Treasure Island Pedagogies Episode 40

Podcast Transcript

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Tünde Varga-Atkins

Hi, this is Tünde Varga-Atkins and this is episode 40 of our Treasure Island Pedagogies podcast today from the Centre for Innovation in Education and the University of Liverpool. Where we share our light bulb movements, teaching props and pedagogies as we cohabit our Treasure Island, the space for contacting with students, and today is a very special episode today because we are focusing on postgraduate research supervision. So all our guests have got a lot of expertise and experience with that. And let me introduce them. So it's Eva Caamano Gutierrez, Christopher Overton and David Joss. So hi everyone and can, can you please introduce yourselves your original degree subject and your current role so everyone can? We start with you.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Hello everybody so I'm originally from Spain hence this accent but I have been in the UK since 2010. I did an undergraduate in biotechnology in Spain and then I work as a research assistant for a bit in the UK and then I'm moving to doing an M SC and a PhD in systems biology. At the University of Warwick. Shortly after a short fellowship, I joined the University of Liverpool as a data scientist in the computational biology facility and I have been here progressing through the ranks until I'm now one of the directors. I have a little bit of a different background to most because I'm of PCR research technical professional. So I bring a bit of a different perspective to some of the areas that we'll be discussing.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Brilliant. OK, look forward to hearing them. Thank you, Avon. So let's go to Chris.

Christopher Overton

Hi. Yeah, I'm Christopher Overton. Sorry I well, my original discipline I did six weeks of architecture at the University of Liverpool quickly. Quickly realised that there wasn't enough maths in an architecture degree, so I swapped over to doing maths local. Unfortunately six weeks was past the cut off where I could transition within semester so I took a year out worked. Hotel and then came back and and and did maths after that. Yeah, I did a PhD in maths at University of Liverpool and I briefly betrayed Liverpool, went to the University of Manchester to do a a postdoc position. Then I joined the UK Health Security Agency as the principal infectious disease modeller and I'm now part time. Between UK Health Security Agency and a lecturer in maths at the University of.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Brilliant. Thanks Chris and David.

David Joss

Hello, I'm David Joss. I'm a professor of physics at the University of Liverpool. So I completed a BSc in Physics a while ago now and and then went on to do a PhD in nuclear structure physics and here at Liverpool. And I've since taught at several UK universities and spent some time. Working in as a as a scientist in a National Laboratory. And in my current role, I'm about to become the leader of the nuclear physics research group at Liverpool, which is a group of around 50 colleagues who are academics, postdoctoral research fellows, technical specialists and, of course, a large number of of postgraduate research students. And so I've had the pleasure to to work with with many postgraduate researchers and as a collaborator and also as a supervisor over the years. And I'm I'm absolutely delighted to to join this PGR focused podcast today.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. OK. So, yeah, let's let's talk about these experiences. So as our audience might know by now, we start with the light bulb moments with your students. Or can you share some of those with our listeners today when when you were working with your PhD students and any aligned bulb moments? What do you look? Like. Yep.

David Joss

Yeah, it's. I guess you get different light bulb moments at different different. Points you know. In in, in, in, in your career. But I guess the one I've picked is

related to helping students make a transition between an undergraduate degree and then entering for for a doctoral degree in a in a quite a different research environment. And I think that transition can be very. Troublesome sometimes in the in the sense. Is it it's. A bit. It's bit like being a, you know, a Mountaineer, an apprentice, Mountaineer, such a thing. You know, you you you've got this steep face mountain, there's a the summit and a long, long way away obscured and mist. There aren't many footholds to to identify right at the start. And and of course you realise that you don't necessarily have the skills to to make the summit on on day one and then so, you know, reflecting on my own. Experiences as a as a new PhD student. Nuclear physics researchers. It seemed a bit like that to me. You know, we, we we rely on performing experiments that overseas laboratories where that that have particle accelerators which is a very exciting prospect on one hand, but it's also quite daunting because you're faced with a lot of state-of-the-art apparatus that you know you you completely unfamiliar with. And you've got to use experimental methods and analysis techniques that are perhaps more advanced than than you've experienced earlier. And of course. You know common to all disciplines. There's an entire specialist literature which is, you know, its own language to get to grips with. Really. And then, of course the the the change is quite quite different. It's quite important because you know there's an undergraduate where everything is a little more scheduled and a little more homogeneous. You enter this research environment where you're suddenly working with an interdiscipline. Team or or the three different skills. So while I'll be working with physicists and I'd also be working with engineers, electronics specialists, computer scientists at Target makers, accelerator operators, and and they'll, they'll have the different stages of their careers and all have very different skill sets, but are completely necessary. To to realise. You know the objectives of the research, but the one thing that they all have in common is they've all got more experience than you have on day one and you know, naturally, that's that's that can be quite daunting. So I think you know, the light bulb moment for me. It is related to realising that we have to set expectations very early for new PhD students and to help them scaffold their. That that, you know that their their to their experiences so that that you know that they you know they don't get too you know over faced by by the challenge and then you know gradually by you know reviewing how we scaffold those experiences and you know we can help them become more independents and and more adventurous in their research. So you know, it's quite interesting to look at different ways of of of how we might. Do.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

