



# Aspire2

Guide to

# Student Mentoring

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# About the Programme

Aspire2 is a student support programme that was established in 2015 as part of DPS CSR strategy. The vision for the programme is to make a tangible contribution to addressing the systemic inequality in Irish education, by increasing the student population from disadvantaged communities who progress to third level or further education, including apprenticeships. There are five elements to the programme that make this achievable; financial supports, work experience, mentoring, student advisory and parental engagement. Aspire2 also works in partnership with a range of education stakeholders to maximise the programmes potential.

The programme provides financial supports to each leaving cert cohort we work with to fund a range of initiatives that reflect the vision of the programme, including; additional tuition and supervised study, personal development and motivational workshops, cultural and extra-curricular activities. Each cohort receives €13,000 over the two year period.

At it's core the programme encourages young people to explore their options for life after school that best reflects

their passion and serves their needs. As part of doing this, DPS host student's on work experience during school's holidays. Annually DPS host about 30 Aspire2 students. The programme also provides a structured mentoring programme to support students to develop study skills, identify their learning needs, set achievable goals and prepare for exams, ultimately the leaving cert. Ultimately we want students to realise their potential and be confident in their performance.

Aspire2 strongly encourages young people's participation in the programme. Each school has a youth advisory panel. The advisory panels are supported to consult with their fellow students to identify where support is needed most and give feedback to the programme coordinators. We also recognise that parental engagement in their child's education is an important factor in educational outcomes. Our parents forum gives parents an opportunity to get involved, learn about state exam assessments, updated progression routes and establish links with University supports.

*“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”*

*- Nelson Mandela*

# The Role of a Mentor

## Your Role

Your role as a mentor is to provide support and guidance to students with a specific focus on helping them achieve a good leaving cert and progress to third level or further education.

The Aspire2 programme work from a mentor student ratio of 2:6, so you will have a co-mentor and together you will mentor a small group of students. You decide who you partner with, it may be someone you feel you work well with. This co-mentoring approach combines mentors skill and maximizes the success of the programme for students.



## Key Responsibilities

- Meet students 5 times per year. Plan your session with your co-mentor prior to the session.
- Build supportive and respectful relationships with students . Get to know your students to help identify their needs.
- Encourage students to identify their strengths to help motivate them to do well in school.
- Work with students to help them set achievable goals
- Establish boundaries in terms of how you work with your students, it is important these boundaries are maintained.

*“Every Great Achiever is Inspired by a Great Mentor”*

*- Lailah Gifty Akita*

*“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen and a push in the right direction”*  
*- John C. Crosby*

### Aspire2 Mentoring Script

A good mentor **listens** to **understand** their students.

With regular meetings of a **kind** and **supportive** nature, students **self-confidence** will increase for sure.

**Guidance** is key, we want to **inspire** ways of **learning** that are stress free. **Creative** minds **encourage** alternative solutions to **problem solving**.

We want our students to **believe** they can **achieve**.

**Positive** feedback will boost **personal growth**. How our students **participate** can exceed **expectations** that others may anticipate.

**Exploring** future options can be made **fun, reassure** them there's always more than one. our destination is student **motivation!**

### Practical Information

-You are asked to commit to approximately 5 sessions per year. Each session will last 1 hour

-Location of the sessions alternate between being hosted at DPS and the school.

-Aspire2 Student Support Worker will inform you of sessions no later than 2 weeks before.

# Codes of Behavior

## Between Mentors and Students

1) The student and mentor need to be clear about the purpose and nature of their relationship, this should be made clear in the first session through the formation of a contract/set of boundaries between the mentor/student.

2) Mentors should be sensitive to physical contact with students. Training should indicate what physical contacts are inappropriate and enable mentors to become aware of actions that might be misunderstood and situations which might render them vulnerable. Mentors must never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a young person.

