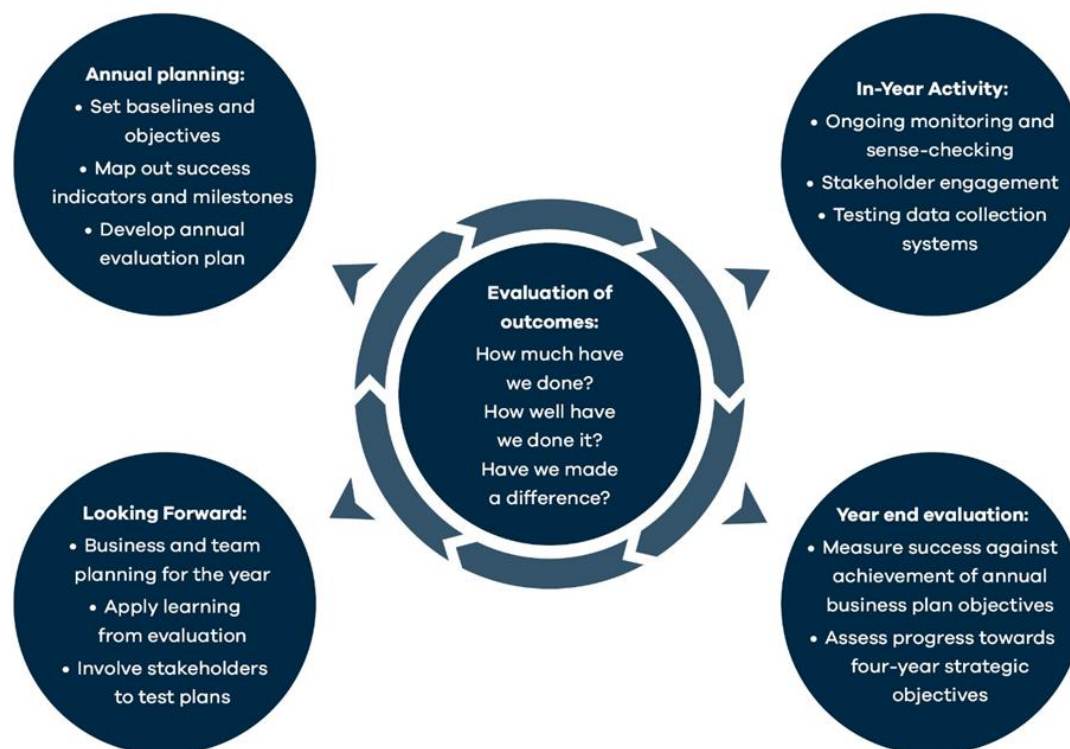


# Evaluation Strategy for the Strategic Plan – 2023-27



## 1. Introduction

This Evaluation Strategy has been developed to map progress towards the outcomes set out in the Social Care Council Strategic Plan for 2023-27. It uses tools drawn from Logic Modelling and Outcomes Based Assessment to track the difference that is being made by the Social Care Council in the delivery of the business over the next four years. Regular evaluation will be used to support business improvement and ensure that the Social Care Council stays on track to make the differences it wants to make over the next four years.

We will do this across our four strategic priorities:

- Regulate: Deliver effective regulation
- Support: Develop the capability of the workforce
- Influence: Lead with influence
- Innovate: Innovate and improve

## 2. Evaluation Aims

The primary aims of the Evaluation will be to gather evidence and carry out analysis to ascertain:

- **Activity and Outputs**

What did we do? and How well did we do it?

- **Outcomes**

What benefits did these interventions bring? and What difference did this make for our stakeholders?

- **Impact**

What are the long term effects resulting from these outcomes?

### **3. Principles Underpinning the Evaluation**

The following principles which will guide the evaluation process are –

- The evaluation will provide robust and reliable findings.
- Where possible, the evaluation will explore links between context, strategies, processes, inputs, outputs and any impacts and outcomes observed.
- Primary and secondary research will be used to identify, explore and explain short and medium-term impacts and outcomes.
- Data-gathering activities will be conducted in an open and honest way. We will respect respondents' views and maintain confidentiality. Subject to the permission of participants, we will record focus groups and take written notes.
- The evaluation will adhere to the provisions in the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, regarding the use, retention and disposal of data.

