

USP UNLOCKED

MAGAZINE

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A message from the Principal

We started this term on a high with our Class of 2025 Graduation Ceremony, celebrating the outstanding successes of graduates from across our Higher Education provision. It was great to see the pride of friends, family, and staff as we came together for such a wonderful evening.

Always a high point on the calendar is our annual Careers Fair, giving students the opportunity to explore the wide array of career pathways available to them. Our second Student CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Day also took place this term, giving students valuable exposure to employers, reinforcing our career-focused learning ethos.

It was also a pleasure to host the inaugural awards ceremony for the FEDEC Inter-College Skills Competition, celebrating a week of successes and achievements of young people from colleges across Essex celebrating technical skills and student talents.

We continued to engage and build partnerships locally, nationally, and internationally to lead the sector on digital innovation, local government engagement, and immersive learning.

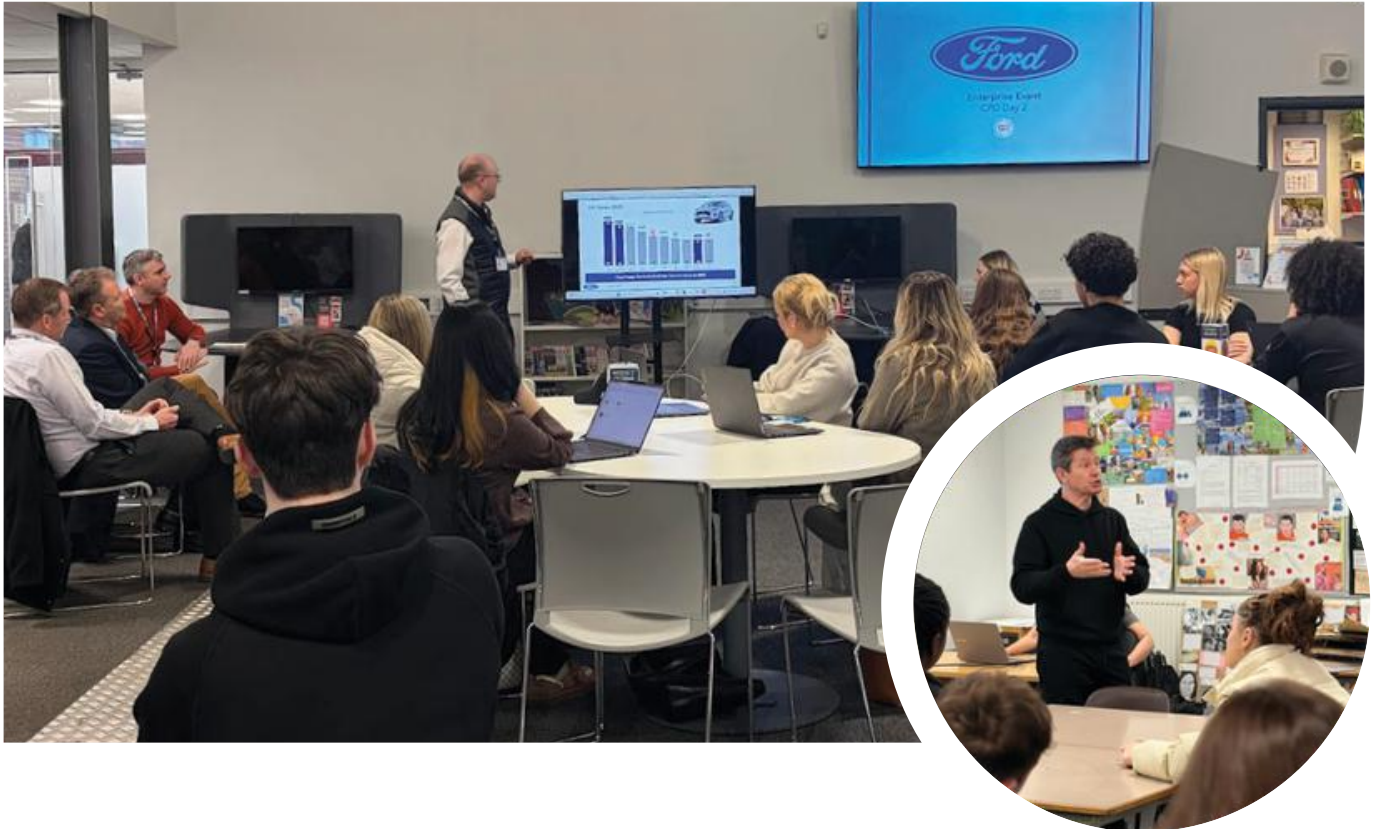
This is just a small insight into what has been a busy Spring Term at USP College. We hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of our termly magazine!

