



# Online Course

## INTRODUCTORY MANUAL **FOR TRAINERS**

[www.eco-oils.eu](http://www.eco-oils.eu)



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# EcoOils manual for trainers

University of Salamanca

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## Executive summary

Global demand for cosmetics and wellness products is increasing, leading to strong growth in the production of aromatic plants on a global scale. Over the past decade, lavender production has doubled in Europe, to about 65 tons a year. Between 2011 and 2019, the imports of essential oils increased by almost 68% in terms and 22% in terms of volume of value in the EU. In global competition, the **maintenance and competitiveness of the European aromatic plant (AP) production and processing sector** requires strengthening of quality approaches, and towards organic and natural labels which meet the growing demands of consumers, contribute to the preservation of the environment, and are more profitable for producers.

It is therefore essential to **support the training of European professionals in the cultivation and transformation of aromatic plants towards quality organic production**. Vocational training for AP producers must adapt to the constraints of a poorly available and dispersed public, which calls for an online training offer. This requirement for a quality online training offer is reinforced in the context of COVID which limits the possibilities of group and face-to-face training. The characteristics of agricultural training, which relies heavily on the acquisition of practical training in the field and transmission by peers, require structuring an adapted and quality digital offer.

Based on all these needs, EcoOils emerged to offer a **European innovative vocational training process** to support the creation of a distance training system in the field of agricultural vocational training, which takes into account recent contributions from educational sciences and technological developments. The training itself will be focused on building the competencies of the target group through online, blended, and distance learning that is tailored-made & designed specifically to meet their needs. It will also aim to build and expand the pedagogical skills of the trainers in the agricultural sector, enabling them to deliver high-quality inclusive digital education.

The thematic focus field of EcoOils will be the **organic aromatic plants (OAP) cultivation and organic essential oils production (OEO) in Europe**, the integration into a common digital curriculum covering all aspects of the development of organic farming and distillation of OAP: farming techniques, production methods, marketing, communication, ethics & corporate social responsibility. It is a question of considering OAP cultivation and OEO production not only from a technical point of view but also from all aspects of the producer's relationship with its customers & territory. And it is also a question of changing the mindset of the professionals on the immense opportunities that digital & online education, knowledge and solutions provided for them.



The **specific objectives of EcoOils** are:

- Meet the needs of farmers and distilleries for building their competencies to enroll in online, blended, and distance tailored-made learning, tailored-made.
- Build and expand the pedagogical competencies of the trainers & consultants in the agricultural sector enabling them to deliver high-quality inclusive digital education.
- Develop high-quality digital content incl. innovative online resources dedicated to farming and production of organic essential oils for professionals and future professionals, complementary of the training contents from agricultural and agronomic education.
- Support all agents in the aromatic plants and essential oils sector (incl. farmers, distillers, educators & trainers) to engage in distant & online training processes that could substitute the currently used presence-based courses.
- Support farmers and distilleries to enter or switch from conventional to the market of OEO & encourage the application of organic farming and production approaches.
- Facilitate cooperation and technical transfers among European countries and European stakeholders.

## Introduction

This guide is designed to help you provide effective training support and mentorship to learners in the EcoOils e-learning course. It contains pedagogical principles based on the expertise and experience of the EcoOils project members to aid your mentoring process. The recommendations and contents of this guide aim to promote a positive and proactive learning environment, resulting in a successful tutoring experience.

This project aims to **put learners at the center** of the teaching-learning process. As a result, the course is based on a digital platform and the e-learning model, where participants can select the preferred modules and learn at their own pace.

e-Learning offers several **advantages** for trainers and learners alike. One of the main benefits is its flexibility, as it allows learners to access materials and resources at their own pace and schedule. This means that learners can study at a time and place that is convenient for them, without having to attend traditional classroom sessions. e-Learning can also save time and money, as it eliminates the need for travel and accommodation expenses associated with attending in-person training sessions.

