SPEAKER:

Dr. Judy Robertson

CS-MACS

Heriot-Watt Unversity

DATE:

Monday the 16th of May 2011

TIME:

15:15 - 16:15

LOCATION:

Heriot-Watt University, Earl Mountbatten Building; room G.45

TITLE:

How to put children off studying computing:  learnersʼ attitudes to computer science after school based game making projects

ABSTRACT:

There is a pressing need to interest young people in computer science. A recent popular approach has been to harness learner’s enthusiasm for computer games to motivate them to learn computer science concepts through game authoring. This talk will describe a study in which 992 learners across 13 schools took part in a game making project. It will provide evidence from 225 pre-test post-test questionnaires on how learnersʼ attitudes to computing changed during the project, as well as qualitative reflections from the class teachers on how the project affected their learners. Results indicate that girls did not enjoy the experience as much as boys, and that in fact the project may make pupils less inclined to study computing in the future. This has important implications for future efforts to engage young people in computing.