

Goal setting at Novitas

We don't 'set goals' – we build a goal system that survives real life.

TWO LEVELS. ONE PLAN. NO WISHFUL THINKING.

01



A number is only useful if we know what it's supposed to do.

Most financial goals fail for one of two reasons: they're too vague to guide decisions ("retire comfortably"), or they're too rigid to survive reality ("£X by Y date, no matter what"). Novitas takes a different approach. We use uncommon intelligence to turn goals into a working system which is clear enough to direct action, flexible enough to adapt and structured to avoid the anti-default trap of drifting from one well-meaning decision to the next.

Before we talk about targets, we establish the baseline – what you have, what each part is doing, what may be drifting and where value may be leaking.

MACRO GOALS AND MICRO GOALS



Macro goals (direction)

These are the 'north star' outcomes that shape strategy over years and decades. They define what you're building, what you're protecting and what 'enough' looks like.

Examples:

- When work becomes optional (and what optional means for you)
- The lifestyle you want to fund and the trade-offs you'll accept
- The point where security matters more than growth (or vice versa)
- What 'Share it' looks like, including support you want to give while you're here.



Micro goals (traction)

These are the practical near-term objectives (typically 3-24 months) that translate intent into action.

Examples:

- Clear a mortgage by a certain date without weakening long-term resilience
- Start drawdown while still earning, in a controlled and tax-aware way
- Build a 12–18 month cash buffer before a change in work pattern
- Make a planned gift without turning generosity into future stress
- Simplify and consolidate so you can manage what you have.

The Novitas difference: Micro goals serve the macro goals. They don't compete with them.

Goal setting and cashflow planning use assumptions about returns, inflation, tax and life expectancy which may not be borne out. Projections are not guaranteed. The value of investments can fall as well as rise. Tax treatment depends on individual circumstances and may change. The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate tax planning.



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WHEN A GOAL BECOMES A NUMBER

02



A target that isn't tied to an outcome is just a round number with good PR.

It's tempting to turn a goal into a single figure - eg I want "£500k by 60" or "£25k a year in retirement". Numbers feel precise and precision feels reassuring. But on its own, a number can be a trap. The real question isn't "Can I hit the number?" It's:

"If I hit the number, will it reliably provide what I want from it?"

So, at Novitas, every target figure comes with meaning.

- What it needs to fund (core spending, flexibility, one-offs, gifting)
- When it needs to start and how long it may need to last
- What can flex and what can't
- What risks matter most (inflation, market falls, longevity, care costs).

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WHERE MOST PLANNING GOES WRONG

03



People pick targets... then forget the forces.

You can have good goals and still get a poor outcome if you ignore what's pushing and pulling on the plan. That's why we use a force field lens.

What's driving progress, and what's resisting it?

A force field is a simple way to map reality.



Driving forces

Driving forces (what helps you move forward)

- Strong surplus income
- A defined retirement timeline
- Clear motivation (freedom, security, family support)
- Good savings habits
- Household alignment / supportive partner.



Restraining forces

Restraining forces (what slows you down or knocks you off course)

- Lifestyle creep and unplanned spending
- Uncertain earnings (business owners, variable bonuses)
- Big future costs (fees, care, renovations)
- Emotional drag (market anxiety, procrastination)
- Competing priorities (supporting family while still building security).



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THE FORCE FIELD

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A planning tool, not a counselling exercise.

We don't use this as a counselling exercise. We use it as a planning tool. Most plans assume a straight line; real life moves in bursts, pauses and pivots. Mapping the forces lets us design a plan that still works when the line isn't straight.

THE RESOURCES AUDIT

05



Not just money – the resources you can actually deploy.

Most firms treat resources as a balance sheet and a risk score. We take a broader view, because a plan can fail if your real-world resources don't support it.

We typically map resources across five areas:

- Financial resources – cashflow, reserves, allowances, flexibility
- Time resources – how long money has to work; where timing risk is highest
- Resilience resources – buffers and contingency capacity
- Decision resources – headspace, complexity tolerance, how you prefer decisions made
- Support resources – household alignment and professional coordination where needed

Uncommon intelligence here is realism; we build around the resources you truly have, not the ones you might have in a perfect year.

HOW WE MEASURE PROGRESS

06



Not pass/fail. A range of confidence.

Novitas measures a goal using three lenses:

01 Outcome lens

Does the plan fund the life you want, including flexibility?

02 Resilience lens

Does it hold up when conditions are unhelpful?

03 Control lens

Is it workable without constant tinkering?

This avoids the default trap of obsessing over the number while missing the outcome.



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IS 95% OF THE GOAL ACHIEVED?

07



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If you reach 95% of a target, the grown-up question is– 95% of what, and what changes as a result? For most lifestyle-based goals, a 5% gap rarely creates a cliff edge. It usually means one of these:

- Retire a little later
- Trim “extras” rather than essentials
- Adjust gifting temporarily
- Change sequencing of where income comes from

So, we don't treat goals like an exam score. We treat them like navigation – are we on course and what small adjustments keep us on course?

WHEN IT MATTERS MORE

08



When it matters more

There are situations where the number behaves more like a line than a range:

- A hard deadline for a lump sum
- Essential spending that can't be reduced
- Contractual or structural constraints where missing the target has immediate consequences.

In those cases, we plan more conservatively using stronger buffers, clearer sequencing and less reliance on favourable conditions.

THE NOVITAS GOAL METHOD

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A practical sequence that keeps goals usable

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- 01 Define the macro goals – direction and what is enough
- 02 Choose the next micro goals – traction for the next 3–24 months
- 03 Map the force field – what will help and what will resist
- 04 Audit resources – what you can deploy without destabilising the plan
- 05 Set decision rules – agreed triggers for action, review and restraint

That's the anti-default. A plan that doesn't rely on constant prediction, constant willpower, or constant activity. Just clear intent, disciplined decisions, and a structure built to hold up in real life.

