

Employment Rights: Universal Protections

60 minutes

Strand 1.2: Understanding my Progression Opportunities

Participating

Outcome LCW.M1.S2.WORK.2

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Discover the employment rights shared by part-time and full-time workers under Irish law. Judge three workplace scenarios, label a sample statement of terms, and build an Employment Rights Checklist covering pay, contracts, equal treatment and the Workplace Relations Commission.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S2.WORK.2	describe how employment rights and entitlements offer protection for all workers.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Outline universal employment rights for part-time and full-time workers
- Match each right to a realistic protection situation
- Explain the role of the Workplace Relations Commission

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Minimum wage	The lowest hourly rate an employer is allowed to pay you under Irish law. Rates can differ by age and role category, and the figure is set and updated by the State rather than by your manager.	A part-time shop assistant must still be paid at least the rate that applies to them, even if the job is only a few hours a week
Contract	The agreement that sets out the main terms of your job: pay, hours, role, and notice. You are entitled to written terms so both sides know what was agreed.	A written statement of terms for a Saturday retail role naming start date, hours, pay method, and notice
Workplace Relations Commission	The State body that gives information on employment rights and handles complaints when workplace disputes cannot be sorted inside the organisation.	A worker who never receives payslips can seek WRC information, and escalate a formal complaint if the problem is not fixed

BEFORE THE BELL

- Print copies of the sample statement of terms for distribution if you want a paper backup beside the on-screen annotator.
- Prepare the list of eight rights on a visible board or handout.
- Confirm students can open their Strand 1.2 Digital Portfolio folder and create Employment Rights Checklist.
- Confirm every student has the Strand 1.2 Digital Portfolio folder open. Project the eight rights so nobody invents a random list. Model creating the document filename Employment Rights Checklist .
- On screen this lesson: scenario cards, document annotator, list builder.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
5 min	introduction	Getting Started
12 min	activity	What Do You Already Believe?
15 min	activity	Annotate a Statement of Terms
20 min	activity	Build Your Rights Checklist
8 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open by asking who already has a part-time job or has been paid cash-in-hand. Keep it light and do not press anyone who would rather not say, since some of these arrangements are their family's business rather than the class's. Say that the checklist they build today is meant as a practical reference they can open before a work placement or a first job.

Set the expectation that this is an active hour: they will commit to a judgment call on each scenario and finish with a document saved in their portfolio, rather than reading about rights and moving on.

12 min What Do You Already Believe? On screen: scenario cards

This is a predict-and-discuss opener rather than a hidden quiz, so there is no answer key to reveal and the counter simply tracks which story you are on. Once students have committed to a call, pick up two of the choices the room disagreed about and name the right that each one touches: age and hours rules, payslips, equal treatment for part-time staff, and the route to the Workplace Relations Commission. Leave any formal rule-check until the statement-of-terms step and the checklist, so that the discussion stays on what they would actually do.

- Watch for the belief that part-time work carries fewer rights, which usually surfaces on Niamh's Saturday-staff card.
- Watch for the belief that the Workplace Relations Commission only deals with dismissal cases, which usually surfaces on Dara's payslip card.
- On Saoirse's late rota, the hook is the limits on night work and school-morning starts for under-18s. The full young-worker detail, including the Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act, comes later in the strand. Avoid giving euro figures, which date quickly.

15 min Annotate a Statement of Terms On screen: document annotator

HOW TO RUN IT

Give six minutes of silent labelling, then four minutes pair-compare, then reveal the model on the board. Pause on the equal-treatment line: many students still think part-time status weakens every right. Link back to Niamh's Saturday-staff call from the opener.

Look-fors: students tagging the WRC line as a dispute route rather than as a threat; students noticing that minimum wage is named without a stale euro figure.

Optional teacher reference: citizensinformation.ie summarises current timings for core terms and the full written statement; keep student copy general so figures do not go stale.

20 min Build Your Rights Checklist On screen: list builder

DURING

Circulate for specificity: "I need a payslip" is weak; "Eoin cannot check PRSI without a payslip" is strong. Stop anyone pasting legal euro figures they are unsure of. Students may draft in the on-page list builder, then paste a clean version into the portfolio file.

DIFFERENTIATION

- If stuck, assign two starter case notes only and require five rights well matched plus the WRC closer; finish the remaining three as short homework so the portfolio file is complete.
- Stretch: add a ninth line on who inside a workplace they would speak to before the WRC.

TIMING

This step needs its full twenty minutes, because it is where the portfolio piece is actually written. If the annotation step is still running, close it and move on rather than borrowing time from here, since a half-finished checklist leaves nothing to save.

8 min What you covered

Two-minute exit: ask three students which right they would notice first if it vanished from a real job. Confirm the checklist file exists in Strand 1.2 before the bell. If anyone is short on matches, set the remaining rights plus WRC closer as a short finish-for-portfolio homework with a clear due point next lesson.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "will not fall below the national minimum wage applicable to your age..." - Pay floor (minimum wage) - This is the pay floor. It does not quote a euro figure that goes stale, but it still names the legal minimum that binds the employer.
- "A written payslip will be provided for each pay period showing gross..." - Payslip / pay record - Without a payslip you cannot check hours paid, tax, or PRSI. Money in the bank is not the same as a clear record.
- "You are entitled to rest breaks during shifts of appropriate length" - Breaks or leave - Breaks during working hours are a core protection, not a favour from a busy manager.
- "Annual leave entitlement is set out in line with working-time law" - Breaks or leave - Leave from work sits beside breaks. Part-time status changes how leave is calculated, not whether leave exists.
- "Equal treatment applies regardless of full-time or part-time status..." - Equal treatment - This is the line that kills the myth from the opener. Same work, same core protections.
- "give minimum notice of ending employment as required by law" - Notice or fair dismissal - Notice periods protect both sides. Ending a job overnight without the lawful notice is not a casual choice.
- "any dismissal process must follow fair procedures" - Notice or fair dismissal - Dismissal is more than notice. Fair process matters when someone's job is on the line.
- "the Workplace Relations Commission may be contacted for information..." - WRC / dispute route - The WRC is the external route when internal talk fails. It is information and complaints, not only dramatic dismissal cases.

TEACHING MOVES

- Step 2 is predict-and-discuss: harvest contested choices and name the right each touches; there is no hidden true/false key.
- Circulate during the checklist for specificity and to block invented euro figures.
- Reveal model labels after pair comparison and dwell on equal treatment (link to Niamh's card).
- Model how to create the digital checklist document and where it sits in Strand 1.2.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students assume part-time workers have fewer rights: highlight equal treatment in the sample and the Saturday-staff scenario.
- Students include specific euro amounts: instruct them to name only the protection and situation.
- Students forget the Workplace Relations Commission: require the three-line WRC closer in the portfolio file.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: pair students for the annotation task; offer sentence starters for checklist entries; allow five well-matched rights in class with the rest as short homework.
- Extension: add who inside a workplace they would speak to before the WRC; propose a first resolution step for one breached right.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Employment Rights Checklist: each right matched to one realistic situation it protects