession*, rather than just a goal of the professional project, is an outcome of the achievement of socially desirable goals.

While the term profession is a social recognition of the achieved set of valued traits at a point in time, the recognition has to be applied to a group to have meaning. For that group to have a constant and known membership, it must have occupational closure. This is usually achieved through some form of registration to identify those applicants who have the necessary knowledge and skills to practise. Successful applicants are granted the use of a title and a market shelter of some sort, both of which are enforced by the state.

This research demonstrates that an occupation could actively manage the professionalisation of its workforce by incorporating a professional project into its strategic plan. By developing its professional project with its community and stakeholders, its professionalisation will include trait-goals that are culturally and socially relevant. Embedding this plan in a logic-style model allows the occupation to test the relationship between traits and modify their professional project accordingly. This approach recognises that professionalisation is a process of quality improvement, where the award of the title *profession* is a social recognition of a level of achievement rather than the objective of the professional project *per se*.

Summary of theoretical implications

This research has demonstrated that trait theory, feminism and the professional project can be used together to identify goals and activities in the professionalisation of an occupation. By controlling their own trait-goals, occupations can customise the type of professionalisation and outcomes that are important to their community and broader stakeholders, including the state.

Trait theory generated a great deal of debate about the difference between inputs and outcomes for professions. For example, is *status* a trait of a profession, or an outcome of another trait such as specialised knowledge or high academic achievement? Using a measurement framework that separates goals, project activities and outcomes in the theory of professions develops a framework that can be tested using a logic-style model. This has the potential to contribute important knowledge to the sociology of professions over time about the nature of traits, how they are achieved and socially recognised. Ultimately, the title of *profession* is awarded by the society when the outcomes achieved by the occupation meet culturally and socially determined criteria associated with a profession.

3.5.3 Future research agenda

This research project has used existing data and documents as a first step in understanding the professionalisation of evaluation in Australia. The limitations of existing data suggest a need for further research in some areas (Table 39). There is little information published about the evaluation market in Australia. Furthermore, there are a lack of structures to collect basic information about the evaluation market, evaluation workforce and quality of products. Leadership is needed to develop the infrastructure to support better reporting around the occupation of evaluation.

In addition, this Portfolio suggests the contribution that a pluralist model of professionalisation could make to the sociology of professions and the professional project of an occupation. Further research is needed to test this pluralist model.

Table 39: Areas requiring further research

Gap in existing data	Possible future research activities
It is not possible to reliably identify basic characteristics of the evaluation market, such as the size of the workforce or value of the sector. As an important service to government, having basic information about the workforce is important to ensure a sustainable supply of evaluators.	Workforce statistics could be improved through changes to financial reporting, contract coding and classification in labour force data statistics.
There is little information available about the role of central agencies in providing evaluation leadership by the Australian Government.	Qualitative research with leading public servants from central agencies is required to understand perceptions of the role of government in evaluation leadership.

Gap in existing data	Possible future research activities
While there is some information available about universities offering courses in evaluation, the availability of nationally consistent education is important to evaluation to ensure a supply of qualified graduates with transferable skills. The relevance of these education programs to evaluators and whether the market could sustain additional providers is unknown.	Feasibility research, including economic analysis, is required to identify if there is a market for additional tertiary education programs in evaluation. A review of the curriculum of existing programs against published local and international competency frameworks for evaluators could be undertaken to identify if the current training delivers the competencies expected of evaluators.

3.5.4 Conclusion

In Australia and elsewhere, evaluation has rapidly developed since the latter part of the twentieth century. While evaluation has emerged more recently than traditional professions like medicine and the law, it is demonstrating similar patterns in professionalising. Professional associations support a community of practitioners and provide opportunities for networking, socialisation and professional development. Membership of professional associations has started off as diverse in order to establish a market. There are moves to separate from boundary partners which, if continued, may lead to occupational closure. There is interest in demonstrating qualification to practise (albeit voluntary) through some form of registration, and ethics guiding the conduct of all members of associations.

Since its establishment, evaluation has continued to professionalise by separating from its early reliance on other professions for methods. Evaluation has also developed a range of approaches or systems that categorise evaluation knowledge and that may form the basis of an evaluation theory.

