



## PRESS RELEASE

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# Commencement of BA (Hons) in Social Work

The Ministry of Health, Care and Justice is delighted to announce the commencement of the BA (Hons) in Social Work in Gibraltar for the very first time. As announced in June 2018, this is the first time this degree course will be delivered locally. The course will be delivered by Kingston University London and St George's University of London, in conjunction with the Care Agency and the Gibraltar Health Authority's School of Health Studies.

Social Work is a highly rewarding, yet highly demanding, profession, which attracts a fairly small numbers of school-leavers. It is a profession that commonly attracts more mature individuals. Locally, many individuals interested in undertaking the profession have found it difficult to leave their commitments in Gibraltar for the purpose of studying abroad. For this reason, it was felt important to deliver this course in Gibraltar, so as to provide opportunities for interested persons to venture into this valued profession.

The Care Agency, through Kingston University, invited applications for the three-year course in 2018, undertaking a rigorous selection process, which resulted in eleven students meeting the required criteria to undertake the BA (Hons) in Social Work. The course programme will include learning in psychology, sociology, social policy, and law. Students are also required to undergo two placements in the social work field. Additionally, the course will bring in local experts, members of voluntary organisations and carers. The Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC), the body which is responsible for the approval of social work courses and registration of social workers travelled to Gibraltar in 2018. HCOC assessed how the course would be delivered locally and agreed it met the required standard and criteria.

The eleven students commenced the programme on the 7 January 2019 and are due complete their studies in 2021. After graduating, students will become eligible to apply to the HCPC for registration and can then apply to work as qualified social workers.

Care Agency's CEO (ag), Ms Natalie Tavares, said "This is a fantastic opportunity for those who have been interested in becoming a social worker, but have been unable to leave Gibraltar due to personal commitments. I want to wish all our students every success in their studies and encourage them to make the most of every opportunity that will be offered. I also wish to thank all those who



have been involved in this process and for the hard work they have put into this in order to make it happen.”

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, added: “I am very pleased to see the hugely significant development of a locally delivered Social Work Degree, for the very first time in Gibraltar. This was not an easy feat. Education in these vocational fields is essential, so as to ensure we continue to deliver social care at the highest standards. I wish to thank Natalie Tavares, Professor Ian Peate, Head of the School of Health Studies, and the team which has worked so hard to make this programme happen. Special thanks must also go to Daphne Alcantara and Jane Tunbridge, who have given up their own time to assist in the recruitment process and will continue to be involved in this programme.”