

**Jane Nolan MBE**

Jane is a Lecturer in Enterprise with the International Centre for Music Studies, School of Arts and Cultures, Newcastle University. She has recently completed her PhD thesis, *Narrating employability from English Studies: an ethnographic study*. She has a BA (Hons) in English Language and Literature, an MA in English Literature and an MBA (Open). She has been recognised as a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Jane can be reached at [jane.nolan@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:jane.nolan@ncl.ac.uk).



Prior to joining Newcastle University, Jane was the owner and Chief Executive of a multi-award winning technical clothing company and was an employer. She was awarded the MBE for services to UK Exports, won a UKTI Achievement in Export award and was the 2006 NE Woman Rural Entrepreneur of the Year. She has also played a proactive role in the community over many years, including working as a non-executive director of the Regional Development Agency, acting as a charity trustee and chairing Northumberland Strategic Partnership.

In contributing to the final panel session on the value of English in the workplace, Jane drew on her longitudinal ethnographic doctoral research. During more than five years of fieldwork, she developed ongoing relationships with research participants, both during their disciplinary studies and their careers after graduation. Employability is explored within Jane's research as a complex and socially-embedded process of situated, lifelong learning. This moves it from being an abstract, generalised concept, to one which can be understood through detailed individual narratives and stories. The research project produced richly nuanced data about how employability is perceived, developed, embodied in situated practice and articulated. In a time of disruptive and rapid technological change, the research participants' narratives provide evidence that the skills and capabilities which are developed by studying English are valuable for 21st century workplaces.