

# Pathways

Third Year  
Unit 1: My whole life

2024



## Attention teachers:

The Pathways units aim to encourage students from diverse backgrounds to think about their career choices, the career decision making process and particularly to consider teaching as a desirable career.

These units are an initiative of the Path Project, which is funded by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), and based in the Institute of Education, Dublin City University (DCU).

There are 3 units for 3<sup>rd</sup> Year students, each approximately 2 hours duration:

- Unit 1: My whole life
- Unit 2: Requirements and routes
- Unit 3: Virtual reality

## Some important points about how the Pathways unit's work:

- The slides are classroom ready.
- The teacher notes, with step-by-step guidance for the specific activity on each slide, can be accessed in the associated pdf.
- It is important to show slides in presentation mode (unless prompted to do otherwise in the teacher notes), as some activities depend on animation. Where there is animation on a slide, this is indicated in the teacher notes.

- When the text in the teacher notes is in italics, it is meant to be used by the teacher in speaking with students; when the text is not italicised, it is meant for the teacher only.
- There is very little preparation of materials required. Occasionally, and depending on your students, you might decide to photocopy worksheet slides in advance of class. In activities where preparation is required, you will be prompted on Slide 2 and in the teacher notes.

Thank you for engaging with the Pathways units!

## Unit 1: Hidden Skills and Talents

Duration: Approx. 2 hours

### Suggested learning intentions

We are learning to...

- imagine our 'whole life' with a desired future job/career in mind
- consider the role of values in relation to job satisfaction and work/life balance
- take steps to identify the job/career that might suit our 'whole life'
- discuss the importance of reflection and giving/receiving feedback in education

SLIDES	ACTIVITY	What will we be doing?
3		Introduction to the icons
4-6	1	Generating advice based on a case study of someone who was unhappy in their job/career   Evaluating job satisfaction and work/life balance now and with a particular job/career in mind
7	2	Discussing steps that can be taken to identify whether a desired job/career suits us and considering the skills needed to take these steps
8	3	Discussing how values can inform decision-making around jobs/careers
9	4	Searching employment websites to further inform ourselves of desired possible future jobs/careers
10	5	Considering the importance of reflection and feedback in education
11		Checking in with the learning intentions
12	Extension task	Creating an employment advertisement for a desired future job/career

### Wellbeing Indicators

- Resilient
- Connected
- Respected
- Aware

### Key Skills

- Being literate
- Managing myself
- Staying well
- Managing information and thinking
- Being creative
- Working with others
- Communicating

## Unit 1, Introduction

Hi, I'm Liam.  
Nice to meet you!  
I'm here to tell you that we use icons  
(the small pictures below) in this unit.  
These will help you to understand what  
you will be doing during the different  
activities.  
Have fun (and learn lots)!



Individual work



Reading



Pair work



Make a  
presentation



Group work



Class discussion



Extension  
activity



**SLIDE 3**



Larissa

Part 1



When I worked in a big law firm, the way I wanted to live my life didn't match what that job required. For example, in the evening if there was a deal going on the partner might come in and say, 'OK, we're going to be here all night, does anyone want pizza?' Everyone would get so excited, and I would be thinking 'Oh, I just want to go home and watch TV'. It just didn't match.

Just because you can do something academically, doesn't mean that you should do it. It's like a marriage – I married the wrong job. I could get him, but it turns out that he didn't suit me! In some jobs you have to have the capacity to switch off and not worry. To be a lawyer, you have to be able to leave it behind when you go home. You have to be able to compartmentalize and I wasn't. I couldn't enjoy life while I was worrying about work. Academically I had the ability to do the job, but it was corroding my free time.

I am a sociable person, and I was meeting clients all the time. No one would have known, but I wasn't happy doing it. I wasn't thriving.

#### SLIDE 4

#### Teacher notes

Ask for volunteers to read Larissa's case study – Part 1 (on the slide).

*Larissa decided on a law career when she was in senior cycle. Larissa says that the job of being a solicitor didn't surprise her – it was exactly what she thought it was going to be, but that the feeling that she got when she was doing the job wasn't what she expected. She didn't find it rewarding.*

Divide the class into pairs.