That yeah, I quite empathise with with with that path towards becoming a bit more independent. I think I think students are heavily tapped on when they are doing the thought degrees and I and I see a cultural difference here. For example, from the Spanish system to the UK system thing in which I mean it's it's a positive thing, there is much more support for the students, but also means that by the end of the degrees and. I needed less, resilient than perhaps others that were on the pit of fire from from the days and that transition from. Someone telling you all the time what you need to do and what are your deadlines and what what is exactly how you should be almost organising yourself to worse. OK, this is the research question. Let's let's change the way we operate to our board coaching style, in which perhaps I I support you a bit more at the beginning, but then you should be trying to. Make your own judgement and be critical of your own work. I think that's the steepest bit of the mountain, that critical thinking and that being with your results, in fact, like the example I could I send I send before with the with one of my biggest students was was the moment in which you get amazing results and and you can go. Fantastic. Or you can think, OK, I might have messed up somewhere here because it is too too good to be true. And I think I think building that that way of thinking of like good science is hard. So we need to challenge every finding and making sure that there was not. A moment in the in the previous steps in which we might have not been as thorough, or we might have overlooked something, is of an important skill to develop on, one that almost only happens by trial error, fighting with the targeting results, trying to put the story together.

David Joss

I I I I relate to that completely because you, you know, I think it. It's often a light bulb moment. I think for you know, for many researchers when they realise, you know, straight out the the undergraduate environment that things aren't always going to work and you can have the best laid plan, you can have the best operators available to you at the time. But you, you know, sometimes things don't don't work. You know, operators can break schedules, can be changed. And you know, it's important to, you know, to have that Plan B, you know, particularly if you're using your scheduled time at a facility. And so you know, but I think when when things don't go right, it's a great opportunity to learn. Actually, you know and.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

When you learn the most.

David Joss

Yeah, absolutely. But, but but the flip side is also that sometimes serendipity works the other way. And you know, you might find things more more exciting than the things you set out to find and.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Yes. Who has antibiotics? No. If that was not the case, for example, that.

David Joss

So.

Christopher Overton

No, I mean I agree. I mean, I'm I'm currently supervising or primary supervising my first student. So it's been a learning experience for both really because we've got students coming in from this fully structured environment where everything's kind of. On a plate and exactly what to do. And then there's me where I can work by myself. Perfectly fine. I know what? I'm. Doing in my civil service job, I can job project manage. So if I know I can sort of tell people exactly what to do. But for a PhD student you don't really want that approach. You don't want to tell them what to do because they're meant to be discovering things for themselves, doing independent research, and so trying to. Get that balance right has been interesting. You know, I still need to guide them right down the right direction, but I can't just be like, oh, here's what I want me to do. Do it when you come, when you're managing someone. So it's take quite a different, different approach. And So what? What I found seemed to work for me, at least for the first year. Was that the first project I wanted the student to work or something? I knew. Sort of safe. As in I knew I knew the solution existed because I did it on a piece of paper many years ago and lost that piece of paper so I knew the knew the the mouse was possible and I knew the direction that needed to be done. But I didn't actually have any of the steps written down anymore because I lost it all. So I need to be. Told the student wanted them to. Why where I wanted them to get to. Then you know, as they got to each step like people guide them if they're going right or wrong, try to let them learn a bit about that independent work and and it seems to have gone quite well. So we we're we're currently hopefully we'll be submitting our paper by the end of this month from our first project. I was reading a draught the a few weeks ago and all that this this actually makes it compared to the first draught win that they wrote and I was like it's, you know, it's it's hard to understand what's going on and you really see that the latest draught I was like actually I don't have too many criticisms that

have too many things to change. All all seems to be coming together. It's also been.

