

Pre-service Teacher Education in the Context of Lifelong Learning

Dr Anne Dolan
Dept of Learning, Society & Religious Education

Lifelong Learning has become a prominent feature of educational policy in recent years around the world. In Ireland, the recently established Teaching Council recognises teachers as lifelong learners and initial teacher education for primary teachers is due for reform with the introduction of a four year B.Ed. Degree Programme. This paper explores the relationship between lifelong learning and initial teacher education. My research which is informed by my doctoral research and more recent desk based research highlights some of the contradictions which exist between the actual delivery of teacher education in Ireland and the aspirations of lifelong learning. There is a need to re-conceptualise teacher education in Ireland towards incorporating lifelong learning principles in terms of programme content and modes of delivery. Primary teachers are in a unique position to facilitate greater levels of lifelong learning in society in the future. In the context of a changing environment for teacher education, this paper provides practical recommendations for teacher education which are informed by the policies of lifelong learning.