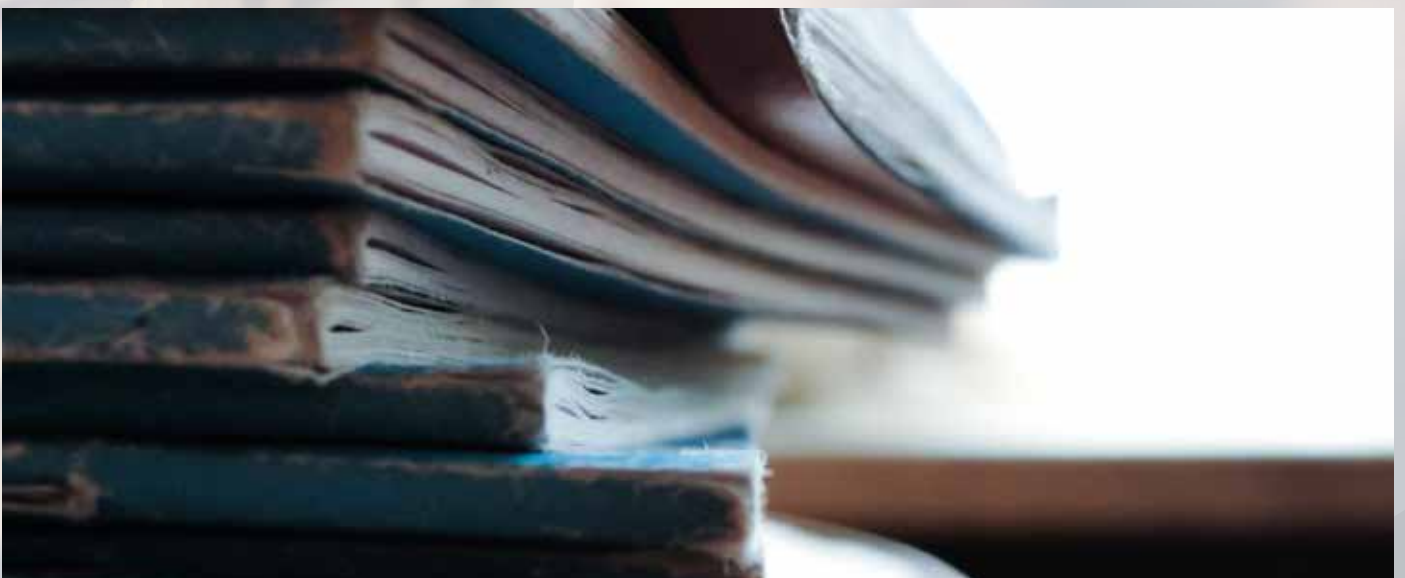
3) Comments or jokes of a sexual nature are not appropriate and should never be told in front of students.

4) All mentors should be familiar with Aspire2 child protection policy. It is advised that mentors do not meet with students alone, to avoid potential personal risk or false allegations which may arise.

5) Mentors should not give students lifts in their cars.

6) Mentors should not exchange phone numbers with students. Communication platforms via email may be established for sharing information between sessions. You are advised to check with Aspire2 team before you do so, school policy may not permit email exchange. In this case, Aspire2 student support worker can pass information to students through the school contact

Please ensure you read our [child safeguarding statement](#) (See Appendix 1)



# Understanding the Leaving Cert

The Leaving Certificate (L.C) is a two-year programme, containing a range of distinct subjects. Most subjects are taken at either higher or ordinary level, depending on academic performance. Usually students study 6 or 7 subjects, some compulsory and some of choice. Students take exams in each subject at the end of two years study. Entry to university for leaving cert students depends on their overall points achieved via exam results. In 2017 a new points system was introduced to fairly reward academic performance and ease pressure. The number of grade bands were reduced from 14 to 8.

How is the **Leaving Cert** Graded?