Warm regards,
Clare White, Principal, USP College



Welcome to the Spring Term edition of USP Unlocked. As we have progressed further into this academic year, it has been great to see our campuses busy with a hive of activity and engagement!”

Developing Career-Ready Skills on CPD Day



We marked another inspiring Student CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Day on Monday 9 February, bringing together employers, staff and students for a packed programme of workshops, demonstrations and industry insights across both the Seevic and Palmer's campuses.

Local employers played a central role, delivering sessions that supported students' development in the professional world, through building industry-specific and transferrable skills, that all students can display in a work setting.

Highlights included business and workplace insights from Ford Essex, a robotics and technology workshop from XR Studios, and sessions in entrepreneurship, life coaching and self-defence.

These sessions are designed to build confidence, resilience, and develop core meta-skills and EQ (emotional intelligence). Building on these skills is key to USP College's new Strategic Framework, supporting our learners through to the next decade and into the ever-changing professional world.

Our employer partners play an active role in Student CPD Days, helping the college bridge skills gaps, providing strategic, long-term support to strengthen our career-focused approach and local talent pipelines.

Student CPD Day once again highlighted USP College's commitment to employer-led, experiential learning. Our approach prepares students for their future careers and develops their technical and professional skills.'

Celebrating the **Class** of **2025**



USP College proudly celebrated our Higher Education Class of 2025 on Wednesday 14 January 2026, transforming the Immersive Theatre into a lively space filled with applause, excitement and pride.



Families, friends, governors, and staff gathered to honour graduates from across our Early Years, Games Development, Sport & Exercise, and Education & Training courses. The atmosphere was buzzing with celebration as guests enjoyed delicious canapés, glasses of prosecco and a lively 360-degree photo booth, adding a vibrant, social feel to the night.

Head of Higher Education and Access, Megan Brophy, lead the evening's proceedings as Master of Ceremonies, guiding the audience through the procession, speeches and prize presentations.

CEO Dan Pearson opened the ceremony with heartfelt praise, telling graduates, "On behalf of the Principal, Vice Principal and myself, we are incredibly proud of all you've achieved. USP College will always be part of your story, a foundation for the bright future ahead."

Krissy Arkell, Early Years Graduate, delivered an address to her fellow graduates and members of the congregation. Her words highlighted the perseverance, self-belief and community spirit that shaped her time at USP College.

Krissy is continuing her studies with us at USP College, progressing onto the Education Studies & Early Years Level 6 course.

As the ceremony drew to a close, the college reflected on the achievements of this year's graduates and the continued growth of Higher Education at USP College. We are expanding our HE offer for 2026 and look forward to welcoming even more students into our professional, career-focused programmes.



With the support of my tutors and classmates, I learned to overcome how I was feeling and gained knowledge, understanding, and believed in myself to achieve what I have achieved today."

Krissy Arkell, Early Years Graduate



Closing remarks were delivered by Cllr Kate Knott, Deputy Mayor of Castle Point.



Scan the QR code to watch the video

ADULT COURSES

APPRENTICESHIPS

We've launched two new apprenticeships this year to support people who want to upskill into new careers. The courses we are offering are:

- Teaching Assistant Level 3
- Business Administration Level 3

Apprenticeships are a powerful way to gain real skills, experience & a nationally recognised qualification, all while earning a wage and developing whilst on the job.

For employers, this means you can hire someone new or upskill an existing employee, allowing you to grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

Discover more on our website uspcollege.ac.uk

ACCESS TO HE

USP College provides outstanding education, training & support for adults.

