EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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Epsom students launch Nescot Music Radio

4 October 2026



Music students at Nescot college in Epsom have just launched a brand-new radio station, Nescot Music Radio, allowing them to get practical experience of working in radio and broadcasting.

Students take on real industry roles, including presenters, DJs, producers, researchers and music curators, developing skills and building professional portfolios as they go. They are involved in every stage of production, from developing the station's branding and jingles to writing scripts, planning transitions, creating adverts and curating music.

As well as offering music, the station provides a platform for the whole Nescot community, with content including student and staff interviews, artist spotlights, campus news and events, and themed shows. The project also creates opportunities for collaboration between students on different courses.

The first episode, 'Your campus, Your Sound', was recorded over the summer as a pilot. Presenters will change from episode to episode, and around 20 students are expected to be involved across the series, with learners from all levels invited to help shape future shows.

Harry Fairclough, Music Lecturer at Nescot said: "This project is all about giving students the opportunity to step into real broadcasting roles and gain practical, hands-on industry experience. There are many different career paths within the music industry, and the radio station is a great way for students to discover the range of creative, technical and production roles that come together to make a radio show.

"It's been fantastic to see students' creativity, confidence and skills develop through a project they are driving themselves. I'm incredibly proud of what they have achieved so far, and I'm excited for everyone to hear the first episode."

Julie Kapsalis MBE, Principal and CEO at Nescot said: "It's brilliant to hear that Nescot students are now on the airwaves, entertaining students and talking about the issues that matter to them. They've done a fantastic job pulling it all together. I'm hoping for a guest spot at some point, so I can have a look behind the scenes at how it all comes together."

Alongside the radio project, the Nescot music department has also introduced three other weekly industry skills sessions, giving students experience in events, marketing and promotion, running a record label, and studio management. Together, these sessions give students the opportunity to explore different areas of the industry and develop skills beyond their main specialism.

Nescot Music Radio launches with pre-recorded programmes, with ambitions to develop into internal broadcasting and potentially public online radio in the future. The project is built around student voice, creativity, collaboration and employability, and offers another platform to showcase the work happening across Nescot.

The first episode is available to listen to now on YouTube: https://youtu.be/agD8Tnnq9JY

Nescot offers a wide range of other courses for school leavers and adults, including Motor Vehicle, Animal Care, Hair & Beauty, Computing and IT, Performing Arts, Childcare and Health & Social Care. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email**adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk**

NESCOT

Epsom students enter the Dragons' Den and secure Tycoon Competition success

4 October 2026

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Four Business students at Nescot College in Epsom recently joined Peter Jones at a charity day, following their success in the national Tycoon Enterprise Competition. As part of their course, the students created a business concept and presented it Dragons' Den style to five local business leaders. Their product impressed and generated enough income to secure them third place in the national competition.

Students on the Nescot Business and Entrepreneurship course had to create a business, research the market, launch a product and try to make as many sales as possible. The winning students – Reem Abid, Johnny Connolly, Nathan Dean and Mattie Ray – created The WalkBottle, a 3 in 1, double insulated dog water bottle with two detachable bowls for food, water, or to carry treats.

Earlier in the course, a variety of local businesses supported the competition and the college by offering up 'dragons', to review each group's business idea and pitches, giving feedback on each one. Matt Thomas – CEO and Founder of Matthew Thomas Garden Design, Andi Drishi – Director and Owner at HICL Builders, Jon Skinner – CEO and Founder at Glow Homes, Lance Harris – National Sector Lead at Ministry of Justice UK and Vanessa McCormack – Hub Manager at the Epsom and Ewell Hub all gave up their time to help motivate and encourage the students as they competed not just with their coursemates, but also against groups nationwide.

Securing third place in the national Tycoon Enterprise Competition saw the team invited to the Peter Jones Foundation Charity Clay Pigeon Shoot earlier this month at the prestigious Holland & Holland Shooting Grounds. They were able to meet Peter and run a promotional stall during an afternoon showcase, to present their products, branding and entrepreneurial journey to guests.

Julie Kapsalis MBE, CEO and Principal at Nescot College said "I am so proud of our students, who pushed themselves out of their comfort zone and created a credible business, which beat hundreds of others across the country. I want to thank the Peter Jones Foundation and the local businesses who supported them by offering up their experienced, inspiring leaders to act as 'dragons' in our Nescot den. Our students learned a huge amount and could absolutely be tycoons of the future. We've provided a launchpad and I'm looking forward to seeing them fly."

Peter Jones CBE said: "My Foundation has been helping to empower young people for over 20 years. With so many challenges facing school leavers, it's more important than ever to provide young people with support to help them fulfill their potential. Charity days allow us to raise vital funds – every pound raised will support the Foundation's work to transform the lives of young people and particularly those at disadvantage, giving them the skills, confidence and opportunities to dream big and build brighter futures."

Samantha Carey, Curriculum Manager for Catering, Business and Travel at Nescot, said: "This was an incredible opportunity for our students, and I'm hugely grateful to the Peter Jones Foundation, as well as the dedicated employers who generously gave their time to support them. Experiences like this not only help students develop their confidence, skills and professionalism, but also provide valuable networking opportunities, enabling them to build connections with industry professionals and gain insight into future career pathways. Seeing our students grow in confidence and realise their potential is incredibly rewarding, and it's exactly why I chose a career in teaching."