%	Higher Grade	Higher Points	Ordinary Grade	Ordinary Points
90 - 100	H1	100	O1	56
80 - 89.99	H2	88	O2	46
70 - 79.99	H3	77	O3	37
60 - 69.99	H4	66	O4	28
50 - 59.99	H5	56	O5	20
40 - 49.99	H6	46	O6	12
30 - 39.99	H7	37	O7	0
0 - 29.99	H8	0	O8	0

The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) is also a two year programme, but is built on continuous assessment. The programme is pre-vocational by nature and is designed for students who do not wish to proceed directly to higher education or for those whose needs, aptitudes and learning styles are not fully catered for by the other Leaving Certificate programme. LCA consists of four half-year blocks called sessions. Achievements are credited in each session. Courses are designed on a modular basis and are of thirty hours duration. Learners must take a total of 44 modules. They are also required to take final exams on their core subjects.

How is the **Leaving Cert Applied** Graded?

%	Credits	Grade
85 - 100	170 - 200	Distinction
70 - 84	140 - 169	Merit
60 - 69	120 - 169	Pass

# Preparing for your Session

## What you **should** do...

- Arrange to meet with your co-mentor in advance to discuss what you want to cover in the session and who's doing what.
- Think about the dynamic of your student group, devise strategies that will allow for everyone to participate.
- Working with students outside the class room requires creativity! Use activities suggested in this guide if needed or test your own ideas.

*“Failing to Plan, is Planning to Fail”  
- Alan Lakein*

## First Step

Getting to know each other. Its important you invest time at the start to get to know the students. Use fun ice breaker activities to explore personalities, interest and hobbies. Keep in mind some students may be shy, try to encourage everyone to get involved without making anyone feel uncomfortable. All groups take time to form.

When working in partnership its important to agree on how you will do so. Create a group contract, facilitate conversations with the students and get everyone to sign when its complete.

## Topic to Explore in your Sessions

- 1) Support students to identify their preferred **Learning Styles**. Remember we all learn differently.
- 2) **Study Skills**. Students are often told to STUDY STUDY STUDY, but usually aren't shown how to. Explore study techniques and develop study plans.
- 3) Encourage individual **Goal Setting**. Explore how to set achievable goals, keep in mind each student will have different strengths and talents.
- 4) **Time Management** skills are essential for positive outcomes. Don't forget that the leaving cert years can be extremely stressful.
- 5) **Stress Management** and Self Care is really important, introduce easy to do techniques in your session.
- 6) Create the space for students to explore **Career Options**. Discuss **CAO applications** and **other progression routes**. Help them to prepare **CV's**.



# Ice Breakers

**Start your** session with an **ice breaker** to warm up the group and **break the silence**

## Mingle Market

-Give each person a question card. (See appendix 2)

-In pairs, ask the questions when both have answered, swap questions and find a new partner to question. This exercise is a nice way to start your session and break the ice, encourage students to get up and move around while sharing.

## PLC Bingo

-Photocopy Bingo sheets for participants. (See Appendix 3)

-Ask students to move around and try find someone for each question.  
\*For use with 6th year students

## Word Toss

Ask your group to sit/stand a circle

Start by picking a topic, going around the circle each person should say the first word that comes to mind when they hear that word.

Go around the circle until each person has had a chance to chose a topic.

A Mentor should start with a topic to demonstrate. An example could be School—first things that come to mind might be; teachers, study, homework, friends, learning etc

## Sit Down, Stand Up

For this exercise the mentor will ask a list of questions to the group, when they answer 'No' they sit down, when they answer 'Yes' they stand up.

To get started ask everyone to stand up, have your set of questions ready. Try make the questions relative to the session planned, but also ask general questions remember we want to shake any discomfort.

### Example questions

1. Did you have breakfast this morning
2. Do you like dancing
3. My energy levels are high this morning
4. Did you do your home work last night
5. Are you a football fan
6. I like school
7. I can speak more than one language
8. I know what I want to do after school
9. Have you been on holiday this year
10. I am so excited about being here!

# Get To Know Each Other

These short exercises are a great way to get to know your students. You need little or no materials, it's a fun way to share personal information and interests. Be mindful of your groups dynamic, try not to make anyone feel uncomfortable. Tip: Pay attention to what information they share, it may be a point of conversation to continue in another session.

