# Stuart Patrick Honorary Graduate Speech

Principal, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen, soon to be fellow graduates.

I am doubly honoured to be receiving this award in your company today. First from the university with whom I studied to get an MBA over 30 years ago. And second to be so warmly introduced by Gillian, who is my president at the Chamber of Commerce. Given all that she said, I feel I may deserve the afternoon off, if she will so allow. Fellow graduate as you leave here and start the next phase of your lives, I can confidently state that there will be many turning points in your careers. Moments when you make decisions to take on a new role, secure a promotion, or even to change the direction you want your career to take, not least since former Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK government, Sir Patrick Vallance stood on this very spot earlier in the summer and declared that you're all likely to live to be a hundred.

 My experience as a student here at Strathclyde was undoubtedly a turning point for me. I am proud to have trained as a chartered accountant with, with what is now E.Y., but even the most charitable of my colleagues would struggle to say that I was a natural as an accountant. I'm sincerely glad that I learned accountancy. Uh, it has been the global language of business for over 600 years, but it was my years here studying part-time in the evenings that persuaded me that I should make a fresh career choice. I had always been impressed by the work of the Scottish Development Agency, the country's economic development agency since 1975, and which became Scottish Enterprise in 1991. It was packed full of radical, ambitious and creative people devoted to improving Scotland's economy and responding to the challenges faced by communities in Glasgow and in my old hometown of Greenock following the collapse of their heavy engineering industries. Perhaps some here will remember the Glasgow Garden Festival of 1988, which was partly a creation of the SDA and was one of the first initiative to set Glasgow on the road to transformation. It was the lessons I learned during that MBA that gave me the courage to leave accountancy and move into economic development first in a small local public agency in Govan, the principal's own home neighborhood, uh, and where the garden festival had been held. And then in the Glasgow Development Agency under the guidance of Stuart Gulliver, it was at the GDA that I found my purpose, the economic development of cities and more specifically the city of Glasgow. So, I have a great deal for which to thank Strathclyde University.

I know it is customary for Honorary Graduates to use this opportunity to pass on lessons to our fellow graduates, but I'd be more inclined simply to congratulate you on having already made one of the best decisions you will make in your lives. You chose to study here at Strathclyde. Not only is this amongst the very best universities in the country, in the world, as you know, but is a university that makes an unusually large contribution to its hometown, I have had the privilege of working alongside your principal over the past 14 years here observing the impact that Strathclyde has had on Glasgow. Nurturing those new industries like photonics, space communications, MedTech, renewable tech, and advanced manufacturing that will be the backbone of this city's economy in the years ahead. A technology innovation centre, a national manufacturing institute, a medicines manufacturing innovation center, the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District, and the Glasgow City Innovation District right here where we are today. Just a few examples and all shaped by Strathclyde University, shining a spotlight on Glasgow as a city of science and technology, and national governments have been noticing most recently awarding Glasgow's status as an innovation accelerator partnership in an investment zone, meaning that many millions of pounds are now being invested in Glasgow's future industries and the business community notices too.

The University of Strathclyde is famous for its ability to work in research partnerships with business both here in the city and all around the world. This university and its principal have been powerful agents of positive change for our city.

So, as you travel the world or like me build a life here in Glasgow, you can take special pride in being a Strathclyder. Find your purpose, choose to work with the best people you can find, and never be afraid to say yes when an opportunity comes along to do something you have never tried before.

Congratulations and I hope you all have a truly wonderful day. Thank you.