

2016 UQ DECEMBER GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Saturday 10 December 2016 – 1.00pm
UQ Centre, Union Road, UQ St Lucia Campus

Faculty of Business, Economics and Law

CITATION FOR HONORARY DOCTORATE RECIPIENT, THE HONOURABLE CHIEF JUSTICE CATHERINE HOLMES

Chancellor

Chief Justice Catherine Holmes is Queensland's most senior judge, renowned for her intelligence and integrity, who is also admired for her service to crucial public inquiries and her resolute commitment to equity and fairness.

Born and schooled in Queensland, the Chief Justice began her tertiary studies at the Australian National University, where she graduated in economics and started a law degree. After marrying a University of Queensland PhD student in the mid-1970s, she returned to Brisbane and enrolled in law at UQ.

So began a long relationship with this university - a relationship which has included being a part-time research assistant in the psychology department, a master of laws (advanced) student, an arts (honours) student, and an ongoing contributor to many activities that benefit students, graduates and staff.

Admitted first as a solicitor and then as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland, Chief Justice Holmes began working as a Commonwealth crown prosecutor in 1984 – the year she also became a founding member of the Women's Legal Service, which was set up to give free legal services to Queensland women.

Joining private chambers in 1986, she took briefs in areas including crime, personal injuries and administrative law, often working pro bono.

In the next decade, while raising three small children with her husband, Dr Arthur Preston, she served as a part-time member of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, as Deputy President of the Queensland Community Corrections Board, and as counsel assisting the Forde Commission of Inquiry into Child Abuse.

Taking silk in 1999, the Chief Justice acted as a judge of the District Court of Queensland, and became a Supreme Court judge in 2000. At her swearing in she acknowledged that as a woman with a working class background, she was in a minority on the Bench, but that "I aspire only to fairness, reasonableness and some compassion and I don't think those qualities are gender-linked".

Quickly acquiring an impeccable judicial reputation, she served as the criminal list judge and the presiding judge of the Queensland Mental Health Court, and was promoted to the Court of Appeal.

She led the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland's 2010-'11 floods.

In September 2015, amid intense public scrutiny of the office, she was named as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court – the first woman in the job.

Her appointment met with widespread and bipartisan approval.

Despite an enormously demanding schedule, the Chief Justice remains a generous enhancer of activities at UQ and elsewhere. Within a day of being named Chief Justice she took part in a UQ panel on women and the law. She has since addressed a Women's College dinner and a Law School awards night, launched a book on judicial independence co-edited by a UQ academic, and penned a candid foreword for a new edition of a history of the Law School.

Chancellor, I present to you the Honourable Chief Justice Catherine Holmes, Bachelor of Economics of Australian National University, Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Arts with honours and Master of Laws (Advanced) of this University, for the award of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*, bestowed by the Senate of The University of Queensland.