We are passionate about helping you to achieve your ambitions and our courses are consistently recommended by students and employers.

The Access to Higher Education Diploma is designed for people who have been out of education for some time or for those who left school without the qualifications needed to go straight to university.

It provides you with a good foundation and the skills needed for studying at university level, so you can be confident and well prepared when you go on to study a degree.

HIGHER EDUCATION

At USP College, we offer a wide range of Higher Education courses in Essex, including Level 4 qualifications, Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees, and full Undergraduate Degrees.

Whether you're a sixth-form or college leaver, or you're looking to upskill and advance your career, our flexible study options are designed to fit around your life.

Every programme is built to give you the skills employers demand today and help you achieve the career you want.



For more on
Adult Education
Scan the QR code

Developing Word Class Skills - Freeport Skills Partnership



In January, USP College CEO Dan Pearson and Chief Technology Officer James Parker joined a national delegation of Further and Higher Education leaders on an intensive two-day visit to STC Next in Rotterdam - one of the world's leading centres for port, logistics, and maritime training.

The visit formed part of the growing FE & HE Freeport Skills Partnership, bringing together colleges and sector specialists focused on shaping a world-class skills pipeline for the UK's Freeport network.

The trip provided rare, first-hand exposure to advanced maritime and logistics training environments, including state-of-the-art simulators and digital training systems.

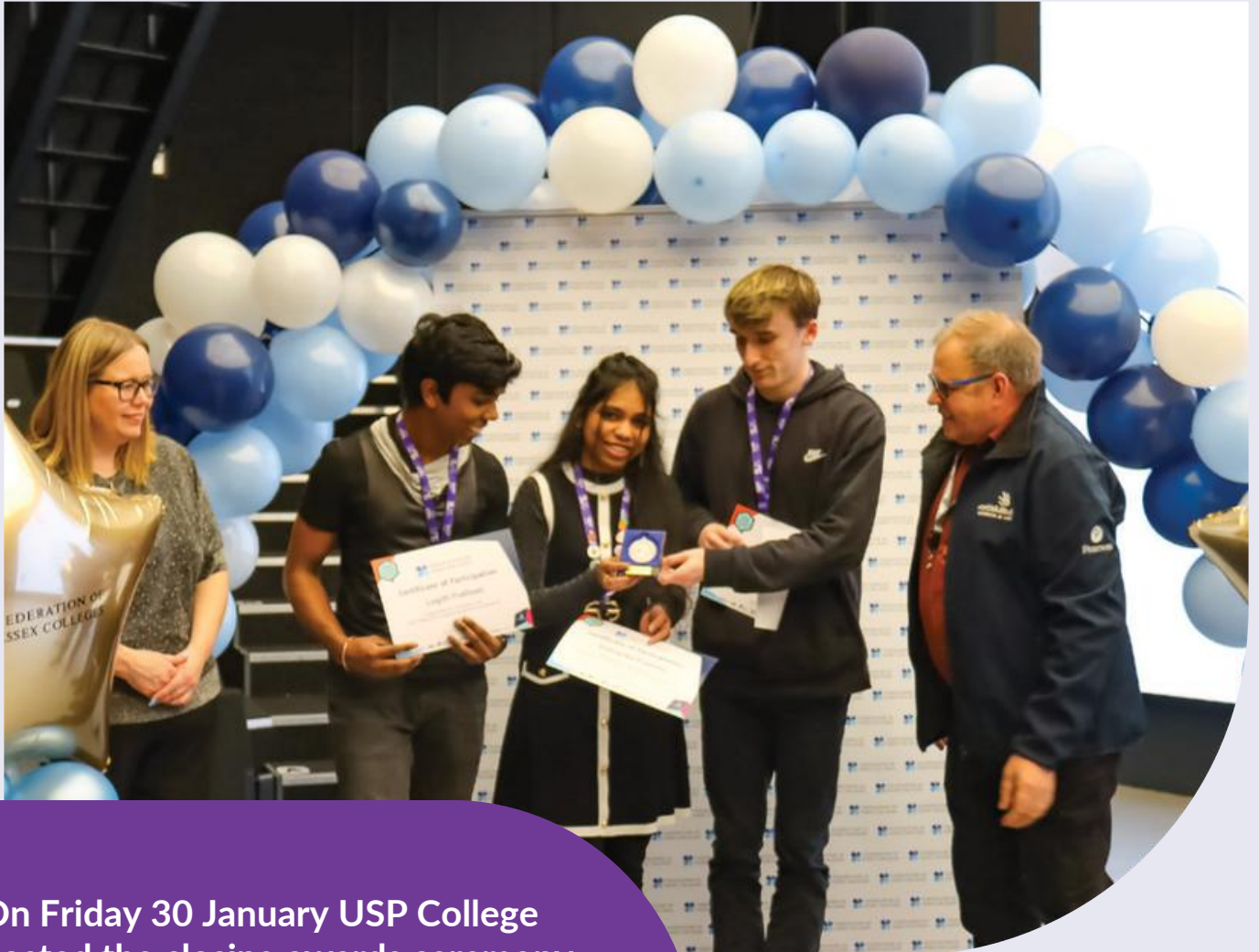
This strategic collaboration marks another milestone in USP College's commitment to delivering industry aligned, future-focused education.



