

Changing Employment Patterns

60 minutes

Strand 1.2: Understanding my Progression Opportunities

Participating

Outcome LCW.M1.S2.WORK.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Explore how employment patterns bend around life events such as study, family and travel. Map a realistic case study across ages 20, 25 and 30 and project your own path at those ages.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S2.WORK.1	identify different reasons why people work, examining different employment patterns over a person's life.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Describe how employment patterns bend around life events
- Plot a realistic case study across ages 20, 25 and 30
- Project your own twenties including likely breaks or direction changes

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Employment pattern	The shape a working life takes over time: jobs, study, gaps, returns and sideways moves, not a single straight line from school to retirement.	Someone who leaves school into a PLC, works retail, retrain at 26, then moves into a related role at 30
Career break	A planned or unplanned pause in paid work, for travel, study, caring, health or something else that matters more at that moment.	Eight months away after a first job to care for a relative, then returning to a similar role
Sideways move	A change of role, sector or employer that is not a simple promotion, but opens a different route that later turns out to matter.	Leaving a till job for a clinic reception role, then using that experience to enter a healthcare course

BEFORE THE BELL

- Primary path: digital pathway planner, then digital portfolio document Employment Pattern Prediction (doc or one-pager) in Strand 1.2. This lesson creates the file if needed; the digital copy is the kept artefact.
- Paper fallback: printed 3×3 grids (education / workplace / life × 20, 25, 30) and a printed prediction sheet if devices fail or clear/save is awkward. Still transfer plain-words maps into the Digital Portfolio before students leave.
- Print or display the three composite case studies and keep them visible throughout the mapping activity.
- Primary path: digital pathway planner interactive, then a digital portfolio document. Filename: Employment Pattern Prediction (doc or one-pager) in the Strand 1.2 folder. This lesson creates the file if it does not already exist; the digital copy is the kept artefact. Paper fallback: printed 3×3 grids (education / workplace / life × ages 20, 25, 30) and a printed prediction sheet if devices fail or clear/save on the tool is awkward. Students still type or paste the final plain-words maps into the Digital Portfolio before leaving. Have the three composite case studies visible for the whole activity. Students must not invent extra biography; they plot only what is written.
- On screen this lesson: pathway planner.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Map a Working Life
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open with a quick show of hands: who expects their path from 18 to 30 to be basically a straight line? Hold the answer lightly. The maps today will do the teaching. Keep the three composite case studies on the board or screen for the whole main step so nobody is inventing biography from memory.

5 min Key Terms

Spend under five minutes here. The examples matter more than the definitions. Flag that a sideways move is not failure: it is often how people find the work that fits.

35 min Map a Working Life On screen: pathway planner

SUGGESTED TIMING

- 2 minutes: teacher models one milestone on one track on the board (e.g. Róisín, workplace, around 25: GP clinic reception)
- 5 minutes: class skims all three cases; each student chooses one
- 12 minutes: plot the chosen case on the pathway planner
- **Checkpoint:** case written into Employment Pattern Prediction before anyone clears the grid
- 10 minutes: clear and plot own projected twenties
- Remainder: finish own projection under the case write-up in the same document

If the class is large, cut skim time rather than the case capture or the portfolio finish.

TEACHING TIPS

Watch for empty near-horizon boxes on students' own maps (everything at 30 and nothing at 20). Push one concrete entry at 20. Watch also for everything sitting on one pathway only; education and work should interleave. Name quietly that family, health and money are legitimate causes of a bend, without forcing personal disclosure. Spell out that the planner is disposable working space; the document is what counts. When ALT work on career progression arrives later, students have already built one of these grids once.

LOOK-FORS IN THE PORTFOLIO WRITE-UP

- Case map names who, then 20 / 25 / 30 on edu, work and life (one line each), plus a break, return to study, or sideways move with the age band
- Own projection covers 20, 25 and 30 on the same three tracks
- At least one cause is named for a likely bend (travel, study, caring, money, health, change of direction)

10 min Think About It

Keep this as paired talk, not a write-up race. Invite two or three voices to the board on question 1 only. Do not require personal family detail for question 2; travel, money and change of interest are enough. Optional portfolio lines stay optional. If a student is clearly unsettled, point them privately to the guidance counsellor rather than expanding the whole-class discussion.

5 min What you covered

Confirm every student has at least the case plot and the 20 / 25 / 30 self-projection in Employment Pattern Prediction before they leave. Empty age-20 boxes are the thing to catch now. The digital document is the kept artefact even if paper grids were used as a scaffold.

TEACHING MOVES

- Open with a quick show of hands on straight-line expectations to set the scene.
- Model one milestone on one track before students start.
- Hard checkpoint: case written to Employment Pattern Prediction before anyone clears the grid.
- Circulate during the main activity to stop invented case detail and empty age-20 boxes.
- Keep Think About It as paired talk; invite a few responses on question 1 only.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students add invented details to the case studies instead of using only the given information.
- Clearing the planner before capturing the case map, so both maps cannot honestly go into the portfolio.
- Treating the pathway planner itself as the portfolio entry and skipping the plain-words document.
- Empty boxes at age 20 in the self-projection section.
- Misunderstanding sideways moves as failures rather than route changes.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide a partially completed grid for the case study plotting task.
- Extension: Ask students to include a possible career break after age 30 in their projection.
- Support: Pair students for the mapping activity to encourage discussion.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Employment Pattern Prediction: case plotted plus your projected path at 20, 25 and 30