DELIVERABLE 3.4

Final Platform Report & Documentation

PROJECT: CoastalPro

Game-based Learning of Entrepreneurship and Next-Generation Skills in Coastal Tourism

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Revision History

V #	Date	Description / Reason of change	Author
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Glossary

Abbreviation / Acronym	Meaning
AUTH/SJMC	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/ School of Journalism and mass media
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
EC	European Commission
EMFAF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ENAT	European Network for Accessible Tourism
ETIS	European Tourism Indicators System
GA	Grant Agreement
GEJI	Global Environmental Journalism Initiative
IKO	International Kitesurf Organisation
PC	Project Coordinator
PO	Project Officer (EC)
PSB	Project Steering Board
QA	Quality Assurance
UAG	User Advisory Group
UC	Usage Cases
WPL	Work Package Leaders

1 Terms definition

Assessment Methods

The encompassing array of evaluation techniques, including written, oral, and practical tests/examinations, projects, performances, presentations, and portfolios, utilised to gauge a learner's progress and confirm the attainment of learning outcomes within an educational component (unit/module).

Assessment Criteria

Explicit descriptions outlining the expected actions and proficiency levels required from the learner to demonstrate the accomplishment of a specific learning outcome. The appropriateness and consistency of assessment methods and criteria must align with the defined learning outcomes and corresponding learning activities.

Competence

As per the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), competence is defined as the adept application of knowledge, skills, and personal, social, or methodological abilities in work or study settings and professional and personal development. Within the EQF context, competence is articulated in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Fostering Competences

The primary objective of all educational programs is to cultivate competences, with their development occurring across various course units and assessed at different program stages. Competences may be subject-area specific or generic, evolving in an integrated and cyclical manner throughout a program.

Course Unit

A self-contained and formally structured learning experience comprising explicit learning outcomes, defined learning activities in line with the curriculum, and appropriate assessment criteria.

Credit (ECTS)

ECTS credits quantify the volume of learning based on defined outcomes and associated workload, with 60 credits typically allocated to a full-time academic year or its equivalent. Credits are expressed in whole numbers and correspond to learning outcomes and workload.

European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)

A learner-centric system facilitating credit accumulation and transfer, emphasising transparency in learning, teaching, and assessment processes. Its goal is to ease program planning, delivery, and evaluation while recognizing learning achievements and qualifications for student mobility.

European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

ECVET aims to enable the transfer, recognition, and accumulation of learning outcomes for qualification attainment, functioning as a decentralised system respecting national regulations. It provides a methodological framework for describing qualifications in terms of learning outcomes using units and transferable points.

European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)

A common European reference framework fostering qualification system linkage. EQF uses eight reference levels based on learning outcomes, emphasising knowledge, skills, and competence for improved readability and understanding of qualifications across European Union countries.

Learning Outcome

Statements detailing a learner's knowledge, understanding, and abilities upon completing a learning process, assessed using transparent criteria. Learning outcomes are attributed to individual educational components and entire programs.

Workload

An estimate of the time individuals typically needs to complete all learning activities, expressed in hours, required to achieve defined learning outcomes. Typically formalised by national legal provisions, workload ranges from 1,500 to 1,800 hours for an academic year.

Work Placement

A planned period of experience outside the institution, such as in a workplace, aiding students in developing specific skills, knowledge, or understanding as part of their program.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

An instrument categorising qualifications based on specified learning levels, aiming to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems. NQFs enhance transparency, access, progression, and quality of qualifications.

Programme (Educational)

A collection of educational components recognized for qualification awards, structured based on learning outcomes.

Qualification

Any degree, diploma, or certificate attesting the successful completion of a recognized program of study.

Student-Centred Learning

An innovative learning approach emphasising communication with teachers and students, considering students as active participants. It fosters transferable skills like problem-solving and critical thinking.

Learning Management System

A software application facilitating the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation, and delivery of educational courses or training programs.

2 Executive Summary

CostalPro's central journey map

The CoastalPro platform aims to help learners achieve their educational objectives by creating realistic scenarios and setting learning goals that are tailored to their needs. The platform's immersive learning experiences with realistic stories and practical cases lead users to gain knowledge and skills in this field. The educational goals are thus meaningful and motivate users to explore their environment and practical cases in coastal tourism.

The platform creates a safe and engaging learning environment that encourages exploration and experimentation. The approach is to make learning fun and enjoyable; to this end, a range of activities has been developed to challenge users and help them develop new skills. The immersive learning experiences are designed to be interactive and collaborative so that users can learn from their peers and share their knowledge with others.

The platform is committed to helping users achieve their educational goals, and the team works with users at every step of the way to ensure that they have the support they need. The team of experts is dedicated to creating high-quality educational content that is relevant and up-to-date. The platform team is excited to embark on this journey with users and help them achieve their goals!

This report serves as a complement to the online learning environment, providing detailed documentation on the final configuration and implementation of the CoastalPro platform.

Access the CoastalPro Platform

3 Establishing the context

The development of the CoastalPro platform was driven by the need to create an engaging, flexible, and modern learning environment tailored to the evolving demands of coastal tourism education.

Students in higher education, vocational training entities, and other educational programmes related to tourism and hospitality, as well as learners specialising in instructional design and education, mostly form the project's target audience and were therefore involved in the initial survey phase. The aim of this survey was to identify the key elements that could enhance learner engagement, with a particular focus on the design of intrinsically motivating learning experiences aligned with the goals of the project.

As part of the project's early development stages, a requirements elicitation phase was conducted to inform the design and implementation of the e-learning platform. This phase included partner consultations and the deployment of a dedicated requirements survey. The responses were analysed to define requirements, ensuring that the platform would meet the needs of diverse learners and align with the project's pedagogical vision.

The platform has been under active development from the early phases of the project, evolving through iterative design and pilot implementation. A continuous feedback loop involving learners, facilitators, and project partners has been established to guide platform updates and improvements. As the project progresses, new cohorts are being added, modules refined, and the overall structure expanded to better support engagement, flexibility, and scalability.

4 Game mechanics

For the implementation of the game-based course, a quest-based approach, through the side component mechanisms appearing on each module, is articulated through symbolic rewards (the progression amongst levels at a module level) that recognize specific accomplishments within educational games. These visual markers signify mastery of skills, completion of challenges, or reaching significant milestones. Beyond acknowledging individual achievements, achievements contribute to a sense of accomplishment and can be shared as a form of recognition amongst peers.

4.1 Contextualising learning through story-driven scenarios

Digital narratives and story-driven scenarios in educational games immerse learners in compelling and interactive storytelling. These mechanics leverage captivating plots and scenarios to contextualise learning content, making it more engaging and relatable. By integrating narrative elements, educational games create an immersive environment that enhances the overall learning experience and encourages deeper understanding. Additionally, progression involves the gradual advancement of learners through levels, challenges, or content. As learners successfully navigate and master earlier stages, they unlock new content or face more complex tasks. This mechanism motivates sustained engagement by providing a sense of accomplishment and a clear path for learners to follow as they progress through the educational journey.

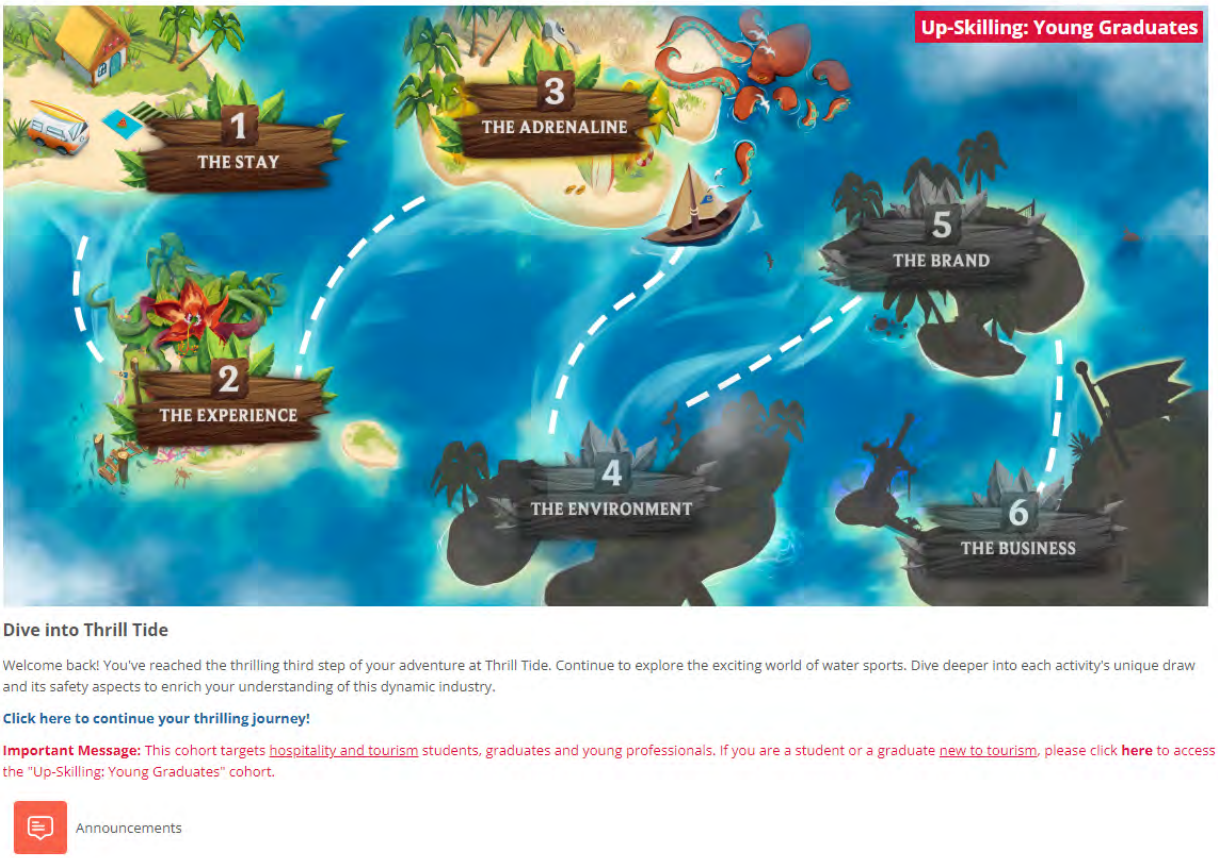

Figure 2.1 - CoastalPro home screen (My journey) supporting digital narrative and learner engagement

The CoastalPro game-based learning experience incorporates narrative elements at the curriculum level. The entire programme is structured as a journey across six thematic modules, visually

represented as six islands. As learners progress, they metaphorically travel from one island to the next, reinforcing the sense of exploration, discovery, and accomplishment. Each island/module is divided into three lessons, which are conceptualised as "stops" along the island, offering a sense of movement and continuity within the module itself. This approach enhances narrative coherence and sustains engagement through a visually guided progression. The user's personal dashboard is titled "My Journey," further embedding the narrative and gamified identity of the learning experience.

Figure 2.2 - CoastalPro map for Module 1, aiming to facilitate digital narrative for learner engagement

4.2 Quantifying achievement through points and rankings

Point systems introduce an element of gamification by assigning scores or points based on learners' achievements and performance. These systems motivate learners to actively participate and excel in educational tasks. By quantifying progress, point systems provide a clear metric for success, turning the learning process into a game where learners strive to earn higher scores.

