

Training programme for the workers of the bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector

Work Package: 4
Author: M.A.R.E. Soc. Coop. Ar.l.
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OPTIMA
Good Practices in Molluscs Aquaculture

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MODULE 0



1. Short descripti on

Module 0 introduces the OPTIMA project, its objectives, target groups, expected outcomes, and the e-learning platform, including its features and practical activities for users.

2. Objective s of the module

Participants will understand the OPTIMA project and training course, learn how to use the online platform, and develop practical skills through hands-on exercises.

3. Learning outcomes

This module introduces the OPTIMA project, its objectives, results, and partner countries, while helping learners navigate the training course and effectively use the digital learning platform.

4. Prerequi sites

Not applicable

5. Duration

60 minutes (face to face online)



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0. The OPTIMA project: perspectives, objectives, target groups, description and use of results

OPTIMA is an **Erasmus+ project** focused on **improving training and skills in the European bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector**.

By bringing together training organizations, research centres, and industry stakeholders from different European countries, the project develops innovative learning tools, digital resources, and mentoring approaches.

Its aim is to support students, workers, trainers, and organizations in aquaculture by **providing accessible and practical training materials that enhance professional competences** and promote innovation across Europe.



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0.1 Understanding the rationale and objectives of the OPTIMA project

The OPTIMA program responds to the need to strengthen skills, knowledge exchange, and cooperation in the European bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector.

Despite its importance, the sector still faces uneven training levels, limited collaboration, and challenges in adopting sustainable and innovative practices.

→ **The project aims to improve vocational training through accessible learning approaches, digital tools, and mentoring systems, while promoting sustainability, enhancing professional skills, and increasing cooperation and competitiveness across Europe.**



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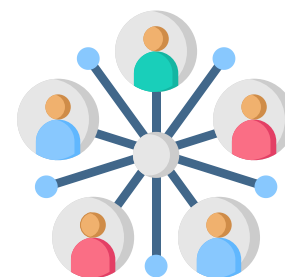
0.1.1 Understand the importance of partnership in the OPTIMA project

The OPTIMA partnership includes producer organizations and aquaculture stakeholders from **France, Ireland, Spain, Italy, and Greece**, ensuring that project results are relevant and applicable in real working environments.

Producer partners such as **CNC (France)**, **IFA (Ireland)**, and **CRMG (Spain)** provide practical expertise from the shellfish farming sector, while organizations like **M.A.R.E.** and **Demetra Formazione** develop vocational training content by combining scientific knowledge with structured learning pathways.

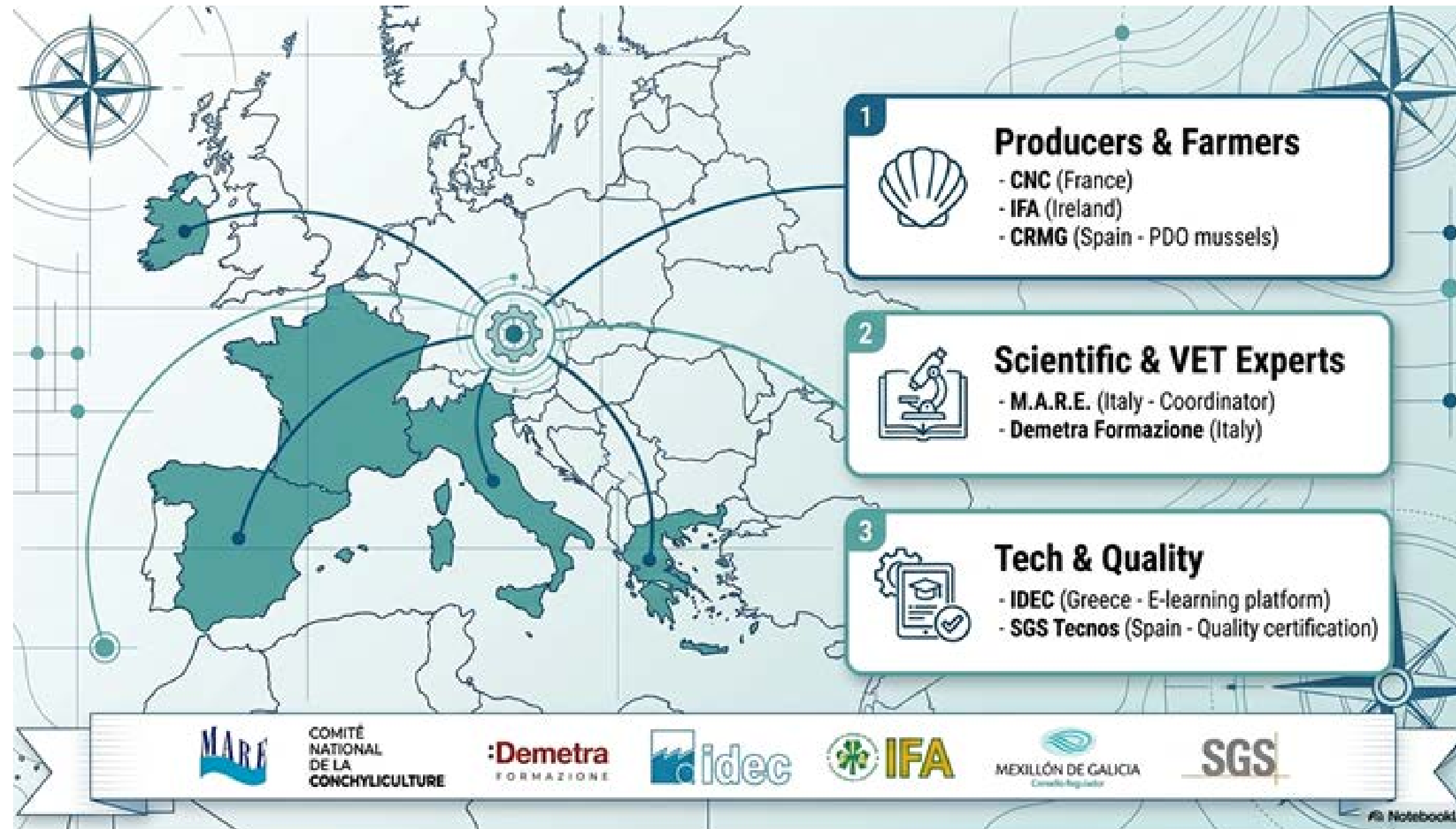
IDEC (Greece) supports the creation of digital e-learning tools, and **SGS Tecnos (Spain)** ensures quality assurance and certification at European level.