Students on the business course can now enter the National Entrepreneur of the Year competition, also run by the Peter Jones Foundation, which allows 16 – 21-year-olds to launch or scale a business.

The Business and Entrepreneurship course hones maths skills, teamwork, communication and critical thinking. It also promotes confidence and resilience as students take on the presentations, networking and promotion.

Nescot offers a range of courses for school leavers and adults, including Motor Vehicle, Animal Care, Hair & Beauty, Computing and IT, Performing Arts, Childcare and Health & Social Care. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

The WalkBottle can be bought on Ebay:https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/thewalkbottle

NESCOT

Image: Peter Jones, Tom Kerridge and Touker Suleyman show off The Walk Bottle, alongside the student entrepreneurs from Nescot.

Options are open at Nescot – GCSE students

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reassured there’s still time to apply

4 October 2026



Students collecting their GCSE results today are being reassured that there is still time to apply for courses at Nescot college in Epsom. Options range from Animal Care and Public Services to Travel & Tourism, Business and IT.

Whether students are keen to help look after the college alpacas as part of the Animal Care course or visit a cruise ship to learn about the industry up close, Nescot has a range of courses which blend practical skills, theory and real-world experiences.

Those who didn’t get the results they wanted today are able to get support from Nescot’s advice and guidance teams. Most courses start at level 1 and students can re-take their English and Maths GCSEs alongside their new course. Last term, 1,367 students sat Maths and English GCSEs at Nescot, with entries significantly increasing compared to the previous year – a 16% rise in students taking Maths and a 29% rise in those taking English.

Nescot Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis MBE said: “Whatever your results today, it’s not too late to explore your options and enrol on a course starting in September. Our expert team is on hand to give you personalised support and advice, and we’ve got a wide range of subjects to get you inspired and excited about your next step.”

Katie, Level 3 business student said: “If anyone is thinking of coming to Nescot, I would definitely recommend it. I’ve really enjoyed my time here and I’m happy with the decision I made.”

Nescot is located on a 60-acre campus near Epsom, Surrey. Learning spaces cover a wide range of sectors and include construction workshops, a garage, labs, kitchens, salons, and a farm. There’s also a theatre, gym, café, day nursery and a hair and beauty salon.

Students who didn’t achieve the grades they were hoping for, or are still not sure what’s next can contact Nescot’s Admissions and Careers team, who are on hand to help. They can discuss alternative pathways, progression opportunities and the support available to help students reach their goals. Students can call the team on **020 8394 3038** or email **adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk**.

Nescot provides college courses for school leavers and adults, with a wide range of career-focused vocational courses on offer. Located on a 60-acre campus near Epsom, Surrey, Nescot is a modern, exciting, and innovative college, which cares about students and invests in their future. Learning spaces cover a wide range of sectors and include construction workshops, a garage, labs, kitchens, salons, and a farm. There’s also a theatre, gym, café, day nursery and a hair and beauty salon. Visit www.nescot.ac.uk to find out more.

NESCOT

Epsom’s NESCOT wins ‘Community Hero’ award

4 October 2026



Nescot College in Epsom won the Community Hero award at last night’s Central South Business Awards 2026, after staff and students impressed the judges with a wide range of voluntary community work. Nescot has been part of the community for 70 years, getting involved in countless initiatives, from cleaning storm debris and transforming a local underpass, to donating expertise, food and funding to those in need.

Students are encouraged to use their skills to make a difference locally. Art & Design students painted an incredible mural to transform a dirty underpass. Plumbing students stepped in to help a local resident who had been scammed after her boiler broke. Media students made a promotional film for a music therapy charity, and Hair & Beauty students ran a

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pop-up salon for children undergoing cancer treatment at the Royal Marsden.

Other recent projects at the college include supporting Ukrainian refugees to improve their English, partnering with a food bank, and running a summer school with Wates for 40 pupils at risk of leaving education with few prospects – aiming to help them into employment or training.

The college has also partnered with the Royal Society for Blind Children and Dorton College to provide facilities for young people who are blind or visually impaired in Surrey. Nescot was recently awarded Silver in the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme, and students and staff have raised thousands for charity including their two chosen charities – The Royal Marsden and CALM.

Julie Kapsalis MBE, Principal and CEO at Nescot said: “Nescot is at the heart of the community, so it’s important the college has a positive impact on local people, charities and the environment. We aim to empower staff and students to be compassionate, taking on projects that matter to them. We also want to demonstrate to students that their time and skills can be used as a force for good. I’m incredibly proud that we’re now officially a ‘Community Hero’ as I see people’s kindness in action every day.”

The Central South Business Awards celebrate the exceptional achievements of businesses across the region. The annual awards, in association with Business South, acknowledge those businesses and individuals that have gone above and beyond, achieving great results, inspiring others and demonstrating best practice. Entry is open to businesses based in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Surrey, West Sussex and Dorset.

Nescot offers a wide range of college courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Business, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Travel & Tourism, Childcare, Health & Social Care and Beauty Therapy. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk, or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

NESCOT

Staff and students from Nescot with the newly painted underpass they worked on.