*With your partner, discuss how Larissa felt about her job with a big law firm and the reasons why she felt this way.*

Take feedback from a selection of pairs.

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following prompt:

- *If you met Larissa at this point in her life, what advice would you give her?*



[How would you reimagine the world](#) (59 secs)

## SLIDE 5

### Teacher notes (NB: internet required for this activity)

Ask if anyone has heard of Ken Robinson? If yes, invite student(s) to explain what they know about him.

*Ken Robinson (1950-2020) was an author, speaker and Professor of Education from the United Kingdom. He specialised in the arts, culture and innovation and advised different governments about their education systems. His three talks are the most watched Ted Talks (see: [Sir Ken Robinson](#)).*

*We're going to watch a video with a voiceover by Ken Robinson. As you watch, jot down any words or phrases that you think are interesting or inspiring or just well said.*

Play the video (1.29 mins) (see: [How would you reimagine the world?](#))

Depending on your class, you might like to play the video a second time.

Take feedback from a selection of students.



# IMAGINE IF...



Ken Robinson – author, speaker and Professor of Education



## SLIDE 6

### Teacher notes (2 animations at \* Click)

*When Larissa was asked what advice she had for young people who were thinking about what they might like as their future job/career, she said:*

*You need to think about the whole life that a particular job will bring. Your quality of life and your personality – you have to think about these as well. Ask yourself “Will I be happy to live that type of life?”*

*When she refers to the ‘whole life that a particular job will bring’, Larissa is talking about job satisfaction and work-life balance. Does anyone know what the terms ‘job satisfaction’ and ‘work-life balance’ mean?*

Depending on your class, you might want to share the following definitions:

*Job satisfaction refers to a person's overall fulfilment and contentment in their job/career. Satisfaction at work is made up of intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) factors which relate to specific work conditions, financial compensation, work relationships and other benefits.*

*Work-life balance is the difference between the time and energy someone devotes to work in comparison to the time and energy they can spend in their personal lives.*

*Each person has their ideal for balancing family commitments, personal obligations, internal fulfilment, leisure and work - and different jobs/careers offer varying degrees of work-life balance.*

*You could argue that being a secondary student is a type of 'job'. Take a minute to think about your job satisfaction and your work/life balance.*

\* **Click** to show a first Ken Robinson quote

*Ken Robinson said, 'with imagination, we can step outside the present moment [and] anticipate our future.' What do you think this means?*

\* **Click** to show a second Ken Robinson quote

*Lets' take a few minutes to concentrate our own personal futures – think about what you might do for a job/career and what this will mean for your 'whole life'.*

*At the end of the video, we were prompted to finish the sentence starting 'Imagine if...'  
Finish this sentence with your future job/career and your 'whole life' in mind.*

**NB:** Some students may not have clear ideas about the job/career they want. You might want to clarify that if this is the case, students can formulate their 'Imagine if...' sentence with a job/career they are familiar with, for example, teaching.

Take feedback from a selection of students.

**NB:** This may be a good opportunity to share your experience of what being a teacher has meant for you in terms of job satisfaction, work/life balance etc.





Larissa

Part 2



My younger daughter had a fabulous teacher in junior infants. I remember collecting my child one day, and I saw the teacher coming out and I thought 'I wish I was doing her job'. That made me think, maybe this is it? I thought about the parts of my legal job that I liked the most - I liked taking on the new trainees....

So, I cold-called the principal in the school I'm in now and asked if I could come in and sit in a classroom for a day and just see what it is like. Because I wanted to make sure I knew what I was getting into. I was buzzing afterwards. I thought it was amazing.

## SLIDE 7

### Teacher notes

Depending on your class, you may wish to re-read the Larissa's case study – Part 1 (Slide 4).

Ask for volunteers to read Larissa's case study – Part 2 (above).

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following prompt questions:

- *Larissa took some steps to help her decide whether teaching was the job for her. What did she do?* [Possible answers: She thought about what she liked about her current job; she called a school and asked if she could observe a class for a day.]
- *What skills did Larissa use when she took these steps?* [Possible answers: self-reflection and evaluation (when she thought about the parts of her current job that she liked), communication (when she spoke to the principal to ask if she could observe a class for a day.)]