This transnational collaboration allows the project to integrate different production models and develop shared training approaches for the European aquaculture sector.



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0.1.2 Understand the importance of communication between EU countries to increase the value of bivalve mollusc's aquaculture

Effective communication and cooperation between EU countries are key to the development of the bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector.

They support the exchange of knowledge and best practices, improving efficiency, sustainability, and product quality. International collaboration also helps harmonize regulations, strengthen competitiveness, and increase sector resilience.

EU frameworks such as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), promote shared strategies and good practices, reducing regulatory fragmentation and ensuring consistent standards, food safety, and better market integration across Europe.



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0.1.3 Understand the value of bivalve farming and the lack of recognition of this practice at EU level

Bivalve farming, including mussels, oysters, and clams, is one of the most sustainable and important forms of aquaculture in Europe.



As filter feeders, bivalves require no external feed or chemicals, resulting in a **very low environmental impact** while also improving water quality and **supporting marine ecosystems**.



The sector is also economically important for coastal communities, providing jobs and preserving local traditions, although it is still unevenly supported across EU countries.



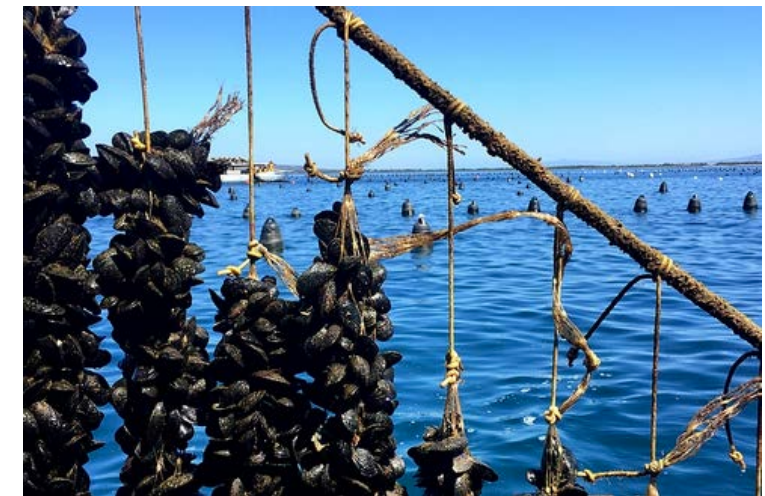
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Production varies significantly:

ITALY



has a **highly developed and integrated sector**, particularly in the Adriatic Sea and Po Delta, and is the **second largest mussel producer in Europe**, although it faces **administrative complexity and land-use conflicts**.



has a **well-established oyster farming industry** supported by strong institutions and quality labels, but it **still relies on imports** to meet demand.

