

Drafting Your Career Progression Plan

60 minutes

Strand 1.2: Understanding my Progression Opportunities

Applying

Feeds ALT 2

Outcome LCW.M1.S2.ALT2.1

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Apply your earlier career ideas to create a full progression plan. Develop short-term, medium-term and long-term SMARTER goals across education, workplace and extra-training pathways, ensuring each milestone enables the next step.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M1.S2.ALT2.1	create a career progression plan that incorporates various education, training and workplace opportunities and outline how it aligns to their personal statement.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Draft short-, medium- and long-term SMARTER goals across three horizons
- Connect goals with education, workplace and extra-training milestones
- Ensure each milestone makes the next step possible

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
short-term goal	A SMARTER goal with a finish line about one year out: the end of Sixth Year and the summer after, close enough that you can name the first action this month.	Complete a QQI Level 5 Healthcare Support PLC application and book one related short course (for example Patient Moving and Handling) before Leaving Certificate results day
medium-term goal	A SMARTER goal about three years out: two years into whatever comes after school, far enough to stretch you and near enough that today's choices still shape it.	Finish year two of a Commis Chef apprenticeship (or another craft route listed on apprenticeship.ie) with workplace hours already logged in the same field
pathway connection	The link between one milestone and the next: what this step makes possible that was not possible before it. Without connections, three goals are only titles with dates.	A SOLAS Safe Pass that unlocks a construction site placement, which then unlocks the employer reference an Electrical apprenticeship interview needs

BEFORE THE BELL

- Ensure students have their ALT 2 Source Material document ready for reference.
- Prepare the pathway planner template for whole class display.
- Remind students the Digital Portfolio artefact is the ALT 2 Career Progression Plan Draft document only; the planner is a working tool and does not need exporting.
- Confirm every student can open their ALT 2 Source Material. Have the pathway planner on the board from the first minute of this step. The assessed Digital Portfolio artefact is the ALT 2 Career Progression Plan Draft document only; the planner is a working tool for this period. Do not require a planner export.
- On screen this lesson: pathway planner.

Drafting Your Career Progression Plan

HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Draft Your Full Plan
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open by asking students to have their **ALT 2 Source Material** document open before anything else. Anyone without it rebuilds the spine in two minutes: now, five years, long-term goal. Do not restart the whole previous progression lesson.

5 min Key Terms

Spend under five minutes here. The load-bearing idea is **pathway connection**. Say it once out loud: *each milestone has to make the next step possible*. That sentence is the filter for the whole main step.

35 min Draft Your Full Plan On screen: pathway planner

SUGGESTED TIMING

- **0-12 mins:** students place milestones on the planner; circulate and challenge empty near-horizon cells and single-pathway plans
- **12-15 mins:** whole-class pause on the two checks (row across, one-year column down); invite two students to read a connection that works and one gap they still have
- **15-35 mins:** students write the draft to the "done enough to leave today" list on their screen. Keep these twenty minutes for writing only, and ask them not to open new research unless a cell is genuinely blank, because the writing is what leaves the room as evidence. Expanding to a full one to two pages can be finished before the next progression lesson if there is no time today.

LOOK-FORS

- Goals that are SMARTER, not slogans with dates
- At least one milestone on education *and* one on workplace in the near horizon
- A line under each completed milestone answering what it unlocks next
- Named Strand 1 sources, not "my research"

TEACHING TIPS

The assessed part is the **connections**. A student with three polished goals and no route between them still has decoration, not a plan. Ask: *What does this one make possible that was not possible before it?* If they cannot answer, the milestone is decoration.

Students stuck on the five-year cell should borrow from their personal statement and career-field shortlist rather than invent a job title under pressure.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Offer a template with one pathway example already filled
- Support: SMARTER sentence starters (S: I will... by...; M: I will know it worked when...; A: First action this week is...; R: This matters because...; T: Deadline...; E: I will check every...; R: If blocked, I will...)
- Extension: Challenge students to add research on specific training routes and complete unlock lines on all three pathways in class
- Support: Allow paired discussion before independent drafting

10 min Think About It

Two minutes each prompt, then two minutes writing into the draft. Cold-call one pair on the titles-only test. If a student has a full grid and still cannot name a connection, that is the teaching moment for the whole room.

Exit check: every student should have either one repaired unlock line or a "Still to find out" sentence in the draft file.

5 min What you covered

Spot-check that the portfolio document exists and has three dated goals before students leave. The planner does not need exporting. Note anyone with an empty one-year column for a quick follow-up; that pattern usually means the five-year ambition is still unanchored.

TEACHING MOVES

- Model filling one cell of the planner with a clear example for the class.
- Circulate the room during the drafting step to prompt connections.
- Use cold calling during discussion to share strong pathway links.
- Stress that the short-term goal needs a starting action this month.
- State the minimum viable draft floor so less-confident students know what counts as done for today; full one-to-two-page polish can finish before the next progression lesson.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Goals lack connections between milestones: Ask students to state what each step makes possible.
- Short-term column left empty: Guide focus to an action starting this month.
- Milestones not linked to pathways: Review the three routes with the student.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Offer a template with one pathway example already filled.
- Support: SMARTER sentence starters for each letter.
- Extension: Challenge students to add research on specific training routes and complete all three pathway rows in class.
- Support: Allow paired discussion before independent drafting.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- ALT 2 Career Progression Plan Draft: 1-2 pages; ALT 2 evidence in progress