Divide the class into small groups.

*With your partner:*

- *discuss three or more steps you can take right now to find out whether the job or career you might like to do in future would really suit you.*

- *Identify the skills that you need to be able to take these steps.*

Take feedback from a selection of groups, recording their responses on the board.

**NB:** If feedback does not include the following, add them to the list on the board and prompt students to identify the skills needed to take these steps:

- Research what the job/career entails.
- Find out if there is work for people who are trained to do this job, that is, what are the employment prospects?
- Research the educational or professional requirements for this job/career and where these can be completed.



Larissa

Part 3



This year I was doing learning support and there was a child that really couldn't read at all. Slowly but surely things started to come together. One day he came in and slapped a book down on the table and said 'Miss, I've just read that book from start to finish!' and that gave me more than all those years of the big deals and the money.

Teaching has completely changed me. I feel content, that's probably the best word. I value what I am doing now. That is a huge different to before. Other people valued what I did before, but I didn't. If you don't value it, it is a waste.

I'm doing something that that I'm supposed to be doing, and it is rewarding – it is actually more than I thought it would be. It is the complete opposite of my experience in the other profession.

## SLIDE 8

### Teacher notes

Depending on your class, you may wish to re-read the Larissa's case study – Part 1 (Slide 4) and Part 2 (Slide 7).

Ask for a volunteer to read Larissa's case study – Part 3 (above).

*Larissa's job as a primary teacher matches her personal values (the things she thinks are important in life) and for this reason she feels content and satisfied in her work. It is useful to try to identify your values because these can help you make good decisions and guide the way you act towards others. When the things that you do, and the way that you behave, match your values, life is usually good. Values are fairly stable, but they may change as you move through life. For example, when you start your career, success - measured by money and status - might be a priority. But after you have a family, more time at home may be what you value more.*

*Take a minute on your own to think about the values that are important in your life. Jot down the words that pop into your mind.*

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following prompt:

*Ken Robinson, who we met earlier in this unit (Activity 1), said 'What you do for yourself dies with you... What you do for others' lives on forever'.*

- *What value(s) does this quote suggest? [Possible answers: altruism, care for others, compassion, service, selflessness]*
- *Do you think that Larissa would agree with this quote? Why? Why not?*
- *Do you agree with this quote? Why? Why not?*
- *Does your answer to the last question tell you anything about the type of job/career that might suit you?*

## Unit 1, Activity 4

All

- Make a list of jobs/careers.
- Match these to the correct sector:  
[Career & Industry Sectors | CareersPortal.ie](#)
- Read the information, note interesting details & any questions you have.

1

[JobsIreland.ie](#)

Working arrangement:  
*All jobs*

Career level:  
*Entry level*

Sector: ...

2

[IrishJobs.ie](#)

Job title, skill or company: *Job title*

Town, city or county: ...

Permanent, Temporary, Part-time: ...

3

[Publicjobs.ie](#)

Choose a job category (sector):  
...

Select counties:  
...



## SLIDE 9

### Teacher notes (internet required for this activity) (3 animations at \* Click)

Depending in the availability of devices, divide the class into pairs or small groups.

*We're going to do some online research that will help us to understand what different jobs/careers are about and find out whether there are currently employment prospects for people who are trained to do these jobs/careers.*

*In your pair/group:*

- *Discuss the job/career you are most interested in doing in future. If you are not sure, pick a job/career you are familiar with, like teaching. Make a list of the jobs/careers that you discuss.*
- *Access the Career & Industry Sectors page on the CareersPortal.ie website ([Career & Industry Sectors | CareersPortal.ie](#))*
- *Match the jobs/careers in your list to the correct sector, e.g. a primary or secondary teacher would come under 'Government, Law and Education' in 'Education and Teaching'.*
- *For each job/career, read the sector information, noting down any interesting details or questions you have.*

Take feedback from a selection of pairs/groups, checking that they have correctly matched jobs/careers with sectors and answering any questions that they have noted.

