

Drafting Your First Personal Statement

60 minutes

Strand 1.1: Understanding Myself

Applying

Feeds ALT 1

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.ALT1.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Apply everything from Strand 1.1 to create your first personal statement. Study an example, then draft your own 300 to 500 word version using a four-paragraph arc. Save it as Personal Statement Draft 1 to begin ALT 1 evidence collection.

HANDLE WITH CARE

- If a student's draft surfaces distress, isolation or other sensitive material, follow the school's pastoral procedures and guidance counsellor route. Do not name external support services on the student page.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S1.ALT1.1	create and develop a personal statement.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Draft a 300-500 word personal statement from your source material
- Use a four-paragraph arc: who I am, what I am good at, what I am interested in, where I am going
- Bank Draft 1 as ALT 1 evidence in progress

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Personal statement draft	Your first full written version of who you are for a progression opportunity, built from the evidence you already hold rather than invented on the spot.	A 300-500 word draft saved as Personal Statement Draft 1 before any peer review or tailoring
Structure	A clear four-paragraph arc that carries a reader from who you are now to where you are heading, with evidence in every paragraph.	Who I am / what I am good at / what I am interested in / where I am going
ALT 1	Applied Learning Task 1: the personal statement you create, refine and revisit across both years of LCW. Today is the first full draft.	Personal Statement Draft 1 (around 300-500 words) saved in your Strand 1.1 folder as the first ALT 1 portfolio piece

BEFORE THE BELL

- Ensure every student has their Strand 1.1 folder and ALT 1 Source Material from Lesson 24 open and ready. Fallback for thin or missing source material: Self Assessment v1, Strong Skills Evidence and Values.
- On screen this lesson: worked example.

Drafting Your First Personal Statement

HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Draft Your Personal Statement
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Confirm every student can open their Strand 1.1 folder and their ALT 1 Source Material from Lesson 24 before you move on. Anyone missing source material works from Self Assessment v1, Strong Skills Evidence and Values instead. The student page now names that fallback, so point to it once and move on.

Name the phase out loud: *Today you are applying, not collecting. ALT 1 starts in this period.*

Personal statements can surface difficult material (family stress, isolation, mental health). If that happens, follow the school's own pastoral procedures and the guidance counsellor route. Do not send students to external support services from the lesson page.

5 min Key Terms

Keep this tight. The structure line is the one students need on the board while they write: four paragraphs, four jobs.

35 min Draft Your Personal Statement On screen: worked example

SUGGESTED TIMING

- **10-12 minutes:** walk beats 1-6 on the IWB while students follow the same artefact on their page. Pause before each reveal and ask the class what the highlighted move is doing.
- **20-23 minutes:** silent drafting. Circulate. Watch for paragraph 2 that only claims strengths, and paragraph 4 that could belong to anybody.

LOOK-FORS WHILE CIRCULATING

- Every paragraph has a job in the four-part arc
- At least one specific occasion (place, stretch of time, or action) in paragraphs 1 and 2
- Four paragraphs on the page; target 300-500 words, not a bullet list padded into paragraphs
- Draft saved as Personal Statement Draft 1 in Strand 1.1

DIFFERENTIATION

If a student is stuck on paragraph 1, send them back to one evidenced value or aptitude from their source material and tell them to open with that occasion. If someone finishes early, have them underline every sentence that could appear in a classmate's draft and rewrite those lines.

ALT 1 checkpoint: four-paragraph Draft 1 saved as ALT 1 evidence in progress. Target 300-500 words; note anyone under 300 or missing a paragraph for Lesson 26 support. Bracketed unfinished lines still count as a saved attempt.

10 min Think About It

Two minutes pair-share, then cold-call three students on the sentence they underlined. The goal is one concrete fix each, not a full rewrite in this step. Check that the two-line note is under the draft in the same document before they pack up.

Remind the room that Lesson 26 is the voice and specificity pass, so today's job is a complete four-paragraph draft, not a polished final.

5 min What you covered

Exit check: every student has a saved four-paragraph Personal Statement Draft 1 (with the two-line fix note). Target 300-500 words; note anyone still under 300 or missing a paragraph so you can support them at the start of Lesson 26. A saved four-paragraph attempt still counts as ALT 1 evidence in progress.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "spent most of my free time for the last three years on a GAA pitch" - Concrete who I am - Paragraph 1 opens on a specific place and a stretch of time. A reader can picture Oisín. Compare that with a line like 'I am a hard-working student who loves sport'.
- "When our club's under-12 coach was out for six weeks last autumn" - Occasion, not claim - Paragraph 2 earns the strengths. The six-week stretch is checkable. Anyone can write 'I am a leader'; only Oisín has this Saturday-morning story.
- "planned each session the night before on a scrap of paper" - Small true detail - The scrap of paper is the kind of concrete detail that makes a draft sound like one person. It costs nothing to add and it stops the paragraph floating.
- "learn the craft of coaching properly: child development, session..." - Names the work - Paragraph 3 uses the language of the field. It shows he has looked at what the pathway actually involves, not only that he 'wants to help kids'.
- "I have seen what happens when someone drops out of the club" - Interest with a reason - The interest is tied to something he has watched in real life. That is stronger than a list of hobbies with no stake in them.
- "structured training while I keep working with real groups" - Direction that fits - Paragraph 4 matches the person in the first three paragraphs. The next steps are concrete: Garda Vetting, shadowing, running sessions. The ending is a direction, not a slogan.

TEACHING MOVES

- Board the four paragraph jobs and leave them visible for the whole drafting block.
- Run a 10-12 minute beat walk on the IWB with pause-before-reveal; students follow the same artefact on the page.
- Circulate for paragraph-2 strength claims with no occasion, and paragraph-4 lines that could belong to anybody.
- In Think About It, cold-call three underlined generic sentences and check the two-line fix note is under Draft 1.
- Remind students this is Draft 1: four paragraphs saved beats a polished fragment.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Using vague statements instead of specific occasions from source material: direct students back to their evidence documents.
- Writing far under 300 words or skipping a paragraph: keep the four-job structure visible and treat a four-paragraph attempt with bracketed gaps as savable Draft 1.
- Skipping the two-line fix note: make it part of the exit check with the saved file.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide sentence starters for each paragraph for students who struggle to begin.
- Support: Allow use of bullet points from source material directly in the first draft if needed.
- Extension: Challenge students to include a specific quote or feedback from their source material in one paragraph.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Personal Statement Draft 1: first full 300-500 word draft; ALT 1 evidence in progress