Speaker

Yes.

Christopher Overton

For the next well, I've got another project lined up which is all extension project I've done now, but I asked them to try and find their own project too because I feel that's. One of the things you want a PhD student to come away with is that complete research independence where they can come up with idea generation and make the connections. You know the ideas might be rubbish, they might not go anywhere. That's what I'm it. Helped with but. Basically, they know I've been tell them to go to various internal workshops or seminars that I've not been going to, and through that they've collaborated. They have some potentially useful. Data and. So that in trying to design a project that could work, I don't know if it will work yet. It's still in the early stages, but it's just nice to see them developing their own ideas and trying to come up with things that they think would be interesting. So I didn't quite where the light bulb moment was in all of that. But some places are on the last 18 months or so, something's clicked. Hopefully it's not just luck. What that features you?

David Joss

It's interesting what you said, Chris, about, you know collaboration because you know the if I think you know if if if. My. If I could talk to my younger self, you know, and we have the sex, but you gotta do everything yourself, you know, and then. But you know it's it's it's important. You know, I think it's very important for for new researchers particularly to to understand that you know, while the thesis is are so low project and endeavour to some extent the research that underpins that has often done collaboratively. It's important to, you know, to develop that. Network of of. Collaborators and you know, and you support them and then they can support you. So it's it's, it's an interesting balance and and. In the postgraduate research world.

Christopher Overton

Yeah, definitely. I mean, because I work in mathematical biology, so obviously there's a lot of little bit to disciplinary collaborations. You know, with mathematicians we can, we can do whatever we want with maths, we can

make random models for anything and probably write a paper on it. But whether it's useful or not, I mean, I'm sure either knows the saying, you know, by all just some loads of data, right. And they don't know what to do with the data.

Speaker

But that's.

Christopher Overton

We've got those in mouths that we don't know what to do for them. That's so, you know, we can if we can work out how to work and collaborate with biologists in designing that feel pretty interesting problem.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Yeah, I think that's another element of the development through the P here and also it's it's team research now to do good science and good research. General and building those communication skills to the right level to the different set of specialists is is something that I think we all have to spend quite a bit of time developing ourselves, but also. Know our students and not only not only being able to communicate effectively, but also highlighting the impact on some decisions and why they are important, at least on my field. I feel that there is a systemic under appreciation for data skills, data needs. And particular, more handsome. Expenditure, let's say of resources on making sure that the data sets are robust, that the statistical methods are robust. Sorry, I don't mean to go into a rant of this, but being able to articulate that importance to an external stakeholder is is super important for the for the other states of the career of the students. So that's something that we don't have a success recipe yet as it depends very much of the of the interaction. But it's something that. I think it's is. Is important to work on, so I I tried to get my students to shadow me and other colleagues into some meetings just so they start picking up skills on how to drive this conversation. And then I asked them, what do you think it went well, what would you have done differently? What do you get from this? And then they, I think it's very interesting as well. Because depending on what is the cultural background this I have experienced myself as well, how a meeting is perceived and can vary quite a lot and picking the nuances of of of body language and of attitudes towards the the the end goal are are quite important as well to make those collaborations effective. Please.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

That's really interesting and and to some extent you've started answering our second question, which is about what teaching props or pedagogies would you like to bring to your islands? Because I think even what you were talking about is reflective practise and get things to and and and also around collaboration and teamwork and you all mentioned I think interdisciplinary. Working and how we might prepare the students for that, but yeah, shall shall we move on and just if you if you offer any ideas, any teaching props or pedagogies that's in your repertoire that you like to use with PGR student.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

It means a lot trying to use coach, a coaching style and and and asking why and what do you think goes next and and getting them to articulate what is, what are the thoughts and then trying to be sometimes distracted and what I say and what do you think this happens or couldn't it be because of and try to get into argument. There there were their thoughts. It depends as well on the personality of the student and and this is something that needs to be also factored in and how you interact with them. Some some some tools that might be very useful with an extroverted person, might be a complete disaster with an introverted person, so I think it's important to to adapt one's practise as a supervisor to cater to different personalities and lives, and this lives on the way of working. So for example, I start induction with all my staff and students. Telling them a bit about about myself and how I like to work and also asking them to complete the same template about themselves and that helps me to decide if, for example, I'm going to try to schedule my meetings in the mornings for early risers or in the afternoons with the ones that prefer working in the afternoon. If someone tells me I've referred to receive feedback in a written. Way so I can process it and then talk about it in our next meeting. I try to adapt to this of of course everybody has to be flexible, but I think. Something we don't talk about enough is that different in personality types and also neurodivergent points that we all need to factor in when we supervise the students.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

That's really nice examples. What about you, David or Chris? Do you have any similar strategies on this?