Another advantage of e-Learning is that it allows trainers to create interactive and engaging content, using a range of multimedia tools and resources. This can include videos,





animations, quizzes, and activities that can enhance the learning experience and keep learners motivated and interested. All these materials are available on the EcoOils learning platform.

Despite its many benefits, **e-Learning also has some disadvantages**. One of the main challenges is that it requires learners to be self-motivated and disciplined, as they need to manage their own learning and progress through the course. This can be difficult for learners who require more structure and guidance, and therefore the motivating role of the trainer would be crucial. Another potential disadvantage is that e-Learning can be isolating, as it lacks the social interaction and support that traditional classroom settings can provide. This can be especially problematic for learners who may need additional help or support to understand the material, so again trainer's role is vital to provide this real connection to the business world.

## Learning model

ECOILS learning model provides the didactic methodology for the training course and the Manual for trainers. The model combines all pedagogical methods derived from partners' theoretical backgrounds and practical experiences that are applicable and relevant to the project topic and the target group of aromatic plant and essential oils producers. It defines and describes the base for the content development of the course & manual as well as the structure of the technical implementation of the web platform.

### Pedagogical objectives of the learning model

- To create a pedagogical framework, derived from the eLearning approach.
- To define an "instructional design" (character, scope, order, and depth of teaching material) addressing the specific needs of aromatic plants and essential oil producers.
- To integrate a clear pedagogical approach that stimulates active, inclusive, and experiential learning into the EcoOils learning environment using collaborative and individual learning processes for aromatic plant and essential oil producers and their employees.

### Target groups and training needs

The EcoOils' main target groups are the following:

- **The core target group** is traditional OAP cultivators and OEO producers and new entrepreneurs interested in starting or switching to OAP and OEO organic production.



- **The second target group** is made of trainers and entrepreneurs who will support producers and farmers to use the electronic platform and all its training materials, such as lifelong learning organizations, Vocation training centers, public bodies providing training for professionals, educational & professional institutions, etc.

After the research conducted by the consortium of partner organizations to create the learning model, most respondents raised the following **needs and concerns**:

- They prefer a self-paced training course due to their work responsibilities.
- They also feel more comfortable with a blended course, since they feel there is no way to replace some of the needed in-field experiences.
- Having expert input was raised as a common interesting feature of the course, since learners can benefit from previous field experience when running organic aromatic plants and essential oils businesses.
- The consultation of best practices, success stories, and practical case studies also raised concerns among the respondents, since theoretical content is not enough to gain a holistic view of the organic production process and implementation.
- Finally, both respondents and partners agree on the importance of creating and enhancing a community in which learners can support an interactive and participatory process.

The EcoOils training course was designed to consider all these needs and concerns, providing an interactive e-learning platform that combines theory and practice, with practical activities to be developed in the field, which also includes case studies, video tutorials, and interviews with experts on each module. A detailed description of the features of the EcoOils course can be found in the curriculum modules section of this manual.