Local girl made good. The rise of NESCOT’s Julie Kapsalis

4 October 2026



Julie Kapsalis, CEO and Principal at Nescot college in Epsom, has achieved a remarkable trio of prestigious awards – including an MBE – in recognition of her leadership, dedication, and outstanding contribution across the region.

Julie’s year of accolades began with national recognition in the King’s 2026 New Year’s Honours List, celebrating her transformative work as Chair of the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) from 2020–2025. During her tenure, Julie championed and delivered major investments in skills, infrastructure and business support, playing a pivotal role in strengthening the region’s economic landscape. This week, Julie was presented with her MBE for Services to Economic Development by His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales at Windsor Castle.

The success didn’t stop there. At the Gatwick Diamond Business Awards on 19 March, Dee Mathieson, Chair of the Gatwick Diamond Business Council, presented Julie with the Outstanding Contribution to the Gatwick Diamond Award — a special accolade widely celebrated by colleagues, partners, and all who have worked with her. The citation shared: *“Over the span of two decades Julie’s career in economic development, skills enterprise and inclusive growth has made her one of the region’s most influential and transformative leaders. For her exceptional leadership, her sustained dedication to the region, and the tangible, lasting positive impact of her work, Julie is a profoundly deserving winner.”*

Rounding off an extraordinary week, Julie was also named ‘Gamechanger of the Year’ at the Dynamic Business Awards in Brighton on 26 March. The award celebrates businesswomen who deliver significant, positive change within their industries — something Julie has consistently demonstrated through her bold leadership, commitment to innovation, and passion for skills development.

Julie Kapsalis, CEO & Principal at Nescot said: *“I love working in this incredible region, building networks and (hopefully) making a difference. This recognition and the awards are shared with the wonderful colleagues I’ve worked with over the last 25 years including at Nescot, Chichester College Group and Coast to Capital LEP. Meeting the Prince of Wales was*

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such a proud moment – and made all the more special by having my family with me."

NESCOT

Ewell's Nescot graduates prove you don't have to move away to go far

4 October 2026



Over 90 Nescot students gathered at Epsom Downs Racecourse on Friday for their Higher Education Graduation Ceremony, donning caps and gowns to celebrate their success with proud parents, families and tutors.

The event marked a major milestone for students who completed university-level qualifications while studying close to home, proving that higher education doesn't have to mean moving away to succeed. For many, Nescot offered the best of both worlds: small, supportive classes with expert teaching, alongside the flexibility to continue living with family while balancing study with local work.

Nescot partners with several prestigious universities including Kingston University, the University of Greenwich, the University of West London, The Open University and the University of Arts London (UAL), offering degrees and other university-level qualifications across subjects including healthcare, performing arts, education, art and design, teaching, management and sports science.

Guests of Honour on the day included the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell, Councillor Robert Leach, alongside Nescot honorary fellows Paul Nicholson, former professional darts player, and Jane Wilson-Howarth, world-renowned physician, author and zoologist.

Julie Kapsalis, CEO and Principal at Nescot said: "Our higher education graduation ceremony is one of my favourite days of the year. It's exciting and joyful, but the overwhelming emotion is pride. Students, who've put their heart and soul into achieving their qualifications, feel so proud of themselves as they step on stage. Families, who've often been there for students every step of the way, burst with pride at what their son, daughter, brother or sister has achieved. There are usually a few tears too, some from our incredible staff who have watched these students persevere, learn and grow and are now waving them off to careers in their chosen fields. Whether you come to us aged 16 or 66, Nescot is a launchpad and I wish all our graduates every success with whatever comes next."

Students from across the college were fully involved in the ceremony. Travel and tourism students welcomed guests on arrival, music students provided DJ sets and live music throughout, and performing arts students surprised the audience with an incredible singing flashmob.

Guest of honour, Paul Nicholson, gave an inspiring speech, telling students: "What you've done to get here is remarkable – you should be extremely proud of yourselves. But by being here you haven't finished; you've only just started. Your ambitions should never have an end date…with the skills and experience Nescot has given you, make our world a little bit better every day."

Madiha Mahmood who studied for a BA (Hons) in Education Studies gave a speech at the ceremony, including a thank you to lecturers, tutors and support staff at Nescot: "Your dedication, patience, and belief in us, especially during challenging moments, has made a lasting difference. You have guided us, encouraged us, and pushed us to be the best versions of ourselves.

Today is a celebration, but it is also a reminder. A reminder that it doesn't matter how long it takes. It doesn't matter if you fail at the start. It doesn't matter how many people doubt you. If you keep going, you can change your whole story. Congratulations to every graduate here today, we did it!"

No matter which qualification students are working towards, Nescot's lecturers and tutors are dedicated to helping them reach their full potential. Staff are experienced tutors but also have substantial experience of working in the relevant industry too. Student satisfaction is high, with National Student Survey results showing the college is "significantly above the benchmark" across all 27 categories.

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NESCOT

A recipe for success – Dame Prue Leith visits Ewell's Nescot

4 October 2026



Dame Prue Leith DBE visited students at Nescot college in Epsom today, to share her experience, expertise and enthusiasm with students, including the next generation of culinary talent.

Prue, a chef, author and founder of Leiths Education, as well as a broadcaster and former judge on 'The Great British Bake Off', met students and staff and toured Nescot's award-winning catering and cookery facilities. She also watched students in action, chatting to them as they prepared some of her own recipes in the college's professional kitchens.