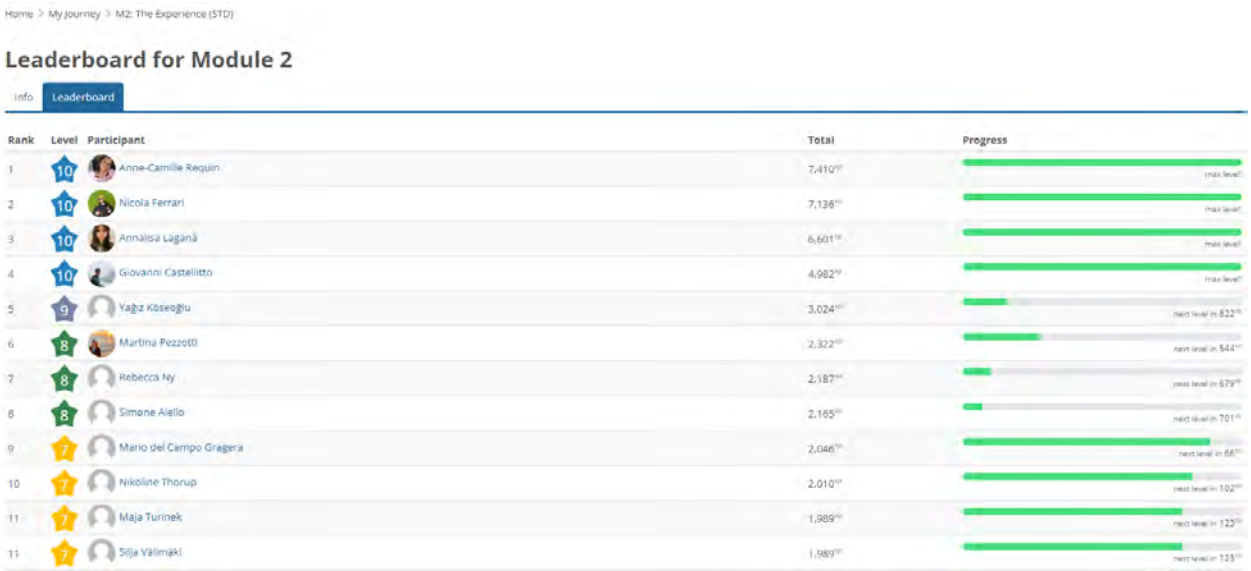

Figure 2.3 - Leaderboard for Module 2/Cohort 1 showing participant progress and XP ranking

Leaderboards introduce a competitive element to educational games by ranking learners based on their performance. Displaying top performers fosters healthy competition and encourages learners to strive for excellence. Leaderboards can be effective in promoting engagement and motivation as learners aim to climb the ranks and achieve a prominent position among their peers.

In CoastalPro, separate leaderboards are maintained for each module, allowing participants to monitor their performance within specific thematic areas. This structure encourages consistent effort across the full course and recognises achievement at every stage of the learning journey.

4.3 Fostering community through peer interaction

Community engagement and peer feedback mechanisms, through fora, encourage social interaction within the educational gaming environment. Learners can collaborate, share insights, and provide constructive feedback to one another. This collaborative aspect enhances the sense of community, fostering a supportive learning environment where individuals can learn from their peers and collectively contribute to each other's educational journey.

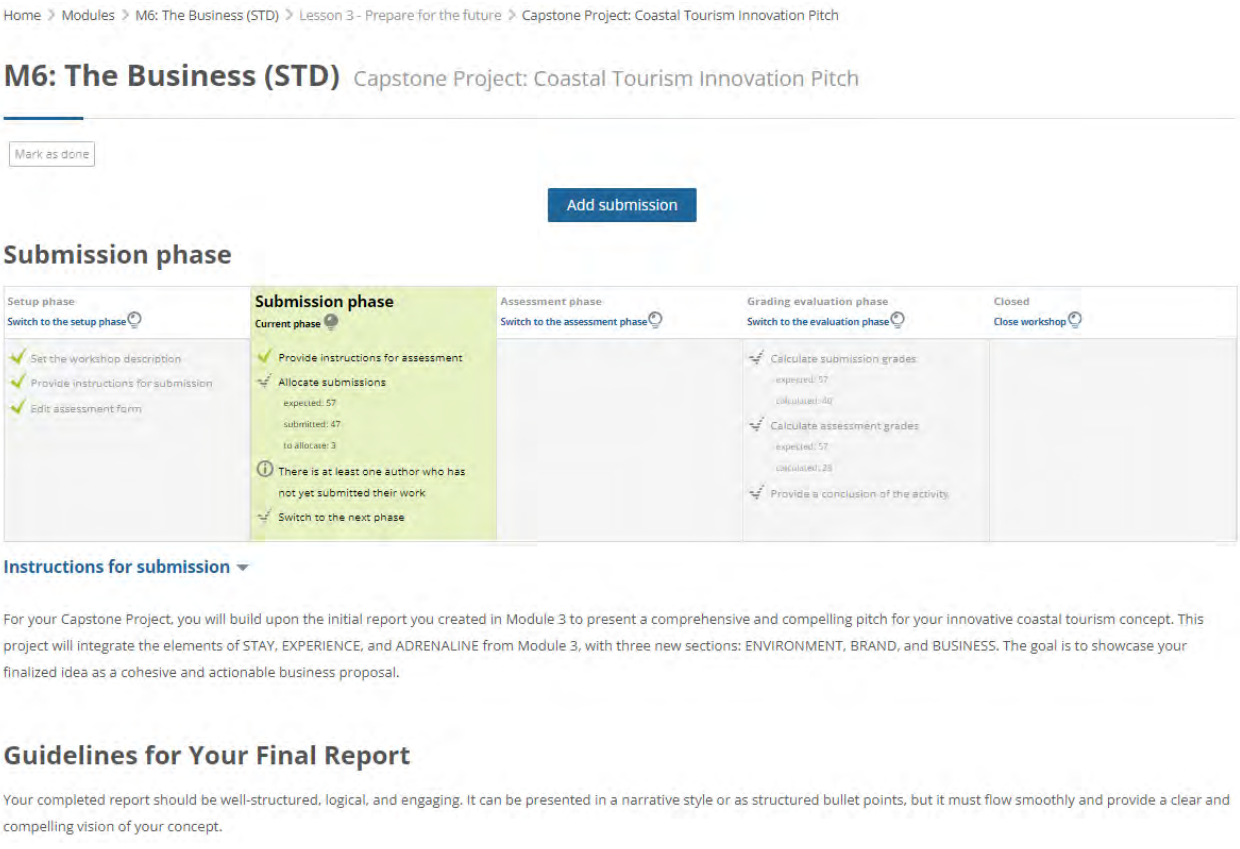

Figure 2.4 - Peer review activity for facilitating learner collaboration and feedback

4.4 Progress reinforcement & engagement nudges

To sustain learner engagement throughout the experience, the platform also incorporates timed reminders and motivational messages. These serve as behavioural nudges, prompting users who have not interacted with a module for a specified period (e.g., one week) to re-engage with the content. These reminders are delivered both in-platform and via email, using contextualised language related to each module's theme. Rather than penalising inactivity, these messages act as positive

reinforcement—encouraging learners to continue their journey, complete pending challenges, and maintain momentum in a supportive, learner-centred manner. In doing so, they complement the overall gamified experience by sustaining attention, encouraging timely progression, and reinforcing a sense of narrative continuity within the learning path. A set of such reminders have been created for the different cohorts to match their different needs and motivation triggers.

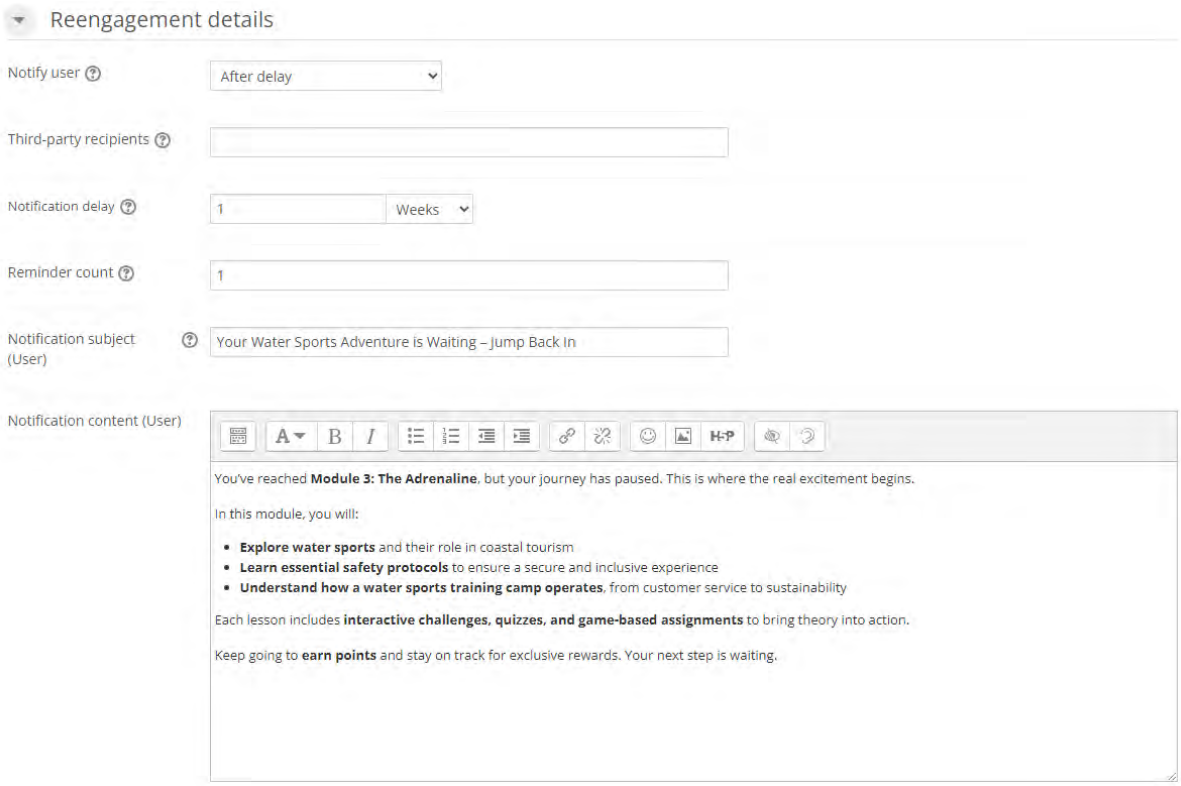

Figure 2.5 - Re-engagement activity setup, used to prompt learners who have paused their progress

6 Platform overview

The CoastalPro platform has been developed as part of the project's commitment to support upskilling in the coastal tourism and hospitality sector, targeting young professionals, graduates, and students. Its purpose is to provide engaging, modular, and gamified learning experiences that combine domain-specific knowledge with applied assignments and interactive storytelling.

The design philosophy of the platform prioritises learner engagement, narrative immersion, and experiential learning. The training environment is structured around quest-based progression, meaningful rewards (such as XP and certificates), and a strong emphasis on digital storytelling to contextualise content within realistic coastal tourism scenarios.