1

## Sweet Introductions

- Bring a bag of sweets/jellies to your session, enough for students to take at least 3.
- Pass them around ask students not take more than 3 so that there will be enough for everyone.
- Pay attention to how many each person takes, for every sweet they take they must share something about themselves. Don't tell them this until everyone has taken their sweets.
- Ask students to share something about themselves that their class mates may not already know. It can be anything, interests, hobbies, holidays, favourite dinner etc.

2

## Fact or Fiction?

- Give students a piece of paper each.
- Ask everyone to write on a piece of paper three things about themselves which may not be known to the rest of the group. Two should be true and one false.
- Ask students to share their 3 facts and let the group guess which is fact or fiction.

3

## Hobby Huddle

Ask your group to sit/stand in a circle First person says their name and favourite hobby, next person repeats the 1st person name and hobby, before saying their own, 3rd person says 1st and 2nd person's name and hobby, before saying their own and so on. Keep going until everyone has shared.

Tip: A mentor should go first to demonstrate what students have to do, the other mentor should be last to go - being the one having to repeat all students names and hobbies before sharing their own

# Learning Made Better

Remember we want to support students to get the best leaving cert they can!

Knowing how best they learn is a good place to start. Talk to the students about why you are doing this exercise. Learning style cards are available, please see Appendix 3.



**Step 1:** Mentors should introduce learning styles to give a general understanding. So do your homework before the session to make sure your familiar with the different learning styles.

**Step 2:** Ask students to take a couple of minutes on their own to think about how they learn and what helps them learn. Present students with learning style cards and ask them to pick which one they identify most.

**Step 3:** Ask students to get into pairs and talk about the learning style they identified with. Give about 10 mins to discuss. Encourage students to;  
Explore why they picked that learning style. Share examples of where the learning style helped them learn better.

**Step 4:** In pairs, ask students to pick 3 subjects they study and think of techniques for learning which reflects their learning styles. (i.e. Logical/Mathematical learner could make a time line to learn significant events in History).

# Be Creative Studying

“Mind mapping” is a fun and easy way of bringing learning together

Here’s how you would do it..

- Ask the students to think about something they have recently learned that is related to one of their subjects.
- Provide markers/pencils/pens, ask students to draw a mind map, it can be words, drawing or symbols whatever helps them connect with what they learned.
- Facilitate a conversation after, encourage them to think about how they done their mind map. Invite students to present theirs to the group.
- Tips: Prepare a Sample Mind Map to demonstrated intended outcome
- Materials: flip-chart/A4 paper, colour markers/pens



# Managing Stress

Try starting your session with some mindfulness to connected the group with the theme. Youtube is a useful resource for short guided mindfulness videos.



**To manage stress**, first we need to be able to identify it.

Using a flipchart brainstorm with the whole group, ask them who experiences stress and what it is associated with. Only give this a couple of minutes, it is just to get the ball rolling on how we think about stress.

Then, ask students to break into pairs to discuss the following;

1. What does stress look like
2. How does it feel (Physically, Mentally, Emotionally)
3. Do I get stressed? Why?
4. How do you react to stress

Provide paper and art materials, ask the students to draw their answers. Give this 10–15mins, keeping in tune with this topic, soft music in the background is suggested while the activity takes place.

Now, ask students to stay in their pairs and discuss:

1. How can you minimise stress
2. What supports do you need
3. Think of a time you were stressed and overcame it, what did you do ?

**Ask each pair to share their drawings and** key points from their conversations with the whole group.

Stress is often associated with negative emotions, feelings of 'I Can't' and when challenges arise stress is likely to try swoop in. Do some personal reflections with students to remind them of their strengths and achievements, creating positive emotions about themselves (see Appendix 5)

# Explore Progression Rules

As a student mentor it is your role to guide students on their journey to life after school. Supporting students to do THEIR best is our goal ! Keep in mind that interests and learning abilities differ, be careful not to dismiss students aspirations. There are a wide range of options for students after the leaving cert, in academic education as well as other learning opportunities. We want to positively explore their options and help them decide what is best . In Ireland the social and cultural expectations has been that students progress from secondary school to third level institutions. This progression route serves well for a large number of students, but not everyone!



