Enhancing Research Impact
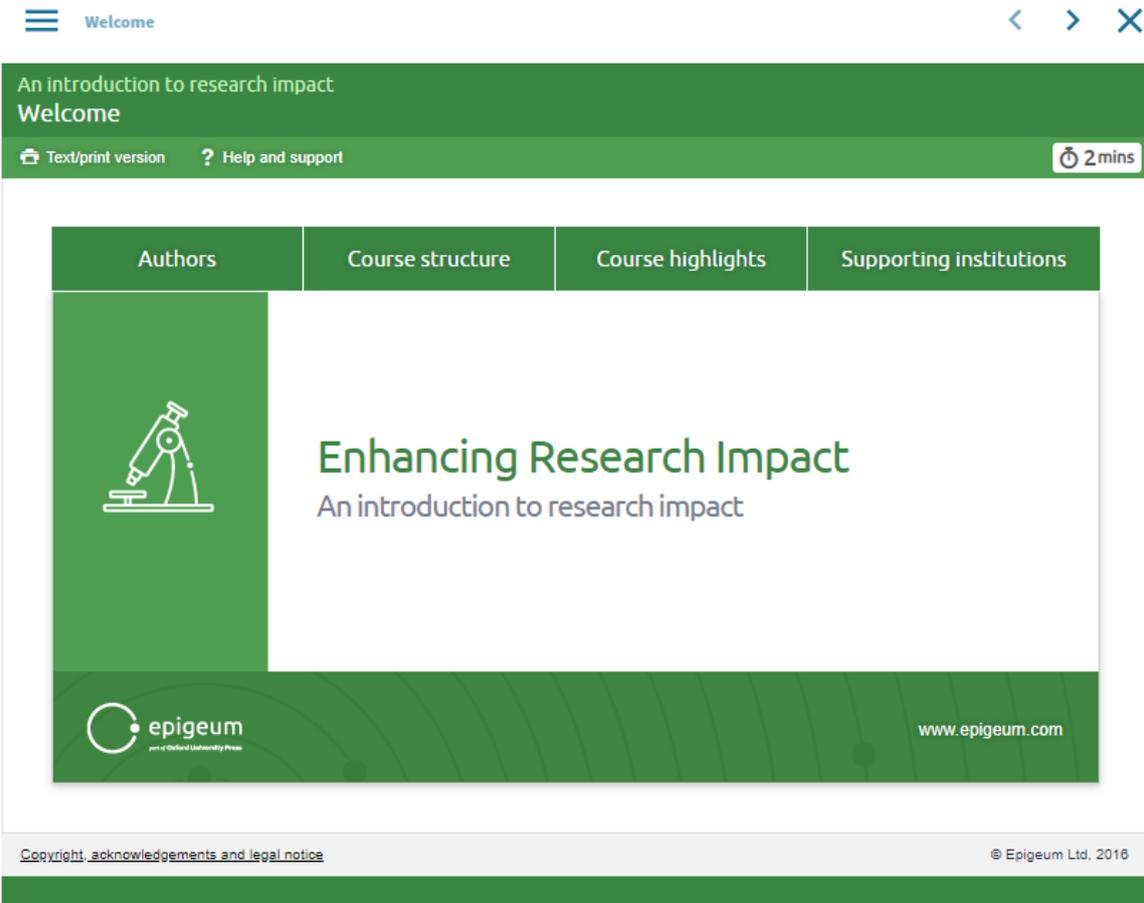**Epigeum online programme**
Notes by Impact Team, SHU, 24 February 2020

Please note: If you have not already done so, you may need to create a new Epigeum account if you registered before 1 August 2020.

Overview
There is some very useful content in these training modules. You can go at your own pace and you can stop/start the course at any time.

You can go through the programme in a linear manner, HOWEVER there is a lot of content and realistically, you may feel you want to focus on certain elements of the course rather than doing it all. You do not have to do all the portfolio activities or all the additional activities - you should choose which you think are most useful or relevant to you.