6.1 Information architecture

Under the project context, as defined by the project description, target audience, aims and objectives, as well as partners' needs and feedback during the requirements elicitation phase, the selected stack for the implementation of the platform is Moodle. The proposed information architecture in the scope of this stack selection (indicative) is the following:

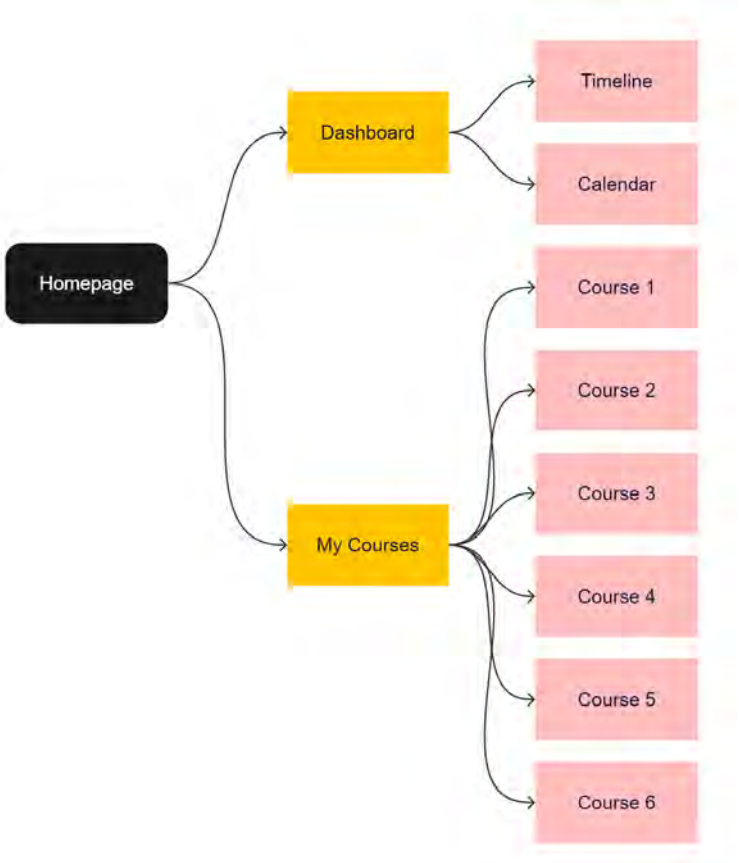

Figure 3.1 - Wireframe of the CostalPro elearning platform

This architecture was revisited in an iterative manner on different instances of the project that include the conception of the platform, the creation of the content and the running of pilot activities. Since the platform development was based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act approach, a continuous feedback loop was established that led to the following architecture of the platform.

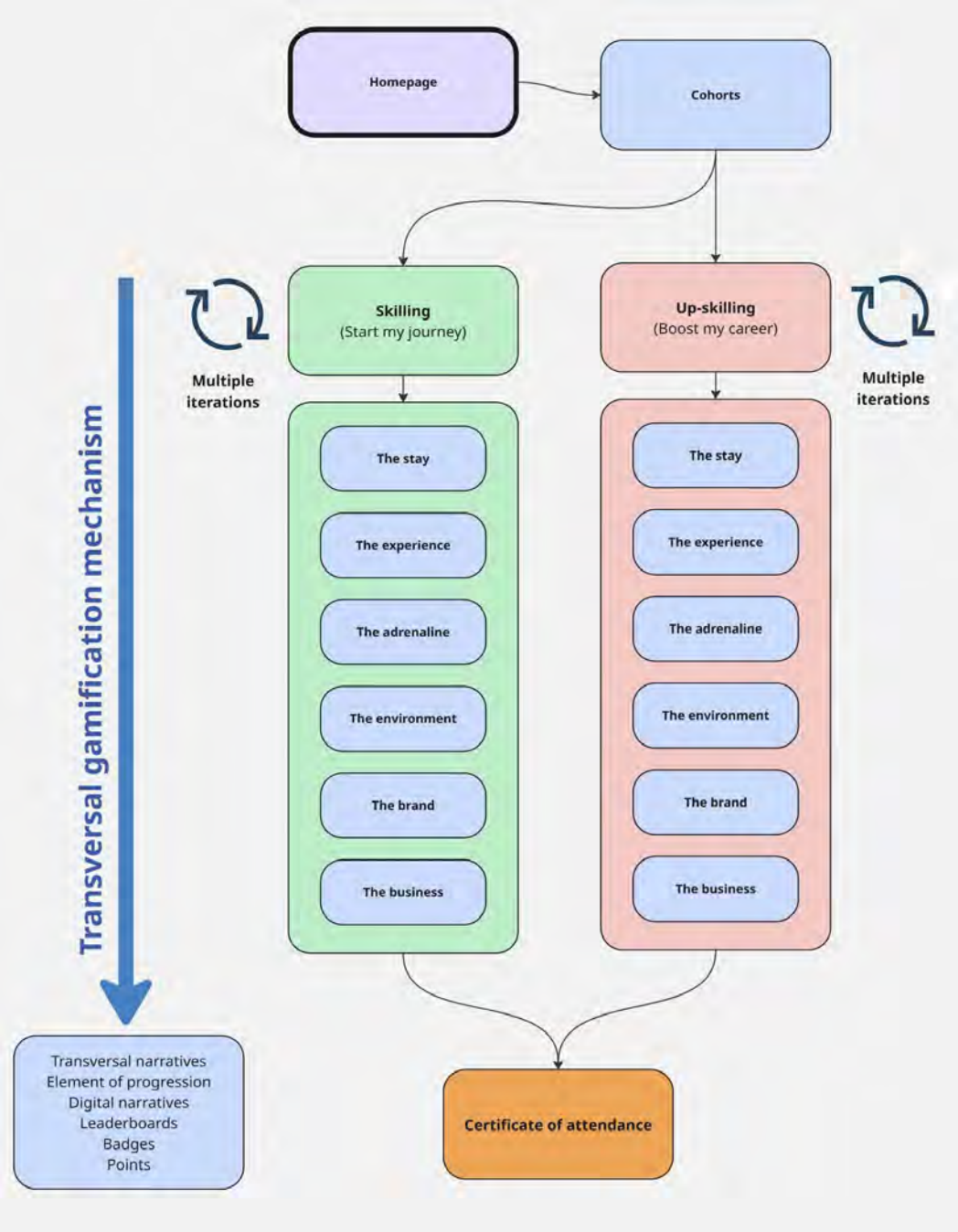

Figure 3.2 - Final architecture configuration of the platform

6.2 User roles and access management

To support pedagogical and operational needs, the platform incorporates three primary user roles:

- **Learners** progress through modules, engage in discussions, complete assignments, and earn gamified rewards (e.g. XP, levels, certificates).
- **Facilitators** monitor progress, support learners through forums or reminders, and moderate peer feedback when applicable.
- **Administrators** manage platform infrastructure, configure gamification rules, and oversee user permissions, technical updates, and data compliance.

Access control is managed through Moodle's role-based system, ensuring that each user type can interact with the platform according to their responsibilities and needs.

6.3 Technology stack and hosting setup

CoastalPro is hosted on a secure Moodle instance under the domain project-spaces.eu. The platform architecture includes:

- Moodle core LMS
- Level Up XP plugin for points, levels, and leaderboards
- Reengagement plugin for timed notifications and user reminders
- Custom Certificate plugin for issuing downloadable certificates
- Activity Completion Tracking to manage learner progress and conditional access.

The platform is secured with SSL encryption, with regular backups and performance monitoring in place. Its modular configuration enables the integration of additional plugins and tools as required by the learning design.

In addition to this base setup, extensive customisation has been carried out to:

- Enhance the visual presentation and align the interface with the CoastalPro identity
- Improve navigation and user experience, including responsive and mobile-first access
- Implement story-driven scenarios and digital narrative elements across modules
- Support various bespoke enhancements to streamline learner progression, visibility of assignments, and interaction with platform elements.

These enhancements ensure that the platform is not only technically robust, but also pedagogically engaging and tailored to the needs of its intended audience.

7 Content overview and structure

The CoastalPro training programme is structured around a six-module curriculum, delivered over six weeks and designed to build skills in coastal tourism, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and branding. The programme uses narrative storytelling, real-world case studies, and gamification to ensure high levels of engagement and applied learning. The modules incorporate multimedia content, quizzes, and peer-reviewed assignments.

7.1 Summary of modules

The six modules that make up the CoastalPro programme are:

The Stay

Foundations of coastal tourism and destination development: Focuses on key concepts in tourism products, local resource use, and sustainable destination management.

The Experience

Entertainment, recreation, and sustainable tourism in action: Introduces types of travel experiences and their role in competitive advantage and community connection.

The Adrenaline: Water sports and coastal activities

Covers recreational and extreme sports, safety in tourism, and operational models for training camps.

The Environment

Sustainability and ESG principles in tourism: Addresses climate change, ocean conservation, and integrating ESG into tourism operations.

The Brand

Branding, marketing, and storytelling: Explores brand identity, storytelling techniques, and sustainability branding in coastal destinations.

The Business

Tourism entrepreneurship and strategic planning: Guides learners in developing tourism businesses with tools like the Business Model Canvas, SWOT/PEST, and compliance planning.

7.2 Modular structure and learning components

The CoastalPro platform currently hosts two distinct learning cohorts to address different learner profiles. Each cohort follows the same module structure and benefits from cohort-specific leaderboards, peer interaction, and game-based progression. The two cohorts are:

Skilling: New Generation

For students and graduates new to tourism: This cohort focuses on introducing core principles in coastal tourism, entrepreneurship, and sustainability. It is ideal for those with limited prior exposure to the sector and supports a generalist entry into tourism careers.

Up-Skilling: Young Graduates

For hospitality & tourism students, graduates, and young professionals: This cohort includes more advanced and industry-specific content aimed at boosting career prospects. Learners engage with topics such as branding, ESG strategies, and business planning.

