

# Fellow Profile



## Emeritus Professor Jenny Edwards University of Technology Sydney

Jenny Edwards is an Emeritus Professor of IT at UTS. Following a teaching and research career in IT, she now contributes to the sector through University reviews and ICT program accreditations for the Australian Computer Society.

**Fellowship title:** TEACHING NOVICE COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS:  
bringing the scholarly approach to Australia

**Year completed:** 2010

**Expertise key words:** ICT, quality, education

**What did you achieve?:** This was a joint Fellowship with Raymond Lister, which built on previous work by the Fellows, particularly the BRACElet project of Raymond and others. Leveraging off this work, by the formal end of the Fellowship in 2010, there were 46 active participants in our action research (2007 – 2010) from 14 Australian, 8 New Zealand and 8 other international universities and institutions.

In 2010, a number of these participants announced 4 spinoff projects across 4 countries. The outcomes of the Fellowship and its subsequent spinoff projects have been and continue to be promulgated through many workshops, papers, sets of exam questions and comparative research studies to computer education groups across Australia, New Zealand and internationally. This means that the many institutions in which the snowballing numbers of participants teach now take a much more scholarly approach to the learning and teaching of introductory programming via the use of well thought out and thoroughly tested assessment. The collaborative multi-institution, multi-participant action research approach means that scientific rigour in analysing approaches to teaching and assessing introductory programming replaced folk pedagogy. The extensive dissemination of all the results encourages many newcomers to participate in and apply the ongoing work.

Another aim of the Fellowship was to show how to eliminate gender bias in the teaching of novice programmers, a critical issue if more women are to be encouraged into IT careers. The extensive bank of resources which has been and is still being developed has been designed and carefully tested to be gender neutral. The result is actually better assessment for all students.

It takes a village to raise a child – it takes active network participants to promulgate and enhance a Fellowship.

**What does the sector need now?:** Rather than one off teaching initiatives, individuals should use existing networks, in our case, Australian Computer Education, to conduct joint education projects to spread successful results widely



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