FRANCE



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GREECE



has a large, **export-oriented mussel sector**, mainly supplying EU markets, but is vulnerable to **market fluctuations** and limited by **small farm structures**.



operates on a **smaller scale** but is recognized for its **strong environmental standards**, although it **depends heavily on the availability of wild mussel seed**

IRELAND



SPAIN



is **one of Europe's largest producers**, especially in Galicia, with highly productive **raft farming systems** and increasing diversification, although **the sector faces environmental pressures** and the need for better coastal management.



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0.1.4 OPTIMA Project Results

The OPTIMA project aims to improve the skills and qualifications of professionals working in the bivalve aquaculture sector through an innovative e-learning training model.

→ To support this goal, the project carried out **national and comparative studies in the five partner countries** (Italy, Spain, Ireland, Greece, and France), analysing **farming practices, environmental impacts, certification systems, and sector challenges** offering a consolidated perspective on the present conditions and future potential of the sector .

→ A literature review was also conducted to examine the ecosystem services provided by bivalve farming, such as **water filtration, eutrophication reduction, carbon sequestration, and habitat creation**, while **also considering potential environmental impacts**.

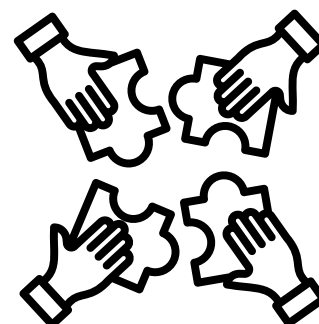


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The knowledge gathered has been transformed into training activities focused on both mentors and aquaculture professionals.

- **Mentors receive training in digital learning methods**, online collaboration, and distance education, enabling them to effectively transfer knowledge within the sector.
- An **e-learning platform** has been developed to provide easy access to training materials and support interaction among participants.
- **Workers** in the bivalve aquaculture sector will **acquire new skills and knowledge through the training programme**, enabling them to apply best practices and support the sustainability and competitiveness of the industry.
- A **video showcasing the main characteristics, challenges, and best practices of the European bivalve aquaculture sector** will be created using audiovisual materials produced in each partner country.



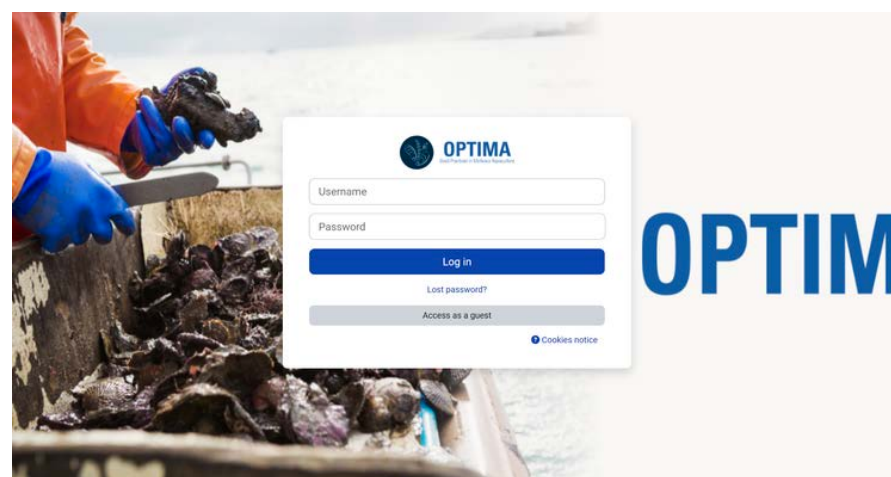
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0.2 Understanding the structure and objectives of the training program and the functioning of the online platform through which the program is delivered

0.2.1 Understand the structure of the training course for workers in the bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector: how is the course structured? General topics, modules, self-assessment quizzes

The OPTIMA training course provides bivalve aquaculture professionals with a comprehensive learning programme delivered through a dedicated e-learning platform.



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- The course **combines technical knowledge with** skills related to **sustainability, marketing, and communication**.
- Participants will gain an **understanding of the European aquaculture sector, ecosystem services** and **environmental sustainability, market dynamics** and **certification systems**, as well as **communication strategies** to promote the nutritional and environmental benefits of bivalves.
- The programme is based on a **self-learning approach** and includes **practical exercises** and **self-assessment tests** to support knowledge acquisition and monitor learning progress.

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<u>Module Duration</u>	<u>What's included</u>
Module 0 (60 min)	Introduction to the OPTIMA project, its objectives, and the e-learning platform.
Module 1 (240 min)	Overview of European aquaculture, production systems, regulations, and major sector challenges.
Module 2 (240 min)	Covers ecosystem services, production impacts (Life Cycle Assessment), and climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.
Module 3 (240 min)	Explores market dynamics, consumer preferences, certification, traceability, product innovation, and digital tools.
Module 4 (180 min)	Focuses on strategic communication and storytelling to promote the nutritional and environmental benefits of bivalves.



