

Citation for the Award of the Degree of Laws *honoris causa*

to

The Hon Catherine Branson QC

The Hon Catherine Branson QC recently retired following a long and esteemed career during which she provided distinguished service, in several capacities, to the law and to the cause of human rights protection and education. In addition, she has been a welcome supporter and contributor to the Flinders Law School.

Ms Branson commenced her University studies by being assigned, in its first year of operation, to Flinders and subsequently completed a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws at the University of Adelaide. Following graduation, Ms Branson served between 1984 and 1989 as Crown Solicitor of South Australia and as the CEO of the South Australian Attorney-General's Department. She moved to the Bar in 1989, and was appointed one of Her Majesty's Counsel (QC) in 1992.

Her judicial career commenced in 1994 with appointment as a judge of the Federal Court of Australia. At the time of her appointment, Ms Branson was a member of the Board of Examiners of the Supreme Court of South Australia; a council member of the University of South Australia; and a Trustee of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. She had earlier been Deputy Chair of the Adelaide Medical Centre for Women and Children and a member of the National Women's Advisory Council.

Ms Branson has made an ongoing contribution to Flinders Law School. She was instrumental in working with Professor Suzanne Corcoran to establish the original Judicial Fellow scheme, an initiative that has since been copied by other universities. She was the first female Judicial Fellow under the scheme in the Law School, playing a very active part in the scholarly and educational life of the School during this period and being the distinguished guest speaker at Flinders Law School Prize Ceremonies. In recognition of the 10th anniversary of the commencement of teaching in the Flinders Law School, and because of the Fellows' program, she was a member of the full bench of the Federal Court panel that sat in 2001 in the Moot Court at Flinders University, the first time that the full Bench had sat outside Court premises.

Having established a reputation in human rights and international law, strengths of the Flinders Law School, and after nearly a decade and a half on the Federal Court bench, Ms Branson was appointed as President of the Australian Human Rights Commission on 7 August 2008. She formally commenced her five year term on 14 October 2008. On 12 July 2009 she additionally became the Human Rights Commissioner, a position she held until her retirement in July 2012.

Ms Branson is a past President of the Australian Institute for Judicial Administration, a former member of the Board of Management of IDLO (a governmental organisation based in Rome enjoying observer status at the United Nations), a member of the International Association of Judges, a member of the International Association of Refugee Law Judges and convenor of the latter association's Human Rights Nexus Working Party. Throughout her career she has been a supporter of Flinders staff at a national level.

The Hon Catherine Branson QC has demonstrated with distinction the values underpinning the legal profession, values which the Flinders Law School strives to instil in its students and graduates.