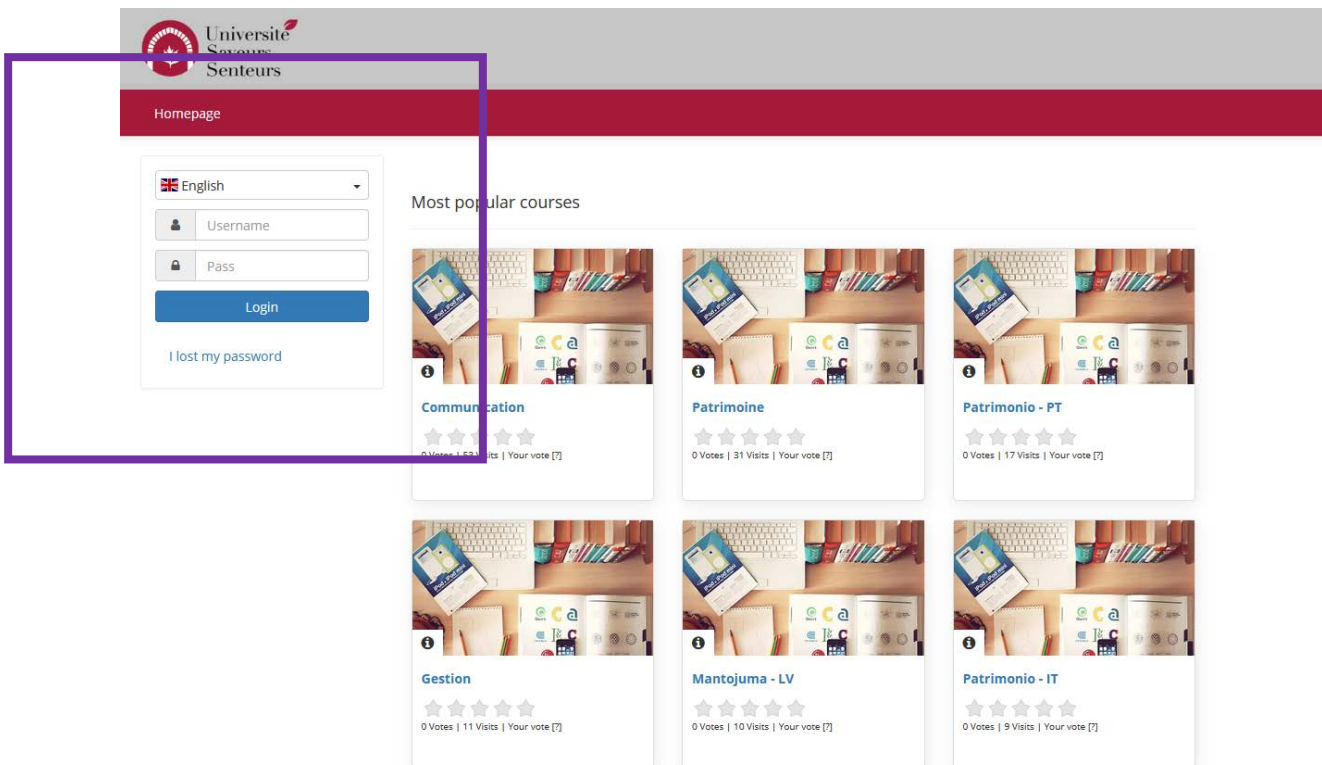
## How to Access the e-learning platform

The EcoOils course is hosted inside the **Chamilo platform**. Chamilo LMS is an open-source software distributed under GNU/GPL v3 license that allows any user or company to use, study, modify, improve, and redistribute its code. Chamilo Learning Management System or Learning Management System is a platform or virtual campus useful for the delivery of online training/e-learning.

**Before accessing the platform**, potential learners should contact EcoOils partners through the [contact form](#) on the website so they can start the **registration process**. When that is completed, the reference partner UESS will assign them a username and a password to enter the learning platform.

The platform is very user-friendly and, once you have your credentials (it will be sent to you by email), you just need to log in to get access to all course contents.

1. Write in the toolbar the following address: <https://www.uess-elearning.eu/>
2. Enter your username and password, and select your language:

A screenshot of the UESS e-learning platform homepage. The header includes the "Universite Senteurs" logo and the text "Homepage". A purple box highlights the login area, which contains a language dropdown menu set to "English", input fields for "Username" and "Pass", a "Login" button, and a link for "I lost my password". Below the login area, the "Most popular courses" section displays six course cards. Each card features a bookshelf image, the course title, a star rating, and a summary of votes and visits. The courses listed are: "Communication" (0 Votes | 153 Visits), "Patrimoine" (0 Votes | 31 Visits), "Patrimoine - PT" (0 Votes | 17 Visits), "Gestion" (0 Votes | 11 Visits), "Mantojuma - LV" (0 Votes | 10 Visits), and "Patrimoine - IT" (0 Votes | 9 Visits).

