Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, fellow graduates, University staff and guests. On behalf of the graduates receiving their awards today I would like to extend a thank you to all those who have helped us reach this momentous occasion in our lives. Without your support and sacrifice we would not be here today.

Federation University Australia has offered us a fantastic platform to complete our studies. Whether it be on campus, online or at one of our partner locations in Australia or abroad. Whether you attend university as a high school leaver, the first in family, as a mature age student or as an international student, the university has embraced and supported the diverse student cohorts each step of the way.

Our family and friends, we thank you! Each of you have offered support through the endless assessments, guidance when we were not sure what to do, and encouragement when we were not sure if we could do it. You have all, when needed, self-sacrificed in order to ensure our success. We are here today because of you and we invite you to share the successes in the next chapter of our journey.

When beginning this journey, like so many other graduates here today, I started university with the intention of developing my knowledge and professional skills to further my employment prospects. Not knowing that the journey I embarked on would have such a profound impact on my personal growth. We have all overcome challenges to be here today, whether it be homesickness, juggling of family or work commitments with study, language barriers, financial hardship, exam anxiety or mental health issues. I have personally struggled with a variety of these issues and I am grateful for the endless support I have received from FedUni, my family and friends as well as my fellow students. Attending university has been the biggest challenge I’ve faced in my personal growth; however, it has, by far been the most rewarding.

Finally, to my fellow graduates, we will now leave here stronger than when we started, as independent learners, with a lifelong love of learning and a curious mind, having the confidence to apply these attributes to our future endeavours. Take time to reflect on this outstanding achievement, celebrating each step of the journey. Bring all that we have learnt, with the same passion and determination and apply them to the next chapter of our journey. I wish you all the best and look forward to hearing all your stories of success.