The courses are described below and there is a **summary of the whole programme in Table 1** at the end of this document.
(If you want to feel motivated, you might want to start with Course 1: Module 1: What's in it for you?)

Caution!
Some sections / activities are more useful than others. Use your judgement. The course has been designed for a wide audience (all Higher Education Institutions in the UK), so some content may not be relevant to a researcher at SHU. For example, there are various planning templates in the portfolio - it would take an age to use them all, so just pick those which are useful to you.

<u>About the programme</u>

- It is written by researchers for researchers.
- There are 4 courses in total, with modules in each course.
- The programme is divided into 'core' and 'additional' content.
- Overview of courses:

<u>Course 1</u> - *An introduction to research impact* - only 55 minutes, worth doing as an introduction to impact / a refresher / introduction to how the course works. Those new to impact may want to miss out the <u>types of impact</u> section, as this level of detail is not needed at this stage. At the end of Course 1 (under Course summary), there is a **diagnostic tool** to help you to work out which parts of the course are most relevant to you.

<u>Course 2</u> - *The research impact process* - a useful overview of impact, covering all the key steps in achieving impact. Those new to impact / starting a new research project might want to go through the whole course, whereas those more experienced at impact may concentrate on specific topics within the course.

<u>Course 3</u> - *Tools and techniques for research impact* - this course gives advice and tools for planning impact. It goes through tools and techniques for all stages of the impact process which are described in course 2.

<u>Course 4</u> - *Writing about impact: Guidance and templates* - this course helps you to produce the written materials which you may need to produce throughout the life of your project - from the impact plan, to the impact case study, to the impact report.

More about the programme can be found on the Epigeum website
https://www.epigeum.com/courses/research/enhancing-research-impact/courses/

Before starting the programme - what will I need?

- A device which can play audio/video.
- Headphones if you work in a shared space.

Getting started

Use the blue arrows in the top right-hand corner of the screen to move onto the next screen.

Advice on the programme content

- I would strongly advise reading the Programme introduction, including the Programme features, which explains the various icons / activities / links that are used in the course. It also explains which is core / additional content. This information is repeated on each course introduction.
- The core content is delivered as text, interactive activities, images and videos. They do provide transcripts of the videos, however it is preferable to use a device which can play videos (and headphones if you are in a shared space).
- Videos - look at the academic titles/backgrounds of the contributors - be aware that some of them are speaking from the point of view of a particular discipline, which might not be applicable across the board.
- Engagement - it is up to you whether you answer the questions during the course - it doesn't stop you from progressing if you do not answer them.

- The 'save your work' icon is a prompt for you to cut and paste what you write on the screen, if you want to keep the notes you are making. The programme does not save any of your notes. Make sure you click on the 'Next' within that feature, otherwise you are missing content. Then at the end of the exercise, click 'View summary' which will bring up a dialogue box for you to either print off or cut and paste to save.
- Responding to questions within the programme - these are not saved or seen by anyone else, so feel free to make mistakes as you learn!

- The assessments (referred to as the 'course quiz' in the course summaries, accessed via Blackboard, see bullet point below) are not compulsory. These *are* saved, but this is to help you to monitor your own progress. So again, feel free to make mistakes as you learn!

- If you take a break, you can go back to where you left off through the Epigeum e-learning site https://courses.epigeum.com/.

Portfolio

- It might be useful to download the portfolio first - it will give you an idea of the content of each of the courses, and help you to decide which parts of the course are most relevant to you. Do not be put off by the various planning templates! Choose which are best for you.