During the visit, Prue spoke about her incredible life, during an 'in conversation' session attended by around 250 students from business, catering, art and design, healthcare and media courses. The session, facilitated by Nescot's CEO and Principal, Julie Kapsalis, included questions about setting up her cookery school, her writing career, including her new book due out in February, and how she moved into broadcasting. Prue also shared personal anecdotes from her time on TV and highlighted the importance of healthy eating and nutrition, an area she has previously advised the government on.

Julie Kapsalis, CEO and Principal at Nescot said "Although many of our students know her from the Bake Off, Prue is a powerhouse business leader, an amazing chef, an author and an educator. Her career is an incredible demonstration of how with determination, resilience and hard work, one person can achieve across several fields. Our Professional Cookery students loved showing her their skills and I know they appreciated her advice, which no doubt they'll refer to when they're running kitchens of their own. Prue has shown our students that the sky's the limit – we're so grateful for her time."

Prue Leith said "Nescot is amazing! Truly professional, caring teachers and enthusiastic students."

As well as Professional Cooking qualifications, Nescot offers a wide range of courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Hair & Beauty, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Childcare and Health & Social Care. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

NESCOT

Prue with Julie Kapsalis CEO and students in the Nescot professional kitchens.

Epsom celebrity visits his old college

4 October 2026

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Joe Wicks MBE, widely known as The Body Coach, recently visited his former college, Nescot (North East Surrey College of Technology), the place where his journey into fitness and education began. His visit to Nescot was filled with inspiration, energy and memorable moments.

Joe was warmly welcomed by Nescot Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis, students and staff to the college. He toured the Nescot Fitness centre where Julie proudly presented him with a commemorative plaque, 'Joe's Gym' in his honour. He also signed copies of his bestselling cookbooks for staff and the college's Learning Resources Centre and was delighted to receive his original college lanyard and a thoughtful gift from the college.

Students from our Sport, Public Services and Foundation Learning courses joined Joe in the sports hall for an unforgettable workout session. Joe led the students in a fun and energetic routine, sharing his passion for fitness and wellbeing.

Sports students, Patrick and Nathan shared their thoughts on meeting Joe. Patrick said, "It's been a huge honour meeting Joe who's done so much for fitness, inspiring young kids at an early age and even raising money for charity. A good day for Nescot too." Nathan added, "It's incredible to meet Joe who's a household name and who's been to the same college as me!"

Joe's visit continued in the college theatre, where he took part in a packed Q&A session hosted by Julie Kapsalis. Staff and students gathered to hear about Joe's incredible journey and his time at Nescot.

Joe Wicks, who completed a National Diploma in Sport at Nescot in 2002, spoke warmly about his time at the college, "Nescot started me on my journey to education. The college helped me to grow and mature, and to be more independent as a learner." Speaking candidly to the students, he encouraged them to persevere, "Always try your hardest and put your heart into what you do. It won't always be easy, but never give up – give it your all."

Nescot Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis, said, "It has been a privilege to welcome Joe Wicks, The Body Coach, back to his hold college. His visit was particularly meaningful as his journey began here at Nescot, and we are so proud that his time here laid the foundation for a thriving career in fitness, exercise and nutrition. A huge thank you to Joe for taking the time to inspire our community with his message to stay 'Fitter, Happier and Healthier'. We look forward to welcoming him back again in the future."

At the end of the Q&A session, Julie Kapsalis presented Joe Wicks with a Nescot Honorary Fellowship, the highest accolade that the college can bestow, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to fitness, wellbeing and nutrition education, and his mission to improve the nation's health.

Nescot's NVQ Catering and Hospitality students also presented Joe with a cheque for £300 in support of his charity, The Body Coach Foundation. They fundraised by preparing and selling meals inspired by his recipes. The visit concluded with excited students lining up for a group selfie and reflecting on how Joe's message of resilience and ambition left a lasting impression.

To learn more about Joe Wicks' journey and his time at Nescot, visit our alumni feature on our website

NESCOT

Epsom and Ewell College Principal wins Silver at National Business Women's Awards

4 October 2026

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Julie Kapsalis recognised for bridging the gap between boardroom and classroom.

Nescot's Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis, won silver in the 'Community Champion' category at the National Business Women's Awards in London last night. Julie was also a finalist for the 'Corporate Leader of the Year' award, highlighting how the college brings together corporates, the community and students, offering young people exciting opportunities to shine.

Under Julie's tenure, Nescot has made business and community partnerships a primary focus, consistently opening doors for students. Examples include collaborations with the cruise industry and Epsom Downs Racecourse which have given students hands-on experience and led to new apprenticeships. Other students have gone behind-the-scenes at darts tournaments, hotels, museums, airports and at the Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival, while the art department has revitalised community spaces in Epsom with vibrant murals.

Julie Kapsalis, Principal and CEO at Nescot said: "Congratulations to the worthy and inspirational winners last night. It was great to win silver and to be in such illustrious company. The recognition reflects the hard work that goes on across Nescot, where we're always creating and taking opportunities to help our students thrive. I love my role, which I see as an enabler, and being able to make things happen. I get huge job satisfaction from bringing employers and students together so they benefit, either through an apprenticeship, a placement or even just an introduction that changes their path.