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0.2.2 Know how to handle and use the platform training tool (how to subscribe, how to access the courses, how to see a video, how to complete a quiz).

Overview

OPTIMA Training Platform is an e-learning system for the aquaculture sector that provides specialized courses, interactive content, and up-to-date industry knowledge to support professional development.

It covers key topics such as fish health, sustainable farming, water quality, and regulatory compliance.

The platform is **user-friendly, multilingual**, and designed to offer **flexible access to learners of different backgrounds and experience levels**.

All courses are open and accessible to anyone interested in aquaculture training.



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Getting Started – Accessing the Platform

To access the platform, please visit <https://learn.optima-erasmusproject.eu/> and log in by one of the following ways:

1. Using the credentials provided to you by your national contact
2. By self registering and creating your own account
3. Click the Log in button.
4. Click the Create new account button on the login page.
5. Enter a unique username, a secure password, and a valid email address and fill in mandatory fields, which typically include *first name, surname, country*. Pay attention to the restrictions regarding the password (*number of characters, use of symbols, capitals, numbers, etc.*)
6. Click the Create my new account button.
7. Check your email inbox (including spam) for the confirmation link and click it to activate your account
8. Log in with your new credentials and navigate to the homepage to choose the course you wish to join.

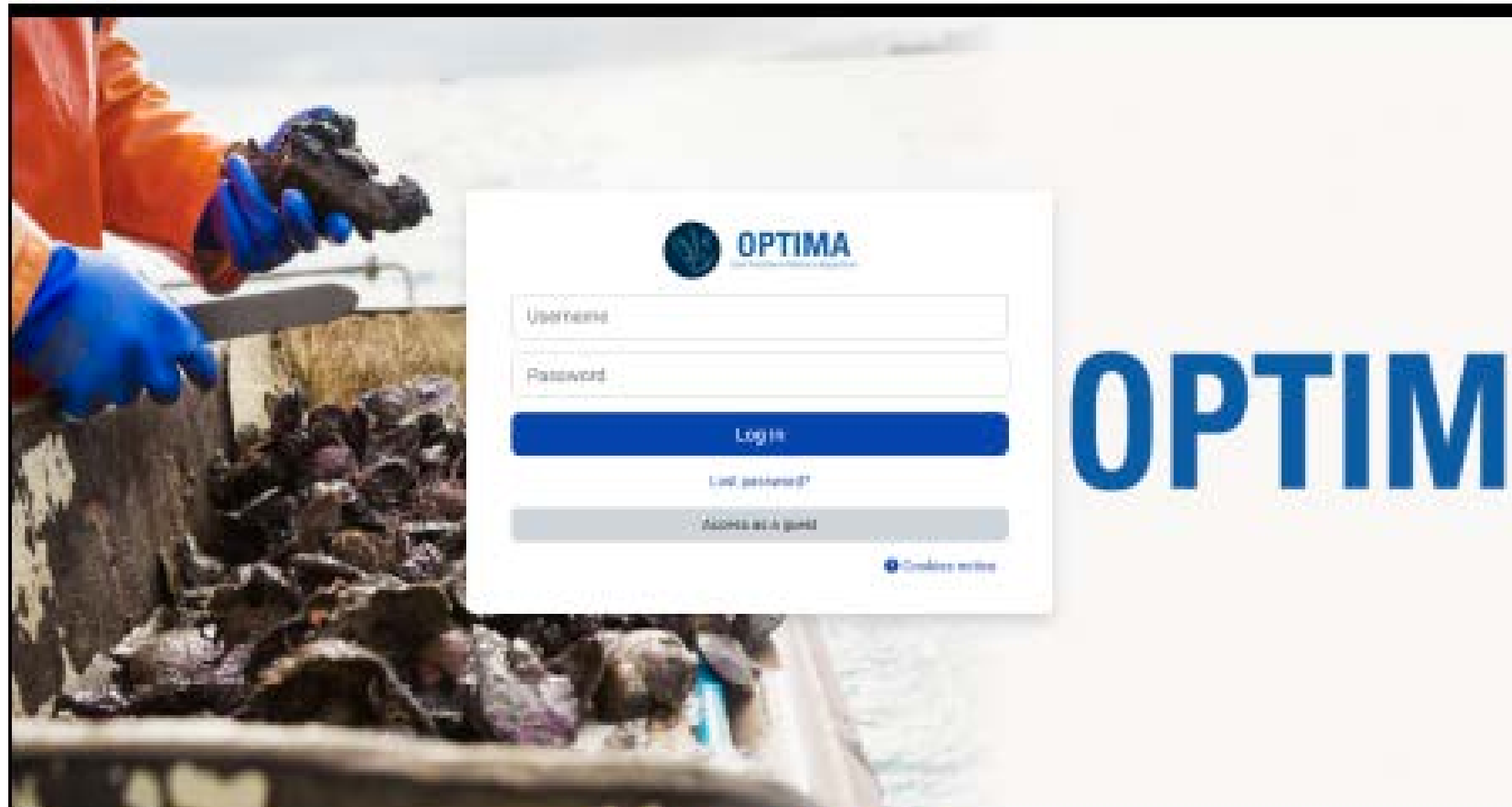


full access to all national versions of the training!



