



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University

STRENGTHS · PROFILE

CASE STUDY

Atlantic Technological University (ATU) was formed in 2022 as a conglomeration of three Institutes of Technology located in the West of Ireland: Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT), Letterkenny Institute of Technology, and Institute of Technology Sligo. Catering for around 20,420 students across the west coast, the university's focus is on applied learning, teaching and research environments to reflect the needs of real businesses, enterprise and professions in the region.

The Challenge

Work placement forms an essential element of many programmes at ATU. Within the GMIT Hotel School, students traditionally embark upon a work placement during the third year of their programme. To bolster students' confidence in themselves and their strengths, and to aid identifying and securing job opportunities that best suit their inherent abilities, a continuous assessment was developed based on the Cappfinity Strengths Profile report.

The Approach

Second year students were invited to complete the online psychometric tool (Cappfinity Strengths Profile) to identify their individual strengths and to reflect upon how those strengths could help their future career development. The students were then assigned a list of questions designed to stimulate personal reflection upon the results of their Strengths Profile, and to consider how their own set of strengths could support a successful career in the hospitality industry. The questions encouraged students to consider how their strengths could be utilised in a practical professional context.

The Outcome

The results of the Strengths Profile were used to encourage active reflection and to increase self-awareness. As a result, students have a clear understanding of how their strengths match with specific sectors and roles within their chosen industry. This has led to increased self-confidence and communication skills amongst the students. The Strengths Profile report can help to create a sustainable career plan and the students were appreciative of the opportunity to engage with it. The lecturer who administered the assessment reported that the students embraced the opportunity.

"I feel it is as vital to provide opportunities for students to learn about themselves, as it is to supply learning experiences about the industry. Having an awareness of one's enduring inherent strengths better equips professionals to deal with a constantly changing world of work." – **Sally Reidy, ATU Lecturer/ Facilitator**

"Incorporating the Strengths Profiling Programme into the students' continuous assessment allowed the opportunity for the students to identify and reflect on their personal strengths and to match these with a range of employment sectors and job roles. The ability to fully understand and discuss their strengths with a potential employer hugely enhances their future opportunities." – **Bridie Killoran, ATU Careers and Learning Pathways Manager**