**Citation for the award of Honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists to Professor David Spalton MBBS MRCP FRCS FRCP FEBO-CRS by Mr Paul Ursell MBBS FRCOphth MD.**

Mr President, Honorary Fellows, Fellows of the College, Honoured guests, it is my privilege to deliver this citation for Professor David Spalton who today is receiving the Honorary Fellowship of our College for his outstanding contribution to the field of ophthalmology.

Virtually all ophthalmologists worldwide perform cataract surgery, it is one of the most successful procedures in all of medicine. Each one of our patients who enjoys pain free, clear vision following cataract removal will have benefited directly from the lifetime contribution of David Spalton. He has undertaken pioneering work in intraocular lens design, the teaching of surgery and application of scientific rigour to the assessment of cataract surgery; all of which have greatly impacted the quality of this life changing procedure.

David trained at Westminster Hospital medical school, graduating in 1970. He undertook his ophthalmic training on the house at Moorfields and was appointed as a consultant to Charing Cross Hospital in 1981. In 1983 he was asked to join a hand-picked team of world class consultants to form the Medical Eye Unit at St Thomas’s Hospital, . The unit took referrals from all over the UK. The initial focus of clinical practice & research at the unit was intraocular inflammation and neuro-ophthalmology. As an idea of how productive this time was, David published over 70 papers in the first 10 years as a consultant.

This research interest pivoted into intraocular inflammation after cataract surgery in the early 90’s and then posterior capsule opacification and then into implant design. To date this has led to over 180 peer reviewed papers, over 100 invited lectures and a world-wide acknowledgement as one of the fathers of modern cataract surgery. In 2010 he was appointed to a personal chair as Professor in Ophthalmology at Kings College, London.

National and International acclaim for work on cataract surgery has led to David giving 11 named lectures, the most prestigious of which were the Ridley lecture at ESCRS and the ESCRS Heritage Lecture, as well as a Gold NHS ACCEA award for Clinical Excellence. David also served as President of the UK & Ireland Society of Cataract & Refractive Society, President of the European Society of Cataract and Refractive surgery Society, Trustee of Fight for Sight and was on the steering committee that set up the Royal College of Ophthalmologists which is giving him this honour today. He has sat on the editorial board of 11 significant peer review publications and received numerous research grants.

Some of the most significant cataract researchers over the last decades were trained under David in a Research Fellow capacity, employed by funds he personally raised from grant applications. He led the department at St Thomas’s as Clinical Director for over 10 years and created a successful private practice in London. This huge contribution to cataract surgery has significantly increased our understanding of the procedure which has benefitted so many and led to worldwide acclaim for his work.

Apart from research, David has published one of the most significant textbooks in Ophthalmology, the Clinical Atlas of Ophthalmology. Co-authors Paul Hunter and Roger Hitchins, have both received this Honorary Fellowship, so it seems fitting that today’s award recognises the contributions of all 3 authors. First published in 1985 it has been translated into 11 languages and was awarded best medical textbook of 1985 for the 1st edition and then again for the 3rd edition in 2005 which has never occurred before. It is considered one of the cornerstones of any Ophthalmologist’s library worldwide.

On a personal note, I have known David & Catherine for 30 years. I had the honour of working as David’s fellow then as a partner in numerous academic roles and finally taking over his private practice on his retirement recently. What is clear from taking over the practice is that David is a clinician that is much loved by his patients, His expertise and surgical finesse - as well as the academic profile I have spoken about previously - is well recognised by all those whose lives he has touched.

I was discussing David with one of his family members, whom he referred to me for surgery and I asked him for his personal reflections on David in preparation for today. I think his reply is a fitting summary of David’s career. He described him as a ‘hyper-inquisitive polymath who had an insatiable desire to understand the underlying nature of how something worked’. This could be equally applied to complex clinical conundrums, academic research theses or fly fishing, one of David’s passions outside of medicine.

It's clear from the career that I have just outlined just how appropriate this summary is and I think this citation demonstrates a lifelong dedication of his inquiring mind to clinical excellence. We have all benefited as fellow ophthalmologists from David’s career of achievements and as such, I can wholeheartedly commend him to you for the award of Honorary Fellowship.

Thank you.