

## **PROFESSOR SIR BRUCE RODDA WILLIAMS KBE – FORMER VICE-CHANCELLOR (1967–81)**

Professor Sir Bruce Rodda Williams KBE was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, and therefore an *ex-officio* Fellow of Senate, from 1967 to 1981.

He served as a Fellow of Senate appointed by the Minister from 1994 to 1997.

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### **PROFILE**

(1919 - 2010)

KBE, BA *Melb* MA *Adel* MA(Econ) *Manc* HonDLitt *Keele & Sydney* HonLLD *Melb & Manc* –  
HonDEcon *Qld* HonDSc *Aston*, FASSA

– **Vice-Chancellor and *ex-officio* Fellow of Senate 1967 - 1981**

– **Fellow of Senate 1994 - 1997**

Chair, Senate's Finance Committee: 1994 - 1997

### **His early years**

Bruce Rodda Williams was born at Warrigal, Victoria and educated at Wesley College and the University of Melbourne.

### **His career**

After academic positions in Adelaide, Belfast and North Staffordshire he became professor of economics at Manchester and a consultant to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

While in England he took part in the creation of two innovative universities, at Keele and Lancaster. He also became economic advisor to the Ministry of Technology and a member of the Prices and Incomes Board - an experience that influenced his views as a board member of the Reserve Bank of Australia from 1969 to 1981.

He returned to Australia in 1967 to become Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, an office he held from 1967 to 1981.

He was knighted Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) for services to education and government in 1980.

Sir Bruce returned to England for a period to direct the New Technical Change Centre and was a visiting professor at Imperial College.

He was keenly interested in a wide variety of cultural affairs and was chair of the Sydney International Piano Competition Australia from 1988 to 2003. He also helped establish the Cladan Cultural Exchange Institute of Australia, which he chaired from 1976 to 1982.

Sir Bruce was a prolific writer and the author of 13 books on industry, investment and education.

### **Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney 1967 - 1981**

He returned to Australia in 1967 to become Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, an office he held from 1967 to 1981. His period in charge coincided with the rise of student radicalism and protests against the Vietnam War.

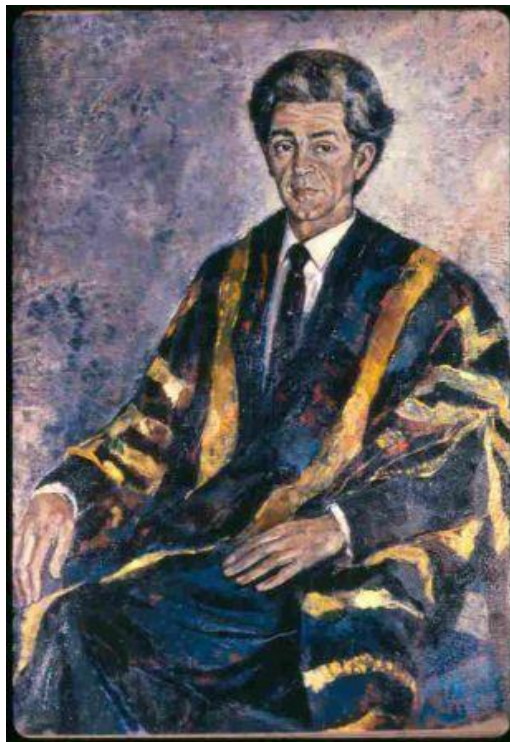
During his tenure he was chair of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee from 1972 to 1974, and chaired several important national government enquiries. He was president of the Committee of Enquiry into Education and Training (1976 - 1979), and chair of the Review of the Discipline of Engineering (1987 - 1988).



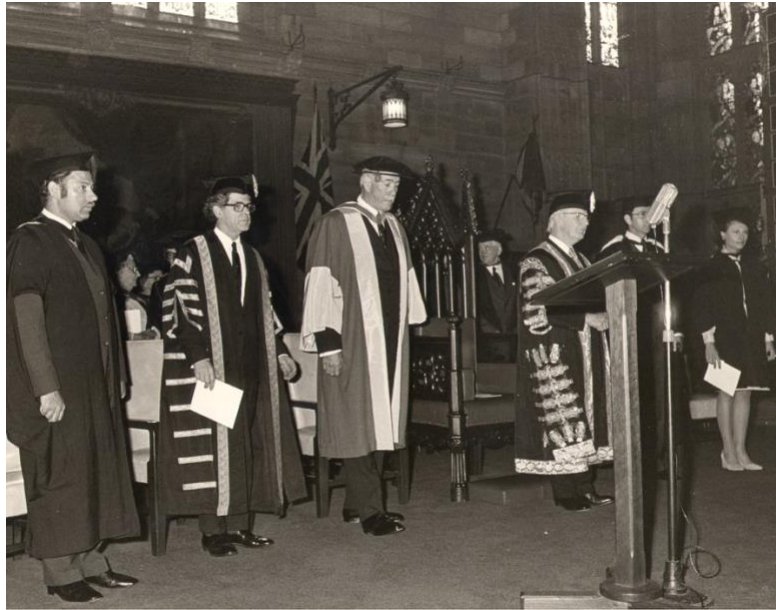
Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Rodda Williams KBE in the 1970s, *photo G3\_224\_1598, University of Sydney Archives.*



Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Williams and Deputy Chancellor the Hon David Mayer Selby AM ED QC, *photo, University of Sydney Archives.*



Portrait of Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Rodda Williams KBE, 1972 by Judy Cassab, *University Art Collection, reproduced with the kind permission of Judy Cassab and the University of Sydney.*



Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Williams with Visitor Sir Roden Cutler, who gave an address, and Chancellor Sir Hermann Black at the annual meeting of Convocation in the Great Hall on 14 October 1973 which was followed by an afternoon tea in the Quadrangle, *photo, University of Sydney Archives.*



From left Dr Ken Knight, Mr Hugh McCredie, Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Williams, Professor Michael Gleeson and Professor John Ward in 1980, *photo G3\_224\_1617, University of Sydney Archives.*

## Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*)

The degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*) was conferred upon Professor Sir Bruce Williams in 1982.



Chancellor Sir Hermann Black conferring the degree of Doctor of the University upon former Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Bruce Williams in 1982, *photo G77\_1\_851, University of Sydney Archives.*

## His membership of Senate

He continued to take a keen interest in the affairs of the University and later served as a fellow of the University Senate, appointed by the Minister for Education from 1994 to 1997, during which period he chaired the Senate's Finance Committee.



Professor Sir Bruce Williams with Dame Leonie Kramer at a dinner held in the Boardroom, Darlington Centre, the University of Sydney on 20 December 2001, in honour of Dame Leonie Kramer following her retirement as Chancellor, *photo, courtesy of ZOOM Productions.*

## In memoriam

Sir Bruce Williams passed away in August 2010. A memorial ceremony to celebrate his life was held in the Great Hall on Monday 23 August 2010.