Number the pairs/groups – 1, 2 or 3.

Work together in your pair/group to choose 1-2 of the jobs/careers on your list to focus on for the rest of this activity.

*Pairs/groups # 1 are going to investigate employment prospects on JobsIreland.ie*

*Pairs/groups # 2 are going to look at IrishJobs.ie Pairs/groups # 3 are going to explore Publicjobs.ie.*

\* **Click** to show the search categories for JobsIreland.ie

*Pairs/groups #1 should search for 'all jobs' (working arrangement category) at 'entry level' (career level). Choose the sectors that match the 1-2 of jobs/careers you have agreed to focus on.*

\* **Click** to show the search categories for IrishJobs.ie

*Pairs/groups #2 should search using your 1-2 job(s)/career(s) (Job title, skill or company). Pick the location based on our current location or where in Ireland you might like to work.*

\* **Click** to show the search categories for Publicjobs.ie

*Pairs/groups #3 should search by sector (called category on this website) and preferred counties in Ireland.*

*In each pair/group, one person should do the searching, and another should take on the role of notetaker. You can take turns.*

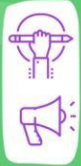
*When you see a job that interests you, keep following the links until you could to the detailed information. Look for headings like job or role description, key responsibilities, requirements...any heading that gives good information about what the job/career is about.*

*Based on the information your find, discuss whether each job/career would give you job satisfaction. Does it match your personal values? Would you be happy with the work-life balance that would come with this job/career.*

Take feedback from a selection of pairs/groups.

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following prompt questions:

- *What kind of skills did you use to search for employment on these websites?*
- *Did you like doing this activity? Why? Why not?*
- *Did you find it difficult? How so?*
- *What advice would you give another young person if they were thinking about searching on these websites?*
- *Will you use these websites again? Why? Why not?*



On a piece of paper, write:

**3** things you learned during this Pathways unit

**2** questions you have about a career/job you might like to do in future

**1** action that you can take to get more information about this career/job

## SLIDE 10

### Teacher notes

*On a piece of paper, write:*

*3 things you learned during this Pathways unit*

*2 questions you have about a job/career you might like to do in future 1 action that you can take to get more information about this job/career*

*We are going to have a paper fight.*

*Scrunch your piece of paper into a ball.*

*On the count of 3, throw your ball of paper at someone else.*

*Pick up a paper ball (other than your own).*

*Open it up and read it.*

*Write any feedback you have beside the comment on the paper.*

*Scrunch the paper into a ball again.*



*On the count of 3, throw your ball of paper at someone else.*

*Pick up a paper ball (other than your own).*

*Open it up and read it.*

Facilitate a whole class discussion, using the following prompt questions:

- *Reflecting on what and how you learn is a big part of going to school. Why do you think that reflection on learning is so important in education?*
- *There is big emphasis in junior cycle on getting and giving feedback on learning – peer-to-peer and feedback from the teacher. What is the value of getting and giving feedback?*
- *What do you think is the connection between feedback and reflection?*

## Unit 1, Checking in with the learning intentions



Hello again!  
How did you get on with Unit 1?

Did you learn to...?

- imagine our 'whole life' with a desired future job/career in mind
- consider the role of values in relation to job satisfaction and work/life balance
- take steps to identify the job/career that might suit our 'whole life'
- discuss the importance of reflection and giving/receiving feedback in education

### SLIDE 11

#### Teacher notes

Read each learning intention aloud.

Ask students to give you a thumbs up if they feel they have achieved the learning intention, a thumbs down if they still need some support and a fist if they are unsure.

## Unit 1, Extension activity



Here's an idea for you.

**Drawing on your learning in this unit, create an employment advertisement for a desired future job/career.**

**Include references to job satisfaction, work/life balance and values in the description of the role.**

If possible, show your finished employment advertisement to someone who currently works in the same sector.

Revise your ad on the basis of their feedback.



## SLIDE 12

### Teacher notes

The extension activity suggested on this slide is linked to all activities in this unit.

Path Project  
Institute of Education  
Dublin City University



HEA HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
AN tUdairg Aontuair na hOideachais