Christopher Overton

Is now one thing and. That we did so as part of being with interdisciplinary students is they don't necessarily all have the different backgrounds, so it's it's not just that they'll have different personality types as you're saying, but

they can also completely different skill sets, right. So we could have a PhD student come in who's done a biology undergrad. They could put maths on the ground, they could have done physics, they could have done statistics that they could be any kind of subject that's either related to something new or something biological. And we can get all of them by. And the challenge is, you know, how do. How do you coach them? How do you how do you sort of help them learn, given that they know and understand completely different things? So one of my colleagues who I recently have did sort of a piece of action research, so part of our PG Cup teaching qualification in the. We conducted an interview. With our PhD students because they started at the same time, 1 was from a biology background. One was from little small maths physics background. And make more heavily weighted towards visits and so we want to understand you know what the unique challenges that they encounter coming in you know, they're reading math papers, they're reading biology papers. We're asking them to write code or asking them to to sort of do some technical analytical maths, you know, what are the strengths or what? What are their different backgrounds for you? That was really interesting. Trying to see you know what? What channels? Came up so some of the challenges were the same for both students. Several apply for all PhD students. Just how do you do a PhD? I think you have all your talent, but things like how do you read a paper from a different research field performance and the big ones that came up and I mean it seems obvious now, but you know from the we didn't think the interview best. You know, because maths is built on is sort of such as contract constructivist teaching style, where you know you build on years and years worth of experience. So your fourth year abouts degrees building on things you've done in the past three years and technical spectrum. And so if you really, really take your maths paper, they will assume all of that stuff is known. They will tell you what a Markov process is. They'll just say this is a Markov process. They won't tell you, you know, what probability distribution is. They just assume you know. Ohh well, we've got gamma distribution here. And so there's a lot of assume knowledge in terms of the words and things that use which can make it really hard if someones come from biology. Crammed, you know, OK, they might have done some basic statistics or no one variable is, but then we'll know anything higher up on the chain that maths that builds on that and say for the biology, the biology papers are are less interpreted to to me. But you know they'll use words and talk about things like. You know, if you think about, say, evolution and you've got sort of horizontal and vertical gene transfer and things like this, these are obvious to a biologist that the tissue will be what interesting how your model evolution comes in like the idea what these words mean and the people would define it. So it's, you know, can we create sort of cheap sheets I guess for the students or something that

would be helpful for them coming in and these are things that should. Know these all. Would be helpful. I haven't designed any yet, having only one student, but I think you know every student I get. I'll probably give them a similar set of questions as to what we designed in this interview just to see, OK what? You know, do I mainly up in there first six months, OK? What what's been a challenge will be helpful and overtime can sort of have this tool that can make or streamline that process.

Speaker

It it it it is.

David Joss

Interesting that they you know, how do you train in an interdisciplinary cohort and it's really nice to see some of the the the approaches taken by centres for doctoral training supported by UK RI and some of the you know, the EU training networks that that that you know take a cohort of students from. Very different backgrounds and then you know that they they undergo training at the, you know, the different universities that make up the CDT. You know and where where they get versed in in those particular specialisms and it's it's it's a very, very encouraging way of of of seeing how you know colleagues come up with different innovative ways of of training you know a very cohort and because you know that reflects the reality of what what research is for all of us. I guess that you know that you know you need many skills to crack a a common a, you know, a common problem. And so yeah it's it's it's it's lovely to see and then you know as well as the the subject specific aspects is that the the more complementary skills you know writing. Keepers, which again is not something you need necessarily to know on day one, but something as you develop as a PhD researcher. These sorts of skills, you know how how you order your data, how you present your data, how you publish and so on. These are these are things that we picked up and and and as I say scaffolded in at a later stage of the. That there are search experience so, but there's there's lots going on I think and it's very interesting to see the different solutions in in different research area.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. And I think all of you talked about this all the time development and how you might adapt to the person, but also all the time of what is needed on that journey just because I guess it's a longer journey than than others or maybe more involved in terms of the complexity of the skill development compared with undergraduate. So David, if he pushed you to. Bring an item

that could be a concrete item or a teaching prop, or a pedagogy on our boat going towards the island. The Treasure Island. What? What would you put in? So we've got, I think a you talked about coaching as a style. And reflective practise as well increase, you've got your Cheat Sheets and working with interdisciplinary so.

