GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

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HLSCC to Introduce Bachelor's Degree In Accounting

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President of the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC) Dr. Richard Georges has announced plans for the introduction of to develop a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting as part of the college’s its Dr. Georges continued expansion of tertiary education opportunities in the Virgin Islands.

The proposed programme was highlighted by HLSCC President, Dr. Richard Georges, during the October 28 edition of Virgin Islands Voice, where he joined Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, Honourable Sharie B. de Castro, in discussing the college's academic development and future direction.

The proposed programme is being developed with the intention of aligning its academic standards with those of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), creating a potential pathway for graduates to pursue internationally recognised professional accounting qualifications. Dr. Georges explained that the goal is to structure the programme so that graduates may qualify for exemptions from certain ACCA examinations, providing a more streamlined route towards professional certification.

The announcement follows the successful introduction of HLSCC's first bachelor's degree programme in Elementary Education, which commenced in September 2026 with an inaugural cohort of 10 students.

Minister for Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, Honourable Sharie B. de Castro for Education highlighted the significance of this milestone, noting that the programme received approval from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and now enables aspiring educators to pursue bachelor's-level qualifications locally. She also emphasised the importance of developing specialised academic programmes that respond to the Territory's workforce needs while increasing opportunities for students to complete their education in the Virgin Islands.

Dr. Georges reinforced this approach, explaining that the college is considering factors such as student demand, industry requirements, available expertise and programme development costs when identifying new academic offerings. He further highlighted HLSCC's commitment to maintaining international transfer

opportunities through articulation agreements with overseas institutions, alongside the development of additional bachelor's degree programmes that students can complete locally.

HLSCC currently has articulation agreements with several institutions in the United Kingdom, including London Metropolitan University, the University of Westminster, Richmond American University and the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering, allowing eligible students to pursue further studies through established transfer pathways. These developments align with the Government's 2027 Budget Address, which identified the expansion of bachelor's degree programmes, online and distance education, and technical, vocational and professional training among the priorities for the college.

The proposed Bachelor's Degree in Accounting represents another step in the HLSCC's long-term vision to broaden access to higher education, strengthen professional development opportunities and prepare Virgin Islanders for careers in sectors critical to the Territory's economy.

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