3. In the home page, you will have access to the courses you are enrolled in, you can get feedback on your activities in the platform, and you can also configure your settings. Select the Eco-Oils course to get access to the different contents:



To access the course you are registered in

To get a feedback on your activity on the platform

To use your electronic mail, find friends or join a social group

List of your courses.

Only 1 Eco-oils course at the moment – as an exemple

You can edit your profile: change the language, add a picture, change your password.  
In the future, if you lose your password, we'll be able to send you a new one.

- Once you select the course, you have the course panel tools available. You can customize your calendar, get access to the quiz (multiple-choice test) of each module, communicate to other learners via the forum or the chat or get access to all materials by clicking in the “documents” section:

 Module 6\_Marketing digital \_SP



Lección



Access the lesson!



Links



Tests



Take the test related  
to each module

5. By clicking on the folder "lesson" you will have access to all module materials (the main lesson, case studies, and activities...)

Module 6\_Marketing digital\_SP / Documents

Current folder: Documents

Type	Name ↓
Folder	Actividades
Folder	Casos concretos
Folder	Documentos
PDF	Eco_oils_lesson_MODULO-6-ES.pdf

Download the course

Click the icon to view the course directly on your screen

Module 6\_Marketing digital\_SP / Documents | Eco\_oils\_lesson\_MODULO-6-ES.pdf

Capítulo 3 - La tecnología digital en la práctica de los profesionales de la OAP/OEO en la actualidad

**Módulo 6**  
Título: Fundamentos de marketing digital

**Introducción**

El mundo ha sufrido profundos transformaciones que han hecho surgir nuevas oportunidades, innovación basada en Internet y las comunicaciones móviles. Las empresas han sido capaces de transformar radicalmente sus procesos de valor utilizando estas tecnologías. Asimismo, en todo el mundo, docentes y profesionales hacen formas de aplicar las tecnologías de las comunicaciones digitales para proporcionar sus servicios. El fenómeno del comercio electrónico y el marketing móvil se ha hecho más visible desde la pandemia del Covid-19. El aumento de la importancia de las aplicaciones móviles y los servicios basados en la localización abre nuevas perspectivas a las transformaciones tecnológicas.

**Duración**  
6 horas



## The curriculum modules

The EcoOils e-learning course is structured in 5 chapters, with a total of 11 modules. All the different modules have the same materials:

- **Theoretical content.** The main lesson in pdf format summarizes the most important aspect of the module. These contents are up to date, properly referenced, and include a contact person for further knowledge.
- **Activities.** Each module contains a series of practical activities aimed at providing empirical context to the theoretical foundations. Learners can implement these activities individually or in groups, so that learners can benefit from the interaction, exchanging knowledge and advice.
- **Case studies.** Each module contains at least two different case studies providing detailed, relevant examples of successful practices on each topic.
- **Self-evaluation tests.** Multiple-choice tests are available at the end of each module so learners can assess their newly acquired skills and competencies.
- **Additional EcoOils resources.** The project has a [YouTube channel](#) with at least one interview per module where producers of OAP/OEO describe different aspects of their businesses and at least two practical video tutorials to offer learning content, information, knowledge, and opportunities in more dynamic, interactive content, illustrating practical applications regarding each module content.

## Brief description of contents

Each chapter aims to cover a fundamental aspect of the main areas of organic aromatic plants and essential oils production:

- **Chapter 1** initiates learners into organic farming for aromatic plants, as well as provides the main reasons and concerns farmers will find when converting or starting to produce aromatic plants or essential oils in an organic form.
- **Chapter 2** deals with the specificities of the OAP and OEO market and how to reach consumers with the principles of traditional marketing.
- **Chapter 3** incorporates digital technologies to successfully promote, market, and sell OAP and OEO in the European markets.
- **Chapter 4** analyzes the impact to and from the territory, in relation to heritage, and rural tourism of the organic OAP/OEO production.
- **Chapter 5** includes economic and legal issues that learners need to know before implementing a successful business model.