Speaker

I.

David Joss

I won't quite specialist, I'm afraid, and in nuclear physics we use a a software package called Radware, which I would take to the Desert Island and and what Radware does is it's it allows us to analyse gamma ray emissions from excited nuclear ice. Which allows us to order the the order of quantum states in the nucleus. So in. In in my research we use large arrays of gamma ray detectors which are in essence a camera for, for and photographing gamma rays. If you like. Rather than regular light and then you know these gamma rays are emitted in a very specific order which depends on the underlying structure of the nucleus, so you know. Murray spectroscopy than I do is that it's a bit like doing a jigsaw puzzle where the gamma rays or the jigsaw pieces and then that way allows you to look at, you know, hundreds of different Spectra and then kind of establish that the order that these gamma rays go in. So you can work out, you know, all complicated interactions. And then the the structural feature. That that give rise to those patterns. So I mean that the software itself is great, but I think that the thing I like best about it is that you once you learn the basics of the package and actually there's a lot of work goes into collecting data and you know sorting the data and so on. But we won't once it's in a format where you can. You use right where to look at it and it's very easy to pick up some of the basics and then you can work side by. Side with with your PhD students and and discuss the spectrum and the logic and and and you know really hammer out these these complicated patterns. So it's a great level. I think you know and it's it's I guess it's akin to you know when when I you know I've I've got a jigsaw puzzle at home with my kids. You know. Despite the fact that I'm decades. All of them. You know, we we can contribute on an equal footing to making the jigsaw puzzle this, this, this does the same thing if you like for nuclear physicists that irrespective of your level of experience, once you've got the basic idea. Yeah, you know you can make quite significant contributions to building this, this pattern of quantum states, so that that's the aspect I really like about it. So you know, assuming that, you know, I wasn't on my own on the Desert Island

and I had someone else to to build level schemes with. And I think that's what I would take with me.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I think it's only a dessert alone until the students and the the educators arrive, it becomes a Treasure Island of of creating knowledge together. And I think that's that's what we're looking for. So definitely. Once you you land on the island, you are. You're creating these treasured moments. So yes, definitely you can have it and I guess it's maybe for the key to me as you're speaking, is that side-by-side learning that sort of disrupts perhaps some potential hierarchies in the learning process. So that seems quite key. In the way you describe it.

Christopher Overton

Absolutely. And.

David Joss

And I think you know, when I use the analogy of a jigsaw puzzle, but you know, in reality it's a little more complicated and it's been like maybe 10 jigsaw puzzles of different levels of complexity thrown into the same box, shaking up and then some of the pieces are missing. So you know that that there's lots you can do side by side and you know independently and then get together. Discuss. So as you say you know you break down the this kind of potential barrier that arises from a a hierarchy of experience which you know which I really love and it's a good way to get to know your students. Very well as well. Yeah, and they.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

And they way to do good, good research as well because I do. Think help this have any place to to a good conversation and inquisitive behaviour now in in terms of in the research question. Sorry, just to add on the on the props to take to the research and that to the Treasure Island it it, I think it's important to speak your supervisors to also think that. This is a development opportunity that is not only for learning how to do research and becoming a bit more independent, but it also has to encompass a number of opportunities to develop transferable skills and to think of what's the next stage, you know. So it's only a small percentage of these histories that will finish on full. That make a position so so we need to be savvy on how we expose them to to different career opportunities and and paths as well. So I I

didn't, I'm and I don't know what you will do, but I try to have a conversation at least at minimum of once a year. What are the opportunities that they're gonna access? Give them ideas and try to find tasters for different types of careers, especially if they feel like they like, for example, organising. Project management. Let's see how you feel about this. Or, uh, they really like public speaking and I want to do the three empty or they they might want to engage more with the public engagement team. What do you do?

Speaker

Yeah.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Well, So what do you do? David and Chris in terms of of this area? Do you have any tips or things that you or things that worked for you as well in the past?

