

PhD Case Studentship: Usability analysis of video games

The Human Centred Technology (HCT) Group in the Informatics Department at the University of Sussex invites applications for a PhD (DPhil) CASE Studentship, available from October 2007. The successful candidate will join the Interact Lab in HCT. The HCT is an internationally renowned research centre in HCI/CSCW, interaction design, pervasive computing and interactive learning environments, recognised with an EPSRC Platform Grant in Human Centred Technology. This research will be carried out in conjunction with an international games development company, Black Rock Studio (previously called CLIMAX, now owned by Disney) which is located in Brighton.

The studentship on offer concerns issues of usability analysis of video games. The development of modern video games is both a lengthy and expensive process. Subjective opinions from the game's stakeholders can lead to the delay of decisions being made for art style, design features and implementation decisions. It is proposed that conducting usability/user experience evaluations as part of the game development process will introduce objectivity and metrics, therefore speeding up development time and reducing costs. The main aim of this research will be to explore new user testing methodologies for the video game development process.

The successful candidate will ideally have a background in Human-Computer Interaction and an interest in computer-based games and usability/user experience issues.

The studentships are open to UK nationals or EU nationals who have been resident in the UK for three years (including for study). Applicants should have an excellent first degree in a relevant discipline. The studentships are fully-funded (ie pay tuition fees at the UK/EU rate as well as a tax-free maintenance stipend of 12,600 pa for 2007/8; 13,100 pa for 2008/9; 13,600 pa for 2009/10). EU nationals who have not been resident in the UK for three years will be eligible for fees only.

For further details please contact Graham McAllister <g.mcallister (at) sussex.ac.uk> or Geraldine Fitzpatrick <g.a.fitzpatrick (at) sussex.ac.uk>. See also <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/1-2-2.html> for general information about research degrees and <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/> for information about the Informatics Department and research groups.

Application forms and online submission available via <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/publications/pgrad2007/applying>.

Deadline for applications is August 24 2007.