### **4. Our Approach to Evaluation**

A Logic Framework (see section 5) has been used to map the activities and outcomes over the next four years. Based on this Logic approach, benchmarks will be set together with desired outcomes. Through regular review of progress and engagement with stakeholders, the plan will facilitate tracking of the incremental changes we want to see in stakeholder awareness, understanding and involvement in our work to raise standards in social care. The evaluation activity will also provide assurance that we are a learning organisation that develops clear goals of what we want to achieve, measures how we have performed, and uses this evidence to improve what we do in future.

## 5. Logic Framework – Strategic Plan Evaluation – 2023-27

Strategic Priority - Deliver Effective Regulation		
Strategic Actions	Outputs (Annual)	Outcomes (4+ Years)
<p><b>Through the systems and processes set out in our regulatory frameworks, we will:</b></p> <p>1.1 Develop our model of regulation to ensure it focuses on improving standards and supporting registrants to be the best they can be.</p> <p>1.2 Ensure our standards of conduct and practice are aligned with the changing context of social work and social care.</p> <p>1.3 Enable social workers and social care workers, through education and training, to put standards at the heart of their practice.</p> <p>1.4 Ensure employers understand their responsibilities in relation to their Standards for Employers of Social Worker and Social Care Workers.</p> <p>1.5 Ensure the experience of people who use services and carers informs the Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Workers and Social Care Workers.</p>	<p><b>Through regular evaluation, we will monitor progress on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement to raise awareness about regulation, the Standards and learning from Fitness to Practise cases and referrals.</li> <li>Promotion of learning resources to assist registrants and employers in applying the Standards in daily practice.</li> <li>Fitness to Practise referrals, cases, committees and hearings within agreed standards and timescales.</li> <li>Consistency of decision making in Fitness to Practise referrals, cases, committees and hearings.</li> <li>Engagement with people who use services and carers to develop benchmarks on their experiences of using social work and social care services to inform the Standards and our engagement programme with registrants and employers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The difference we want to see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Work and Social Care registrants use the Standards of Conduct and Practice to support their practice.</li> <li>Regulation enables people who use services and carers to have confidence in the social work and social care workforce by ensuring that registrants work to their standards and deliver high quality care.</li> <li>Social worker and social care workers are supported by their Employers through the Standards for Employers of Social Workers and Social Care Workers.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority - Deliver workforce capability

Strategic Actions	Outputs (Annual)	Outcomes (4+ Years)
<p><b>Building on the strong foundations of social work and social care education, training and development, we will:</b></p> <p>2.1 Establish a qualifications and continuous learning framework which can support a career in social care that strengthens the capability of the social care workforce.</p> <p>2.2 Ensure the delivery of high-quality qualifying and post-qualifying social work education and training that is accessible, flexible and equips social workers to meet the needs of the people they work with in an increasingly diverse society.</p> <p>2.3 Embed the Professional in Practice Framework for social workers as the benchmark for safety, quality, improvement and continued fitness for practice.</p> <p>2.4 Support the development of social work leadership capability using the DoH Leadership Framework.</p> <p>2.5 Promote uptake and engagement in continuous learning through the development of a Digital Learning Strategy.</p>	<p><b>Through regular evaluation, we will monitor progress on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with key partners in the development and implementation of the social care Learning Framework.</li> <li>• Social care qualifications to ensure they are updated to meet changing service needs.</li> <li>• Social work Education and training reviews; learning and improvement actions for programmes, curriculum and practice standards.</li> <li>• Engagement to support social workers to engage with the PiP Framework for their CPD.</li> <li>• Workstreams to support DoH Social Work Strategy.</li> <li>• Collaboration with key partners in the development and implementation of the Digital Learning Strategy.</li> <li>• Equality, diversity and inclusivity and diversity in social work and social care training, learning and development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The difference we want to see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career choices for the social care workforce area supported by continuous learning and development.</li> <li>• There is increased engagement in the PiP Framework and Digital Learning Resources to support learning and development.</li> <li>• Leadership capability is embedded in qualifying and post-qualifying social work education and training.</li> <li>• The social work and social care workforce are supported to work effectively with people of various cultural backgrounds and understand how their own cultural beliefs may differ from other cultures.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority – Lead with Influence