8 The platform configuration in production

The platform implements various Graphical User Interface configurations, compiled in a way that's user-friendly. More specifically, the configuration of the platform in terms of GUI is presented below:

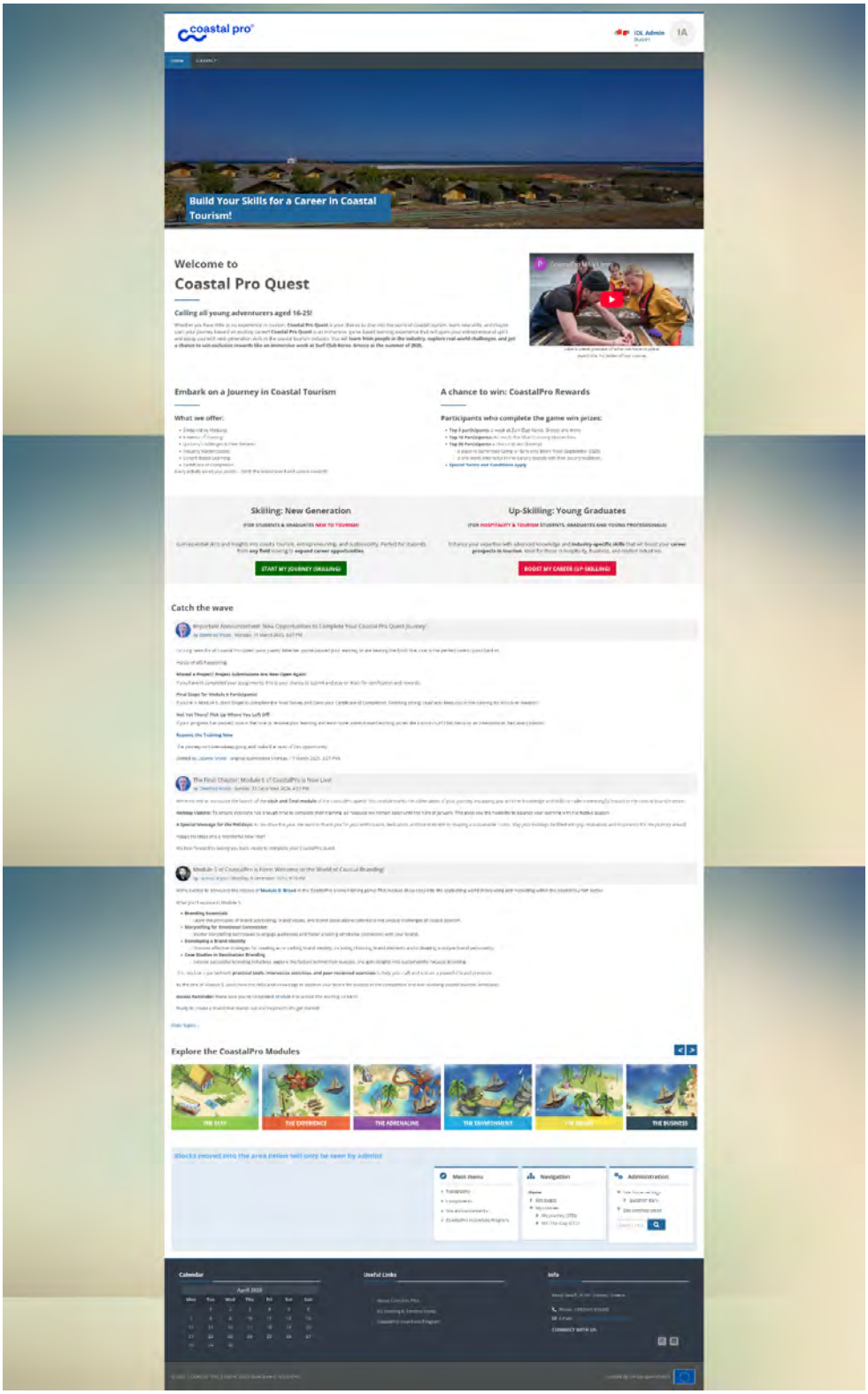

Figure 5.1 - CostalPro elearning platform - Dashboard

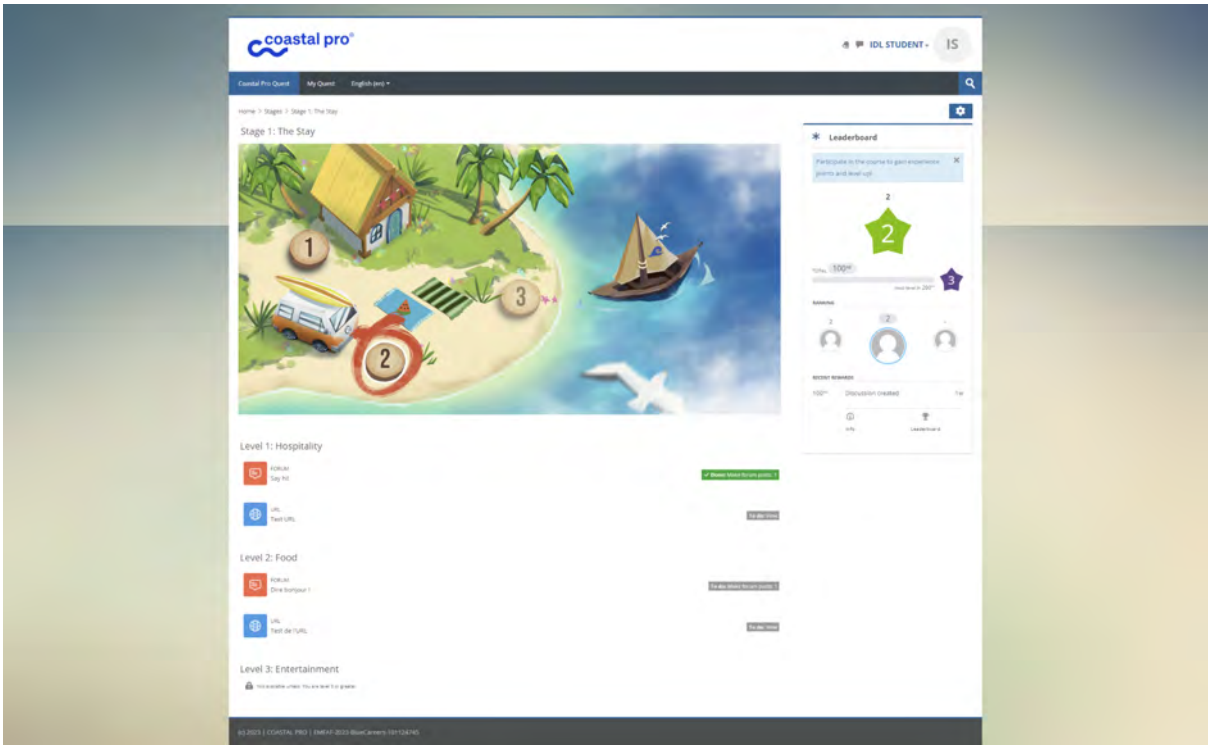

Figure 5.2 - CostalPro elearning platform - Module page

Figure 5.3 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 1

Figure 5.4 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 2

Figure 5.5 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 3

Figure 5.6 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 4

Figure 5.7 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 5

Figure 5.8 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of the storytelling path for module 6

Figure 5.9 - CostalPro elearning platform - Draft design of a course island

The implementation of the game platform allows for different configurations of customization and application of game mechanics, based on the needs of each learning experience. This means that the progression amongst levels and the implementation of the different modules will be decided by the creators of the modules, allowing for customization based on the different courses and cohorts.

8.1 The guest log-in interface

The guest log-in flow makes sure that non-registered users can review and get informed about the content of the platform. This flow also maintains the possibility of registration along different touchpoints between the platform and the learners.

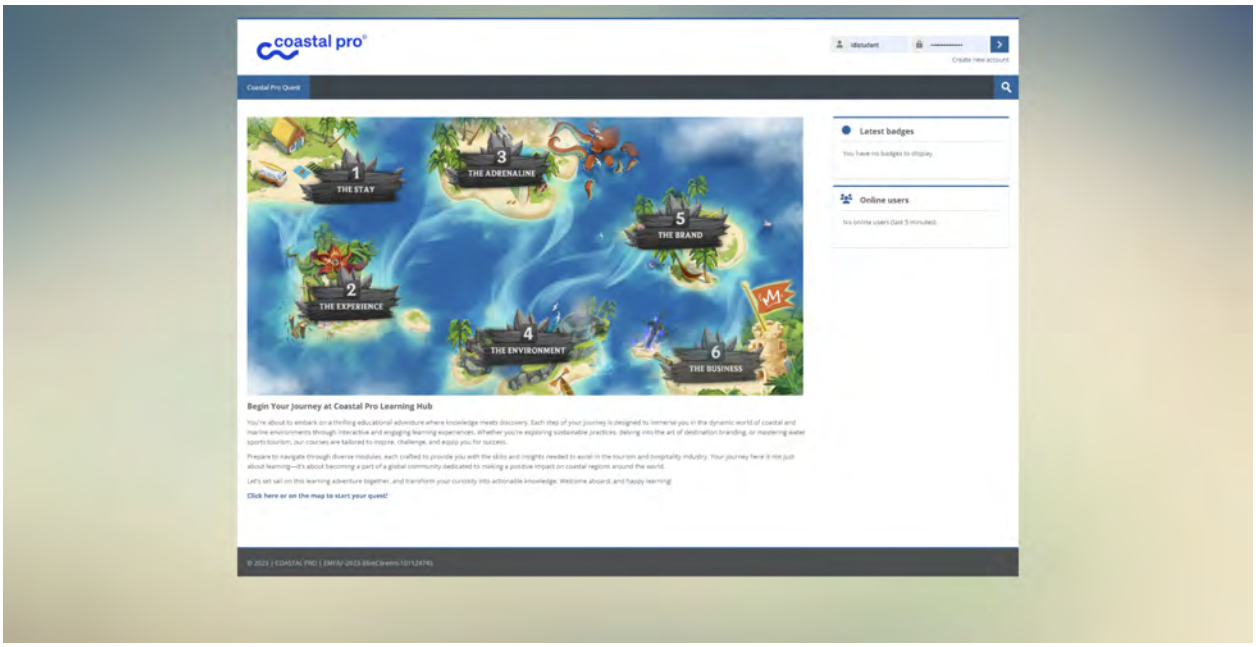

Figure 5.10 - CostalPro elearning platform - Design of the guest log-in flow

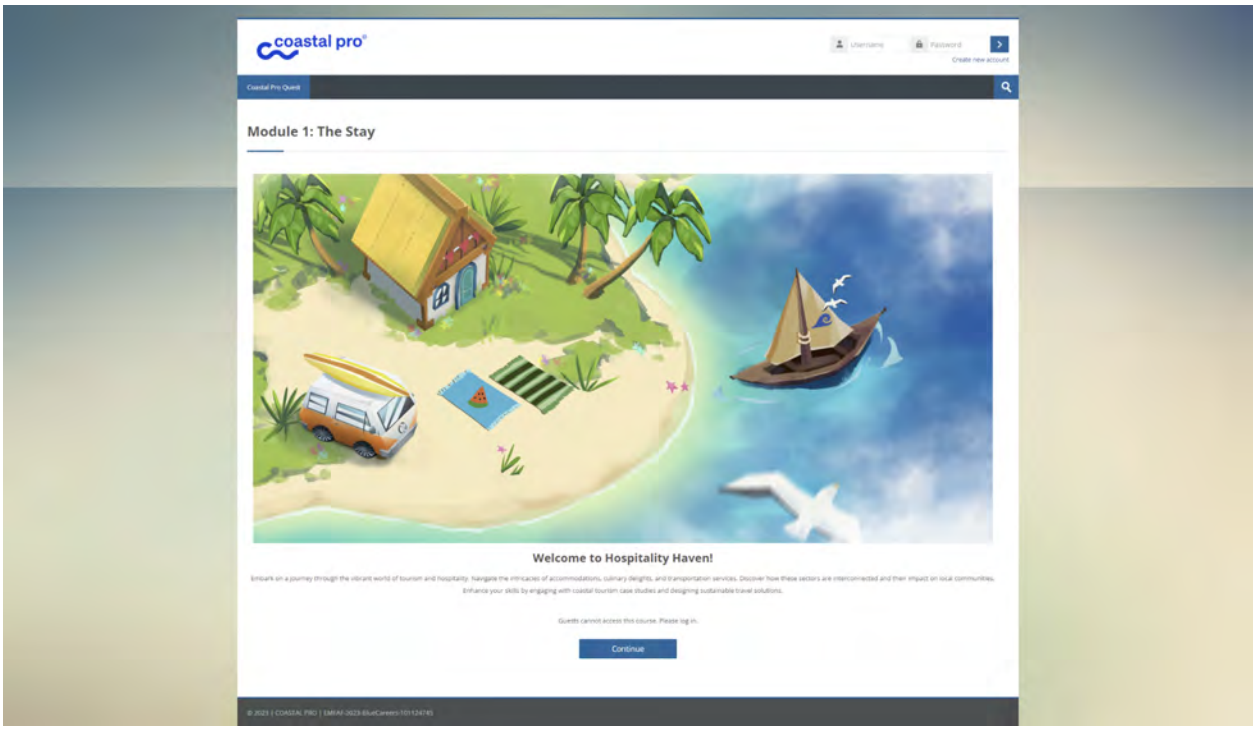

Figure 5.11 - CostalPro elearning platform - Design of the guest log-in flow for module 1