Christopher Overton

I mean, that's that. Yeah, I. Mean we've only one student, we've we've had casual discussions about career directions. And the main thing that's come out is really we need to make sure we do. One project that uses. Some data, ideally real world data. And that's important for a maths degree is you get a lot of maths graduates, particularly underground level law for a PhD level that might have never touched data. So you can add code and how to do maths. But in the build job and most people not want you to be able to integrate something really challenging. Go on you to. That plugs some data in and run a basic model on it, probably like building anything that's protocol from scratch. So you need to know the basics of how you load data. How do you clean data? How do you visualise data? Things like that. So that's what my students look another way and look, this biological club rate turns just can we use that data for. Anything it might. Not even be anything super fancy. Math flies, but just trying to get some of that more gentleness skill.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Development. I was just going to reflect this on your. Introduction. Because I mean your your life story must be quite motivating for students. The idea that you started on one path and then after six weeks you realise that that wasn't probably for you. That took quite. A lot of courage, I guess, to to make that realisation and then change and act on it so and and then you, your your journey to become specialised within mathematics, in health, in the area of

health. So I think it's probably quite model we talked about shadowing and modelling earlier. So that's probably quite an interesting. We also. To to engage students with that, with your stories again.

Christopher Overton

Was telling students during open days as well. You know, we're always here and they don't know what to do. And I'm like, you know, with change you.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Know. Yeah. You're not. You're not stuck for 3/4. It must be quite nice for them to hear that, you know, not everyone knows and it's just you. You. It's a way of figuring out what you like and what your values are and things like that. But sorry, David, you were gonna.

Speaker

No, I think it's just.

David Joss

Gonna agree? I mean, I think it's it's it's an, it's an interesting you know we we're we're graduates an end up in in terms of employment and I think you know it's it it is very important. To you know, to always reflect on, you know, the skills that are transferable, you know? So I mean, you know, you know, some of the work that we do might be considered to be quite pure, but, you know, you you you're developing lots of skills with, you know, data analysis and you know, instrumentation. Skills and things that are translatable into into different different industries, and I think you know exposing research. To you know, to other possibilities, as you know is is, is is very useful. I think it's really nice as well you know and reflecting on different career paths and and where, where, where, where colleagues you know end up and in the university and I I took part in a A A PGR session. A few years ago. And it was quite interesting to. Hear you know other. Other lecturers you know talking about, you know, the they they're often teaching and researching in disciplines where they qualified in quite different areas. So, you know, maths graduates that are now, you know, teaching in, you know, in health and life sciences and, you know, people starting off and say, theoretical physics and then. Ending up in a completely different area, so it's it's. It's always fascinating, you know? And and it's. I think it's really good for. So our students, our our researchers, but also prospective students as you said to me, you know to, to, to, to be aware of those those possibilities that you know

that the the transferable aspects of the work that we do on a day-to-day basis is enormously useful to a whole range of of industries and sectors beyond the university.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

And also you because you talked about interdisciplinarity and having an understanding of different ways of thinking and I guess if you've experienced that as well then that that's something that you can utilise in your research area.

Christopher Overton

Yeah.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Great. So is there? And I'm gonna ask you about bartering. So is there from the different teaching probes pedagogies or even light bulb moments as we were discussing your approaches or or supervisory style, perhaps other things you could see swapping be or utilising from each other or perhaps? Adding them together, is there anything that else that you might want to mention or maybe creates a mixture of this? So yeah, anything any bartering that we might do on the island? But I mean with the interdisciplinary features we've already introduced that anyway, so.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Yeah, I totally. Will use the software that David was saying.

David Joss

Quite like the idea of, you know. What Chris was saying earlier on about, you know, different subjects have quite different, you know, literature and language to. To some extent. So I mean I I think the idea of some sort of CHEAT SHEET that would allow you to, you know, interact sensibly with colleagues from different disciplines is always a welcome thing. I think that's that's a great idea. I'll take that.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

I I during my my master that was part of our training centre and and we they had they recruited people from biology background and from maths stats background. And we had one week to sort of train each other on to things

and we were just given 2 thick books. Read the chapters, get on with it. So I think it's. Yeah, I think something that is a little bit more directive perhaps with concrete things to look at will be quite useful. Of course, where do you draw the line, right.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, yeah.

Christopher Overton

Compress the biology degree into three months to hit them at the.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Deputy, can you tell me what? What? I was writing.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. Could it create the Cheat Sheets? That would be exciting. I mean, you would be longed to see an example of your Cheat Sheets, Chris. Just just to give it because I guess it's what you're talking about also almost like the signature pedagogies the signature ways of thinking in particular discipline and then how that might come together or how how the students might understand that and the differences? So interesting how you can read the same text from different perspective, yeah.