"The joy of attending awards is the connections you make and the inspirational stories you hear. Networking is key and I love meeting people, as I know that each business, community or civic connection we make has the potential to change a student's life."

Julie established a Women in Business Network, which hosts local leaders from organisations including KPMG, NatWest, Ringway, Wates and Atkins Realis. This year, she is especially proud of a partnership that Nescot has formed with the Royal Society for Blind Children which has enabled the establishment of a new Centre of Excellence for Blind and Visually Impaired students at Nescot, meaning young people from Surrey no longer need to travel outside the county for a college education.

The National Business Women's Awards aims to raise the profile of industrious, hardworking and enterprising Business Women nationally. The awards are made up of 23 categories and winners are chosen by an expert panel of judges. Find out more here.

NESCOT

Epsom and Ewell's NESCOT plumbs the heights

4 October 2026



Nescot's gas and plumbing apprenticeship provision has been awarded a City & Guilds End Point Assessment (EPA) plaque for excellence in apprenticeship delivery.

Elizabeth Akinlaja, City & Guilds Business Development Manager for London, Kent & Sussex, officially presented the award to Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis and the plumbing team at the college this week (Monday 22 September). She said: "Congratulations Nescot, it was a pleasure presenting the City & Guilds EPA Excellence plaque to the apprenticeship team. This award is for their dedication and commitment in supporting learners on their Building Services

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Engineering (BSE) apprenticeship provision, which has resulted in outstanding first-time pass rates, especially in plumbing, an area facing significant skills shortages. Well-done to everyone involved for making such a positive impact!"

Learners on the gas engineering apprenticeship, part of the plumbing apprenticeship department at Nescot achieved a 94% first time pass rate.

The award recognises excellence in Nescot's EPA delivery, which is the final stage of an apprenticeship designed to validate an apprentice's knowledge, skills, and behaviours against the required apprenticeship standard. It signifies the high quality and standard of the college's apprenticeship training, and celebrates the plumbing apprenticeship department's successful and impactful EPA achievements.

Liz Crawley, Head of School, Construction, Engineering & Automotive at Nescot, commented: "It's fantastic to receive such amazing feedback from City & Guilds. Our plumbing team work really hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for our apprentices and local employers."

Sarah Keith, Head of Apprenticeships at Nescot, added: "I am so proud of the teamwork at Nescot across all apprenticeships. This award is a testament to the benefits of working in a strong team that supports our apprentices, employers and each other. It means that our students are fully qualified and industry ready. Well-done to the plumbing team, and everyone involved in apprenticeships at Nescot."

The EPA Excellence award showcases Nescot's commitment to apprentice success and industry standards and reflects the wide range of apprenticeship training available at the college. At Nescot, we offer apprenticeships in carpentry and joinery, commercial catering, gas engineering, plumbing and heating, electrical installation, business administration, customer service, team leading and management, marketing executive, hairdressing, early years, health play specialists as well as laboratory scientists.

Explore the range of apprenticeship courses available on the Nescot website.

Photo: (centre left to right): Nescot Principal and CEO Julie Kapsalis receiving the City & Guilds EPA Award plaque from Elizabeth Akinlaja, City & Guilds Business Development Manager for London, Kent & Sussex along with the Nescot Plumbing team. Credit NESCOT

An EPA Plaque from City & Guilds is an award given to colleges and training providers to recognise their high-quality apprenticeship delivery and the success of their apprentices. The plaque highlights consistent excellence in End-Point Assessment (EPA) performance, based on factors like high pass rates and a large number of Distinction grades achieved by apprentices. It is also a recognition of staff dedication, guidance and support offered to learners.

NESCOT

Ewell's Nescot student's work selected for Origins Creatives 2025

4 October 2026



Art & Design student from Nescot College, Imaani Zafar, has been selected to exhibit her work at Origins Creatives, taking place at the Mall Galleries in July.

Imaani's submission, titled, 'Mother Nature: The Voice of Amazigh Women Through Textile', explores the idea of civilisation and caught the attention of UAL (University of the Arts London) Awarding Body's curator, Calum Hall, amongst over 600 submissions.

Speaking about her work, Imaani, who has completed the first year of her UAL Level Three Extended Diploma said, "I made this installation to educate people about the Amazigh women. Their knowledge and practices are often overlooked, and I wanted to create something to honour their existence."

Sarah Morgan, Art and Digital Design lecturer at Nescot commented, "We are all so proud of Imaani. Her creation demonstrates her artistic voice with meaning and sentiment. We are thrilled that her work has been selected by UAL Awarding Body for Origins Creatives at the prestigious Mall Galleries. It is a fantastic opportunity for Imaani to showcase her work at this annual celebration of student achievement, connect with peers, industry experts and the public."

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Origins Creatives is a free exhibition presented by UAL Awarding Body, offering an exciting opportunity for art enthusiasts, critics, and industry professionals in the creative sector to discover fresh, original talent. This event celebrates the dedication and hard work of young creatives from across the UK and internationally. Origins Creatives provides a platform for emerging talent to be seen and celebrated, connecting them with potential collaborators, industry leaders, and a wider audience.

The exhibition features outstanding work from students based across the UAL centres showcasing their talent across the UAL subject areas of Art and Design, Fashion Business and Retail, Creative Media, Music Performance and Production, Performing Arts, Entry Level 3 in Art and Design and Performing Arts, Professional Diplomas, and the Extended Project Qualification.