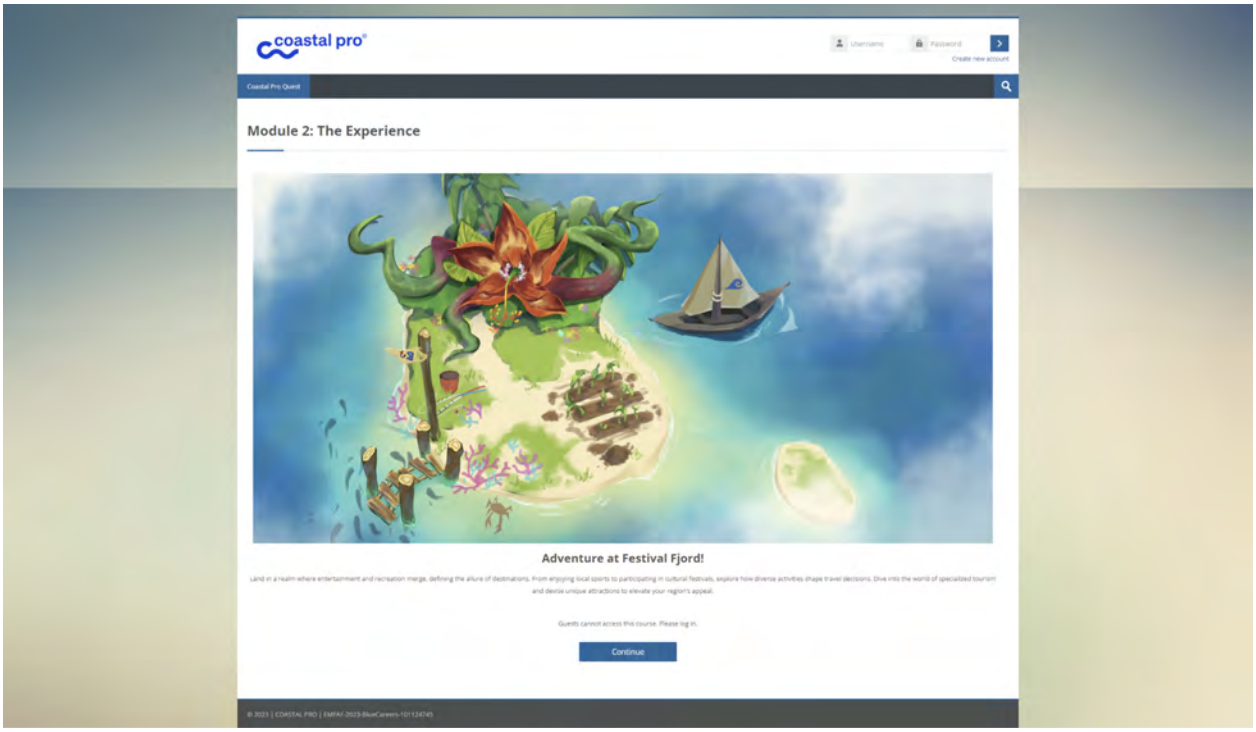

Figure 5.12 - CostalPro elearning platform - Design of the guest log-in flow for module 2

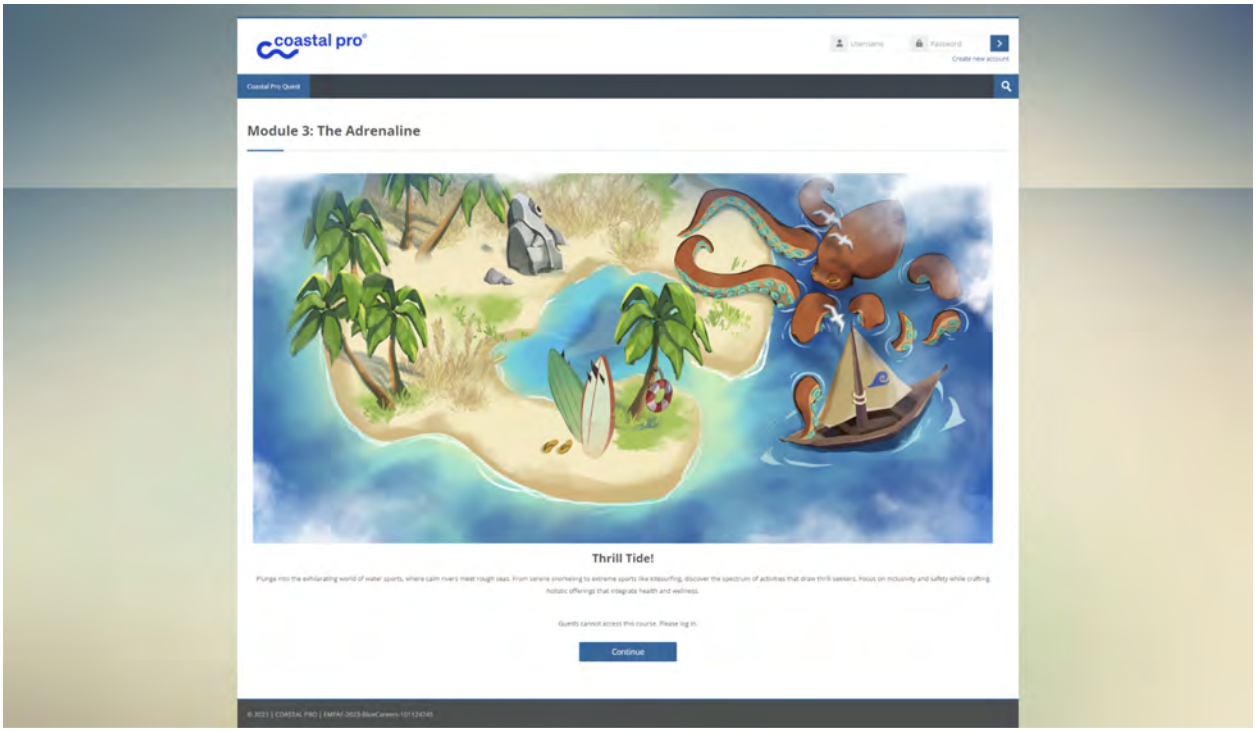

Figure 5.13 - CostalPro elearning platform - Design of the guest log-in flow for module 3

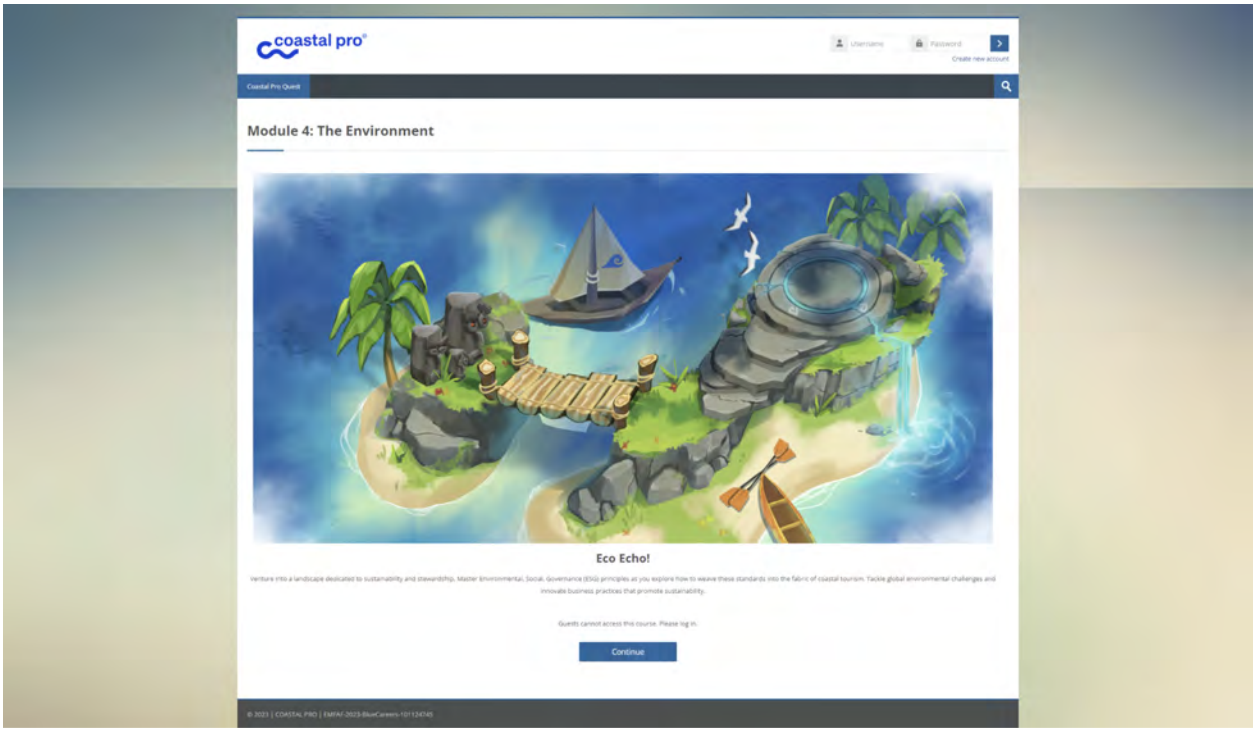

Figure 5.14 - CostalPro elearning platform - Design of the guest log-in flow for module 4

8.2 The module interface

The module interface presents all available content in each module grain, broken down in the different sections.

The interface presents the module hierarchy, while also putting forward the progression of learners.

