

LESSON 3

AI in the Job Application Process

60 minutes

Strand 2.2: Engaging with the Workplace

Reflecting

Outcome LCW.M2.S2.APP.2

Outcome LCW.M2.S2.APP.4

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You will debate whether AI should write your job applications, identify problems in an AI-generated letter, and then produce your own version while reflecting on appropriate uses of the technology.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M2.S2.APP.2	outline the different components involved in applying for a job and discuss the potential role of AI in this process.
LCW.M2.S2.APP.4	explain the process of shortlisting and how to maximise success in the application process.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Take a position on AI use in applications with real evidence
- Annotate an AI letter for untrue, generic and employer-spotted lines
- Write your own letter and state what you would and would not let AI do

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
AI drafting	Using an AI tool to produce a first version of an application document (cover letter, personal statement, or form answer) that you then edit, cut, or rewrite.	Pasting a job advert into a chat tool and asking it to 'write a cover letter' in under a minute
Generic content	Wording so vague or so widely used that it could sit in anyone's application and tell a reader nothing about you.	I thrive in fast-paced environments and work well both independently and as part of a team
Authenticity	The quality of an application that could only have been written by you: checkable facts, specific moments, and a voice that matches how you actually speak.	Naming the Saturday shift you held, what went wrong on one busy hour, and what you did about it

BEFORE THE BELL

- Ensure all students have their Cover Letter v1 from the earlier job-application lesson (Lesson 92 in the scheme) ready.
- Prepare a spare generic school-leaver role for any student who missed that lesson.
- Students need Cover Letter v1 from the earlier job-application lesson (Lesson 92 in the scheme). Have a spare generic school-leaver role ready for anyone who missed that lesson. The class already staked a first position in Getting Started, so there is no need for a second debate here; go straight into the annotator so the writing time survives.
- On screen this lesson: document annotator.

AI in the Job Application Process

HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
4 min	introduction	Getting Started
4 min	content	Key Terms
40 min	activity	Annotate the AI Letter, Then Write Yours
7 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

4 min Getting Started

Open with a quick show of hands, or a short agree-disagree line across the room, on this claim: *Using AI to write your job application is cheating*. Take two or three voices only, in about two to three minutes, and leave the question open rather than settling it. Tell the class that the position they leave with today has to come from the letter they are about to annotate, not from the opinion they hold now, so there is a reason to hold back from a full argument at this point.

Students need their **Cover Letter v1** from the earlier job-application lesson (Lesson 92 in the scheme) open or to hand for the writing half of the main step. Have a spare generic school-leaver role ready for anyone who missed that lesson.

4 min Key Terms

Spend under five minutes here. The three labels on the annotator (untrue / generic / employer-spot) map directly onto these terms. Do not debate AI ethics yet; that lands after they have marked the letter.

40 min Annotate the AI Letter, Then Write Yours

On screen: document annotator

SUGGESTED TIMING

- Annotator (place tags, then reveal model): 14 minutes
- Own letter and three boundary lines into the portfolio: 20 minutes. Keep this block whole, even if the annotator discussion is going well, because the letter is the piece of work the student leaves with.

ANNOTATOR

Circulate while tags go down. Watch for students tagging buzzwords as employer-spot, and for those who catch the invented QQI Level 6 award and the three-years-of-experience claim as untrue. After the reveal, ask who disagreed with the model and why, because that disagreement is where the thinking shows. Point out that the same tags transfer to a real Irish shop floor or to their own Cover Letter v1 employer.

OWN LETTER

Hold the line on authenticity and employability: a letter with no named place, hour, person, or result is not finished. A pasted AI draft will not meet that bar, because it cannot supply checkable detail only this student holds. Accept the rewrite-three-sentences route if a student is short on time, provided the three boundary lines still cite something from today's AI letter. Those three lines have to point at the letter rather than offer a general moral.

MINIMUM COMPLETE EXIT

Tags noted, three-line judgement done, letter drafted or clearly in progress in **AI in Applications**. Anyone still mid-letter gets five minutes at the start of next lesson.

7 min Think About It

Put the questions on screen and let the pairs work from them; there is nothing to collect in writing here. Give about four minutes of pair-share, then take two voices. Listen for students who moved position because of a specific line they tagged, rather than because of a general feeling, and ask anyone still speaking in slogans to point at the part of the letter that backs them. Keep this to the two voices rather than reopening the cheating claim as a whole-class argument, because their considered judgement is already written into the three boundary lines in the portfolio and a second round tends to talk it back out again.

5 min What you covered

Quick exit check: every student should leave with **AI in Applications** started (tags + three boundary lines at minimum). Letter drafted or clearly in progress is a full exit; anyone still mid-letter needs five minutes at the start of next lesson. Do not treat an incomplete letter as failure if the three-line judgement cites today's AI letter.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "I am a highly motivated individual with a passion for excellence" - Generic: anyone could have sent this - No person, place, or moment. Swap in any name and the sentence still works, which is exactly why it fails.
- "a proven track record of delivering results in customer-facing roles" - Generic: anyone could have sent this - Claims proof without giving any. A reader cannot check a track record that never names a shift, a till, or a result.
- "three years of experience managing busy retail floors" - Untrue: false for a typical LC student - Most people in this room are seventeen. Three years of managing floors is a factual claim an employer can test, and for a school-leaver it collapses on contact.
- "I hold a QQI Level 6 major award in retail management" - Untrue: false for a typical LC student - A checkable-sounding qualification most LC students do not hold. AI invents credentials freely because nothing in the prompt stopped it.
- "I thrive in fast-paced environments and work well both independently..." - Generic: anyone could have sent this - A stock sentence that appears in countless Irish school-leaver applications. It signals nothing about this applicant and everything about the template.
- "leverage my synergistic skillset to drive customer-centric outcomes" - Employer-spot: a hiring manager would notice - Buzzword stack. Hiring managers who read dozens of letters a week flag this register as machine-made even when they cannot prove it.
- "add immediate value to your organisation" - Employer-spot: a hiring manager would notice - Corporate filler with no link to Harbour View Stores. A human who had walked the shop would name a product, a customer type, or a weekend rush instead.

TEACHING MOVES

- Run the agree-disagree claim once only at the open (two or three voices). Do not stage it again after the portfolio judgement.
- Circulate during annotation and push for specific line tags, not vague underlining.
- Model one example annotation before students start if the room needs it.
- Ring-fence the letter block; the portfolio artefact is the thing that must not get cut.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Tags stay surface-level: ask which key term the line maps to, and why that tag not another.
- Position unchanged after annotation: ask for one specific tagged line that should move them, even slightly.
- Own letter lacks personal detail or clear AI boundaries: point at the minimum bar (named place, hour, person, or result) and the three boundary lines that must cite today's letter. Frame this as protecting authenticity and employability, not catching cheats.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide a short list of example generic phrases to help with identification; pair for the opening stake if confidence is low.
- Extension: Rewrite one full section of the AI letter so it would pass an authenticity check for a real Irish retail floor.
- Time press: accept rewrite-three-sentences from Cover Letter v1 plus the three boundary lines as a complete minimum artefact.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- AI in Applications: annotated AI letter, your own letter, three lines on allowed AI use