

**Josephine W. Finn**  
**Head of Department of Adult & Community Education, National University of Ireland Maynooth**



**Josephine Finn** was appointed Head of the Department of Adult and Community Education at the National University of Ireland Maynooth in 2010. She has been involved in adult education for over thirty years, first as a student and later as an educator and academic.

Josephine is the epitome of a lifelong learner. She began her studies as a mature student in 1982 when she participated in a part-time outreach course, offered by NUI Maynooth, in her local community school.

Almost ten years later, she began her Bachelors degree; she completed her professional studies in Adult and Community Education in 1995.

Her career in adult education began as a 'freelance' educator. She worked part-time as a lecturer/facilitator in a number of higher education institutions, community education initiatives, industry and with the Irish public broadcasting corporation. She started working full-time in the Department of Adult and Community Education in 2000 when she took up the post as Head of Continuing Education. During the eleven years that she held this post her work centred on: broadening access, developing progression pathways and overseeing the development of the Department's undergraduate courses.

In her role as Head of Department, her work focuses on the development of programmes (to PhD level) for teachers in adult, community and further education; research and publication and policy development in university adult and lifelong education.

Her personal research focus is in the area of recognition of prior learning, 'learning to learn', and practitioner research. In relation to the latter, she is particularly interested in research methodologies that enable 'practitioners' to research and write about their professional experiences and knowledge. She is currently involved in a European funded project (DIALOGUE) that aims to explore the dichotomies that exist between research and practice in lifelong learning.