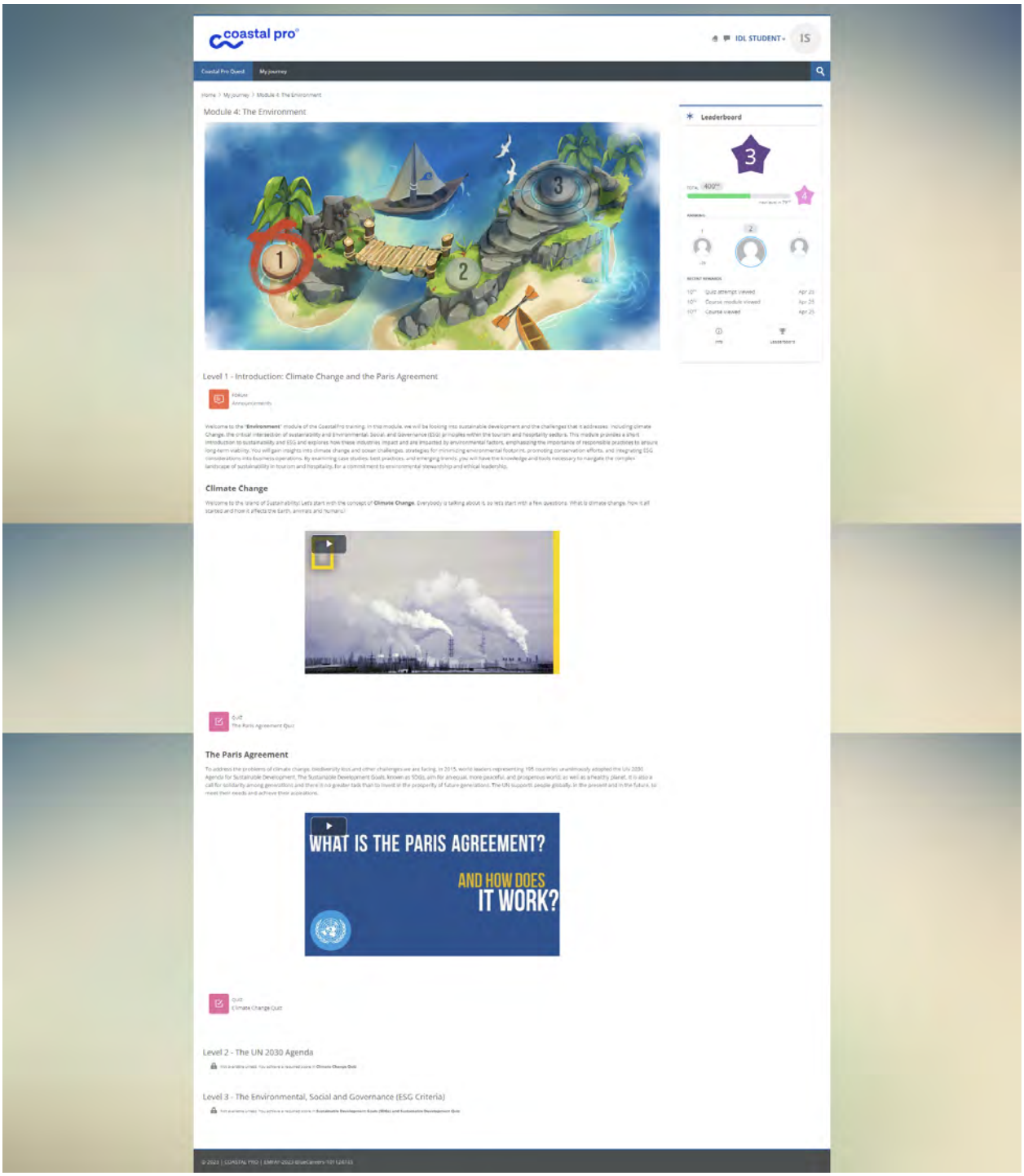

Figure 5.15 - CostalPro elearning platform - Module 4 interface

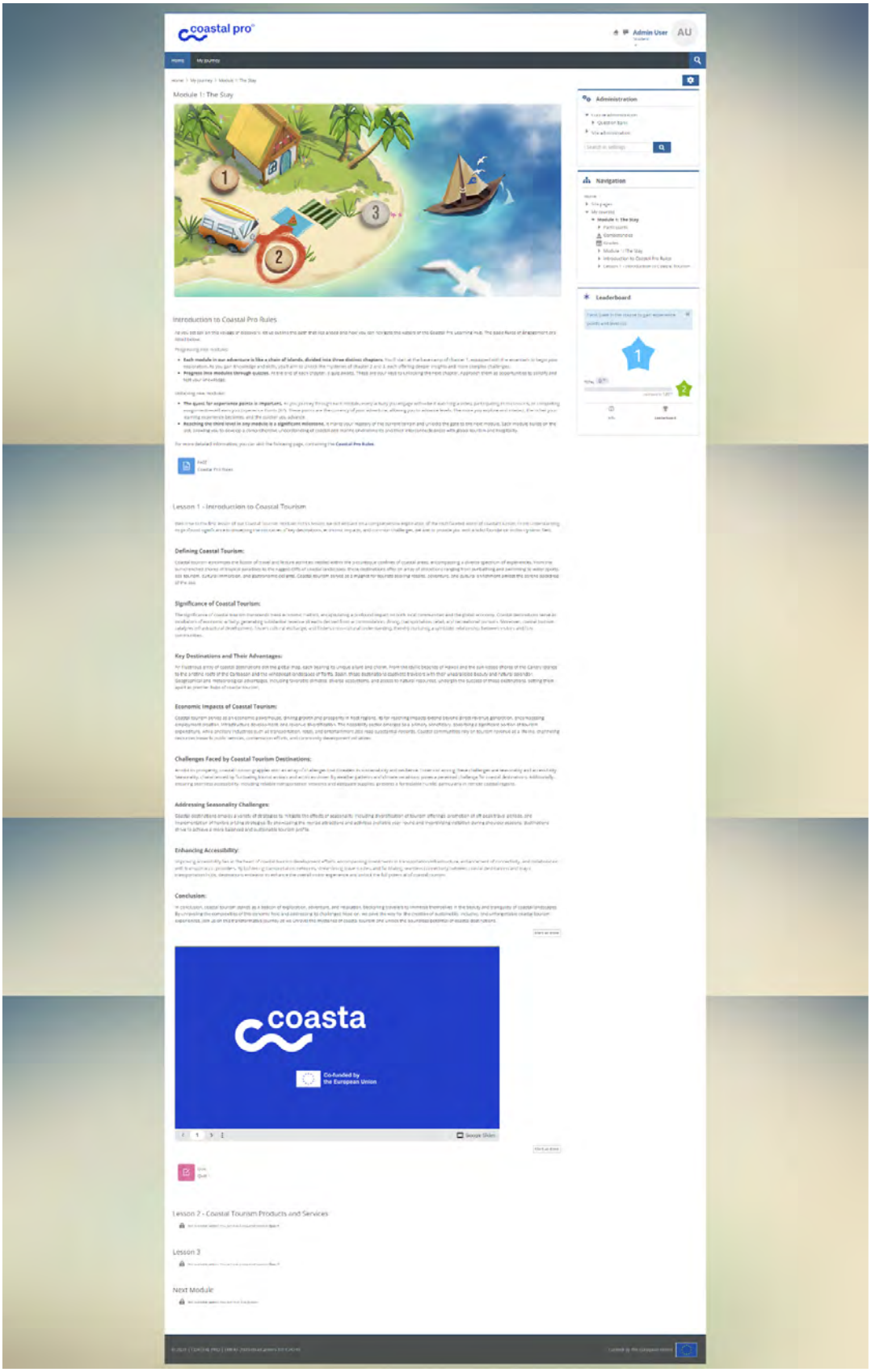

Figure 5.16 - CostalPro elearning platform - Module 1 interface

8.3 The gamification layer

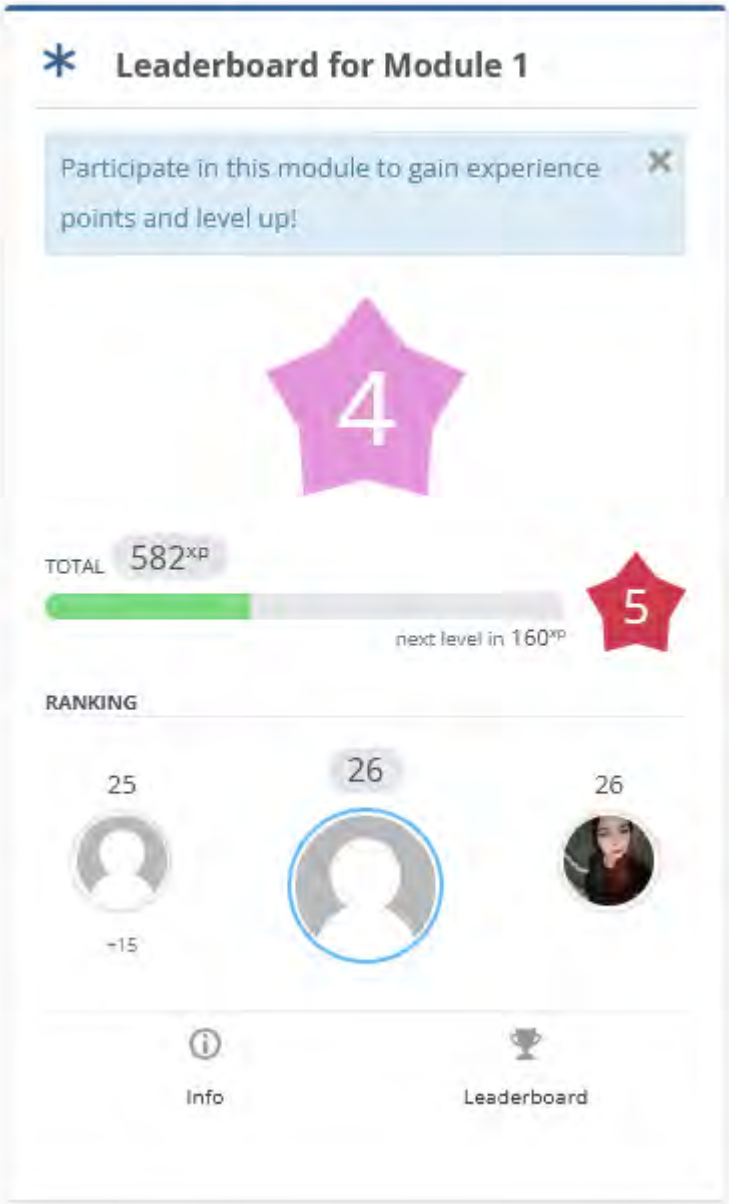

Figure 5.17 - CostalPro elearning platform - Module 1 sidebar leaderboard

A gamification layer at module level was implemented in order to help engage learners with the proposed module activities. The gamification layer consists of a point system that is generated as learners interact with the module's elements. The point system was also logged on a leaderboard of all module students, which could be consulted at any moment in order to see who amongst learners had earned the most points.

8.3.1 Multiple levels of leaderboards

The platform proposes different levels of leaderboards:

- One level is proposed at module level. This means that for each course (whether this is for a cohort of skilling or up-skilling), there are six leaderboards: one for each module.

