Transcript: Helen - career building during the PhD

Did you do anything during your PhD that you might consider career-building?

Yeah, well really right from the start of my PhD, the first year of my PhD, I had a teaching assistantship, a teaching studentship I think they called it, where I did have some tutorials about how to be a tutor and I gave four to six hours of tutorials every week and a couple of lectures in that first year.

How did you find that? That's quite an undertaking for someone who's just beginning their PhD.

Yeah, it was incredibly difficult and I had been assigned some courses where I knew very little about the topic that I was teaching, so for example I had to do tutorials on East Asian civilisation, which included Ancient China and Ancient Japan and I knew nothing about Japan, so I did feel very unequipped and I spent most of that first year of my PhD in fact reading up to prepare for that teaching experience and very little time on my PhD itself.

Did you continue that teaching throughout the PhD?

No, that was just for that first year, in the second year I then went away to do my research in Taiwan and then I picked up an office job with the British Council, so I moved into doing other things and I didn't teach – oh I taught a bit again in year three, when I came back to the UK and then I also did a few more tutorials and a few lectures.