

LESSON 13

Tailoring Your Personal Statement to the Placement

60 minutes

Strand 2.2: Engaging with the Workplace

Applying

Outcome LCW.M2.S2.ENG.2

Outcome LCW.M1.S1.PS.2

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You will annotate a sample personal statement against a sample placement brief to identify relevant content. Then create a tailored paragraph for your chosen organisation and decide what to remove for first contact with that workplace.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M2.S2.ENG.2	discuss how their personal statement might support their engagement with the workplace.
LCW.M1.S1.PS.2	recognise different formats and uses of personal statements.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Mark a sample statement against a placement advert for relevance
- Produce a tailored placement paragraph for your named organisation
- Cut material that does not belong in first contact

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Placement paragraph	A short, tailored version of your personal statement aimed at one named organisation: who you are, why them, and what you will actually do while you are there.	Four to six sentences written for Harbour View After-School Club, not for every workplace in Ireland
Tailoring	Choosing, cutting and re-ordering material so the same person fits a specific audience without inventing a different person.	Keeping the newsagent shift, cutting the camogie captaincy, adding one line about children and reading
First contact	The first message you send a workplace when asking for work experience or work shadowing: email, phone, or in person. It has to be short and specific.	A short email to the Harbour View supervisor naming the three-day placement and what you can do on busy afternoons

BEFORE THE BELL

- Confirm every student has a named target organisation. Prepare a list of local placeholders for those without one.
- Ensure every student has a blank Placement Personal Statement file in their Strand 2.2 folder (title, organisation heading, body, cut-note subheading), or plan to create it at the start of Part 2.
- Students without a prior personal statement: temporary base from Ciara's kept material plus two own facts, or bullets from the broad-engagement plan; flag for catch-up before Lesson 14.
- Check that every student has a named target organisation, and keep a short list of realistic local placeholders beside you for anyone who has not chosen yet, because a student with no name in front of them cannot write a tailored paragraph at all. It helps if every student already has a blank Placement Personal Statement file in their Strand 2.2 folder with a title, an organisation heading, a body and a cut-note subheading; if that has not happened, the step tells them to create it at the start of Part 2, so you only need to point at that line. The file is called Placement Personal Statement and lives in Strand 2.2.
- On screen this lesson: document annotator.

Tailoring Your Personal Statement to the Placement

HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
35 min	activity	Write Your Placement Paragraph
10 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open by asking who already has a named target organisation from the broad-engagement plan. Anyone without one needs a realistic placeholder before step 3 (a local library, club, clinic, shop or community centre they could actually contact).

For students with no prior personal statement and no ALT 1 draft, the sample statement they will annotate in step 3 (Ciara's, written for an after-school club) gives them a shape to borrow: tell them to hold on until then and, when it appears, to use the lines the class keeps as relevant plus two facts from their own experience. Bullets from their broad-engagement plan work just as well. Flag these students for catch-up before Lesson 14.

Remind the room this is applying, not redrafting ALT 1 from scratch.

5 min Key Terms

Keep this brisk. The class needs the three terms in their mouths before they annotate.

35 min Write Your Placement Paragraph

On screen: document annotator

SUGGESTED TIMING

- **0-10 mins:** the annotating activity in explore mode. Place two or three tags live yourself so they see how a tag is justified, then reveal the model tags and the model placement paragraph.
- **10-35 mins:** students write their own placement paragraph in the portfolio document. This is a full, quiet writing block, and they do not swap with a partner here, because the peer test on whether the paragraph could go anywhere comes in the next step and works better once the draft exists.

LOOK-FORS

- The organisation is named in the first or second sentence.
- At least one concrete experience is kept and the slogans are gone.
- The cut-note names something real, not "I shortened it".
- If the full 80-120 words are not finished, the least you accept at exit is the organisation name, three sentences and the cut-note started.

TEACHING TIPS

Students who paste half of ALT 1 have not tailored anything. Push them to cut until a supervisor could read the whole thing in under a minute. Anything left vague today shows up immediately in the email next lesson, which is the argument to use with anyone who wants to keep every line they are fond of.

10 min Think About It

Keep this oral and brisk. Cold-call two pairs on the "could this go anywhere?" test. If a paragraph fails that test, send the student back to cut rather than polish. This is the only peer pass on that criterion; there is no earlier pair swap in the writing step.

Flag that Lesson 14 uses this artefact directly in the first-contact email, so unfinished work today blocks tomorrow. At exit, every student needs at least organisation name plus three sentences in the draft.

5 min What you covered

Exit check: every student should have a named organisation and a draft in **Placement Personal Statement**. Note anyone still on a placeholder so you can unblock them before the email lesson. Unfinished full drafts are acceptable only if the minimum bar is met (org name + three sentences + cut-note started); polish of the cut-note can finish as homework, not the paragraph itself.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "help my community and make a difference" - Cut for this audience - Warm, and true of almost every applicant. Harbour View does not need a slogan; it needs a reason this club, these children.
- "open to any placement that will let me grow" - Does not prove fit - This is the opposite of tailoring. A supervisor reading first contact hears: you have not chosen us.
- "captain the senior camogie team" - Cut for this audience - Strong leadership evidence for another audience. For a short placement paragraph it costs space and does not prove calm work with younger children.
- "Saturday job at Brennan's Newsagents for fourteen months" - Relevant to this placement - Hard, checkable reliability with the public. Keep this: it proves she turns up and handles customers.
- "rearranged the morning so the papers still went out on time" - Relevant to this placement - A specific afternoon at an after-school club gets chaotic in the same way. This is transferable initiative with evidence.
- "I am reliable, a good communicator and a team player" - Does not prove fit - Three claims, no child, no reading, no care setting. For Harbour View this line proves nothing the advert asked for.

TEACHING MOVES

- Model the annotation process on the sample statement before students begin, then show the model placement paragraph so production has a concrete shape.
- Circulate during the writing activity to prompt students on relevance.
- Use whole-class discussion in Think About It for the could this go anywhere test (single peer pass).
- Encourage students to keep the paragraph short and specific.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students include too much irrelevant detail; remind them to focus only on the placement needs.
- Paragraphs remain too generic; prompt for specific references to the organisation.
- Failing to note cuts; ensure students record reasons for each removal.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide sentence starters for the placement paragraph (name org → why you → one proof → what you will do).
- Extension: Challenge students to include a specific action they will take during the placement.
- Support: Pair students with similar targets for peer discussion.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Placement Personal Statement: tailored paragraph plus what you cut and why