

## Citation - Emeritus Professor Annabelle Duncan

Emeritus Professor Annabelle Duncan PhD, FTSE, PSM, grew up in Nelson, New Zealand. After leaving school, Annabelle attended the University of Otago where she enrolled to study Pharmacy but partway through switched to the sciences, majoring in Microbiology. Then followed a Master of Science in which her thesis examined the survival of antibiotic-resistant bacteria through sewage oxidation ponds.

A move *across the ditch* in 1982 saw Annabelle take up a PhD at La Trobe University where she studied the interactions between microorganisms and algae and corals. This was followed by a Postdoctoral fellowship at Monash University where she worked in a project team alongside Monash and CSIRO scientists investigating biological removal of phosphate from sewage, signalling the beginning of a 16-year career with CSIRO, initially as a research scientist, later as a Divisional Chief.

From 1990 to 2005, Professor Duncan was appointed as advisor to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on biological weapons control, representing Australia at international arms control meetings and acting as a biological weapons inspector with the United Nations in Iraq. In 1996, for her service to disarmament, Annabelle Duncan received the Public Service Medal (PSM). In addition, she was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Science (DSc) from Murdoch University in 2005 and from La Trobe University in 2019.

From 2005 to 2008, Professor Duncan worked as the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer at the Bio21 Institute at Melbourne University. From 2008 until 2010 she was the Executive Director of Science Collaboration and Transition in the Centre for Agricultural Bioscience, a joint venture between La Trobe University and the Victorian Department of Primary Industries.

Joining UNE in 2010, Professor Duncan served, initially, as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), and subsequently as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, before being appointed to the role of Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer in 2014, a role she fulfilled until mid-2019.

As Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), her primary task was to improve UNE's research standing. By building a strong ERA reporting team, refocussing strategy and processes, enhancing funding support for international Higher Degree Research students, and by better communicating the impact narratives of the University's high-quality research, she substantially advanced its reputation on the national and international research stage.

As Vice-Chancellor and CEO, Annabelle led the development of the UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020 which recognised the important place that UNE has in the Australian community, the need to build upon its strengths, and the need to transform in some areas to remain a market leader. Some examples of her success include large agricultural development projects and partnerships in Indonesia, and a project promoting higher education and teacher training partnerships in Bhutan. Annabelle also tackled the sensitive issue of reviewing processes and cultural initiatives to address sexual assault and harassment in university residential colleges. Her open and transparent approach, including to contract the Australian Human Rights Commission to review current practices, was warmly received by the University and wider community.

In 2018, Professor Duncan was elected as a Fellow (FTSE) of the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE).

After retirement from UNE, Professor Duncan continues to serve on state and national bodies, and is currently the Chair of the NSW Physical Sciences Fund, the Chair of the Australian Council of Learned Academies Expert Working Group on Rural, Regional and Remote Research Excellence, Chair of the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship, Chair of the Asia Pacific International College and is a member of the Board of the Regional Australia Institute.

Professor Duncan believes in the transformative power of education and is passionate about removing barriers that prevent many people from rural, regional and disadvantaged communities from aspiring to post-compulsory education. In summary, Annabelle Duncan is an outstanding scholar and leader who has made impressive contributions to her discipline, to public service, to the community and to UNE.