In Canada, the federal government has shown strong leadership to improve the quality of evaluation in that country. There is some evidence that government employees within Australia are critical of the quality of the evaluations they see. There is also evidence that the AES is exploring local interest in a Canadian-style accreditation model. In such a model, the engagement of the state is required to ensure that recognised evaluators are given preference in employment decisions. A precursor to such a model is the development of a partnership between stakeholders and agreement about competency frameworks and a national curriculum. The key to the future professionalisation of evaluation in Australia is the development of a partnership between education providers, the state and the AES, with a clear focus on the continued improvement of evaluation in Australia.

Appendix 3A: Detailed comparison of professional codes of ethics for evaluators

	AES ³²	CES ³³	AEA	UKES ³⁴
VALUES				
General values statement about upholding ethics, honesty and fairness	A8		C1	
Reasonable criticism of others/limit harm from presentation of findings/guard against harm			D3	7
Respect undertakings of confidentiality/informed consent consent/privacy/disclosure of clients/data storage	B11, B12, B15		D2, C7	10
Acknowledge the work/intellectual property of others				11
Transparency in selection process/solicitation for work/accurately represent skills/practice within individual or team competencies	A6, A9, B14	I1	B3	
Balance the needs of clients and other stakeholders			E4	
Declare any conflict of interest to clients before commencement or as early as possible	A7	12	C2	
Courtesy and consideration towards others/protect the dignity and self-worth of stakeholders in presentation of findings			D4	
Evaluators should be explicit about their own, their clients', and other stakeholders' interests and values concerning the conduct and outcomes of an evaluation.	A2		C4	
Consider the public interest and good/right to know/promote social equity			E5, D5	18
Demonstrate a commitment to the integrity of the process of evaluation and its purpose to increase learning in the public domain				15
Include all relevant perspectives and interests of the full range of stakeholders in the preparation and conduct of the evaluation/stakeholder equity			E1	19
Truthfulness in presentation of work/prevent or correct misrepresentation by others/take care to prevent misinterpretation of data/state limitations of methods			C5 C6	
PROJECT MANAGEMENT				
Client to provide a comprehensive brief	A1			
Evaluation should be covered by a formal contract – consider external support or arbitration, copyright	A3			4,12
Risk assessments and plans//risks associated with methods/adverse events//reports of illegal activity	A5, C17, C18			

³² In reporting AES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct, the following abbreviations have been used for brevity: A = Commissioning and preparing for an evaluation, B=Conducting an evaluation, C=Reporting the results of an evaluation

³³ In reporting CES Guidelines for Ethical Conduct, the following abbreviations have been used for brevity: C = Competence, I=Integrity, A=Accountability.

³⁴ The UKES Guidelines for Evaluators were used in this analysis. Each standard was numbered by the author for ease of reference and review.

Agree and record changes made to contracts, frameworks or research plans, reasons for change and advise clients of the implications of decisions	A4		C3	
Know when to refuse or terminate an evaluation contract because it is undoable, self-serving, or threatens to undermine the integrity of the process.				17
Confer with client on contractual matters (IP, communication, scope, confidentiality, etc.), negotiate changes to the contract as required		I1	C1	2, 5, 3
Provide information to clients about strategy, questions and methods, including limitations. Clear about intended outcomes and outputs from the evaluation		A1	A2	1
Completion of work within a reasonable timeframe as agreed with the client, acknowledging factors beyond control		A4		
Be realistic about what is feasible to achieve and the capacity to deliver within the time-scale and budget agreed				16
Refer to significant problems identified in an evaluation as a priority	C16			
Use/release of information by third parties	C24			
Responsible for fiscal decisions and providing value for money		A3		
COMPETENCY				
Remain current and competence/continuous improvement		C2	B4	
Apply systematic methods		C1	A	
Demonstrate comprehensive and appropriate use of all the evidence and link conclusions to evidence				9
Possess or provide appropriate knowledge		C2	B1	
Adhere to the highest technical standards//be rigorous	B13		A1	
Understand the contextual elements of the evaluation			D1	
Sensitive to the cultural and social environment of all stakeholders/cultural competence/reflect in analysis of data	B10	I3	B2 D6	
Consider not only the immediate operations and outcomes of whatever is being evaluated, but also its broad assumptions, implications and potential side effects.			E2	
REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION				
Provide clear, accurate, and useable written and/or oral presentation of study findings and limitations, and recommendations.	C19, C21, C23	A2	A3	
Communications of data and findings to stakeholders while respecting confidentiality/agree communication of finding early to maximise utility			E3	14
Write and communicate in accessible language	C20			13
Evaluators should communicate sufficient details about their work so that others can replicate, understand, interpret and critique their work/demonstrate transparency			A3	8
Acknowledge contributors to the evaluation	C22			
Provide progress reports to demonstrate progress of work and adherence to contract				6

