

Jane Stapleton citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Barbara Jane Stapleton.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) is being awarded to Professor Jane Stapleton in acknowledgement of her distinguished service to the law and the legal profession in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Professor Stapleton is internationally regarded for her expertise in the fields of tort and personal injury law. She has pursued this work at the highest level across four decades, including academic and leadership roles, research and consultancies on complex cases within her field.

Born in Sydney in 1952, Professor Stapleton was initially educated in science – she earned a Bachelor of Science with First Class Honours from the University of New South Wales, and a PhD in Chemistry at the University of Adelaide.

Soon after, Jane made a critical decision to change her career to law. She received a Bachelor of Laws with First Class Honours and received the University Medal from the Australian National University. She went on to complete a D.Phil in Law at the University of Oxford, Balliol College – this was to be her second of three doctorates, many years later receiving a Doctor of Civil Law from the University of Oxford.

Professor Stapleton was admitted as a Barrister of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 1981, and to the High Court of Australia in 1984.

In the 1980s and '90s she held various academic positions with the University of Sydney Law School, Trinity College, and Balliol College, Oxford.

By 1996 she had been made Reader in Law at the University of Oxford.

The following year, Professor Stapleton was appointed Research Professor of Law at the Australian National University – a position she held for 19 years.

For most of this century until 2016, Professor Stapleton has held academic Chairs simultaneously at ANU, Oxford and the University of Texas – a remarkable achievement in itself, and testament to her standing in the legal community. In 2011 and 2012 she was also the Arthur Goodhart Professor of Legal Science at Cambridge, one of the world's most prestigious legal chairs.

Professor Stapleton is currently Master at Christ's College, University of Cambridge, and is a Distinguished Professor at ANU.

Her expertise on torts and physical and economic loss has been highly sought after the world over. In recognition of her contributions to the development of American law, Professor Stapleton was elected a Member of the American Law Institute, and she is the first and only non-US lawyer ever elected to its Council.

In recognition of the importance of her academic work, Professor Stapleton has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy, and as a Fellow of both the Australian Academy of Social Sciences and Australian Academy of Law.

In the United States, she is the first and only non-US recipient of the Prosser Award of the American Association of Law Schools for her "outstanding contribution to the world of tort law scholarship".

Professor Stapleton is also the first and only non-US recipient of the American bar Association's Robert B Mackay Law Professor Award, presented for attorneys "who have shown commitment to the advancement of justice, scholarship and the legal profession, demonstrated by outstanding contributions to the fields of tort and insurance law".

Throughout her career, Jane Stapleton has excelled as an academic, as a lawyer, and as a true global leader in the profession in the field of tort law.

Chancellor, I am very pleased and proud to present to you Professor Barbara Jane Stapleton, Bachelor of Science, Doctor of Philosophy, Bachelor of Laws, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Civil Law, for admission to the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa).