

Prof Elizabeth Hall - Hon Doctor of Science

The Board of Governors and the Academic Board of the University of Chichester have resolved to confer an Honorary Doctor of Science to Professor Lisa Hall. Could I please ask Lisa to come forward and join the Chair of Governors.

In making this award we recognize and celebrate the lifetime achievement of a career committed to excellence in Science and in Education.

Its recipient is an impressive role model for all our students who rather than accepting glass ceilings as an inevitable obstacle in our society, one that often clouds the perception of evident strengths, diverse styles and effective capabilities, has instead consistently obliterated legal and social barriers leading in every aspect of academia, through example and through supporting others.

Indeed, in 2003 Professor Lisa Hall became the first female Professor of Queens' College, Cambridge.

Her meteoric career started in 1974 when Lisa sat in a graduation ceremony very much like this one, at Queen Mary College, University of London. She was then graduating in Chemistry with that same feeling of hopeful expectation about what the future would look like... very much like you might be feeling today.

Just a few years later, Lisa was awarded a PhD in Chemistry, also at Queen Mary, University of London, and went on to pursue an impressive international career that led to becoming a Chair in Analytical Biotechnology at Queens' College, Cambridge, where in 2013 she became Vice-President, shattering to pieces yet another glass ceiling.

The goal for the Institute has, since, been uncompromising: to be a centre of excellence in Biotechnology, with an international

reputation for highest quality research and innovation and it is unquestionable that Lisa has had a pivotal role in building the Institute and this goal.

However, her interest in Science long preceded this impressive academic journey. In fact Lisa mentions a keen interest in Analytical Science from the age of 4. In her own words Lisa states that:

*“For as long as I can remember analytical science was my ambition. I imagine that it must have raised an adult smile to hear this serious 4–6 year old declare that she was going to be an analytical chemist, not a ballerina or a nurse or any of the other ambitions of little girls. There may have been some impact (genetic or environmental) in having a mother who had studied chemistry and a father who was a public analyst but, my memory is not of parental influence but sibling impact. With an elder brother that was talking of the ‘family business’, this was clearly the right thing for a 4 year old also to aim for!”*

Lisa is an internationally recognised authority in her field with her research encompassing areas of chemistry, biomedical engineering, and physics.

She is also the President of Disability Snowsports UK. On this people-centred organisation Lisa works with a unique sense of purpose: that anyone regardless of their disability can take part in and enjoy the thrill of snowsports. Lisa has applied exceptional know-how and adaptability for over 30 years to enable those with a disability to experience the joy of skiing alongside the able-bodied, enabling the provision of exciting and life enhancing activities for individuals or

groups who require adaptive equipment and/or special instruction and support.

Lisa's connection to our university is indeed very strong. In fact, I believe that Lisa is not only a professional colleague but also a good friend of our Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Seamus Higson. As fellow electrochemists, Lisa and Seamus have worked together on a number of fronts for many years, from both having acted as external examiners on a number of times for each other's PhD students - to having served together on (for example) UK Trade and Industry missions around the world. To give an idea of the timescale, in one instance, Seamus and his wife popped into Cambridge for collaboration when his wife was on maternity leave – with Lisa and Seamus struggling to put up a push chair for their eldest daughter when she was just a toddler (you may ask how many PhDs does it take to take to put up a push chair). This young lady is now the same age as many of you – and she is, like you are today, graduating in a few weeks time.

Lisa's incredible work has led to many honours:

She has achieved one of the highest honours in her field when, the Gold Medal by the Analytical Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry for innovation and leadership in Analytical Science.

Perhaps most notably, she has been appointed Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to higher education and to sport.

What is interesting to note is how lightly Lisa carries her achievement, standing across different fields with a genuine humility. Many who know Lisa through the world of science are unaware of what she has contributed to the world of para-sport; likewise many in this area are not so aware of her recognition as a scientist who has advanced her field in the way she has.

It is important to mention that Lisa is regarded as a great teacher and communicator. The Pilkington Teaching Prize, which was awarded to Lisa in 2001 in recognition of outstanding teaching. When asked what she would view as the ingredients necessary to achieve this skill, Lisa answered:

*I find it difficult to believe that dry dissemination and acquisition of scientific fact will excite anybody unless they can understand the context of that fact and the story that it tells. Some people do just memorise fact without emotion, but they miss out on that 'eureka' of understanding.*

*In order to maintain world leadership, it is important to provide our students (future leaders) with a background and training of the highest academic standard and with an understanding and familiarity of business, commerce and ethics that will equip them for leadership and judgement in their future careers.*

Chair of Governors, in awarding the highest academic honour available to any University, we express our respect and admiration for an outstanding career committed to excellence in Science and in Education. I present to you for the award of Honorary Doctor of Science, Professor Lisa Hall.