

## The Rt Hon Lord Currie of Marylebone – Honoris Causa

Today we are delighted to award David, Lord Currie of Marylebone an honorary degree from City University London. Our honorary graduates are those who have achieved international academic distinction or held major leadership roles nationally or globally in the areas of business and the professions that the University serves and are considered to be appropriate role models for our students. Lord Currie more than fulfils these criteria. He is an expert in international economic policy with a long and distinguished career in academia and business and is also one of Government's most highly respected advisers.

David was born in Streatham, South London, shortly after the Second World War. As a child he had his sights firmly set on becoming a famous mathematician. He studied initially at The University of Manchester where he achieved a first class degree in mathematics and subsequently at The University of Birmingham where he gained his Masters degree in National Economic Planning. This led David to his first job as an Economist with Hoare Govett.

David enjoyed several successful years in the City, but for him the lure of academia was compelling: he accepted a position as Lecturer at Queen Mary College, University of London in 1972 and progressed rapidly to Professor of Economics there. And so began his illustrious academic career.

David subsequently spent 12 years at the London Business School, becoming Professor of Economics in 1988 and Deputy Dean for External Relations. It is no coincidence that during

David's time at the London Business School it rose steadily in the rankings to become one of the top business schools in the world.

David's career took a further turn in 1992 with his appointment as one of the six 'wise men' who formed the Treasury's panel of independent forecasters, advising the Tory government on economic issues. In 1996 he was made a Life Peer by the then Prime Minister Tony Blair and sits on the cross benches in the House of Lords as Lord Currie of Marylebone.

In 2001 David was appointed Dean of the City University Business School, as it was then, at that time a relatively unknown business school based in the Barbican and without its own front door. David was determined to change all that and he embarked on a strategy to create one of the best business schools in the world. In 2002, having secured a donation from the Sir John Cass Foundation, the School changed its name to the Sir John Cass Business School, Cass for short, and moved to its current premises in Bunhill Row. As well as investing in new facilities and programmes, David set about recruiting exceptional academic staff to Cass whilst exploiting the School's links with the City of London. He is without doubt the architect of the Cass Business School, ranked the third best in the UK and within the top 200 in the world, of which we are immensely proud today.

During his time at Cass, David's public role developed considerably. In 2002 he became the founding Chairman of Ofcom, the UK communications regulator, a role he held until 2009 and one he describes as perhaps the most challenging of his career. It involved the considerable task of merging five separate communications regulators into what is now regarded as a high performance organisation. David has perhaps most famously compared regulators to drains. 'If you notice them' he says 'there is a problem'.

David is currently Chairman of the International Centre for Financial Regulation, Chairman of Semperian PPP Investment Partners and a Board member of the Dubai Financial Services Authority, the Royal Mail and BDO Stoy Hayward. One of David's great passions is music and he is a Board member the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He is also a member of the Leveson Enquiry into the culture, practice and ethics of the press and in 2011 was appointed Chair of Council at the University of Essex.

David's significant achievements in business, academia and public life are testament to his exceptional personal skills. He is without doubt a true visionary and a great leader. He has the rare ability to bring people with him, no matter how difficult or complex the task or how daunting the expectation. Colleagues say he is a man who inspires in others a sense of entrepreneurial spirit and determination to be exceptional.

I am sure that you will agree that it is difficult to think of a more worthy person to receive an honorary degree.

In recognition of the distinction achieved in international economic policy and the leadership demonstrated as founding chairman of OfCom it is my great honour and privilege to present the Rt Hon Lord Currie of Marylebone, for the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.