Appendix 3B: AES Code of Ethics

1. When commissioning, conducting or reporting an evaluation, members should strive to uphold the ethical principles and associated procedures endorsed by the AES in the Guidelines for the Ethical Conduct of Evaluations.
2. Members should consider the interests of the full range of stakeholders in their evaluation work, including the broader public interest, and in particular, the potential impacts of differences and inequalities in society.
3. Members should remain competent and rigorous in their practice of evaluation, fairly representing their competence and experience to others, and striving to keep abreast of current and emerging practices.
4. Members should undertake their evaluation work in accordance with the highest standards of evaluation practice.
5. Members should ensure responsible use of information obtained in the course of their evaluation practice and respect confidentiality undertakings.
6. Members should conduct themselves with courtesy, honesty and consideration towards all with whom they come into contact during the course of their work.
7. Members should practice with honesty, sensitivity and fairness. Members should not knowingly make or prepare or certify as true any oral or written statement which is false, incorrect, misleading or incomplete.
8. Evaluators should be accountable for their performance and their product.
9. Members should acknowledge the work of others by appropriate citations and references. The reputation and objectives of the AES
10. Members should at all times act in ways that maintain, promote and enhance the aims, objectives and reputation of the AES.
11. Members should follow due process when soliciting or offering work, and should not improperly solicit or offer work either directly or through an agent, nor improperly reward any person for the introduction of work.
12. Members should only use reasonable criticism and should not damage the professional reputation, practice or prospects of others in the field of evaluation.
13. In the course of their professional activities, members are entitled to state their membership of the AES, offices held, and awards received. Beyond this, any use of the name and logo of the AES, or claims of AES endorsement of activities and events, should only be made with the approval of the Board.
14. Members have diverse backgrounds, and the range of their needs, interests and contributions should be respected in terms of their perspectives.
15. Members should not disclose or allude to privileged information about other members without their express permission.
16. Members should utilise the resources of the AES with due care, and the Executive Officer should act in accordance with the policies and role statements determined by the Board.
17. Members involved in making decisions for or providing advice to the AES should identify and declare any potential conflict of interest associated with such decisions or advice.

18. In establishing the AES policies, members and the Board should have due regard to the reputation and objectives of the AES. (Australasian Evaluation Society, 2013h)

Appendix 3C: University subjects in evaluation (2013)

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
University of Melbourne								
EDUC90715 - Debates in Evaluation				P				
EDUC90715 – Economic Evaluation 1	P							
POPH90095 - Economic Evaluation 2	P							
EDUC90800 – Evaluation Capacity Development				P				
EDUC90719 – Evaluation Capacity development and Change				p				
EDUC90747 – Evaluation Capstone				p				
EDUC90720 – Evaluation Project				p				
POPH90058 – Health Program Evaluation 1	P							
POPH90090 - Health Program Evaluation 2	p							
EDUC90714 – Impact Evaluation – Principles and Practices				p				
EDUC90717 – Mixed Methods Evaluation				p				
DEVT90035 – Monitoring and Evaluation in Development							p	
EDUC90797 – Mixed Methods Research for Evaluation				p				
CCDP60006 - Practice, Process and Evaluation						P		
EDUC90713 - Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches				p				
SCWK90056 – Program Planning and Evaluation						P		
ABPL90030 – Project Evaluation			P					
EDUC90795 – Qualitative Methods for Evaluation				P				
MAST90078 – Quantitative Methods for Evaluation				P				
EDUC90718 – Recent Approaches to Research and Evaluation				P				
POPH90091 – Research Project – Health Program Evaluation	P							
ENST90002 – Social Impact Assessment and Evaluation			p					
SOCI90005 – Social Research Design and Evaluation						p		
ABPL90012 – Workplace Design, Briefing and Evaluations		P						
Australian National University								
SOCY3123 Policy and Program Evaluation						U		
COMP3900 Human Computer Interface Design and Evaluation			U					
ECON8075 - Health Program Evaluation	P							