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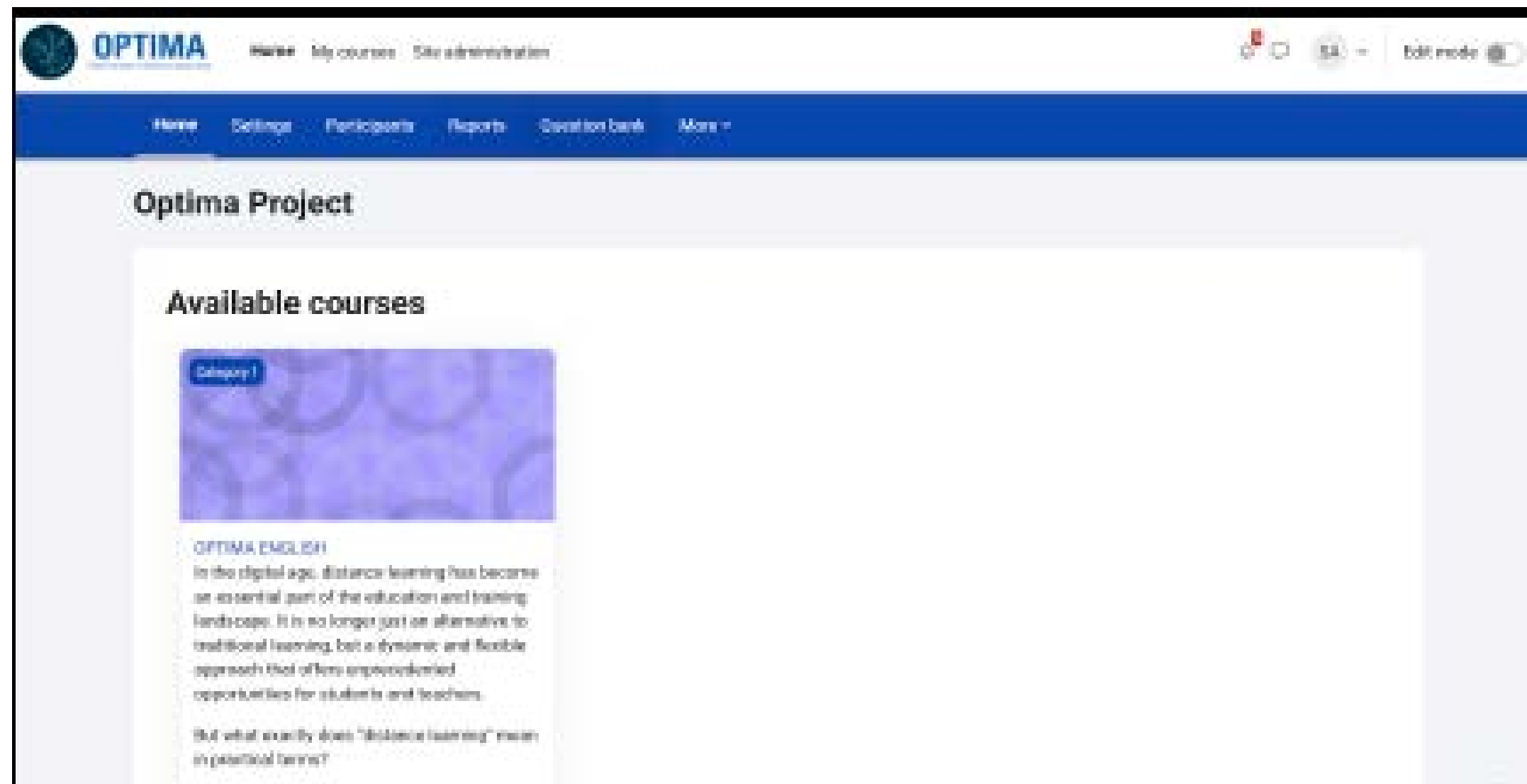


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Navigating the Dashboard

The dashboard displays all courses you are enrolled in, recent activity, and navigation menus.



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Course Structure – Course Categories and Modules

Courses on the platform are organized into categories and modules. Each module includes a short description outlining its content, objectives, and expected learning outcomes.