This year's edition of Origins Creatives will take place in person at the Mall Galleries in central London. The exhibition kicks off with an invite-only opening night on Tuesday 15 July. It will be open to the public from 16 – 19 July, alongside an online showcase.

The exhibition will showcase selected work created by students from Entry Level and Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 across all subject areas. You can expect to see a diverse range of painting, photography, drawing, sculpture, fashion and more.

Exhibition opening times for the public:

- Wednesday 16 July, 10am – 6pm
- Thursday 17 July, 1pm – 6pm
- Friday 18 July, 10am – 6pm
- Saturday 19 July, 10am – 5pm

Address: Mall Galleries, The Mall, St. James's, London SW1Y 5AS

If you are interested in attending this event, please book your ticket at: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/origins-creatives-2025-tickets-1345097014379?aff=oddtdtcreator

In addition to the range of Art and Digital Design UAL Awarding Body courses, Nescot offers a wide range of college courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Business, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Childcare, Health & Social Care and Beauty Therapy. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

Nescot student Imaani Zafar's art installation_Origins Creatives 2025_2

Ewell students cruise to new careers

4 October 2026



Cruise industry giants have teamed up with three colleges to highlight the sector as an exciting, rewarding career pathway for school leavers. This included 12 Travel and Tourism students at Nescot college in Ewell, who have just completed their first Cruise Career Springboard programme, allowing them to dip their toes into a potential career in the cruise sector by visiting several incredible ships, hearing from industry leaders and seeing head office and shoreside roles in action.

The Cruise Career Springboard programme was developed and masterminded by Edwina and Matthew Lonsdale at Mundy Cruising and has been supported by key industry figures, who have come together to invest in the next generation. This includes representatives from the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and leaders from numerous operators including Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises, Silversea, Norwegian Cruise Line, Oceania, Regent Seven Seas, Cunard, P&O, Princess, Seabourn, MSC Cruises, HX Expeditions, Uniworld, AmaWaterways, Windstar and Viva. Former Managing Director and Vice President of Celebrity Cruises, Jo Rzymowska, an inspirational speaker and Non-Executive Director at Hays Travel joined the programme to mentor the Nescot students. Participants have also benefited from the wisdom of former Managing Director of Regent Seven Seas Cruises UK, Graham Sadler, and Debbee Dale, leading trainer for the sector.

The course, which took place over nine weeks and included students from St John Bosco College in Battersea and Itchen College in Southampton, also aims to improve diversity and inclusion, introducing learners from varied backgrounds to the wide range of on-board and shore-based opportunities. This could be anything from engineering to entertainment, HR to health and safety and destination management to deck duties.

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This year the students visited six cruise ships and learnt about the product offer covering expedition, luxury, mainstream and river cruise liners. They also undertook classroom work, visited and heard about operations at company headquarters and prepared for a final presentation to industry professionals where they will pitch the opportunities for career pathways in the sector. Plans are already in place to embed the learning and experience into Nescot's future delivery and to launch a Level 4 qualification in Travel & Tourism with a pathway in the cruise industry from 2026.

Julie Kapsalis, Principal and CEO at Nescot said: "This programme is very close to my heart as a cruise addict – I've recently returned from my latest fantastic adventure. It's wonderful to share my love for this sector with my students. University isn't always the right route for everyone at eighteen, particularly once the cost is factored in. With that in mind, we aim to be innovative at Nescot, working closely with businesses to show students there are other exciting options out there. This includes apprenticeships and entry level roles which can be inspiring and fun with exceptional progression pathways. The Cruise Career Springboard has offered once-in-a-lifetime experiences, expert mentorship and the chance to learn about and try roles beyond the course. It's clear that the Cruise industry offers students a world of opportunity and we're working together to help them grab it."

Edwina Lonsdale, Managing Director of Mundy Cruising and Cruise Career Springboard creator said: "Many young people look at the cruise sector and don't realise it could be a career option for them, so we set out to change that. We want a diverse, enthusiastic workforce, both at sea and shoreside so linking up with colleges made perfect sense. I've been blown away by the continued industry reaction and how many individuals and operators have come on board to help us. We're incredibly grateful, as with their support, the Springboard programme can launch more careers than ever. I have also been struck by the enthusiasm and participation of the students – they have a great future ahead of them."

Eva Williams, Travel & Tourism Student at Nescot said: "Nescot's partnership with the Cruise Career Springboard programme has been amazing! We were so lucky to visit all the different ships and have big names in the industry chatting to us. I was genuinely surprised by how many people work behind the scenes to keep everything running – whole teams making things happen without ever stepping on deck. I'd never really considered the cruise industry as a career option before, but it's definitely on my radar now. I love the idea of playing a part in helping people's dreams come true."

Working in the cruise industry allows young people to access a wide range of careers and utilise skills that cover a range of jobs and functions. As a global industry, it also offers opportunity to work with colleagues around the world and to travel. Many who join the cruise line industry might begin on ships, but then pivot into shore-based roles as their career develops, or family commitments make travel more difficult. The industry can provide a lifelong, varied and dynamic career.

