

Short Educator Guide

Practical independent living skills for schools and colleges

A quick-start guide to using the Nexsteps Independent Living Skills Workbook with learners aged 16 and over. Use it in lessons, tutor sessions, small groups or individual support.

1. Start with the learner

Choose one practical goal together, based on the learner's interests, priorities and support needs. Use selected activities rather than expecting every learner to complete every chapter. Keep the pace flexible and recognise existing strengths.

2. Choose a useful activity

Connect the topic to everyday life: planning a simple meal, comparing prices, preparing for a journey, understanding a tenancy or asking for help. Check the activity is suitable for the learner's age, circumstances and level of understanding.

3. Make learning accessible

Use plain language, pictures, demonstrations, reading support or verbal answers. Break tasks into smaller steps, allow thinking time and offer a quiet space or sensory adjustments. Learners can show understanding through discussion, photographs of practical work or demonstration, where appropriate and permitted.

4. Use a simple session structure

Time	What to do
5 minutes	Agree the goal and connect it to daily life.
10 minutes	Explore one workbook activity together.
10–15 minutes	Practise or demonstrate the skill safely.
5 minutes	Reflect: what worked, what support helped, what next?

Putting learning into practice

5. Record progress that means something

Record the skill practised, what the learner did, the support used and the agreed next step. Distinguish between discussing a skill, practising it with support and using it independently. Revisit the activity in a different situation before assuming the skill is established.

Example: “Compared two lunch options and chose one within a £5 budget, using a price list and one verbal prompt. Next step: repeat with a different menu.”

6. Keep sensitive topics safe

Preview activities about relationships, sexual health, substances, mental health and exploitation before use. Follow your school or college’s safeguarding procedures and relevant curriculum arrangements. Offer a way to take part without sharing personal experiences. Do not ask learners to disclose trauma, finances or health details in a group.

If a learner shares a concern, listen calmly, avoid promising confidentiality and follow your organisation’s reporting process. Use fictional examples where personal detail is unnecessary.

7. Protect privacy

Keep completed work and progress records in your organisation’s approved secure systems. Record only what is needed. Follow your organisation’s arrangements for consent, photographs, access, retention and sharing. Use anonymised examples when discussing work outside the learner’s support team.

8. Be clear about the workbook’s role

The workbook supports practical learning and reflection. It does not award an accredited qualification or replace professional assessment, a learner’s education or support plan, or your organisation’s safeguarding procedures. Practical activities need suitable supervision and a check of any risks.

Before your first session

- Agree one useful goal with the learner.
- Select an activity and check accessibility and suitability.
- Prepare any materials and supervision needed.
- Explain how progress will be recorded.
- Finish with a realistic next step.

Workbook access and enquiries

Contact Nexsteps to discuss workbook access, school and college licensing or a pilot:
hello@nexsteps.co.uk.

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