Ruth Aylett

Computer Sciences, Heriot Watt University

What is your research about?

As a late-career woman I have researched various things over the years, and being able to move on to new topics is an important aspect of doing research in my view. Currently I am focusing on Social Robotics - how to successfully embed robots into normal human social environments. This involves Affective Computing - the ability to model and display emotion.

What do you think was crucial in making your career successful?

Never sacrificing my research time to meetings and too much admin - being able to say 'No!' if necessary. Having a supportive partner. Having a supportive HoD when I started my first academic job at what was then Sheffield Poly and had twins 9 months later. Being able occasionally to go away to a conference where all kinds of new ideas and people could fill in what I was lacking in my Uni environment.

What aspects of your career have you found challenging?

Balancing work and family life - four children. The key is to understand that parental guilt however unjustified is unavoidable and that doing the best you can is all you can ask of yourself.

Me with our Sarah robot when we did Sarah the Poetic Robot as dissemination for the LIREC project

Currently

Professor in the Computer Sciences Department at the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences

2016

EU Project

First EU Project success and began work with colleague sin other EU countries

2001

Promotion

Chair at the Centre for Virtual Environments at Salford

1998

First Grant

With colleagues in Engineering at the University of Salford

1990