It was a brilliant two days for our FE & HE Freeport Skills Partnership at STC Next, getting a masterclass in how they attract, develop and strengthen the workforce for one of world's busiest ports. We were not just there to see it; we were there to learn and adapt it for the UK.”

James Parker, Chief Technology Officer

Celebrating the inaugural FEDEC Awards



On Friday 30 January USP College hosted the closing awards ceremony for the inaugural FEDEC (Federation of Essex Colleges) Inter-College Skills Competition, welcoming students, staff and partners from across Essex to our Seevic Campus.

The event marked the culmination of a county-wide competition celebrating technical skill, student ambition and the strength of further education collaboration.

Delivered through FEDEC, the Inter-College Skills Competition is the first initiative of its kind to be jointly developed by Essex colleges.

The programme was endorsed by WorldSkills UK through the Local Skills Competition Endorsement Framework, recognising the quality and impact of the competition in supporting learner development and progression.

Students from USP College, Chelmsford College, Colchester Institute, Harlow College and South Essex Colleges Group competed across a range of categories, including Health & Social Care, Hair & Beauty, Electrical Installation, Plumbing, Bricklaying, Engineering, Digital, Science and Hospitality. Throughout the competition, learners showcased exceptional talent, technical skills and a clear commitment to excellence.

Alongside hosting the awards ceremony, USP College delivered the Health & Social Care competition, using its hospital simulation suite to provide a realistic, professional environment aligned to industry standards. The setting allowed students to demonstrate not only technical competence, but also communication, decision-making and professional behaviours under pressure.

We are so proud of our student teams who took home silver in the Digital category and silver in Health & Social Care category. Our congratulations are extended to all students who took part.



Events like this place students at the centre of their learning experience. Competing in realistic settings helps them build confidence, apply their skills under pressure and understand the professional standards expected in their future careers. It has been a strong example of how we can create meaningful, motivating experiences that support both personal and professional development.”

**Hannah Johnson, Assistant Principal
Student Experience**



**Scan the
QR code to
watch the
video**

Future of Healthcare with AI Simulation



USP College students took a step into the future of healthcare this term as Simulaids visited our Hospital Simulation Suite to deliver an immersive training experience rooted in AI-enhanced clinical practice.

The session showcased how advanced digital simulation tools, including AI-driven patient communication systems, responsive mannequins and scenario-based assessment platforms, are transforming the way learners prepare for real-world clinical environments.

This aligns closely with USP College's strategic focus on technology-enabled education and our commitment to ensuring students enter the workforce with the skills, confidence and digital fluency demanded by modern healthcare settings.

NHS partners help with interview preparation



T-Level Health students prepared for their interviews with Southend and Basildon Hospital for industry work placements as part of their studies.

T-Levels are made up of 80% theoretical study and 20% industry work experience, allowing students to finish college with well-rounded, career-ready skills.

