**Royal Holloway, University of London**
**14 May 2015**

# Citation for Professor Peter Bramley

Chairman of Council, it is my privilege to present to you Professor Peter Bramley.

The reasons for this honour include his influential academic contributions in the field of plant biochemistry and human nutrition; and his outstanding service of 41 years in our College in the Department of Biochemistry and the School of Biological Sciences.

Peter grew up near Nottingham, and early indications of his talents were not immediately apparent, with one school report describing him as 'slow, but gets there in the end'. In 1966, he went to University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and graduated with a degree in Biochemistry in 1969. Peter remained at Aberystwyth to complete a PhD in 1972 on carotenoid biosynthesis in fungi. Carotenoids - the pigments that give red vegetables their colour - have played a major part in Peter's career and, indeed, in all our lives, as the beneficial effects of these chemicals in the human diet have become apparent. Peter's talents were spotted by the late Prof Jack Pridham, Head of Department and later an Honorary Fellow who recruited him as a Lecturer in Biochemistry straight after finishing his PhD. Throughout his career, he carried a large teaching load, was exceptionally popular with students and introduced a number of enhancements in our degree programmes. Furthermore, he was School Director of Teaching and the first coordinator of the Science Foundation Year. Peter was also sub-Dean of the Faculty of Science and part of the faculty steering committee.

Peter is one of the outstanding biochemical researchers of his generation. He has published over 120 peer-reviewed articles and has been cited over 7,000 times, with career income of over £9million. He has a real talent for spotting a gap in a research area and developing topics that go on to become important parts of our daily lives.

Thus, his first research project as a lecturer concerned carbohydrate metabolism by bacteria in yoghurt. When this research was initiated in the 1970s, the idea of bacteria in yogurt being beneficial was unusual to say the least. Now, of course it is an accepted fact and used as a marketing tool by many companies.

In the 1980s Peter developed his work on the antioxidant activity of carotenoids in the diet. His work led to the development of the first Genetically Modified food with altered chemical contents, termed the 'super red tomato', in 1991.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the approaches developed in his laboratory led to the development of golden rice. The grains of golden rice have enhanced carotene levels, hence the name, but most importantly the carotene acts as a precursor to vitamin A. This can provide important health benefits for those with vitamin A deficient diets, and has the potential to save millions of lives. Golden rice is now undergoing field trials in various parts of the world.

Peter's ability to work with a wide range of subjects is perhaps best exemplified by his more recent work funded by the Food Standards Agency. Here, he used biochemical approaches to identify the animal species present in mechanically recovered meat.

Thus, Peter's interests and influence extend across a wide range of foodstuffs, from yogurt to tomatoes and rice and, indeed, whether there is horse meat in your pork pie. Put simply, his ground-breaking research has helped to improve the quality of the human diet across the world.

Peter was Head of the School of Biological Sciences from 2006-2011. He commanded respect from everyone and was a supportive and inspirational leader. He masterminded the School REF submission in the 2008 assessment, in which we performed exceptionally well, being ranked 6$^{th}$ in the UK.

Chairman, this dedication to teaching administration and research may lead you to think that Peter has spent the last 40 years in his laboratory or office, never seeing the light of day. In fact, he was a keen sportsman, captaining his school tennis and football teams. At Royal Holloway, he swapped tennis for squash and was number 1 in the staff team for a number of years.

He has been a life-long fan of Derby County FC and we hope that this accolade will go some way to alleviating his obvious disappointment at their failure to gain promotion to the Premier League this season.

In recognition, therefore, of his outstanding contributions to the discipline of Biochemistry and the School of Biological Sciences, may I invite you, Chairman of Council, to induct as an Honorary Fellow of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Professor Peter Bramley.

Professor Alan Gange
Head of the School of Biological Sciences
14May 2015