**Citation for Dr Michael Spence AC**

Doctor of Laws (Honoris Causa)

Wednesday, 11 October 2022 - 12.00pm

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Dr Michael Spence AC to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) in recognition of his outstanding contribution in the field of intellectual property law, his extraordinary contribution to the University of Sydney and for his eminent service to the tertiary education sector nationally and internationally.

An alumnus of the University of Sydney, Michael graduated in 1985 with a Bachelor of Arts with first‑class honours in both English and Italian and in 1987 with first class honours in law. He was also awarded a Diploma of Language Studies (Korean) from the University in 2020.

Michael lectured in law at the University and worked for the Australian Copyright Council prior to departing Australia for the UK to study at Oxford. There, he obtained a Doctor of Philosophy and a Postgraduate Diploma in Theology, becoming a Fellow of St Catherine’s College. During his 20 years at Oxford, he headed the Law Faculty, was chair of the Law Board and then Head of the Social Sciences Division.

Michael was admitted to the Supreme Court of NSW in 1987 and has held a number of visiting appointments in Boston, Munich and Siena and was twice a Parsons Fellow at the University of Sydney Law School.

Michael is internationally recognised as a leader in the field of intellectual property theory and has lectured on intellectual property-related topics around the world. His work includes articles and books on both intellectual property law and the law of obligations.

Michael returned to the University of Sydney as Vice-Chancellor in 2008 and during his tenure led a distinctive effort to position the University as a leading global institution. Under his leadership, the University established 10 new multidisciplinary initiatives, funded cutting-edge research, invested in world-leading infrastructure, undertook a major and radical overhaul of the undergraduate curriculum to ensure our students had deep disciplinary expertise but also real world problem-solving and teamwork skills, opened up new pathways for students from schools from less well serviced areas, developed a vital Indigenous strategy and appointed the first ever Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous in Australia. Under his leadership the University broadened and deepened its engagement with key international institutions throughout the world, especially in our region. He became a powerful voice for the importance of higher education in a challenging public policy environment. In spite of many voices of doubt that large-scale philanthropy was possible in Australia, Michael pioneered a philanthropy strategy and devoted great energy and insight into making Sydney the first University in the country to enter into a major whole-of-institution public fundraising campaign, with the crowning achievement that we became the first institution in Australia to obtain $1 billion in philanthropic support through such a campaign. This has inspired other Australian universities to follow suit, with a welcome uplift in philanthropy for the whole sector, although Sydney continues to lead the way.

In 2017, Dr Spence was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours List for eminent service to leadership of the tertiary education sector, to the advancement of equitable access to educational opportunities, to developing strategic programs focused on multidisciplinary research, and for his contribution to the Anglican Church of Australia.

In 2019, he received a Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Asia-Pacific Leadership Award for his visionary leadership and profound impact upon the University of Sydney in presiding over the INSPIRED philanthropy campaign.

In January 2022, after 12 years as our University’s Vice-Chancellor, Michael commenced as President and Provost at University College London, one of the world’s leading universities. In recognition of Michael’s significant work and impact as the University of Sydney’s 25th Vice-Chancellor and Principal, the Administration Building was renamed the Michael Spence Building and if you look under the Memorial Arch just beside the Quadrangle, a plaque with one of Michael’s most memorial quotes “We must learn to disagree well” has been installed.

Chancellor, I present Dr Michael Spence AC for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) and invite you to confer the degree upon him.