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
IDEC8026 - Policy Impact Evaluation							P	
University of Queensland								
DECO2800Design Computing Studio 2 - Testing & Evaluation			U					
DECO7280Design Computing Studio 2 - Testing & Evaluation			P					
ECON7740Benefit-Cost Analysis & Project Evaluation		P						
ECON7810Economic Evaluation and Health		P						
ENGG7501Formation Evaluation			P					
HLTH7005e-Healthcare Systems Evaluation	P							
HLTH7007Critical Evaluation in Practice	P							
HLTH7213Clinical Leadership in Action: Implementation and Evaluation	P							
HLTH7215Clinical Leadership in Action: Implementation and Evaluation	P							
LEIS3000Leisure Industry Evaluation					U			
MGTS7963Evaluation of Programs & Projects		P						
OCTY7810Occupational Performance & Evaluation across the Lifespan		P						
OHSS4004Research & Evaluation of Interventions in OHS		U						
PLAN7113Urban Research & Evaluation Techniques							P	
PUBH3001Health Services Planning & Evaluation	U							
PUBH3002Evaluation of Health Systems	U							
PUBH3003Evaluation of Health Programs: Field Placement	P							
PUBH7021Evaluation in Public Health	P							
PXMH7001The Evaluation of Comprehensive Mental Health Services	P							
PXMH7031Research & Evaluation Practices in Primary Mental Health Care	P							
RBUS3460Evaluation of Health Communication Programs: Field Placement	U							
SWSP4033Research & Evaluation for Social Work Practice						U		
SWSP7033Research & Evaluation for Social Work Practice						P		
SWSP7164Program and Service Evaluation in the Human Services						P		
University of Sydney								
EDUF3032 Curriculum and Evaluation								U
EDPA5013 Program Evaluation				P				

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/ resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
DVST6905 Development Project Evaluation						P		
PUBH5017 Public Health Program Evaluation	P							
PUBH5302 Health Economic Evaluation	P							
PUBH5307 Advanced Health Economic Evaluation	P							
INDH5224 Research and Evaluation	P							
OCCP5241 Evaluation of OT Practice	P							
HIMT5088 Health Informatics Evaluation	P							
OCCP4089 Evaluation in Professional Practice	U							
EDPN5014 Coach Effectiveness: Evaluation				P				
KCSE3101 Evaluation and Assessment in Schools				U				
Monash University								
ECC4790 Project evaluation		P						
ECC4990 Economic evaluation of health services		P						
ECX5479 Project evaluation		P						
ECX9730 Economic evaluation in health care		P						
APG4554 Resource evaluation and management							P	
APG4761 - Program planning and evaluation in the human services							P	
ATS3554 Resource evaluation and management							P	
EDF2805 - Multimedia in adult education: implementation and evaluation				U				
EDF6234 Curriculum design and evaluation in languages education				P				
CIV5310 Infrastructure project and policy evaluation			P					
LAW7289 Evaluation and assessment								P
HSC3061 Health program evaluation	U							
MEH5060 - Research and evaluation in disaster preparedness and management	U							
MPH2049 - Field methods for international health planning and evaluation	P							
SWM5140 Policy, program planning and evaluation I	P							
SWM5150 Policy, program planning and evaluation 2	P							
University of New South Wales								
PATH3208 Cancer Sciences: Research Design, Measurement & Evaluation	U							