USP College currently offers 9 T-Level courses, with efforts to expand this provision over the coming academic year.



The students were really well prepared and enthusiastic. It was interesting for us to see the variety of experience the students already had and their ambitions for the future of healthcare.”

Liz Summers, Head of Nursing for Professional and Commissioned Education. Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust

Spring Term Student Conference



This term, we held our second Student Conference of the year. It was a great opportunity for members of our Student Union to give their feedback on their college experience.

Taking place at our XTEND Digital Campus, students engaged with a whole host of workshops, aiming to give them the platform to provide open and constructive feedback to staff on a range of topics related to the student experience at USP College.

Our Student Conferences aid senior management and key stakeholders in making positive changes to develop and improve the overall learner experience at the college.

Events like this give students the chance to make a positive difference to not just their own experiences, but to the experiences of their fellow students and learners in the years ahead.

Students using their Learner Voice



Continuing our calendar of Learner Voice events, this term we also hosted our MyUSP Question Time sessions at both our Seevic & Palmer's Campuses.

MyUSP Question Time is open for all students to give feedback and raise questions with a panel of senior managers and key staff members at the college.

Learners have this unique opportunity to speak directly with the people that can make things happen at the college, and hearing directly from students also allows the student voice to be factored into potential developments and changes at the college itself.

Learner Voice is at the heart of everything we do at USP college, and these events give a direct opportunity for key discussions to happen between students and staff.



MyUSP Question Time puts the student voice at the centre of decisions made at USP College. By sharing their ideas, experiences and feedback at this event with senior managers and key stakeholders, our learners actively shape college life and help drive positive change.

Kerry Amos, Student Engagement Manager

Discovering next steps at our **Careers Fair**



During National Careers Week 2026 in March, USP College hosted our annual Careers Fairs. These fairs are to support young people at the college, and those in the local community, with their next steps whilst opening doors to industry and career opportunities.

Our Careers Fairs are designed to connect current and prospective learners, parents, and key stakeholders with local employers and training providers. This event gave young people the opportunity to explore career pathways, gain insights from industry leaders, and discover the right opportunities for their futures.

Events took place at our Seevic and Palmer's Campuses on Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 March. USP College students were able to engage with and meet the many industry professionals and organisations who came to exhibit.

“Exhibitors fed back how confidently our learners engaged asking focused and purposeful questions, to exploring their next steps, with all holding meaningful conversations about their future goals. Nearly all arrived with a clear sense of direction, and those who weren't sure were supported by both our guests and Careers Advisors to ensure no opportunity was missed.” Explains Lauren Morgan, Careers Team Leader.

Our evening Careers Fair, hosted at our Seevic Campus on 3 March, which was open to the public, welcomed hundreds of visitors to discover what opportunities are available in our region. Engaging with the local community is a key aim for us at USP College, as it allows us to not just support our own students, but to open doors and opportunities for young people across south Essex.

As a career-focused college, we are committed to equipping our learners with the skills, knowledge, and experience to navigate the world of work when their time with us has finished.

Thank you to all local employers, businesses, training providers, and universities who exhibited throughout the week.



This has been our busiest Careers Fair yet, bringing together over 40 universities, 33 employers, and apprenticeship training providers. Events like this spark ambition and help learners feel empowered about the pathways ahead.”

Lauren Morgan, Careers Team Leader

WELCOME DAYS



Seevic Campus | 29 & 30 June

Palmer's Campus | 1 July

Immerse Yourself in College Life

We are creating a day full of memorable and enjoyable experiences, and we want you to be there!

Welcome Day is an exclusive opportunity to:

- ✓ Explore our campuses
- ✓ Meet tutors and support staff
- ✓ Meet your future classmates
- ✓ Ask USP students questions
- ✓ Get a feel for your campus

MEET
YOUR
TUTORS

MAKE
NEW FRIENDS

WIN PRIZES

APPLY NOW
TO SECURE YOUR
INVITE TO
WELCOME DAY!



Apply now on our website
uspcollege.ac.uk



Employer Roundtable

On Friday 27 February, USP College hosted a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Sector Group Roundtable, in partnership with Essex Chambers of Commerce.



