



PRACTICAL RESOURCE

Goal-Setting Strategy

From major learning goals to realistic daily action

Project	Supporting Learning Environments in Digital Education (LED Education)
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Based on / derived from	D3.2 Digital Education Framework; D5.2 Framework Evaluation and Refinement Report; D5.3 Tutoring and Feedback Log / pilot implementation evidence
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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource translates the LED Education framework and pilot experience into a simple goal-setting process for online, hybrid and digitally supported learning. It is intended for Buddies, tutors, teachers and learning-centre staff who support learners with planning, motivation, task completion, emotional readiness and increasing autonomy.



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Goal-Setting Strategy

The LED Education Goal-Setting Strategy helps learners move from broad academic or personal aims towards clear, manageable and reviewable next steps. It is intentionally light-touch: the purpose is not to document every interaction, but to create enough structure for the learner and support team to agree priorities, remove barriers and review progress.

CORE PRINCIPLE

Big goals become achievable when they are translated into realistic monthly, weekly and daily steps - and when those steps are reviewed and adjusted together with the learner.

Why goal-setting matters in the LED Education context

In online, hybrid and digitally supported learning, several demands can overlap at the same time: school assignments, digital platforms, family expectations, subject gaps, language barriers, motivation difficulties and emotional overload. A learner may understand the final expectation but still struggle to identify the next realistic action.

The strategy makes the learning process more visible. It gives the learner and Buddy a shared way to discuss what matters most now, what can realistically be done next, what support is needed and how progress will be checked.

Challenge observed in practice	Goal-setting response
Large or unclear workload	Break the workload into monthly priorities, weekly actions and one immediate next step.
Low motivation or avoidance	Begin with a small achievable action and recognise specific effort or progress.
Emotional pressure or overload	Reduce the immediate task size and agree a calm, realistic next step.
Digital distraction or AI-supported work	Ask the learner to explain the task, method and understanding - not only submit a completed answer.
Weak autonomy or planning	Use shared planning first, then gradually transfer responsibility to the learner.

KEY PRINCIPLE

Goal-setting is a support process, not a test. The aim is to help the learner understand and manage the next step, not to judge the learner.

The Goal-Setting Sequence

The strategy moves from the broadest level of planning to the smallest practical action. Each level has a different purpose, but all four should remain connected.



Figure 1. From major goals to daily action in Buddy-supported planning.

The Review - Adjust - Continue cycle

The pathway does not need to be fixed in advance. When circumstances change, the learner and Buddy can review what happened, adjust the plan and continue with a more realistic next action.

Step	Practical meaning
Review	What was completed? What was difficult? What changed since the last check-in?
Adjust	Does the goal, task size, schedule, support mode or subject help need to change?
Continue	What is the next realistic action, and who will support or check it?

How to Use the Strategy in Practice

The same structure can be used at different points in the support process. Recording should remain proportionate: document what is needed for continuity and follow-up, rather than creating a detailed daily report.

Moment	What to do	Minimum useful record
Beginning of semester or support period	Discuss broad academic and personal-development goals. Identify what feels most urgent or difficult.	Learner Goal Snapshot.
Monthly check-in	Choose one to three priorities. Check whether the plan is realistic and what support is needed.	Monthly Priority Plan.
Weekly or need-based check-in	Agree the next actions and identify barriers to starting or continuing work.	Weekly Action Check-In, where useful.
Daily use	Clarify the immediate next step. Record it only when a short note genuinely helps continuity.	Daily Next Step, usually verbal or a short note.
Review point	Look at what worked, what remained difficult and what should be adjusted.	Review and Adjustment Note.

LIGHT-TOUCH RECORDING RULE

Record only what helps continuity: the agreed priority, support needed, adjustment made, next step and follow-up responsibility. Avoid reproducing raw messages, detailed personal circumstances or unnecessary daily observations.

Roles in the goal-setting process

Role	Contribution
Learner	Shares goals, difficulties, priorities and readiness; gradually takes more responsibility for planning and next steps.
Buddy / tutor	Helps translate broad goals into realistic priorities, provides feedback, notices barriers and supports review.
Subject teacher	Clarifies subject-specific gaps, confirms understanding and suggests appropriate academic steps.
Parent / legal representative	Supports agreed routines and provides context where needed, without replacing the learner's own responsibility.