- You can download the complete portfolio and instructions (on the Programme introduction (Programme features - towards the bottom of the page). Alternatively, you can download each individual portfolio exercise as you come across it during the course. Look out for the purple boxes:
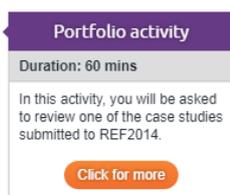

Table 1: A breakdown of the course (described by Epigeum)

ENHANCING RESEARCH IMPACT **Epigeum**
Published: May 2016
Length: 6 hours of core activities, 24 hours of additional activities - benefit is that you can dip in and out.
Description: *Enhancing Research Impact* is designed to meet the growing need for universities to place engagement and impact higher on their agendas. The programme will help academics and universities as a whole demonstrate the contribution that their high quality research makes to wider society.
This programme is for: Academics looking to demonstrate the impact of their research beyond academia.

Course 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IMPACT *Overview* *Core activities: 55 minutes* *Additional activities: 2 hours, 30 minutes* This introductory course looks in detail at definitions and examples of research impact in different contexts and provides an overview of how impact was assessed in the 2014 UK REF exercise. It encourages researchers to think more broadly about why their research is important, what motivates them and what they want to achieve. Module 1: What is research impact and why is it important? - What is research impact? - Types of impact - How can impact be assessed? An overview of the UK REF assessment

- What motivates your research?
- What's in it for you?
- What are your impact aims?

Course 2: THE RESEARCH IMPACT PROCESS
Overview
Core activities: 2 hours
Additional activities: 5 hours, 30 minutes
There is no 'one-size-fits all' approach when it comes to generating impact from research. Impact can emerge through different processes and possibilities. Sometimes the pathway that researchers choose to take might lead them to a completely unexpected destination. Nevertheless, there are elements of the process that are common to all outstanding examples of research impact.
This course will help researchers to understand the key steps involved in achieving impact, including:
Setting impact goals
Identifying stakeholders
Planning impact-related activities
Writing funding applications
Capturing evidence of impact.

Module 1: Planning for impact from the outset
- Institutional support
- The impact process
- Setting your impact goals
- Types of stakeholder
- Types of impact-related activity
- Building stakeholder relationships
Module 2: Funding for impact
- Types of funding
- Funding applications and impact
- What does impact cost?
- Justifying costs and resources
Module 3: Evidencing impact: Capturing change
- Indicators and evidence
- Evidencing public engagement and policy impacts
- Capturing evidence
- Overview of the evaluation process

Course 3: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR RESEARCH IMPACT
Overview
Core activities: 2 hours, 30 minutes
Additional activities: 8 hours, 50 minutes

This course provides practical advice and guidance on how to achieve impact from research, and looks at some of the tools, methods and approaches that can assist researchers in their activities. Topics covered include:
Project planning
Stakeholder analysis

Risk analysis
Communication and dissemination
Monitoring and evaluation.

Module 1: Planning for impact

- Project planning tools

- Identifying potential stakeholders

- Conducting a stakeholder analysis

- Assessing risks and anticipating conflicts of interest

- Planning your impact-related activities

- Monitoring and recording progress

Module 2: Achieving impact: Dissemination, communication and engagement

- Developing a dissemination and communication strategy

- Writing for impact: Audiences and approaches

- Digital pathways to impact

- Social media: Opportunities and challenges

Module 3: Evaluating impact and keeping track in the long term

- Evaluating impact: Forward tracking and backward tracking

- Evaluating impact: Data collection, assessment and feedback

- Succession planning and ongoing engagement

- Keeping track in the long term

Course 4: WRITING ABOUT IMPACT: GUIDANCE AND TEMPLATES
Overview
Core activities: 55 minutes
Additional activities: 7 hours, 45 minutes

This course provides advice and template documents to help researchers develop written materials about their research and its impact. Researchers will have an opportunity to:
Define their long-term impact objectives
Review and revise the impact section of their funding application
Produce a detailed impact plan to ensure that their impact remains on track
Write an impact case study
Write a report for a funder or for their institution.

Module 1: Apply your learning

- Define your long-term impact objectives

- Review the impact section of your funding application

- Write an impact plan

- Write an impact case study

- Write an impact report