Essex Chambers of Commerce were appointed as the Employer Representative Body (ERB) in November 2023 for the first Essex LSIP, and are leading once again on LSIP 2.0, which is currently in the research phase and due to be published later this year.

It was great to bring together local employers and education providers from the Health, Care, and MediTech sector to share experiences and challenges organisations are currently facing in the region, and to help shape the future of workforce development across Essex.

A range of topics were discussed, from emerging skills gaps and industry trends to critical skills and the digitalisation of traditional roles. Conversations were focused on collaborative solutions across education settings, and how local government can support companies and organisations to meet these growing skills needs.



Employer Engagement is critical to the progress of Education and Skills Development. It was great to bring local education, apprenticeship, and training providers together to discuss how as a region we can better support emerging skills gaps, and how USP College can be at the forefront of this.”

Chris Murgatroyd, Vice Principal Academic



Human Library

Performing Arts students brought literature to life in February, performing their own specially curated show for the 'Human Library'.

The Human Library, created by our Creative Industries and Learning Resource Centre Teams, enabled students to write and perform their own monologues, inspired by novels, fiction, and musicals.

Students then performed their pieces as one big performance in our Immersive Theatre.

It was great to see students indulge in their love of performing, and to bring such a unique show to life!

Level 2 Creative Arts Exhibition

Level 2 Art and Design students set up a wonderful exhibition with their architecturally inspired prints at Hadleigh Gallery.

They created a range of beautiful lino prints, screen prints, heat press fabric prints and original drawings. Their pieces were on sale with all profits donated to Andy's Man Club, a local charity focusing on awareness for men's mental health.

An amazing effort for a great cause, allowing students the opportunity to develop their professional skills in the creative industry.



Jack Petchey Glee Club Competition



As part of the Jack Petchey Glee Club challenge, some of our talented Performing Arts students participated in the Essex Regional Semi Finals, performing at Chelmsford Theatre in March.

It is a fantastic achievement, to be a part of such a high-profile competition, and we are proud of our learners who took part.



“The Performing Arts Team are incredibly proud of the students for their dedication, commitment and professionalism on the day and we look forward to the Glee Club performing in this event next year and in many other events to come.”

Rebecca Lynch, Curriculum Manager Creative Industries

Supported Internship at Southend Airport

During the Spring Term, Vinny Gaskin, a Supported Internship student at our XTEND Digital Campus, has been completing a work placement at London Southend Airport.

Throughout his placement, Vinny has been getting hands on in several departments and roles, from fuel and engineering to the fire department and jet centre. It has been great to see Vinny fully immersed in his love of aviation!

Placements like this open doors for our students and helps them to gain insights into their dream professions.



It's fantastic to be giving an opportunity to young people and particularly to people like Vinny who have a passion for aviation. I'm sure this is going to open many doors for him in the future, and we're happy to be a part of that journey with him."

Lisa Price, Director of People and Internal Communications, London Southend Airport