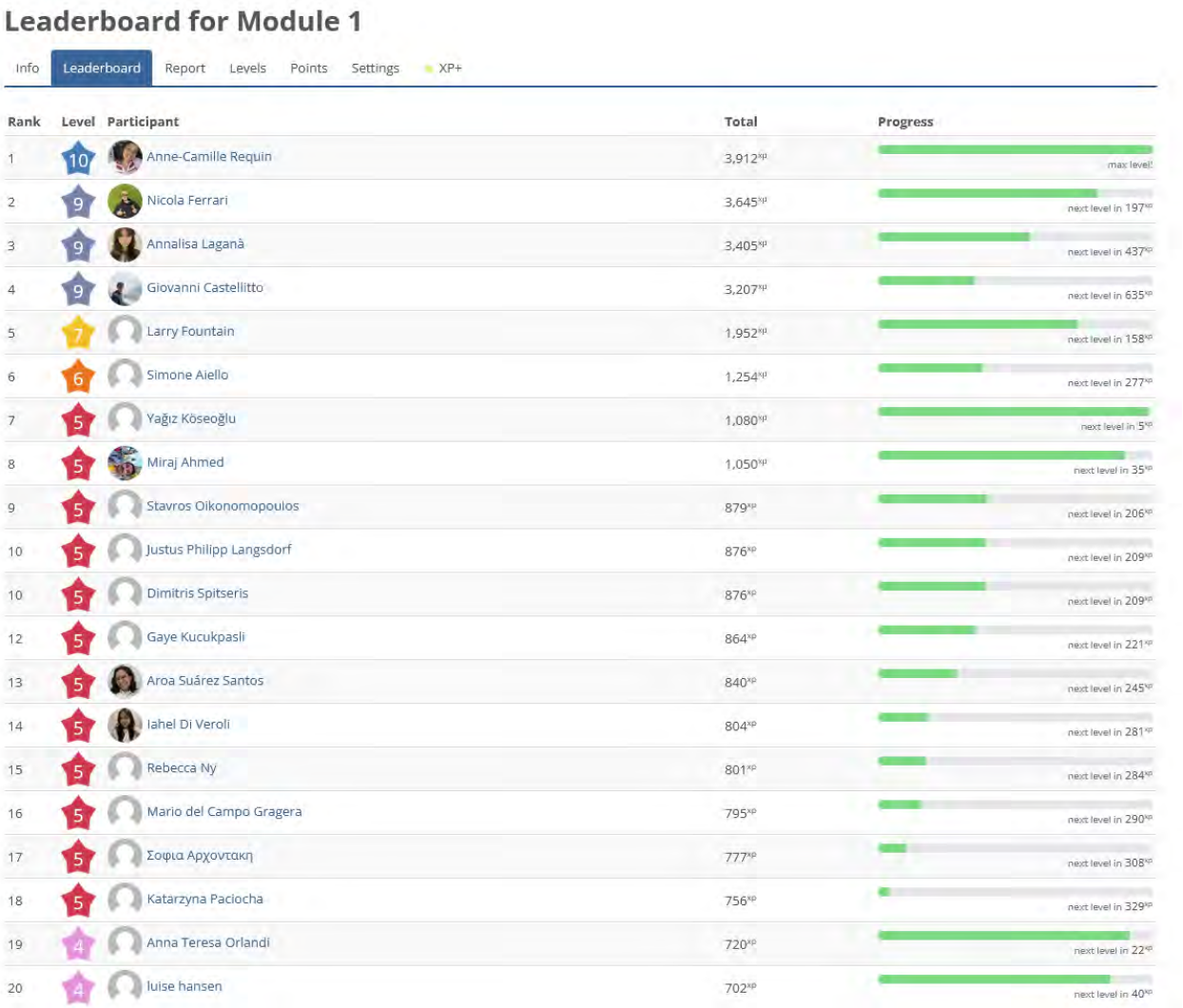

Figure 5.18 - CostalPro leaderboard at module level

- There's also a leaderboard for the entire course (comprising all learner activities for all six modules). The leaderboard of this level addresses individual cohorts (one leaderboard per cohort). The course leaderboard is only available upon completion of the last module.

Figure 5.19 - Label of CoastalPro leaderboard at course level

8.4 Learning content hosting

The CoastalPro platform hosts and orchestrates learning experiences, based on different types of learning content. The platform does host various types of audiovisual content that span from text, audio, video, presentations and different types of activities, like multiple choice quizzes as well as peer-reviews.

The content of several of those types of activities was reviewed and refined on multiple occasions in order to address discrepancies, typos as well as improve the overall facilitation of the proposed learning experiences, based on learner feedback (coming from pilots). This includes refinement and balancing of quizzes as well as examining the configuration of the different peer review activities, as well as re-editing and updating PowerPoint presentations, graphs and videos.

8.5 Learning content hosting

Although the screenshots in this report focus primarily on the desktop version of the platform, it is important to note that the platform was designed with responsive layout principles. All interface components—including dashboards, module pages, and activity flows—are fully accessible and functional on mobile devices, ensuring a seamless learning experience across different screen sizes. Navigation, content display, and gamification elements adapt automatically to smaller viewports without loss of usability or content visibility. This responsiveness enhances accessibility for learners who prefer to engage with the platform on the go or from devices other than a desktop.

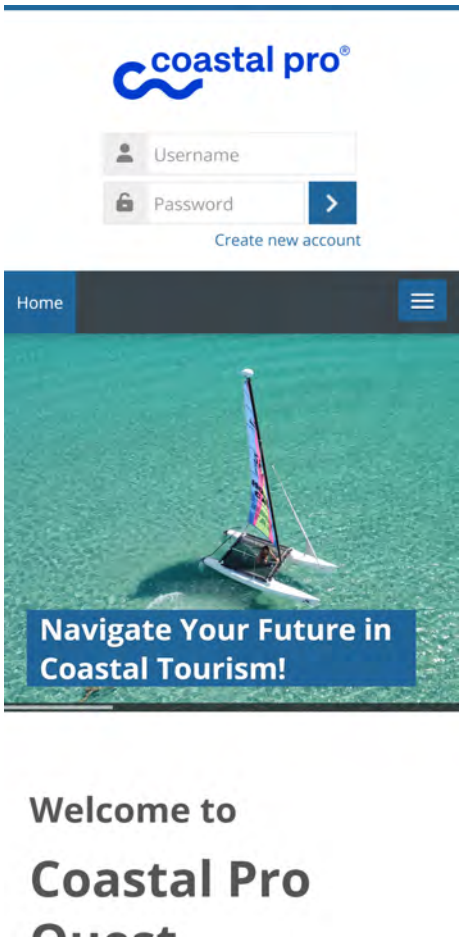

Figure 5.20 - Home screen on mobile

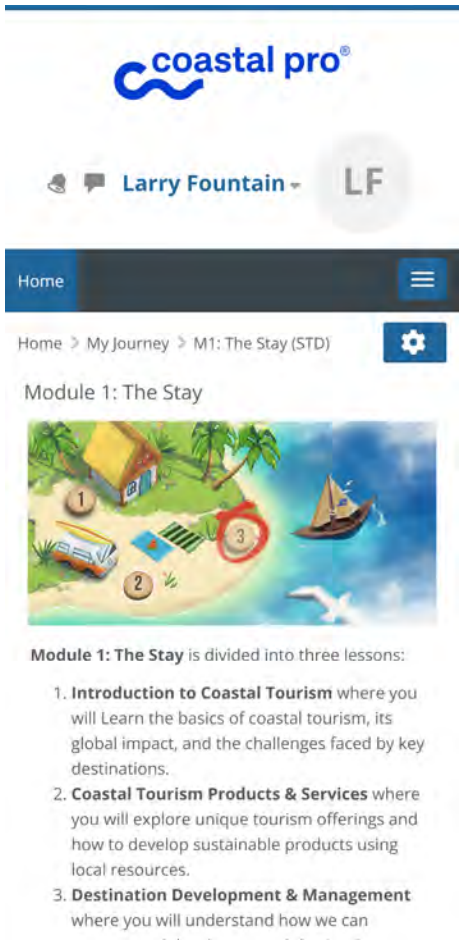

Figure 5.21 - Example module on mobile

9 Certificate generation

The platform also can generate a verifiable certificate of completion. The issuance of the certificate for each student is predicated upon the successful completion of all six modules.

Figure 6.1 - CostalPro certificate issued by the platform

10 Preliminary user evaluation

This chapter presents a preliminary analysis of user feedback based on approximately 35 responses collected from participants in Cohort 1 of the training. The data reflects learners' perspectives on platform usability, engagement, and the effectiveness of gamification elements. As the training is ongoing, additional responses are being gathered, and the statistics presented here will be updated accordingly to reflect input from subsequent cohorts and continued feedback.

The current insights are drawn from selected questions within the evaluation questionnaire available at the end of Module 6, focusing specifically on aspects related to the platform experience. This analysis serves as a first iteration to inform continuous improvements in design, functionality, and learner support mechanisms, and includes:

- How motivating learners found the **gamification elements** (points, badges, leaderboards, and narrative structure)
- Their perceived **level of engagement** throughout the training
- The **immersiveness** of the experience compared to traditional online courses
- The **ease of navigation** within the platform
- The **technical performance** of the platform (e.g., loading speed and mobile compatibility)

First, participants responded positively to the **gamification elements** embedded in the CoastalPro platform, such as points, badges, leaderboards, and the overarching narrative structure. A total of **79.4%** rated these features as motivating (scores 3–5), with **26.5% giving the highest possible score (5)**. This suggests that the game mechanics contributed meaningfully to learners' motivation throughout the course.

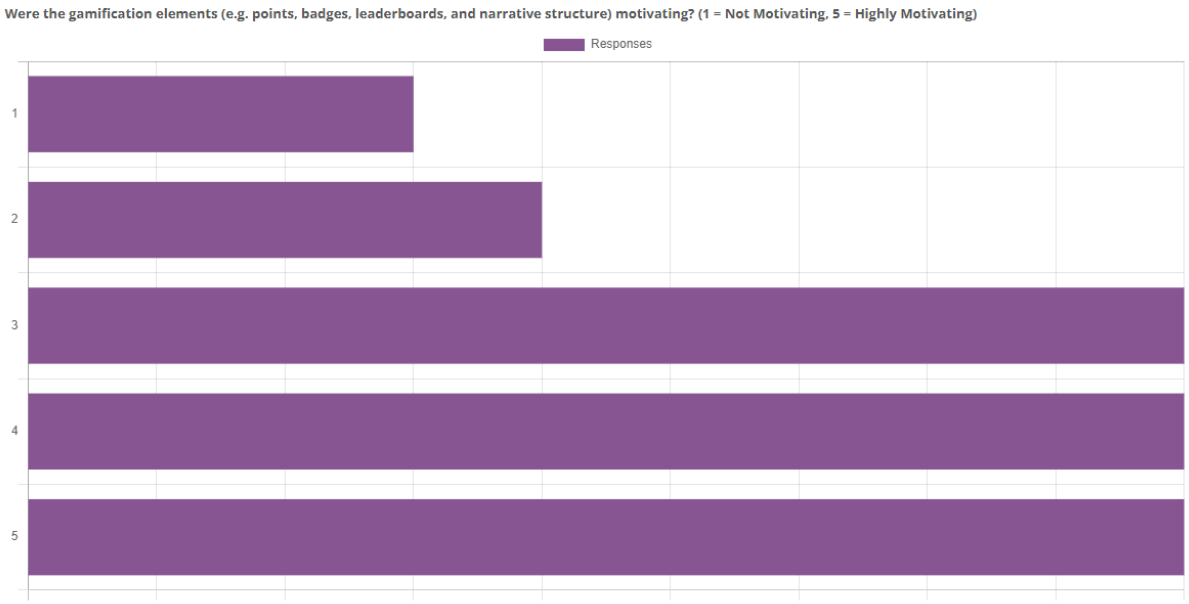

Figure 7.1 - Responses on the motivational impact of game elements

When asked about their **overall engagement**, considering interactive elements, the storyline, and the final project, **91.2%** of participants rated their experience at 3 or above. Notably, **23.5% selected 5**, and **32.3% selected 4**, indicating a strong sense of engagement for the majority of learners.

