

Personal Statements as Foundational

60 minutes

Strand 1.1: Understanding Myself

Applying

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.PS.2

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.ALT1.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You will audit six areas from your portfolio to see how strongly each proves your qualities to someone who has never met you. Rate their evidential strength and identify where improvements are needed for your personal statement.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S1.PS.2	recognise different formats and uses of personal statements.
LCW.M1.S1.ALT1.1	create and develop a personal statement.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Audit values, aptitudes, achievements, interests, skillset and feedback as ALT 1 sources
- Rate each area for what it would prove to someone who has never met you
- Name the two weakest areas and where better evidence would come from

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
source material	The real evidence you already hold in your Digital Portfolio, values, aptitudes, achievements, interests, skillset and feedback, that a personal statement will draw on.	Your Values document, Achievements list, Strong Skills Evidence and Feedback Entry 1
evidential strength	How much a piece of material would actually prove to a stranger who has never met you, not how much you have written about it.	A page of vague claims rates low; one specific occasion with a result rates high
application seed	The personal statement you build now is the starting point for later applications to education, community roles and work, not a one-off school exercise.	A strong Achievements line on leading a GAA underage session becomes a paragraph in ALT 1, then the opening of a PLC or apprenticeship personal statement

BEFORE THE BELL

- Ensure students can access their six Strand 1.1 portfolio documents: Values, Aptitudes, Achievements, Interests, Strong Skills Evidence (or Skills Audit / Transferable Skills as substitutes), and Feedback Entry 1.
- Prepare a paper checklist of the six area names for students with access issues.
- This lesson is pre-ALT preparation. Students produce working source material for ALT 1; do not log it as a scored ALT capture.
- Strong Skills Evidence (default skillset file; Skills Audit or Transferable Skills are fine substitutes if that is where the proof lives; rate one skillset source only)
- On screen this lesson: self-audit.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Rate Your Six Evidence Areas
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open by asking: *If a stranger read only one folder from your portfolio, would they know anything real about you?* Keep it brisk. Name the applying phase, then move straight into Key Terms.

ALT tracking: This lesson is pre-ALT preparation. Students produce working source material for ALT 1; it is not a scored ALT capture. Keep *Applied Learning Task* unset and treat the saved document as portfolio working evidence that feeds the draft next lesson.

5 min Key Terms

Stress the stranger test once: **would this prove anything to someone who has never met them?** Volume of writing is not the scale.

35 min Rate Your Six Evidence Areas On screen: self-audit

ALT TRACKING

This is **pre-ALT preparation**, not a scored ALT capture. Students save working source material that feeds ALT 1; do not log this lesson as completing ALT 1 itself.

SUGGESTED TIMING

- Self-audit on screen: about 18 minutes
- Copy into ALT 1 Source Material and write the two-weakest recovery plan: about 15 minutes
- Quick circulate for blank evidence boxes: final 2 minutes

TEACHING TIPS

Watch for high ratings with empty or adjective-only evidence. Prompt: *What would a stranger still know if they only read that sentence?*

If a student is missing a whole area, rate it low honestly and put the recovery step as reopen or rebuild that document this week. Do not invent content on the spot.

Keep the two-weakest recovery plan in **ALT 1 Source Material** only. The prompts on screen are there to help students think their way towards that document, so they should not be typed up a second time in the activity itself.

LOOK-FORS

- Ratings tied to proof for a stranger, not to how much is written
- Two weakest areas named without defensiveness
- Recovery steps that name a person, moment or document, not "try harder"

10 min Think About It

Pair-share for three or four minutes, with a job that is distinct from the audit itself: stress-test one strong evidence sentence and one recovery step. Then take two voices on a next step that names a time. Leave this as talk rather than writing up answers on the board, because the writing they need is already in ALT 1 Source Material and a second capture only slows them down.

5 min What you covered

Spot-check that **ALT 1 Source Material** exists and names two weak areas with a next step. Flag anyone with empty evidence boxes before they leave. Remind them this file is pre-ALT working material, not the completed ALT 1 capture.

TEACHING MOVES

- Emphasise the stranger test during the introduction and key terms.
- Circulate the room during the rating activity to encourage specific examples over vague claims.
- Keep the two-weakest recovery plan in ALT 1 Source Material only; on-screen prompts are thinking aids.
- Facilitate a brief pair-share in Think About It that stress-tests one strong sentence and one recovery step.
- Check that students save their ALT 1 Source Material at the end.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students rate areas based on volume written rather than evidential strength: remind them to focus on what would prove to a stranger.
- Students struggle to name specific next steps: prompt them to identify one small action with a when before the next lesson.
- Students invent content for missing folders: rate low honestly and plan the rebuild.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Offer sentence starters for the rating activity and reflection questions.
- Extension: Ask students to consider how these ratings might apply to a specific future application like a PLC course, apprenticeship or part-time job.
- Support: Allow use of the paper checklist alongside digital access.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- ALT 1 Source Material: six areas rated for proof value plus recovery plan for the two weakest