Highlighting inspirational leaders during **Women's History Month**

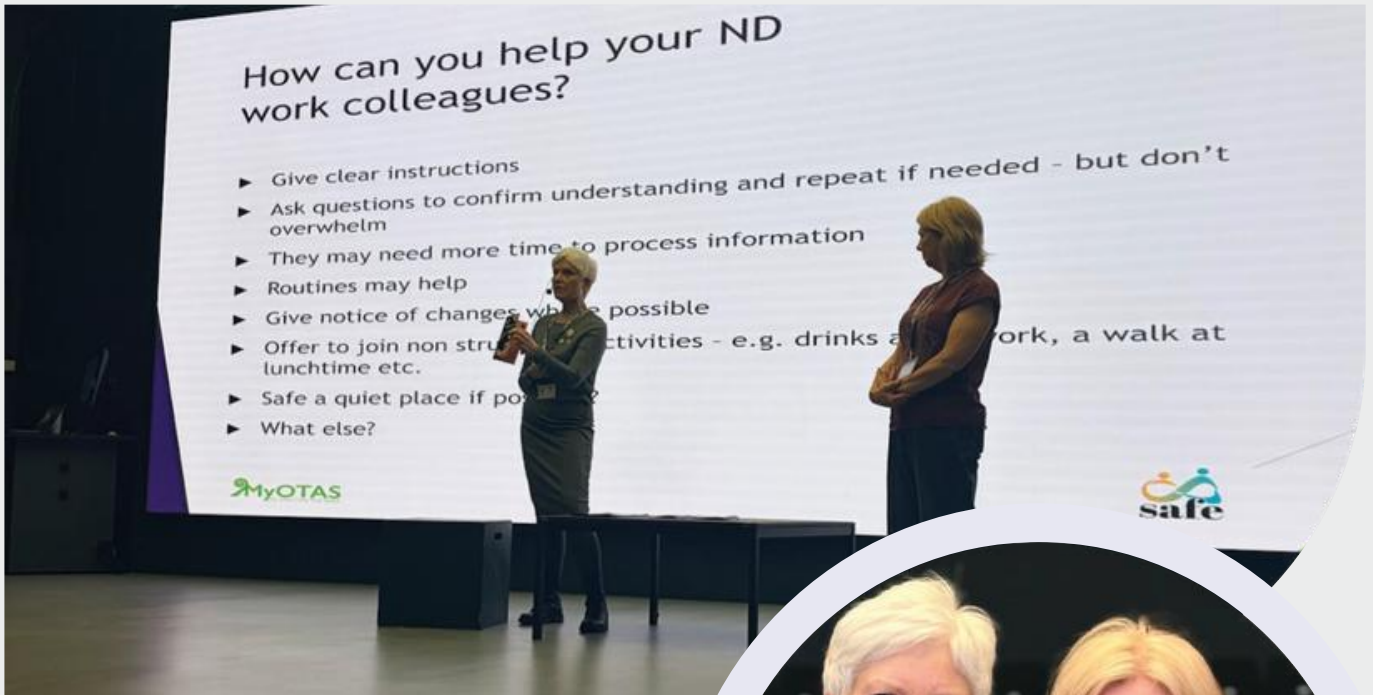


During Women's History Month in March, Cherie Brightwell, Vice Principal Technical and Professional, took part in IQUK College's International Women's Day 2026 celebration.

Cherie joined a panel of inspirational female leaders, led by Jen Craft MP, Member of Parliament for Thurrock, who held insightful conversations on what it means to be a woman shaping education. The event brought together inspiring women, community leaders and students from across the borough to celebrate leadership, opportunity and the importance of supporting the next generation of women in Thurrock.

Cherie was also awarded a Certificate of Appreciation, recognising her commitment to strengthening our community and inspiring future generations across Thurrock and South Essex.

Empowering Every Mind During Neurodiversity Week



We were proud to welcome MYOTAS and Safe Essex as guest speakers to our BetterU session during Neurodiversity Week back in March.

Their work supporting neurodivergent communities across Essex sends a powerful message to our young people: your differences are strengths, and you never have to navigate them alone.

Hearing how the modern workplace is evolving, embracing diverse thinking, adapting environments, and valuing individuality, gave our students a glimpse of a future where they can thrive as their authentic selves. For many, it was a reminder that their journey is valid, their voice matters, and their potential is limitless.



Creating spaces where young people feel understood and empowered is exactly why Neurodiversity Week is so important.

Student-Led Podcast on Spotify



Introduced this year by our Student Union, the USP Download is a brand-new podcast created by students, for students.

Student Union members have already hosted several podcast sessions, with an amazing team of students working behind the scenes to make this podcast all about community, confidence and connection.

The USP Download gives our students the platform to share their views, experiences, and insights on a range of topics.



Scan the QR code to listen to the podcast

SHAPE THE FUTURE

JOBS AT USP COLLEGE



Looking for a career change or want to bring your real world skills to help shape the workforce of tomorrow? USP College has a number of opportunities that might just be right for you!



Teaching
Curriculum Support
Business Support



We believe in investing in our staff, offering competitive salaries, benefits, and professional development opportunities.

Contact us recruitment@uspcollege.ac.uk

View our current vacancies today
uspcollege.ac.uk

