



University
of Glasgow

TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Graduation Ceremony: COLLEGE OF ARTS, 25 June 2015, 4pm

Vice-Chancellor,

Graduation is the time at which we recognise the achievements of our students, and it is appropriate that, at this point, we also recognise the achievements of the staff who have supported and encouraged them towards their successes.

The University of Glasgow has a long and distinguished tradition of learning and an established reputation for the high quality of teaching that it offers to its students. The University recognises Teaching Excellence through awards presented to colleagues who have made outstanding contributions to teaching and student support. I will shortly invite you, Vice Chancellor, to present a Teaching Excellence Award to Professor Lynn Abrams, who is Head of History and Professor of Modern History. Before I do so, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you, and those present, the reasons why Professor Abrams is being recognised in this way.

Through two decades of outstanding research and major leadership roles at the University of Glasgow, Professor Abrams has exhibited an equal commitment to developing highly innovative contributions to teaching practice—in content, methods, and theory—across all levels of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

Professor Abrams introduced gender history into the Glasgow curriculum upon her arrival and this strand has grown into one of the recognised areas of excellence within the subject, consolidated by the formation of the cross-College Centre for Gender History and the introduction of the M.Sc in Gender History. Professor Abrams has also introduced the use of oral history as a new methodology into the curriculum, building on her own world-leading research, including a popular honours option, training courses for masters students and doctoral candidates, and supervision of numerous dissertations and theses based on oral history.

In all of her teaching, Professor Abrams encourages her students to reflect on their learning and to engage with new theoretical perspectives to understanding the stories we tell about the past. Innovative assignments, including learning journals and student research conferences, promote student reflection. One undergraduate who took her Special Subject on Women and Feminist

Movements in Europe writes, 'Lynn has been incredibly approachable, very supportive and influenced our learning whilst encouraging independent thought.'

Perhaps most importantly, Professor Abrams reminds her students that History takes place beyond the classroom. Leading by example through her own public engagement with organisations such as Girlguiding Scotland and the Shetland Museum and Archives, Professor Abrams encourages her students to seek out historical stories in the world around them. She takes classes on field trips to the Glasgow Women's Library; assigns her students to carry out oral history interviews with local community members; and supervises students in independent research to uncover the voices that often have been left out of the historical record.

In all of these ways, Professor Abrams inspires not only her students, but also her colleagues, to push the boundaries of how History is taught and learned at the University.

Vice Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to invite you to present a Teaching Excellence Award to Professor Lynn Abrams.