

HONORARY DOCTORATE BY UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD

JUY 2025

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

PROFESSOR DR. NOOR AZUAN ABU OSMAN

1. ‘Madam Chancellor, Chair of Council, Vice-Chancellor, members of Council and Senate, distinguished faculty, proud families, and—most importantly—today’s graduates.
2. Thank you for the extraordinary honour of this Doctorate. I stand here bursting with gratitude—and also with disbelief and nostalgia. When I first arrived from Malaysia to University of Bradford as an eager engineering student, I never imagined I would one day be back in this hall, wearing this beautiful Bradford robe.
3. Bradford did far more than teaching me thermodynamics and mechanics in biomechanical engineering. It taught me to think holistically, and to be a useful and aspiring human being.
4. To the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor and the entire management team of the university, no words can describe my profound gratitude humility, and honour.
5. I accept this honour not for myself alone, but on behalf of every individual whose life has been touched by the work that I have been privileged to do.
6. My life's work has always been guided by a singular mission: *to serve people*. To serve those who have lost something they thought they would never regain—mobility, dignity, hope. To serve not just humans,

but all living beings, including animals, whose pain often goes unseen and unheard. I believe with all my heart that science and technology must exist not just to invent, but to *heal*—to *restore*, to *renew*, and to *uplift*.

7. From the beginning, I have been inspired by the potential of innovation to give people a *new beginning*. It brings me great joy to see that our work is no longer just research on paper, but practical solutions that make a real difference—especially for those most vulnerable. This is the essence of life, to do good and to contribute to a better tomorrow for all of mankind.
8. One of the most unforgettable moments in my journey was witnessing the joy of Palestinian children—just seven or eight years old—fitted with prosthetic limbs we helped create. Their eyes sparkled with the light of newfound hope. Tesco sponsored these devices, but the real sponsors were *compassion* and *human solidarity*. Seeing their smiles—that is when I knew, *this is why we do what we do*. There is no greater reward.
9. Through the support of Universiti Malaya, which has been my academic home and life platform, I had the honour of founding BioApps Private Limited, a spin-off company of Universiti Malaya that has, over the past seven years, generated over RM35 million in value and now supports 16 practitioners—every one of them fully salaried by the company itself.
10. This is a vision powered by the dedication of my 43 PhD students, 45 master students by research, and a multi-talented global team who brought the dream to life. I share this award with every single one of them.

11. As I reflect on this journey spanning more than 29 years as both an academic and a university administrator, the deepest truth I have discovered is this: our purpose is to make a positive impact on the world and humanity.
12. To all the graduates here today: I want you to know something that perhaps no textbook has ever told you—you *made it*. And that alone is extraordinary. It doesn't matter what grades you got in your first year, or how many times you doubted yourself along the way. It doesn't matter if there were moments when you failed an exam or stumbled in your journey. What matters is that you are here today, wearing this robe, stepping into a new chapter with courage in your heart. And that means everything. Don't let anyone—including yourself—tell you that your past defines your future. It doesn't. You do.
13. Success, my dear graduates, is never about numbers alone. It's not about the digits on your transcript or the title on your business card. It's about the weight of your heart, the strength of your values, and the fire of your conscience to serve others. It's about choosing to do the right thing even when no one is watching, about lifting others as you climb, and about making your own unique mark on the world in your own way.
14. Whether you become a doctor, an artist, an engineer, a teacher, or something the world hasn't invented yet—do it with love, with humility, and with purpose. The world needs you. And I believe, that you are ready to shine, I knew, because I was once in your shoes,

exactly in this juncture of life, deciding what's next for my next chapter of life.

15. *You are the future.* You are the ones who will build the next set of innovations, who will shape the values of our society, and who will carry forward the torch of human progress. *You can do this.* If there is one message I want to leave you with today, it is this: Every single one of you has the power to make a difference in someone's life. Never underestimate that.
16. I also stand here today as a proud father and husband. My family is my anchor and my strength. To my beloved wife, Liana, who is seated here, thank you for your endless patience and love.
17. My son Erwin, who is following in my footsteps in mechanical engineering and now a mechanical engineer—you inspire me. Nadia, my eldest, is now a medical practitioner in Limerick, Ireland—carrying forward the mission of healing in another beautiful way.
18. And my youngest daughter brings joy to every corner of our home, chasing her dreams in social sciences and digital media as a final year student in Universiti Malaya, Mickey Mouse forever enchants her and *We Bare Bears*.
19. Before I conclude, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest appreciation to Professor Shirley Congdon, your leadership has been nothing short of inspiring.
20. I must share personal note—one of fondest memories was the moment we shared over Thai food in Kuala Lumpur not long ago. That simple, joyful occasion meant a great deal to me. It reminded me that

leadership is not only about milestones and policies, but about warmth, humanity, and connection.

21. I was shocked when Professor Congdon informed me of her intention to retire later this year. It felt sudden, but I was reminded of a truth I've always held close: God knows best. I truly believe—with all my heart—that every transition carries a purpose. If not for ourselves, then for those we love.
22. Professor Congdon, thank you for your friendship, your wisdom, and your legacy.
23. Madam Chancellor Anita Rani, by granting me this honour, Bradford has completed a beautiful circle in my life's journey. I accept this doctorate with deep humility, renewed purpose, and a promise to keep advancing knowledge that serves humankind.
24. Thank you, University of Bradford, for this tremendous honour. Thank you all for allowing me to share this journey with you.

Let us go forward—not just to do well, but to *do good*.

Thank you