Practical Tools and Templates

The following templates can be used as standalone tools or integrated into the learner monitoring and feedback process. They are deliberately simple and can be adapted to the learner, support setting and frequency of contact.

Tool 1. Learner Goal Snapshot

Use at entry, at the beginning of a semester, or when a new support period starts.

Field	Notes
Learner code	
Support period	
Main academic goal	
Main personal / wellbeing / autonomy goal	
What feels most difficult now?	
What helps the learner start or continue?	
Main support needed from Buddy / tutor / teacher / parent	
First realistic next step	

Tool 2. Monthly Priority Plan

Use no more than three priorities. Too many parallel priorities can increase pressure and reduce clarity.

Priority for this month	Why it matters	Support needed	Review date / note
1.			
2.			
3.			

Practical Tools and Templates - continued

Tool 3. Weekly Action Check-In

Question	Short note
What was completed?	
What was delayed or avoided?	
What blocked progress?	
What is the next realistic action?	
Who will support or check it?	

Tool 4. Daily Next Step Card

Use only when the learner needs help starting, continuing or returning to work. The card can be verbal, written on paper or recorded as a very short note.

Prompt	Learner / Buddy note
Today I will start with...	
I need help with...	
When I feel stuck, I will...	
Before I finish, I will check...	

Tool 5. Review and Adjustment Note

Area	What changed?	Adjustment / next step
Goal or priority		
Task size or sequence		
Schedule or delivery mode		
Subject support		
Motivation / emotional readiness		
Family / teacher coordination		

Using Goal-Setting Evidence for Evaluation and Refinement

Goal-setting records can provide useful evidence for framework evaluation without creating a heavy administrative burden. The important information is the pattern of support: what goals were set, what barriers appeared, what adjustments were made and whether the learner became more able to identify and manage the next step.

Evidence from goal-setting	How it can inform refinement
Repeated difficulty starting tasks	Review task sequencing, emotional-readiness support or first-step guidance.
Monthly priorities consistently too broad	Simplify planning tools and reduce the number of parallel goals.
Need for frequent adult prompting	Strengthen gradual autonomy-building and help-seeking strategies.
Progress blocked by subject gaps	Add targeted subject-teacher support before assessed tasks.
Progress affected by digital distraction or AI use	Strengthen responsible digital-learning practices and understanding checks.
Parent communication needed to maintain routine	Clarify the parent role and coordinate realistic routines without replacing learner responsibility.

Ethical and data-protection note

The Goal-Setting Strategy is educational and developmental in nature. It is not a clinical assessment instrument, psychological test or high-stakes evaluation tool. It should be used to support learning, tutoring, feedback and framework refinement.

Where templates are used with minors, records should be minimised and coded. Tutors should avoid unnecessary personal detail, raw communication extracts, sensitive family information or diagnostic labels. The focus should remain on educational support needs, agreed actions, adjustments and follow-up.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM EVIDENCE

For each learner, retain one goal snapshot, monthly priority notes, selected weekly or review notes where relevant, and a short record of any significant adjustment. This is sufficient for continuity and evaluation without turning the strategy into a daily reporting burden.

Quick Implementation Checklist

Check	Practical application
Start with the learner	Discuss what the learner wants or needs to achieve and what currently feels difficult.
Keep priorities limited	Translate broad aims into one to three realistic monthly priorities rather than a long list of goals.
Make the next step visible	Agree a concrete weekly action and, where necessary, one immediate daily starting point.
Match support to the barrier	Clarify whether the learner needs subject help, planning support, a smaller task, schedule adjustment or another form of assistance.
Review before adding more	Check what happened before introducing new tasks or priorities.
Adjust without treating change as failure	If the original plan is unrealistic, reduce, resequence or change the support mode and continue.
Build autonomy gradually	Move from shared planning towards greater learner responsibility as readiness increases.
Record only what is useful	Keep short notes that support continuity, follow-up and evaluation; avoid unnecessary personal detail.

WEBSITE TAKEAWAY

Goal-setting becomes useful when it turns a distant or overwhelming expectation into a realistic next action. In LED Education, the strategy links planning with personalised support, regular review and gradual learner autonomy.

Project sources

D3.2 Digital Education Framework.
D5.2 Framework Evaluation and Refinement Report.
D5.3 Tutoring and Feedback Log / pilot implementation evidence.