The course models are integrated within this chapters as follows:

Chapter	The corresponding list of modules
Chapter 1 - Producing and transforming Aromatic Plants in Organic Agriculture	Module 1 - Plant management
	Module 2 - The plant and its environment
	Module 3 - Harvesting - transforming and labeling
Chapter 2 - How to market OAP & OEO	Module 4 - Customer profiles - European market
	Module 5- The principles of marketing
Chapter 3 - Digital technology in the practice of OAP/OEO professionals today	Module 6 - Essentials of digital business
	Module 7 -Digital communication in rural areas
Chapter 4 - Territorial impact of OAP/OEO production	Module 8 - Economic diversification and rural tourism
	Module 9: Aromatic plants and heritage
Chapter 5 – Economical issues and business model for OAP/OEO	Module 10 - Economic specificities and business models
	Module 11 - Legislation regarding OAP/OEO & REACH regulation

### Certification Process

If learners are interested in getting a **certification**, they can obtain it upon the completion of the following criteria:

- Learners should **complete all course modules**, dedicating a reasonable amount of time to each one to ensure the acquisition of competencies. Each partner organization will check this requirement on the platform before the certificate validation.
- Learners must **submit the multiple-choice tests within every module** with at least 4 correct answers out of 5. The platform automatically validates the learners' performance on each module.

When meeting all the above-mentioned criteria, learners can contact the reference partner of his/her country at the website [contact form](#) to request the formal certificate.

### What to expect from trainers

As trainers, it is expected that you will perform several **mentoring functions** to facilitate the learning process of learners, including:

- explaining concepts and technical terminology using relevant examples,
- adapting course materials to suit local learners,
- providing additional materials such as references, videos, and case studies,



