

Emeritus Professor William Arthur Brown CBE

Doctor of Economics (honoris causa)

Conferring ceremony: 11.30am, 11 December 2015

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Emeritus Professor William Arthur Brown CBE to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Economics (honoris causa) in recognition of his exceptional achievements and eminence in the fields of industrial relations and labour economics.

For many years, Professor Brown has been a most eminent scholar in these fields, not only in the United Kingdom but also at the international level. He is arguably one of the most influential academics of his generation in both research and policy formulation. William has also had considerable influence in Australia as a distinguished academic visitor and an important advisor on industrial relations policies to various governments at both state and federal levels.

William recently retired from the University of Cambridge in the UK where he held numerous positions at the highest levels for almost thirty years. He held the Montague Burton Professor of Industrial Relations from 1985 to 2012. He served with distinction as the Master of Darwin College from 2000-2012. At various times he chaired both the Faculty of Economics and Politics as well as the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Cambridge. He was the Head of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences from 2009-2012.

Professor Brown has published six books and monographs and well in excess of 100 chapters in books and scholarly papers in high ranking international academic journals. His first book, *Piecework Bargaining*, published in 1973 has become a classic in this field. *The Changing Contours of British Industrial Relations*, published in 1981, provided an authoritative account of the changing nature of industrial relations during a turbulent period in Britain. *The Evolution of the Modern Workplace*, published in 2009, used data from successive workplace surveys to analyse the way in which collective bargaining had given way to a more individualised system of employment arrangements in the UK over several decades.

After graduating from Wadham College, University of Oxford, William joined the British National Board on Prices and Incomes as an economist. He was appointed to Warwick University where he became the Acting Director and then Director of the Economic and Social Research Council's Industrial Relations Research Unit from 1979 to 1985. Under William's leadership, this became the foremost research centre for industrial relations in Britain and gained an international reputation for excellence and influence in this field. William continued his leadership of industrial relations and labour relations research at Cambridge University not only through his research and teaching but also through his influence as a PhD supervisor and academic administrator. He has been a frequent visitor to Australia and was a Reserve Bank of Australia Visiting Research Fellow at Flinders University of South Australia in 1978.

William has played a key role in several important labour market institutions in Britain during the past thirty years. He continues to be a member of the panel of arbitrators of the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) to which he was appointed in 1985 and has served as a member of its Council. He was appointed by the UK government as a member of the Low Pay Commission from 1997-2007. He was Chair of the Trade Union Congress Partnership Institute Advisory Board from 2005-2010 and was a member of the Union Modernisation Fund Supervisory Board from 2005-2010. William was awarded the title of Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 2003 for 'services to employment relations'.

William is focusing much of his current research on the evolution of Chinese employment relations and protecting labour standards in a global economy. He is working on several research projects funded by the UK and Chinese governments and is a consultant to the Chinese Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. William is an Honorary Professor at Renmin University in Beijing and has been instrumental in bringing together international and Chinese scholars to examine developments in Chinese employment relations.

As a frequent visitor to the University of Sydney, Professor Brown has developed close links with researchers in the Work and Organisational Studies Discipline in the Business School. He has supervised

graduates from this Discipline to the completion of their doctorates at Cambridge University. He has also collaborated with colleagues at the University of Sydney, contributed to conferences and publications, including the *Journal of Industrial Relations* on which he serves as a member of the editorial advisory board

Chancellor, I present Professor William Brown CBE for admission to the degree of Doctor of Economics (honoris causa) and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.