## Apprenticeships

Solas is the national coordinating body for apprenticeships in Ireland. Traditional apprenticeships have been rebuilt and a whole range of new ones developed. Apprenticeships provide high-quality training and employment opportunities for practical learners as opposed to academic learners. It is a combination of work and study.



## Third Level

Third level consists of universities, institutes of technology and colleges of education. The Central Applications Office (CAO), operates a centralised applications procedure for all third-level colleges. Entry to third level is generally based on Leaving Cert points. The Higher education access route (HEAR) is an option for students from low socio-economic status to get in to third level on lower points



## Further Education College

Further Education courses are provided in colleges throughout the entire country through the network of Education and Training Boards. Class sizes are small and project-based assessment methods are used, with the prevalence of work placements. Post leaving Cert (PLC). Courses are available for students who wish to progress to third level but for whatever reason need an extra year to acquire the skills to do so.

# Career Investigation

Use this session to give students an opportunity to talk about what their dream job would be, how will they get there and what will it look like when they are there. Often we have misconceptions of what certain jobs entail.

To support students to learn about occupations related to studies, encourage talking to someone who has professional and/or educational experience in the area of interest.

You can suggest students contact employers, unions or professional associations, counselors, teachers, family members or friends to gather more information about the occupational research you are conducting. Ask them to go off and contact people to find out the following:

- Name/Title
- Company/Organization
- Previous Education/Training
- Work Responsibilities
- Expected Commitments (working hours, weekend work)

Debrief with the group, discuss how they felt doing the exercise and what did they find out. See questions below to prompt discussion

1. Describe one or two employment opportunities related to the field of studies you have chosen. How will your personal background enable you to be successful in this field?
2. What is a typical workday like in this profession? What does an employee do?
3. What skills/abilities are required to be successful in the field?
4. What kind of education and training are required?
5. Did you learn something new about working in this field, that you hadn't thought of?

**Tip: It's best to do this when the session is in DPS, because you will have access to phone , computers etc.**

# Getting ready for The Next Chapter

What are the **entry requirements** for my course of study?

Support students to understand the points needed to get the course they want:

- Use college prospectus, ask students to find courses they may be interested in and identify the entry requirements.
- Also encourage student to explore the course content, what are the modules, is there a work placement, what will be expected of them
- Have a conversation with the group about their findings



## Interview Preparation

Interviews and personal statement letters may also be required for entry to third level, further education and/or employment.

- Support students to identify their strengths, skills and qualities. Individually ask them to list 3 of each, encourage group discussion and peer support.
- Mock interviews with students is a great way to get them prepared for an interview. Discuss what's appropriate and what's not (e.g. dress code, language)
- Ask students to write personal statements, discuss what should be considered first
- Offer students support in writing a CV, demonstrate with an example.



# Appendix 1

## Aspire2 Child Safeguarding Statement

### 1. Name of Service

Aspire2 Student Support Programme,  
DPS Group,  
Landscape House,  
Clonlara Road,  
Baldonnell Business Park,  
Dublin 22

### 2. Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm:

Aspire2 provides a range of educational and developmental activities for Leaving Cert Students age 16-19 years. These activities include students in a broad range of activities as follows:

1. Student mentoring sessions
2. Educational trips to Colleges and Universities
3. Leadership training
4. Youth Advisory panels
5. Alumni group

We believe that Child Protection is about promoting the welfare of students who avail of our services and creating a safe environment for both staff/volunteers and young people, where trust and willingness to listen to the young person is foremost.

