

PROFESSOR GAVIN BROWN AO – FORMER VICE-CHANCELLOR (1996–2008)

Professor Gavin Brown AO was Vice-Chancellor and Fellow of Senate of the University of Sydney from 1996 to 2008.

PROFILE

(1942 - 2010)

AO, MA *StAnd* PhD *Newcastle(UK)* HonLLD *StAnd & Dundee*, FAA CorrFRSE

Vice-Chancellor and ex-officio Fellow of Senate 1996 - 2008

Education and career

Professor Gavin Brown AO FAA CorrFRSE, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Sydney, was born on 27 February 1942 in Lundin Links, Fife, Scotland. Dux of Madras College, St Andrews, he was awarded a Harkness Scholarship for study at the University of St Andrews, where he graduated with a Master of Arts degree (1st Class Honours and the Duncan Medal) in 1963. Professor Brown was then awarded a Carnegie Scholarship, which enabled him to undertake postgraduate study at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne where he was awarded a PhD in 1966. Professor Brown also spent a year as a Junior Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

Professor Brown commenced his academic career at the University of Liverpool, where he rose to the rank of Senior Lecturer in Mathematics. After accepting the Chair of Pure Mathematics at the University of New South Wales in 1975, Professor Brown and his family emigrated to Australia. At the University of New South Wales, Professor Brown held a number of academic administrative posts, including Head of the Department of Pure Mathematics, Head of the School of Mathematics and, from 1989 - 1992, Dean of the Faculty of Science.

During his time at UNSW, Professor Brown's mathematical research and, in particular, his work involving Fourier analysis, led to the award of the Sir Edmund Whittaker Memorial Prize and the Australian Mathematical Society Medal. He was also elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and later became a member of its Council (1992-1995) and Vice-President (1993-1994). Professor Brown also held Visiting Professorships at the University of Paris, the University of Cambridge and the University of Washington.

From 1988-1993, Professor Brown was also actively involved in the work of the Australian Research Council. He chaired several of its funding committees and, during 1992-1993, was a member of its Council.

Professor Brown moved to Adelaide in 1992 when he was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Adelaide. In January 1994, he became Vice-Chancellor and held this post until he resigned on 30 June 1996. Features of Professor Brown's period as Vice-Chancellor included a major restructuring of University management, a strong focus on links with industry and a programmed return of the University's budget to surplus. Professor Brown was also very active in national and regional committees during his time at the

University. The most notable of these was his service as Chair of the National Advisory Group on Science and Technology Awareness and Promotion.

Vice-Chancellor, University of Sydney 1996 - 2008

Professor Brown held the position of Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Sydney from 1 July 1996 to 10 July 2008. During his tenure the University of Sydney reasserted its leadership role in Australia dominating each of the major Australian Research Council funding categories and obtaining outstanding National Health and Medical Research Council results. The University's reputation for quality learning and teaching was demonstrated by its increasing percentage share of first preference applications for admission over the last several years in which it has drawn even further ahead of all its competitors. Professor Brown was also active in supporting the overall student experience and encouraging extra-curricular activity such as sport and debating. Sydney University won the Australian Student Games for the last five years, provided many Olympian and Paralympian athletes and won the World Student Debating Championships as well as the Australasian competition.

Author of more than 100 research papers, Professor Brown continued active mathematical research and was on the board of several international journals. He was a regular commentator on higher education policy and has given invited presentations to international meetings, most recently in China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Hong Kong, Germany, US and Britain.

As Vice-Chancellor, he was President of the international group of universities, Academic Consortium 21, Vice-Chair of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities and Foundation Chairman of the Go8 universities. He was on the executive of the Business Higher Education Round Table and the Global Foundation and served on the Australian government's Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council.

In 1997 Professor Brown was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws by the University of St Andrews and in 2004 an honorary Doctor of Laws by the University of Dundee. In January 2006 Professor Brown was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia. In March 2007 Professor Brown was elected as a Corresponding Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Professor Brown retired as Vice-Chancellor on 10 July 2008.

The same year, Professor Brown was appointed as the Inaugural Director of The Royal Institution of Australia (RiAus) in Adelaide.

2008 - 2010

Inaugural Director, Royal Institution of Australia 2008 - 2010

Professor Gavin Brown was appointed in 2008 as the Inaugural Director of The Royal Institution of Australia (RiAus) in Adelaide.

Emeritus Professor, 4 August 2008

On 4 August 2008, Senate's Chair Appointments Committee conferred the title of Emeritus Professor upon Professor Brown.

Honorary degree, 15 May 2009

The degree of Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*) of the University of Sydney was conferred upon Emeritus Professor Brown by the Chancellor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, on 15 May 2009.

In memoriam

The University of Sydney community was saddened to hear of the death of Professor Brown, who suffered a heart attack at his Adelaide home after a 2010 Christmas Day lunch with his family.

Memorial Ceremony, 18 February 2011

A Memorial Ceremony to celebrate the life of Professor Brown was held at 10.00am on Friday 18 February in the Great Hall, the University of Sydney, where tributes were given by Dr Michael Spence, Vice-Chancellor and Principal; Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Chancellor; Emeritus Professor Ken Eltis, former Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor; and Jennifer Doubell.