Strategic Actions	Outputs (Annual)	Outcomes (4+ Years)
<p><b>Using our unique insight into the social work and social care workforce as a regulator, we will:</b></p> <p>3.1 Develop our capacity and capability for data analysis and insight to unlock intelligence about the workforce, and the context of social work and social care practice.</p> <p>3.2 Work with our partnerships and networks to promote a collaborative working environment to enable transformation and improvement.</p> <p>3.3 Work collaboratively with Health and Social Care workforce regulators and the RQIA, using our data and insights to inform, improve and enhance service user safety and experience of social work and social care workforce and services.</p> <p>3.4 Influence the recognition of the value and contribution the social work and social care workforce make to society.</p> <p>3.5 Promote careers in social work and social care that reflects the diversity of our communities.</p>	<p><b>Through regular evaluation, we will monitor progress on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data and resources to provide information on the registered workforce.</li> <li>• Promotion and sharing of reports and dashboards that can inform workforce information, policy making and decision making.</li> <li>• Communication and engagement to raise awareness of the valuable contribution made by social workers and social care workers.</li> <li>• Strategic forums and workstreams to represent social work and social care in HSC Policy and Transformation.</li> <li>• Management forums across social work and social care to develop leadership capacity and strengthen the quality of management practice.</li> <li>• Diversity of the workforce and the level of sustainability across employers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The difference we want to see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce data and intelligence improves understanding of the role and value of social work and social care and informs the development of policy and strategy.</li> <li>• The contribution of social work and social care is recognised and valued by those who engage in the services they provide.</li> <li>• There is greater diversity in the social work and social care workforce.</li> <li>• A more stable and sustainable workforce exists across both social work and social care.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priority – Innovate and Improve

Strategic Actions	Outputs (Annual)	Outcomes (4+ Years)
<p><b>As an innovative regulator, we will:</b></p> <p>4.1 Work in partnership with our registrants and employers to co-produce a future proofed regulation and registration system.</p> <p>4.2 Embed a culture and model of continuous improvement to ensure the efficient delivery of Social Care Council services.</p> <p>4.3 Improve our digital registration, regulation and learning and development communication systems to ensure a seamless and efficient service for registrants and all of our stakeholders.</p> <p>4.4 Engage with the DoH Digital Strategy to inform our digital innovation and system improvement.</p>	<p><b>Through regular evaluation, we will monitor progress on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with stakeholders to review and improve the online registration system.</li> <li>• Engagement with those involved in Fitness to Practise proceedings to evaluate their experience and identify improvement opportunities.</li> <li>• Digital services and communications systems to inform improvement plans.</li> <li>• Workstreams to support implementation of the HSC Digital Strategy and facilitate effective information sharing to inform workforce development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The difference we want to see</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders' experience of engaging with us is positive and our services fulfil their needs.</li> <li>• Registrants are able to engage effectively and easily with our systems and processes.</li> <li>• The Social Care Council maximises the use of digital innovation to deliver high quality services to registrants.</li> </ul>

## 6. Evaluation Methods

The evaluation will involve a multi-method approach to gather feedback and data from Social Care Council staff. Registrants, people who use services and carers, stakeholders and others using secondary, primary qualitative and quantitative measures. This enables us to triangulate our work to gain learning across a range of themes including:

- **With registrants and their employers** - their experiences and views of Social Care Council activities, and their perceptions/expectations relating to the impact of our work on quality and standards across the services we provide.
- **With the general public, people who use services and carers** - their perceptions/expectations relating to the impact of our activities on public safety, quality and outcomes.
- **Using existing secondary monitoring data** - from our reporting systems to map progress against our KPIs and objectives.
- **Developing existing data sources and amending existing sources** - to address information gaps and join up relevant data sharing to inform and influence policy and decision making for social work and social care.
- **Facilitating discussion and/or focus groups** – using appreciative (where are we starting, where are we going and how) and deliberative (focused on issues/material presented to the group) approaches.
- **Individual semi-structured interviews** - may be conducted on the telephone or face to face or by email. Content would allow and encourage open responses, but do so using a common and consistent set of variables/themes.

The evaluation will make use of existing data sources mapped against our Strategic Outcomes to identify information gaps and opportunities to develop sources. We will measure our progress throughout the year – with an annual Evaluation Report on the year's activities and outcomes towards our four-year strategic actions and outcomes. This annual exercise will help inform what we do in the following years to ensure the overall successful delivery of our Strategic Plan by 2027.

