

Chancellor,

Marcus Ryder is a broadcaster, journalist and producer who has been named one of the UK's leading cultural change makers, and whose services to diversity in the media were recognised with an MBE in 2020.

Marcus' interest in issues of identity, society and justice started at an early age. His mother managed a branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau in North London, where Marcus would observe the centre's work to advocate on behalf of its clients. His first foray into media production began at age 17, when Marcus joined a black film collective set up to share fresh perspectives on African and Caribbean politics and history.

Having completed his degree in economics with African studies from the University of Sussex, Marcus intended to spend a year working to pay off his student debts, before returning to complete a Master's. He recalls applying for any role going, including as an undertaker, fishmonger and as a junior researcher at the BBC. Luckily, the BBC was impressed by Marcus' experiences at the Citizens Advice Bureau and hired him for their consumer rights programme, Watchdog. Over the next 24 years Marcus built his career at the BBC as a producer on music, arts and youth programmes, with the community programmes unit and on current affairs; gaining a reputation for covering under-represented views on important topics. This included overseeing much of the coverage of the Scottish independence referendum as head of BBC Scotland current affairs programming.

Following a period working in broadcast and print media in China and Malaysia, in 2021 Marcus returned to the UK as Head of External Consultancies at the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity. Since 2023 he has been Chief Executive Officer of The Film and TV Charity, which provides support and talent development programmes to those working in all aspects of film, TV and digital broadcast. Alongside this role, he is also Chair of RADA (The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) where he is helping the historic institution to play an active role in changing the cultural landscape of the UK.

Marcus' work is characterised by a belief that achieving positive change is not about trying to make nasty people nicer, but about tackling the societal structures in which we all operate.

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Marcus Ryder and I ask you to confer upon him an Honorary Doctorate of Letters.