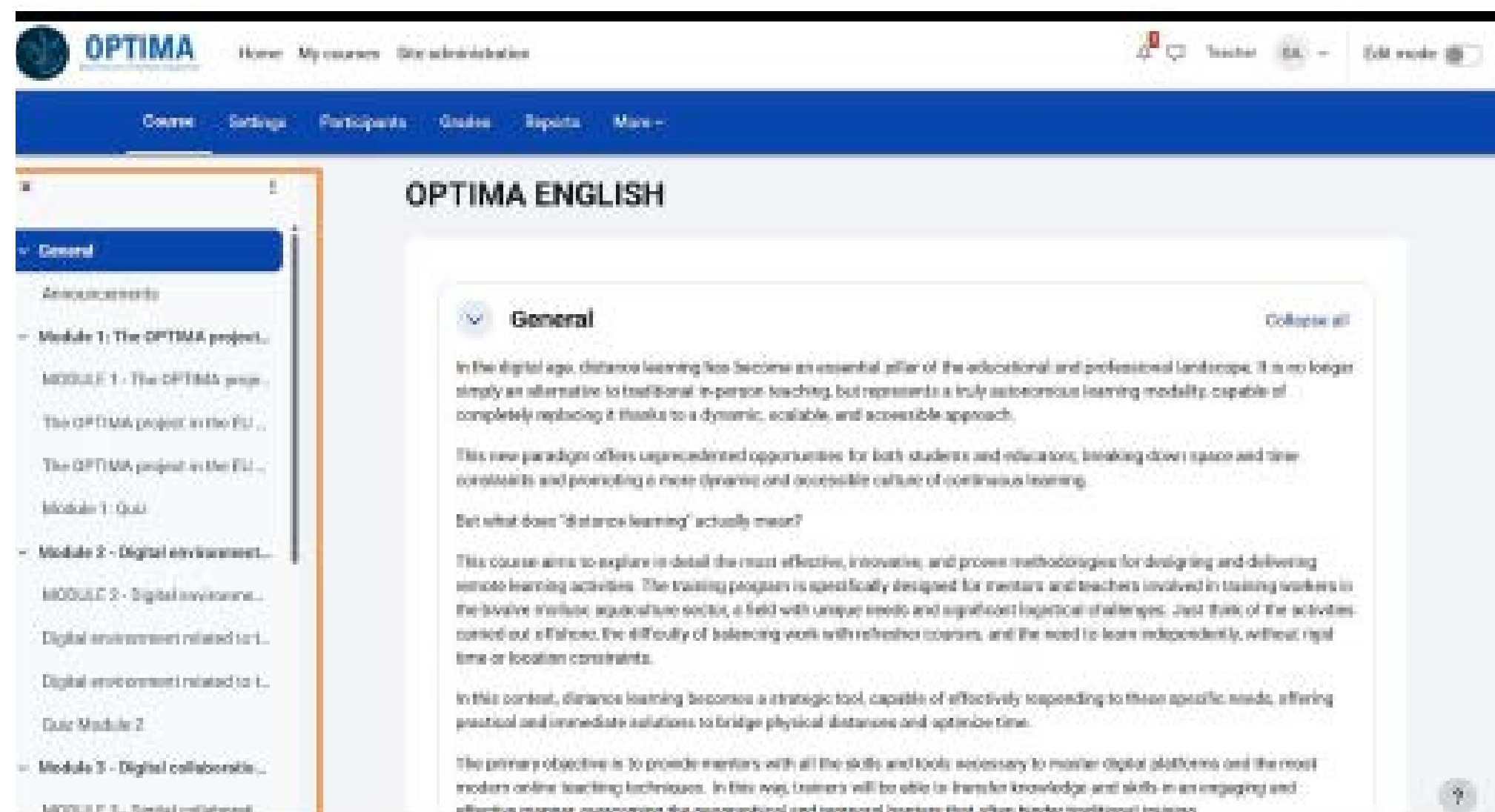


The screenshot shows the OPTIMA platform interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the OPTIMA logo, 'Home', 'My courses', and 'This website is in:'. Below this, the main header for 'Module 1: The OPTIMA project in the EU scenario of bivalves aquaculture' is displayed. The content area features a detailed description of the module's focus on bivalve aquaculture in the EU, its objectives, and the types of learning materials provided. A purple box highlights the module title and a brief description. To the right, a table lists the module's components and their durations.

Component	Duration
Introduction	100 Minutes
How to Use	100 Minutes
E-Learning	100 Minutes

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Learners can access all course modules through the navigation menu on the left side of the webpage, which can be opened by clicking the menu button located in the upper-left corner.