It is the policy of Aspire2 to safeguard the welfare of all students in our services by protecting them from all forms of abuse. We are committed to providing a safe space for students to grow, develop, learn in line with Children First Act 2015

### 3. Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to students while availing of our services.

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

	Risk identified manage risk identified	Procedure in place to
1	Unsuitable adults having access to young people	-Garda vetting for all staff/volunteers/tutors/students. -Reference check and recruitment procedures
2	Non reporting of concerns due to risk of harm not being recognized by staff/volunteers	-Induction for all staff. -Child protection training for all staff.
3	Risk of inappropriate behavior on overnight residential & European trips	-Policy guidelines for trips. -Staff planning. -Risk assessment of accommodation as part of residential/ trips policy /guidelines. -Adequate adult supervision for duration of trip.
4	Risk of inappropriate or abusive behavior by staff, volunteers or students	-Garda vetting for all staff/volunteers/tutors/students. -Induction for all staff. -Child protection training for all staff.
5	Appropriate management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against staff, volunteers or student	-Child protection training for mentors and DLP -Clearly defined CP and HR policies and procedures that include the role and responsibilities
6	A danger to young people if a group or activity is not adequately supervised.	-Planning for future events, with ratios of adults to young people. -Trained staff - Induction training, child protection training, first aid training. -Garda Vetting for all volunteers & staff.

## 4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, the Children First: National Guidance, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of mentors to work with children
- Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person
- All procedures listed are available upon request.

## 5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Aspire2 is committed to the Implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed in March 2019, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 2

## Mingle Market

Describe yourself as a stranger might see you

Describe yourself as your best friend knows you

Who do you most admire?  
Why?

Describe your favorite teacher

Describe the ideal job for a teenager

What famous person would you most like to meet? Why?

If you could live anywhere in the world where would it be? Why?

What do you like most about school

What do you not like about school

What is the best movie you've ever seen

If you could be anything, what would you be?

What's your best subject

# Appendix 3

## PLC Bingo

Has completed all course choices on their CAO	Has been for a PLC interview	Still needs to know what points they need for their college course
Likes to sleep in on the mid-term break	Doesn't really know what they want to do yet	Has a holiday planned for this year
Has done work experience in DPS	Would like to do work experience in DPS	Make up a question you would like to ask

# Appendix 4

## Learning Styles

<p><b>Visual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Create visual diagrams</li><li>-Graph results of a survey</li><li>-Create a comic strip</li><li>-Create a poster</li><li>-Draw a map</li><li>-Create a PowerPoint</li><li>-Create a web-cast or video</li></ul>	<p><b>Musical/Auditory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Write a song or rap</li><li>-Create a dance</li><li>-Write a jingle</li><li>-Create a rhyme</li><li>-Use an Instrument to create</li></ul>	<p><b>Verbal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Teach concept</li><li>-Write instructions</li><li>-Create ads</li><li>-Write a poem</li><li>-Keep a journal</li><li>-Retell in your own words</li><li>-Teach concept mapping</li><li>-Write a story</li></ul>
<p><b>Physical/Kinesthetic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Create a game</li><li>-Do an experiment</li><li>-Construct a model</li><li>-Build a representation</li><li>-Create a sport</li></ul>	<p><b>Learning Styles Choice Board</b></p> <p>We all learn in different ways! Pick your way to discover, think, create, and learn concepts in all areas; math, reading, science, history, writing etc...</p>	<p><b>Logical/Mathematical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Create a code</li><li>-Make a time line</li><li>-Compare/contrast Ideas</li><li>-Create an outline</li><li>-Design a map</li><li>-Show a pattern</li><li>-Teach concept mapping</li></ul>
<p><b>Social</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Tell stories or poems</li><li>-survey others</li><li>-Interview someone</li><li>-Teach a cooperative game</li><li>-Role play</li><li>-Hold a discussion</li></ul>	<p><b>Solitary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Research an area</li><li>-Keep a journal</li><li>-Write about personal experiences</li><li>-Think about... and plan...</li><li>-Create a PowerPoint</li><li>-Read a book on...</li></ul>	<p><b>Naturalist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Collect and categorize data, material, or Ideas</li><li>-Discover or experiment</li><li>-Take a field trip</li><li>-Adapt materials</li><li>-Label and classify</li></ul>

# Appendix 5

## Personal Reflection

1. My greatest success

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2. Something I did that helped someone

