

The Honorary Graduand: David Relph

The Orator: Anita Gulati

David Relph is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Business Administration.

David Relph is the Director of Bristol Health Partners. He leads the partnership and his role involves promoting collaboration and ambition between Bristol's NHS organisations, universities and council in order to deliver significant health gains and improvements in service delivery in and around Bristol.

David has a first degree from Bristol University in Economics and Economic History. He has further degrees from Cranfield University and Kings College London.

After graduating, he joined the British Army and spent 15 years working in a variety of roles. He served on operations in Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. He also spent time in Whitehall working on security policy and the development of strategy across a range of UK and international partners.

After leaving the military David worked at the Carbon Trust, advising the UK and other governments on the development of low carbon technology. In 2012 he started working in the health sector, leading on strategy development for a hospital Trust in Bristol. In 2014 he became the Director of Bristol Health Partners.

David has studied, worked and lived in Bristol for much of the last 20 years. Outside work, he was an early campaigner for elected mayors in Bristol and other UK cities, helping to deliver a major change to the governance of the city. He is also the Chair of Happy City, a Bristol-based organisation that campaigns for happiness and wellbeing to be taken more seriously in policy and decision making.

David says of his work over the last few years:

'My work is about connecting people and ideas. This is what drives me and I am particularly focused on the power of informal networks to share ideas, build consensus, and mobilise change.

Throughout my career I have been involved in connecting people and ideas, then leading people through the changes and challenges that inevitably result. I have been lucky enough to get opportunities in two of the areas that matter most to people and the way they live their lives Energy and Health. I am motivated by a desire to develop approaches that will transform the way we deal with these issues.

I also feel strongly that the city is the level at which we must address many of the challenges we face as a society. In Bristol, we have all the ingredients for an ideal city but plenty of challenges that we have still yet to tackle. Through my work, I am trying to do what I can to address this, and to help others to do the same.'

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of David Relph's contribution to management and leadership.