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Type of Course Materials

Learners can access resources such as PDFs, videos, links and quizzes.

Support – Technical Help

If users encounter technical issues or need assistance while using the platform, they can contact the OPTIMA support team by email at info@learn.optima-erasmusproject.eu.

Additional help, including detailed guides and documentation, is also available through the Moodle documentation resources at https://docs.moodle.org/500/en/Main_page.



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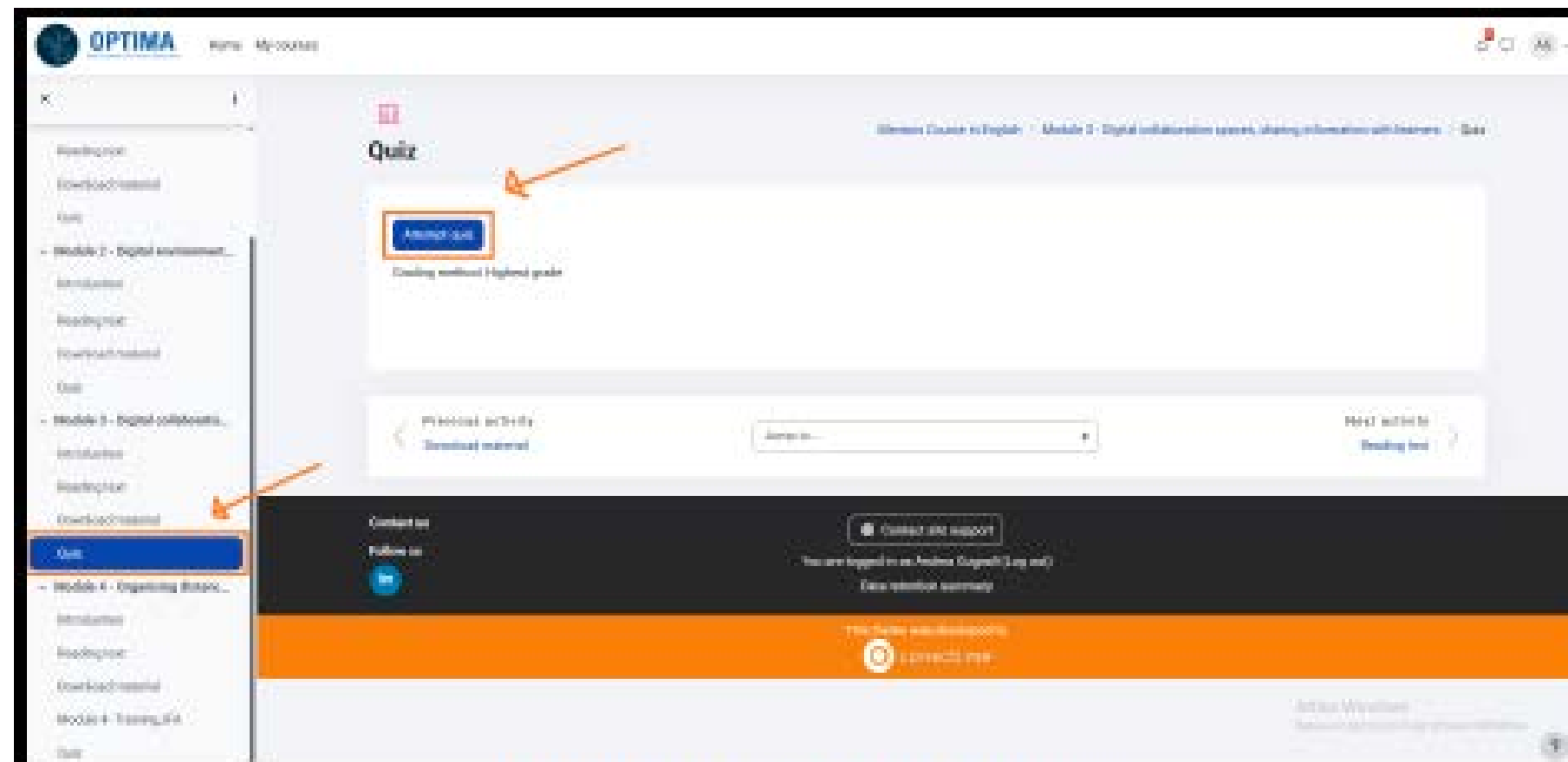
0.2.3 Know how to complete quizzes and exercises with the e-learning platforms

Quizzes are used to assess learners' knowledge and understanding while providing feedback to support the learning process.



