

Amanda Vanstone citation

*Tuesday 2nd of May 2017
11:00am – Faculty of Arts*

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Amanda Eloise Vanstone.

The Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University is being awarded to Amanda Vanstone in acknowledgement of her exceptionally distinguished service to society as one of Australia's most high-profile and influential female politicians, as well as her subsequent public service and ongoing contribution to the community at large. As a Senator for South Australia, she held many influential and senior positions within the Australian government. Today she continues to wield influence through a variety of roles, and as media political commentator and national radio presenter.

The Honourable Amanda Vanstone was born in Adelaide and educated at St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School before studying arts and law here at the University of Adelaide. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts in 1981 and a Bachelor of Laws in 1983, before completing a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and a Certificate in Marketing Studies from what was then the South Australian Institute of Technology.

Before entering politics, Ms Vanstone worked in retail, small business and the legal field.

Ms Vanstone entered the Australian Parliament in 1984, and at that stage was the youngest member of the Senate at the age of 31. She served as a Liberal Senator for South Australia for 23 years until her resignation in 2007.

She was re-elected in 1987, 1993, 1998 and 2004 and became one of only two female members of the Howard Cabinet following the 1996 election that brought the Coalition to power. She was a leading member of the moderate Liberal faction and a mentor to younger Liberal moderates.

In government Ms Vanstone held many prominent ministerial portfolios over more than a decade, including: Minister for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs; Minister for Justice; Minister for Justice and Customs; Minister for Family and Community Services; Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women; Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Reconciliation; Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Indigenous Affairs; and Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Throughout her career she displayed consistently distinguished service, proving to be a forthright and influential member of major committees, including: the Senate Select Committee on Sales Tax Legislation; Senate Estimates Committee; and the Joint Statutory committees on the National Crime Authority. As an opposition backbencher, she was instrumental in introducing televised parliamentary proceedings.

Ms Vanstone continued to demonstrate distinguished service as Australian Ambassador to Italy from 2007 to 2010 and Commissioner on the Federal Commission of Audit from 2013 to 2014.

In 2015, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull appointed her to the 16-member Indigenous Referendum Council, advising the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition on progress towards the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution.

She continues to have a strong impact through her continuing political commentary and service, including her role as presenter of ABC Radio National's Counterpoint program; her ongoing contribution on the Board of the Port Adelaide Football Club; and her role as Chair of Vision 20/20 Australia, which is part of the World Health Organization initiative, *The Right to Sight*.

It is therefore with great pleasure I present to you the Honourable Amanda Vanstone, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws, for admission to the degree of Doctor of the University (*honoris causa*).