## 7. Reporting and Dissemination

**Interim Reporting** - Progress will be presented and discussed as part of quarterly reporting to the Social Care Council Leadership Team and to the Social Care Council Board.

**Annual Reporting** - An Evaluation Report will be produced at the end of each business year to report on progress against the Strategic Plan outcomes and the annual evaluation plan will be developed to reflect business priorities for the coming year. The Evaluation Report will include highlights for what is working, what has worked best and what the challenges have been in delivering against business objectives. In addition, we will use this work to determine and confirm future evaluation efforts

## Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

The following list is a work in progress of the terms we will use.

**Activities** - The specific actions the program or group of stakeholders will undertake to bring about outcomes.

**Assumption** - Conditions or resources that your group believes are needed for the success of your program, and that you believe already exist and will not be problematic. An assumption like a precondition is a condition that is necessary for your program's success. Unlike a precondition, it already is in place and does not need to be brought about. When your group states your assumptions, it is a good time to take into account the various conditions that your program's success will rely on. Assumptions are crucial because if they are incorrect it can completely alter how your program works.

**Deductive Research** – Researchers taking a deductive approach take the steps for inductive research and reverse their order. They start with a social theory that they find compelling and then test its implications with data. That is, they move from a more general level to a more specific one.

**Impact** is the broader or longer-term effects of a project's or organisation's outputs, outcomes and activities e.g. the longer-term change in the way the project engages with stakeholders, influences policy at a local or wider level. Impact is normally measured on longer time periods of 4 years and longer.

**Indicator** - Measurable evidence of meeting a goal. Indicators are visible signs, (e.g. reading scores, attendance) that demonstrate that the outcomes are achieved. Often, indicators can be counted (quantitative), but sometimes evidence will be something more descriptive (qualitative). Each indicator needs to have four components: population, target, threshold and timeline. These answer the questions: Who or what is to reach this goal? (Population) How many of that group do we need to reach? (Target) What level needs to be reached — how good is good enough? (Threshold) By when does this goal need to be reached? (Timeline)

- **Outcome Indicators** – assess progress against specific outcomes
- **Output Indicators** – assess progress against operational activities

**Inductive Research** – Researchers take an inductive approach, they start with a set of observations and then they move from those particular experiences to a more general set of propositions about those experiences. In other words, they move from data to theory or from the specific to the general.

**Outcomes** are the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from what the project or organisation makes offers or provides e.g. improvements in wellbeing, or a projects' improved ability to extend their reach to different client groups. They are normally measured on 2-5 year timeframe.

**Outputs** are the products, services or facilities that result from an organisation's or project's activities e.g. the interventions being offered by projects, or the numbers of people overall participating in activities under the programme. Outputs are normally measured within the business year.

**Population** - The entity (some common examples are groups of people, organizations or places) your initiative seeks to have an impact on, e.g. registrants according to job role; employers according to sector. This is one component of an indicator.

**Strategy** - The overall focus of the initiative, and activity to describe all the specific actions that make up an intervention.

**Target** - How many of your population you expect will change based on your initiative. For example, do you expect 80% of students in a school to improve in some way? Or do you expect to find jobs for 100 residents? As with all components of indicators, your target for your long-term outcome should be set by combining your vision for change with a realistic assessment of your resources. Targets for all other outcomes should be based on how many people need to change in order for it to be enough for the next outcome in the pathway to occur. For example, if only 20 people take a literacy class, would you be able to raise overall literacy rates in your community by the amount you want?

**Threshold** - How much does your target group need to change? Simply put, “how good is good enough”? For example, if students improve reading scores by one grade, is that sufficient? Or how many sessions must participants attend of a class or workshop to attain the skill being taught? Again, as with the target and timeline, how much change is determined by how much you believe is needed to reach the next outcome.

**Timeline** - By when does the outcome need to be reached at the level (threshold) and for the number of people you have specified? The timeline for reaching any given outcome depends on the timeline for reaching the outcomes above and below it on the pathway. So, for example, if residents will not have completed a literacy class until the end of the year, it is unrealistic to expect to see an increase in literacy rates in a shorter timeline. Likewise, if the long-term outcome is that parents read to their children within three years, you can work backwards to determine by when they need to have increased literacy and motivation.