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
ECON4106 Policy Evaluation Methods		U						
SLSP5013 Program Evaluation							P	
PHCM9440 Economic Evaluation in Healthcare			P					
ZEIT8231 Test and Evaluation			P					
SOCW7855 Rights Based Project Design and Evaluation						P		
PHCM9108 Program Design and Evaluation	P							
EDST5436 Evaluation of Educational Programs				P				
PSYC7000 Research and Evaluation Methods	P							
ECON6202 Policy Evaluation Methods		P						
University of Western Australia								
ACCT2206 Performance Measurement and Evaluation		U						
ACCT3206 Performance Measurement and Evaluation		U						
IMED8810 Program Evaluation	P							
LAWS8545 Evaluation and Research		P						
PSYC8510 Evaluation and Research Methodology I	P							
PSYC8519 Evaluation and Research Methodology II	P							
PUBH8801 Economic Evaluation of Health Care	P							
University of Adelaide								
COMMGMT 3504NA Strategic Evaluation and Control III		U						
EDUC 5406 Online Learning Design, Assessment & Evaluation				P				
EDUC 5406NA Online Learning Design, Assessment & Evaluation				P				
EDUC 6553 Assessment and Evaluation in Education				P				
EDUC 6553EXT Assessment and Evaluation in Education				P				
EDUC 6553NA Assessment and Evaluation in Education				P				
EDUC 7004 Curriculum design & evaluation				P				
EDUC 7004NA Curriculum design & evaluation				P				
NURSING 5110HO Change Management and Evaluation	P							
PUB HLTH 7082 Health Economic Evaluation & Decision Making	P							
University of Newcastle								
SWRK6100: Policy and Program Evaluation							P	
SOCA6240: Project Design and Evaluation							U	

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
SOCS3100: Policy Development, Program Management and Evaluation							U	
HPRO6760: Health Promotion Program Evaluation	P							
EDST3080: Program Development and Evaluation	P							
EDUC6002: Disability Support & Services: Management & Eval				P				
Macquarie University								
SSC200 Evaluation, Planning and Policy - Social Science Research							U	
SOC818 Evaluation and the Policy Process							P	
ECFS900 Project Analysis and Evaluation		P						
EDCN815 Evaluation of Educational Programs				P				
GSE806 Economic Evaluation Techniques								P
Queensland University of Technology								
PUP037 Health Program Evaluation	P							
PYP405 Road Safety Evaluation Models								P
EFN509 Policy Economics and Evaluation		U						
University of Wollongong								
TBS 977 Health Services Evaluation and Development	P							
Deakin University								
AIP747 Policy and Program Evaluation							P	
ASD712 Monitoring and Evaluation						P		
ECE111 Curriculum 1: Curriculum, Theory, Development and Evaluation				U				
ECE307 Program Planning and Evaluation				U				
EXE735 Evaluation: Improvement and Accountability				P				
HPS722 Facilitation, Training and Evaluation in Organisations	P							
HPY705 Evaluation, Ethical Practice and Professional Development	P							
HSE212 Physical Activity Promotion and Evaluation	U							
HSH201 Planning and Evaluation 1	U							
HSH218 Planning and Evaluation 2	U							
HSH719 Economic Evaluation 1	P							
HSH745 Health Program Evaluation	P							
MPM741 Personal Injury Scheme Evaluation	P							

	Health	Economics/ Business	Engineering/ IT/ Building/resource management	Education	Hospitality	Social work/ Community	Sociology/ Policy/ Politics	Other
Murdoch University								
EDU637 Program Evaluation				P				
SWM516 Policy Research and Evaluation						P		
TOU304 Events, Policy and Evaluation								P
University of South Australia								
EDUC 2044 Principles and Practices of Evaluation				U				
HLTH 5172 Research and Evaluation in Dietetic Practice	P							
EDUC 5112 Curriculum and Evaluation in TESOL				U				
EDUC 5121 Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education				U				
University of Technology, Sydney								
010040 Program Development and Evaluation in Indigenous Education and Development				P				
49003 Economic Evaluation			P					
49021 Evaluation of Infrastructure Investments			P					
Charles Darwin University								
HSC301 Primary Healthcare Planning and Evaluation	U							
Swinburne University of Technology								
HES4710 Environmental Health Services Evaluation	U							
HAY524 Program Evaluation for Psychologists	P							
HAY624 Program Evaluation for Psychologists	P							
HPI506 Evaluation of Policies, Proposals and Social Investment PG		P						
HLTPOP504B Evaluate a Population Health project	P							
University of Tasmania								
CAM720 Evaluation and Evidence Based Research Methods	P							
ESH713 Quality and Evaluation in Professional Settings				p				
HPP402 Policy Development, Implementation and Evaluation							P	
KNE508 Project Evaluation		P						

Appendix 3D: References

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