Industry professionals interested in finding out more about the Cruise Career Springboard can contact Edwina Lonsdale – edwina@mundycruising.co.uk

In addition to Travel and Tourism courses, Nescot offers a wide range of college courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Business, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Childcare, Health & Social Care and Beauty Therapy. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

Image: Students from Nescot, St John Bosco and Itchen Colleges are joined on Silver Spirit by Edwina Lonsdale – Mundy Cruising, Mentors Graham Sadler and Jo Rzymowska, Peter Shanks – Silversea Cruises and Julie Kapsalis – Nescot.

Jane Wilson-Howarth visits her Epsom alma mater

4 October 2026



North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) welcomed **Jane Wilson-Howarth**, world renowned physician, author, zoologist and an authority on travel health to the college yesterday. Jane inspired and motivated our learners with two very special talks about her journey as a published writer, and her love for animals in her fascinating encounters with the wildlife in Madagascar.

Jane studied at the college in the early 1970s when it was known as Ewell Technical College, completing her Ordinary National Diploma in Sciences. She was delighted to return to her alma mater, now known as Nescot.

Jane's first talk reflected on her career as an author and her time at the college. She spoke about how a letter-writing habit in childhood helped her writing abilities. She explained to students that writing is an essential and useful skill and emphasised the importance of finding your passion, "It doesn't matter what it is, if you're passionate about something, it will come across in your writing", said Jane.

For her second talk, Jane spoke about her travels in Madagascar and her fascination and love for the wonderful wildlife on

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the island especially the lemurs. Our Animal Care students, some of whom have been to Madagascar on a college trip last year were fascinated to hear her experiences and reflections – including being bitten by a scorpion.

Jane was also given a tour of the college including the Learning Resources Centre (LRC) that featured an eye-catching and creative display of her fiction and non-fiction books, a selection of photographs from her travels and various newspaper articles. Students are able to borrow and browse Jane's books from the LRC. At the end of her visit, Jane was delighted to be awarded with the Nescot Honorary Fellowship by Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis.

Julie Kapsalis, Principal and CEO said, "It's been an absolute pleasure to welcome Jane back to her old college as one of our most illustrious alumni. A big thank you to Jane for sharing her extraordinary career as a writer and zoologist with our students and staff.

"It's a privilege to award Jane with an Honorary Fellowship. We introduced the award in 2023 for the college's 70th anniversary to recognise excellence of former students and members of the local community. It is the highest accolade the college can bestow."

Speaking about her visit, Jane said, "It's a real pleasure to come back to Nescot. I was here from 1970 to 1972 and had a really good science education at the college and that gave me the confidence I needed. It's been so wonderful meeting and speaking with students today. I was so touched by the time and effort that went into creating the wonderful display of my published work in the college's Learning Resources Centre and the beautiful drawing I received of a leaf tailed Gecko by one of the students. I was especially thrilled to receive an Honorary Fellowship from Nescot. Thank you to everyone at the college for making me feel so welcome and for such a memorable day."

Image: Jane-W-H-Nescot-Honorary-Fellowship-Award-and-Julie-Kapsalis-Principal-and-CEO

Darts mathematics lesson for Epsom college students

4 October 2026



Nescot (North East Surrey College of Technology) College in Epsom, Surrey welcomed a trio of darts legends and MC, Paul Starr to the college Wednesday to inspire students and encourage them to develop their mental maths skills. Paul 'The Asset' Nicholson, Devon 'The African Warrior' Petersen and three-time darts World Champion Mighty Michael Van Gerwen visited the college for the 'Nescot Loves Darts & Maths' event promoting arithmetic and numeracy, launching a college darts league and sharing their stories of determination and success.

Nescot hosted a full day of darts events, aimed at students re-taking their maths GCSEs. Nicholson and Petersen played a 5-leg match, then the players and Paul Starr held a Q&A and participated in a darts related maths quiz with students. Smaller groups of students later met the players in workshops on self-belief and inclusion.

The players also formally opened the newly branded Nescot Department of Maths. Each classroom now has a darts board and is named after a darts legend. In addition, Nescot launched a darts club and league, the first college in the country to do so. The inaugural Kapsalis Cup was contested between Nescot and East Sussex College Group, with plans to roll out a wider college league. During the sessions, all three players plus the MC were awarded a Nescot Honorary Fellowship and the day concluded with a 'meet and greet' for students.

The event was masterminded by Julie Kapsalis, Principal and CEO at Nescot, and also a massive darts fan. Julie makes an annual pilgrimage to the Lakeside World Championships and loves watching the sport, live and on TV. Having previously worked in sports PR, she also has contacts in the world of darts and reached out to them with the seed of an idea.

Julie said "Exciting and engaging students retaking their maths GCSEs was the challenge that made this day take shape. We regularly invite leaders from business, sport and the community to share their stories and when looking for a maths enthusiast, my mind turned to my own sporting passion – darts.

"The response from the darts community was incredible, after one phone call we were gifted boards, surrounds and darts, then the representatives of top players suggested an entire day of events at the college. We created a mini arena, and it was so exciting to see darts legends step up to the oche at Nescot. We're so grateful to the players, their management and everyone involved for taking the time to promote maths and inspire our students. Highlighting role models from all kinds of backgrounds and making learning fun are key at Nescot. I can't wait to see our students' playing darts in the classrooms. Game on!"