Christopher Overton

You know, I've planned that I'm planning to make one. I've not made it yet, so there's keep like a piece of paper.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Right. We shall await the delivery on the island for your cheap cheese.

Christopher Overton

I mean, I think he was approached on them. You know the coaching style I think is important and it will include integrate well with any other item, right? You know you if you want to sort of understand, you know, interdisciplinary backgrounds and the albums Cheat Sheets that you need to work with the student and you know this or that hands on coaching, you know, what do they understand or don't understand whether they. Need

more help? And yeah, David's software might be a bit too specific, but we could with the change it to research software and then I'd agree that should always be on that.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Or maybe could be a puzzle, a multi-purpose puzzle, that maybe there's ways of using that I don't know. Could you use a puzzle, Chris, with your students? Well, whatever the puzzle might be about.

Christopher Overton

And make this a bit. I mean, just if you're strapping, if you're stuck on an island, the jigsaw is always gonna be fun.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Mapping out, looking at looking for patterns, similarities, differences and things like that, yeah.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

It's almost an analogy of data analysis, not like putting the parcel together, yes.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

And then if you can put it out too quickly, then you might be might be not the right picture it what you said. OK, so that that's brilliant. I think there's lots of disciplinary in the in in interdisciplinary learning on this island which is lovely and different approaches and it's definitely a rewarding journey. Preparing you from whatever may come after. So let's talk about luxury items, because this is when you relax because you, you you've, you've earned your little break and focusing on yourself. So what? What luxury items would you take to the islands that helps you relax?

Christopher Overton

Yeah. Well, I mean the the guidance here was what do we do in our free time or you know I've got a one year old son. So my free time is it's entertaining him, feeding him and cleaning up after him. The majority of my emails. So if I can bring, if I can bring him to the island, then I guess he'd be the battery item. If not, any extra free time. Yeah, I like playing video games, so it would

be some kind of gaming console or PC, or a book if everyone else would put it out. Would be a nice site to one of one of those 3.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

As a mother, first more child, I I must confess I was a bit surprised that you would choose looking after your one year old as a relaxation. Activity.

Christopher Overton

Well, let's say you know what wasn't necessarily relaxing is what? What do I do with my free time?

Tünde Varga-Atkins

So, Eva, what about you then? How would you relax?

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

So when I have time to do this, yes and it used to be for me it was a a complete luxury on a Friday afternoon after work to go to AJ's here with the other, the people in the team, I'll have a drink and you know, banter a little bit.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Well, the last Syrian, yeah.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

The compress from the stress of the wake, of course, as a mom, that maybe happens once or twice a year now, but still it's.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Just for the listeners, the AJ is an on campus pub and then and basically leasing place, isn't it? Yes, yes.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Yeah, it's it's the the the local pub. Yeah. Lovely atmosphere. They don't pay me for. The changes but. And and and then other all reading. I love reading so yeah, I I love this potential of just reading some. I mean taking some pages and being completely translated to another universe and with your imagination. So yeah, I I am an avid reader. Yeah.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

So take him to an island, to another island from your island. Brilliant. Inception very much. Yeah, David.

David Joss

So I mean, I'm with the the the I think the reading is it is it is a great pleasure. It's a great way to unwind but as soon as you said Desert Island, I thought hammocks and have a nice hammock between 2 shady trees and a good book. I think that would be a. And a gentle breeze that would do me, I think.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Ohh yeah I'm. I'm OK what he said.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

So I think there might be a little cluster of hammocks and books, and maybe a gaming console in one a solar powered gaming console in one of them as.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Well, yeah, they probably also do a game like.

Speaker

When we. Going.

Eva Caamano Gutierrez

Yes, I'm going to. Go now.

Tünde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I think, yeah, that that sounds amazing. OK. So yeah, I think we have reached with that lovely picture. We we leave it in our audiences and our listeners minds as well. So it's time to sail away to our treasure islands together. Thank you for listening. And if you enjoy the episode, you can subscribe to our podcast. And also sign up to any future episodes. I guess if you would like an hour, see you at Liverpool Uni C i.e. Podcast website. You can access our previous episodes and blog posts. And yes, goodbye for now and a big thank you to our special episode PGR episode to our guests today. So goodbye. Thank you. Goodbye.