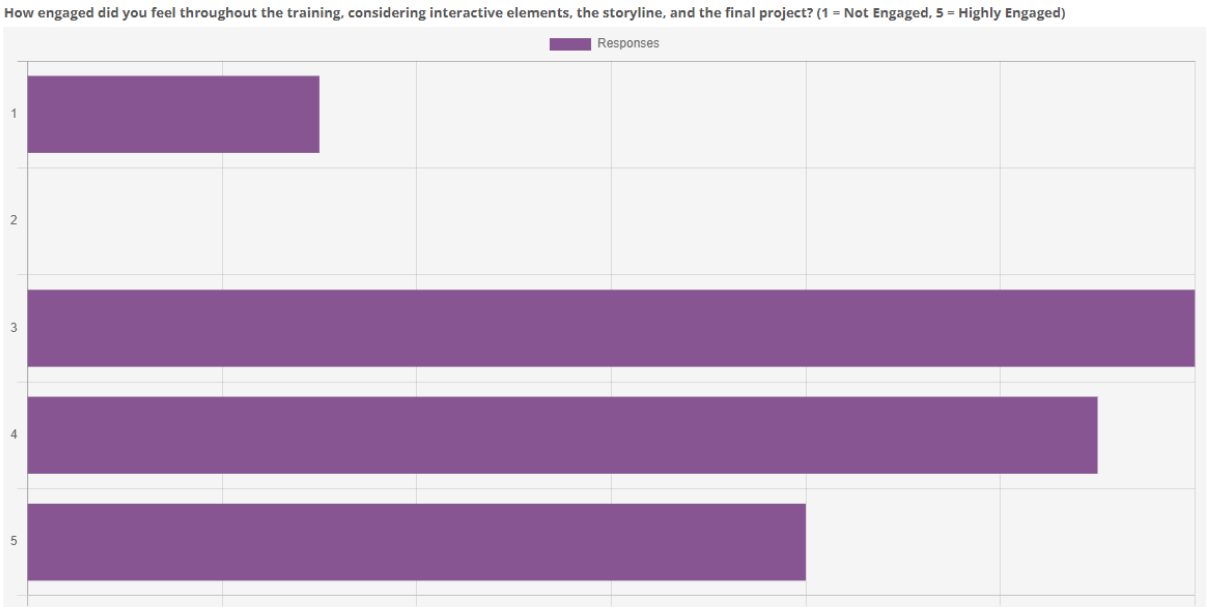

Figure 7.2 - Responses on how engaged participants felt during the training

In relation to the **game-like atmosphere** of the platform, **61.8%** of participants reported feeling immersed (ratings 4 or 5). This shows that the storytelling design and progression mechanics were successful in creating a more playful and experiential learning environment.

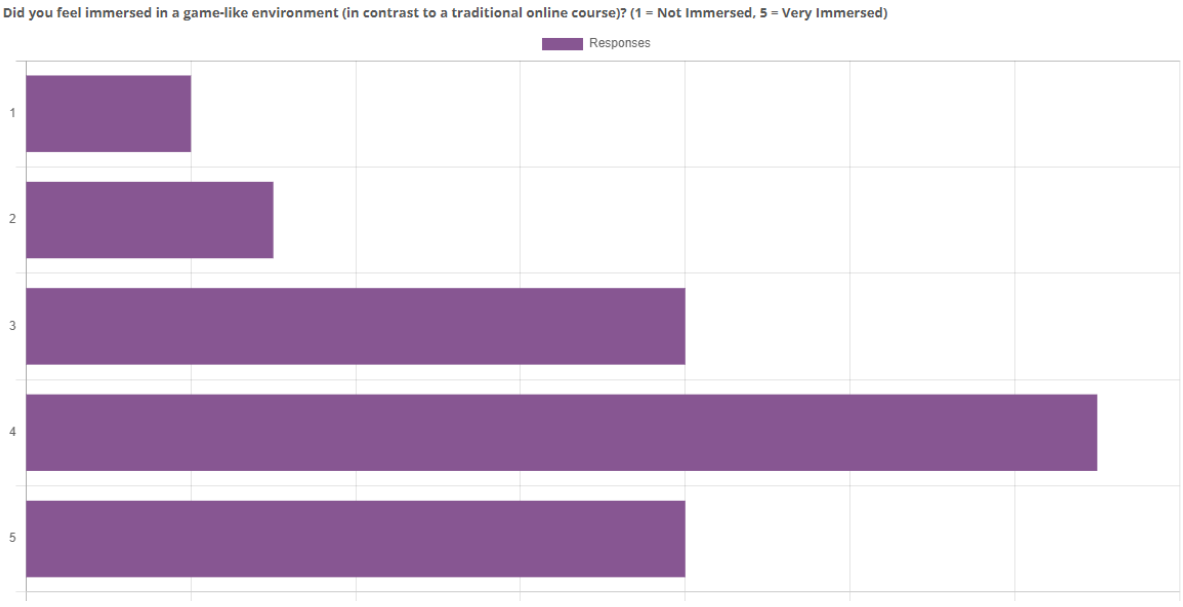

Figure 7.3 - Perceptions of immersion compared to traditional online courses

The **navigability of the platform** was one of the most positively rated aspects, with **94.1%** of respondents selecting 4 or 5. Only **5.9% rated it as average (3)**, and no participants indicated any difficulty (ratings 1 or 2), confirming that the interface design was clear and user-friendly.

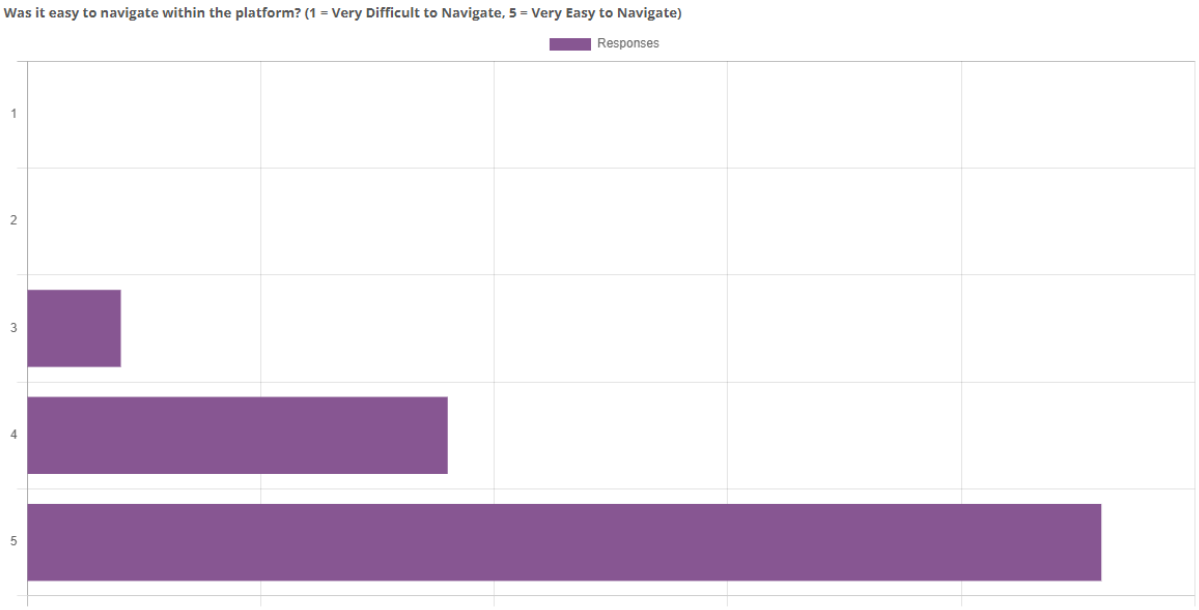

Figure 7.4 - Ease of navigation within the platform

Regarding **technical reliability and responsiveness**—including loading speed and mobile compatibility—**67.6%** of participants rated it as good or excellent (ratings 4 or 5). **26.5% rated it as average**, and a small number (**5.88%**) reported below-average performance. Therefore, the overall impression was one of stable functionality with room for further optimisation.

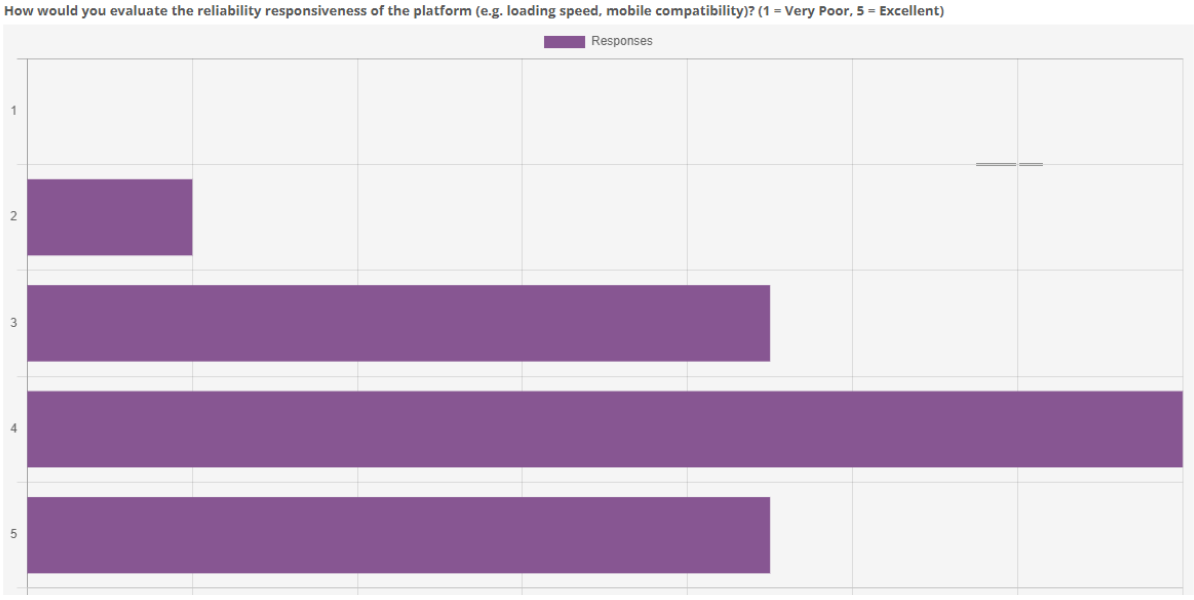

Figure 7.5 - Ratings of loading speed and mobile compatibility

12 Next steps

Embracing an iterative methodology, the platform will still continue to evolve incrementally in small phases as other Cohorts for learners commence and feedback is gathered from different types of users. This iterative process aims to facilitate the identification of potential challenges and opportunities, allowing partners to iteratively refine the platform to better align with the project's overarching goals and objectives.