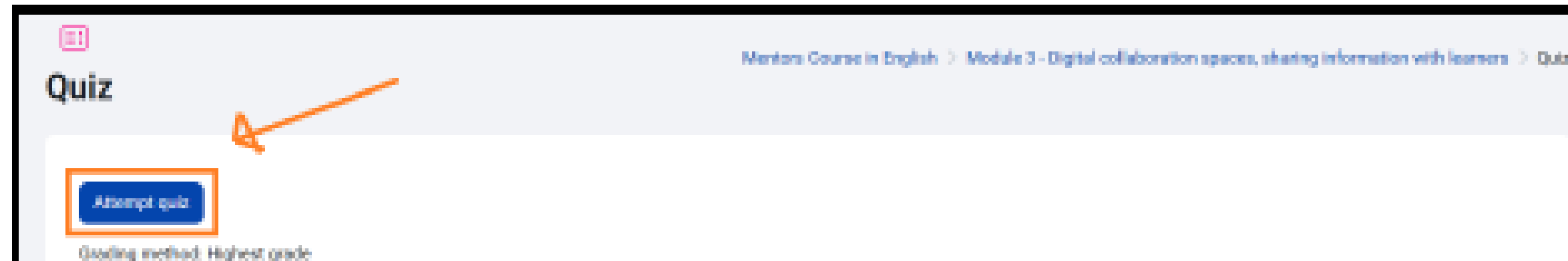
How to start a quiz:

1. Each course module includes a dedicated quiz, which can be accessed from the course page through the navigation menu on the left side of the platform.

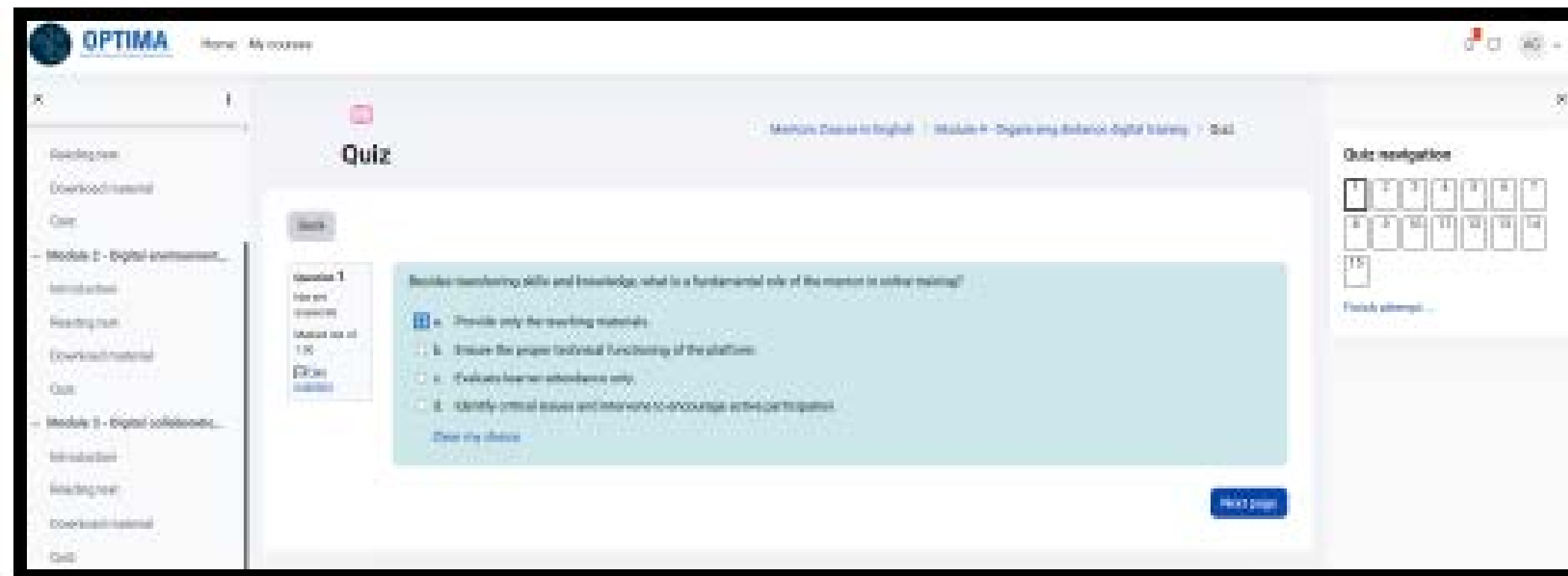


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- Simply click on "Quiz" in the list of each module. A page will open where you can choose to "start the quiz" by clicking on "attempt quiz."



- Once you click "attempt quiz," the platform will open the first page with the first question (image below).



- At the end of the test, a grade will be given that will allow the student to pass the module and declare it understood.

THANK YOU!



2, Enrico Toti – 47841 Cattolica (RN) Italy



mare@coopmare.com



+39 0541833680



www.coopmare.com



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