EVERY YEAR THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK CONFER HONORARY DEGREES ON DISTINGUISHED PEOPLE.

The recipients come from many walks of life and all have made a significant contribution to society. Honorary graduates are selected from nominations by members of the University and very often have links with departments or are alumni.

At these ceremonies, the honorary degree of Doctor of the University will be conferred on the following:

Viram Jasani

For more than 40 years, Viram Jasani has made a unique contribution in the UK to the appreciation and understanding of the Asian arts, particularly Indian classical music. He has made frequent visits to the University to teach and perform.

He is Chief Executive Officer of the Asian Music Circuit, one of the most significant promoters of Asian music in Europe, through concerts, education events and a new multi-media Music Centre – the first of its kind in the UK. An accomplished sitar player, he is one of the finest performers of North Indian music, as well as playing fusion music and featuring on recordings by Led Zeppelin, Osibisa and SKY.

Viram Jasani is a broadcaster and composer – he has written music for radio, television and films, notably with John Dankworth for Joseph Losey’s film Boom! and with Mikis Theodorakis in the Michalis Kakoyanis film Trojan Women.

He studied Economics, Philosophy and Politics at the University of St Andrews and holds a Masters degree in Indian music from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. He sits on a number of advisory panels for the Arts Council and the Royal Opera House.

Sir Dai Rees

Sir Dai Rees played a crucial role in the establishment of the Centre for Novel Agricultural Products (CNAP) in the University’s Department of Biology. He chaired its Science and Management Boards through its evolution to its successful nomination for the Queen’s Anniversary Prize in 2006.

After graduating from the University of Wales, he began his academic career in 1960 as a lecturer in Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh. His research into the chemistry and biology of carbohydrates attracted the interest of Unilever, and he moved his entire research team to the company in 1970.

Sir Dai’s research focus shifted to health and health benefits of food and personal care products and he developed links with medical research, becoming the Director of the National Institute for Medical Research. In 1987, he was appointed Chief Executive of the Medical Research Council, a position he held for a decade. During his tenure he achieved closer alignment between the MRC and industry as well as strengthening programmes in human nutrition, toxicology and health services.

In 1993, he was elected President of the European Science Foundation and continues to be a consultant to Unilever. He was appointed Knight Bachelor in 1993.