Michael van Gerwen said "It's great to see first-hand how Nescot are using darts to inspire their students. It's a brilliant way to improve mental maths, as the two go hand in hand. I love the fact the college is going to have a dartboard in every maths class too. It will be a fantastic addition, and I'm sure the students will love it."

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Devon Petersen said"It was a pleasure to visit Nescot College, and it's so good to see them following core values and using darts to enhance their arithmetic. I have seen darts and maths work together in the work that I do for Bullseye Maths with young children, and Nescot will definitely see the benefits of using darts to enhance their education."

Paul Nicholson said "Seeing young people like the ones at Nescot College enjoying the sport of darts today is so good to see, and I have no doubt that including darts as part of the student's maths learning journey will only be a good thing. Darts is a sport for all, and it can be educational as well as fun, as proved with what Nescot are doing. Schools and colleges can only benefit from adding darts to their learning program."

Darts is a sociable, inclusive sport, which almost anyone can access. It can improve mental health by enhancing cognitive function, reducing stress and boosting confidence. It also improves motor skills, hand-eye coordination and problem solving. Importantly for the maths department, the mental maths involved in darts can improve maths skills generally, especially around multiplication and subtraction.

Maths skills and mental maths are important for many employers. Nescot welcomes students who would like to retake their maths GCSEs and improve their employment prospects before they step into the world of work.

As well as functional skills courses in maths and English, Nescot offers a wide range of college courses for school leavers and adults, including Animal Care, Business, Computing and IT, Construction, Performing Arts, Childcare, Health & Social Care and Beauty Therapy. The college has an open event on May 15th, from 4.30 – 7.30pm, where prospective students can learn more about the courses, campus and facilities. To find out more about studying at Nescot call 020 8394 3038, visit www.nescot.ac.uk or email adviceteam@nescot.ac.uk

Image: Julie Kapsalis and Andy Cowan from Nescot alongside Devon Petersen, Michael Van Gerwen and Paul Nicholson

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Watching out for tomorrow's film talent in Epsom and Ewell

4 October 2026



Creative Media students from North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) were joined by their tutors, family and friends for the premiere of their short film, 'The Watching' which was screened at Epsom Picturehouse last week.

The Watching' was filmed on location in the South Downs in November by Nescot's Level 4 and HND Creative Media students as part of their domestic filming project. Written by and starring former student, Charlie McCarthy, 'The Watching', is a psychological drama, exploring themes of identity, state control and the human cost of forgetting, set against the desolate beauty of an isolated coastline.

Louise Gaskin, Head of Curriculum for Creative Industries at Nescot said, "A huge well done to our cast and crew. We are so proud of their efforts and hard work on this project which has resulted in, I think, one of the best films we've made as a department. Thank you to Epsom Picturehouse and Satisfied Eye International Film Festival for supporting our students, we were thrilled to be able to showcase our students' film on the big screen."

Abigail Partington-Moran, Creative Media tutor at Nescot added, "The students have worked really hard on this filming project and enjoyed themselves too. They've taken the early starts, late nights, cold weather and countless unit moves all in their stride. The project has given them the real-world experience of working on set, and alongside the technical film-making skills, they've also learnt team work, problem-solving and time management skills."

After the film screening, key cast and crew members involved in the filming took to the stage for a Q&A session with Creative Media tutor demonstrator, Alex Marshall. They included, former student, Charlie McCarthy, Script Writer and Actor, and Sam Gower, Actor; HND student, Hannah Lealan, Producer; Level 4 student Frankie Hamley and HND student Nathan Elford, Directors and Level 4 student, Amani McKenzie, Script Supervisor.

Former student Charlie was part of Nescot's Gold Medal winning Creative Media team at WorldSkills UK 2023. He said his inspiration for the script was the filming location, "I liked the idea of writing something satirical with reference to the beach. Everyone involved was brilliant and so dedicated all of the time. We had lots of fun making this film and I do hope audiences enjoy it."

HND student, Nathan, who had the role of Director along with Level 4 student Frankie said, "We all worked really well together, there were no arguments which was great! Both Frankie and I collaborated to bring together the visual aspects of the film. The whole production was very professional. The experience has given me an idea of the job role I'd like to get into."

"Even though it was stressful at times, it was good stress and taught us how to problem-solve. We have learnt a lot from

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this whole production. It has made us ready for the film-making industry," added Frankie.

HND student, Hannah who had the role of Producer said, "We were essentially two different classes, working together. We turned a challenge from never having worked with someone before into an opportunity to develop, work and learn from each other. We had lots of fun on set between takes which made the experience enjoyable."

Level 4 student Amani explained that as part of his role as Script Supervisor, he had to ensure there was continuity through the whole production from props to the actor's lines, to make sure everything ran smoothly. "It's been an amazing experience and has prepared us for handling industry-related situations. We are ready!" he said.

Nescot Creative Media alumnus and industry professional, Luke James was present for the screening. Addressing the students, he reminisced about working on a similar filming project nine years ago when he was a student at Nescot and offered them key advice. He said, "Filmmaking is a labour of love and there are endless opportunities in this industry. The opportunity to make something like this film is just so valuable, and you may not feel it now, but you should all be extremely proud of yourselves."

'The Watching' has been entered into the Student Short (UK) category for the 2025 Satisfied Eye International Film Festival

Nescot's Level 4 and HND Creative Media students on location for the filming of 'The Watching'. Credit NESCOT

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