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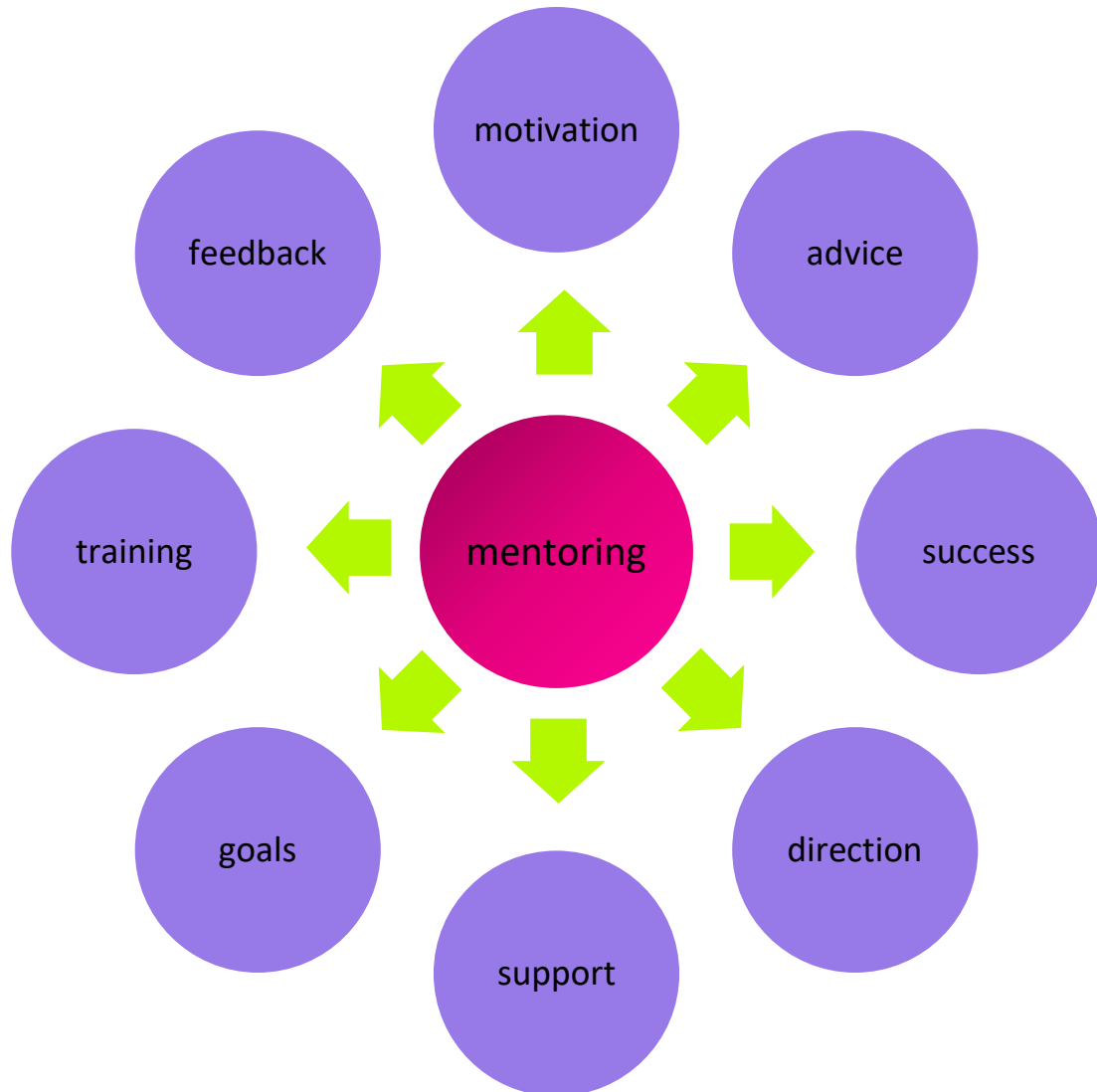


- providing feedback on completed activities and exercises,
- motivating and engaging learners to promote participation and facilitating networking.

Successful trainers should demonstrate a range of skills, including:

- knowledge of relevant course topics and materials,
- enthusiasm, initiative, and willingness to share knowledge and experience,
- approachability and accessibility for consultation,
- ability to create a welcoming learning environment,
- organization and preparedness,
- application of leadership skills,
- positivity toward learners' progress and avoidance of criticism,
- ability to valorize individual competencies for collective knowledge construction,
- clarity in explanations, use of diverse teaching and learning methods,
- effective management of group dynamics (generation but not the domination of discussion),
- interest in learners' progress,
- ability to provide constructive feedback,
- consistent presence through follow-up and feedback provided to learners.





## Recommendations for trainers

Trainers should get familiar with the methodology and the platform before the training process itself to have a **standard preparation** that guarantees a good teaching-learning environment.

During the training, learners expect an **active, participatory, and interactive approach to learning**. Despite being an e-learning platform, students will choose their own self-paced learning rhythm, but they need a safe environment for work. Make sure you provide an



environment for mutual communication between participants and trainers and learners so all participants can exchange experiences and advice.

You need to provide **effective communication** built on mutual understanding. Turn difficulties into valuable lessons and use alternative resources (video interviews, case studies, video tutorials...) to further encourage learners to successfully achieve their learning goals.

### The three Cs of effective mentoring programs

Successful and effective mentoring programs follow these simple principles:

clarity	communication	commitment
effective listening trust and understanding feedback questioning motivating	active involvement constant support accessible for consultation interest	time consistent presence enthusiasm initiative



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Uk, I. (2021, 5 noviembre). *Clarity, Communication, Commitment – the key to successful mentoring programmes*. INTOO UK & Ireland. <https://www.intoo.com/uk/cat-blog/the-key-to-successful-mentoring-programmes/>

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