

The Honorary Graduand: Robert Bourns

The Orator: Professor Nicholas Ryder

Robert Bourns is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws.

The youngest of 4 brothers, born following his parents' move to Bristol, Robert is a proud Bristolian.

Educated in Bristol and now living with his wife and their 4 children in South Gloucestershire, he has long been determined that young people growing up in the West of England should be given line of sight on the opportunities open to them, so that their ambitions are not limited by environment, lack of awareness or self-confidence.

He is a solicitor in practice, training with Osborne Clarke and in due course moving to a Bristol firm, Trumps. As Managing Partner he merged that firm with Lawrence Tucketts (in 2000), creating TLT LLP. In 2002 Robert was elected Senior Partner and working with the Managing Partner and their colleagues, saw the firm grow from its Bristol base to become a UK wide firm employing in excess of 1000 people.

In 2000 Robert said that the firm would only succeed if it made sense from the view of its clients and those working within it.

The theme of developing others continues to be a fundamental belief and driver. Robert is a trustee of ABLAZE (Bristol Learning Action Zone - promoting attainment of students at primary school and their ambitions at secondary school), a governor of Merchants' Academy (Hartcliffe), a supporter of Room 13 (an excellent arts project run by the students at Hareclive primary school) and the incoming President of The Law Society of England & Wales, where he has made it a theme to ensure that its 160,000 members are equipped with the skills to support their individual career ambitions, in a changing and competitive environment.

Robert recognises and advocates in support of the work UWE does to reach out to the community, supporting the ambitions of so many members of our diverse and strong community.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Robert Bourne's contribution to the legal environment in Bristol.