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3. Something I don't like

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4. Something I've done that I'm proud of

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5. Something I've learned from failure

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6. The funniest thing I ever did

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7. Something I'm good at (outside school)

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8. Something I've done that took courage

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9. Something I'd really like to learn

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# Appendix 6

## Monthly Goal Planner

Encourage students to take an organised approach to study, support them to identify what it is they need to study/complete and set goals accordingly. Use the template below to demonstrate, ask students to use the blank one to do their own monthly goal planner. See the example below.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
What is my goal?	I would like to learn off my French oral piece.	Complete my history research project.	I would like to improve in maths class	I would like to feel confident going into my exams
How will I achieve my goal?	I will put a few hours of my week aside and study my oral work	I will go to the library and work on it and use books from the library to get information	Do my homework and ask for extra help from my teacher.	I will prepare for exams, I will know when they're on, in what order they are. I will revise my notes for each subject.
Who could help me?	I could practice with my class mates, who are also doing French	My history teacher, my mentor or my peers can help be think it out	Teacher, mentor, parents, friends.	Myself, I will do my best!
What is likely to get in the way of me and my goal?	My phone is a distraction, I need a quiet working environment etc	I usually go out with friends	If I'm not in school/ maths class I won't learn the maths	I may not know everything on the papers
How will I know I have achieved my goal?	I will know my oral piece by heart	I will have completed my research topic	Yes, I know most of section one clearly now.	I will complete my exams knowing I done MY BEST!



Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

What is my goal?

How will I achieve my goal?

Who could help me?

What is likely to get in the way of me and my goal?

How will I know I have achieved my goal?

# Appendix 7

## Planning to Study

An unscheduled study plan is a study timetable to help students realistically plan their study hours. Some students have sports training, hobbies, go out with their friends etc so this will help them to clearly see what free time they have. Use the template below to demonstrate how they might develop their own.

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
8am-10am	School	School	School	School	School		
10am-12pm	School	School	School	School	School		
12pm-2pm	School	School	School	School	School	Football Training	
2pm-4pm	School	School	School	School	Work	Work	Family time
4pm-6pm	Homework Dinner Chores	Homework Dinner Chores	Homework Dinner Chores	Homework Dinner Chores	Work	Work	
6pm-8pm	Practice Maths Sets from Exam Papers	Football Training	Revise 2 Irish poems		Youth Group	Out with friends	Read 2 chapter of English Novel Prepare for week ahead.
8pm-10pm	Get a good nights sleep!						



# Appendix 8

## Get Them Talking

Talk to your students and get them talking. Do not underestimate the power of a conversation, a good conversation can be a positive learning experience. The important thing is knowing how to ask good and relevant questions that will get your group engaged in the conversation.

Remember mentoring is about support and guidance, invite students to share their thoughts, ambitions and concerns. Mentors should open the conversations with questions that will get students talking and allow you to listen. You can then discuss solutions and advise students on how to enhance their achievements.

Getting students to talk about what they are good at can be a challenge, very often students are reluctant to shout out their strengths and will be quick to let you know what they are bad at. Try asking students what subjects they enjoy most and why? Instead of asking what subjects they are good at? They might say 'Nothing'! Explore the 'why' they enjoy it, use the conversation to help identify their strengths.

Asking structured and thought-out questions will;

- Help students clarify their understanding of a topic
- Motivate students to engage in conversation about their interest
- Provide opportunities for student learning through discussion

## TED Question Model

TED questions are designed to get more than just an answer to your question. The technique uses Tell, Describe or Explain to direct conversation and stretch the answer- "Tell me more about that" "Explain the situation to me" "Describe that to me"

You can also add Tell, Describe or Explain to your question to get students talking instead of giving a Yes/No answer. When constructing your questions include what, when or where to gain content and why or how to discover the process.

## Example Questions

Tell me about what you want to do when you finish school?

Tell me what you have learned this week and why do you think it is important?

Explain the history topic you have chosen study and how will you research it?

Where did you go on your geography field trip, describe what that was like?

