



Phoenix College

*A Pathway Towards
Independence and Employment*

VISION

To equip young people with autism to develop their independence, life and employability skills ; to gain much greater control over their own future and to reach their full potential and lead a full and productive adult life.



MISSION

To provide positive life enhancing education to enable individuals with complex autism access to specialist 16-25 further education in their local communities. To enable and increase their knowledge, skills and confidence to allow successful transition into adulthood and to live, work and contribute as part of their community.

WELCOME

The Phoenix Autism Trust is an independent registered charity and incorporated company by guarantee. It has grown out of Phoenix School in Tower Hamlets. Phoenix School is an outstanding education provider for young people with complex autism and related Special Educational Needs. In response to a growing need in the borough and at the request from the local authority, PATH (Phoenix Autism Tower Hamlets) was established in September 2015 to develop a specialist 19-25 further education provision in partnership with New City College. In September 2019, Phoenix College opens its doors as the need for high-quality 16-25 provision continues to grow in Tower Hamlets.

Phoenix College is committed to the full inclusion of people with complex autism (meaning autism together with communication and learning difficulties) into their local communities, where that is what they choose, want and need. We regard this as meaningful equality and the best route to an active, safe and secure life. Our starting point is therefore to help our students integrate the core independence skills to enable them to live as independently as possible, in their own homes, with full access to their community through leisure, friendships, employment or voluntary work.

With that objective, of real community membership, it follows that our courses are all firmly based on learning, practicing, applying and integrating core skills. Everyone is different so teaching is adapted to individual need. As skills are integrated our students are all offered work placements that allow them to discover what they enjoy and have an aptitude for. We want no student graduating only to find that they cannot sell their skills to an employer, or offer them an environment where they can volunteer and make a contribution if they cannot be an employee. We strive for all students to be an **active** citizen of their local community.

VALUES

At Phoenix College, the education and well-being of students is our first priority. We exist to help our students develop and learn, that is our purpose. Being able to make choices of your own is the basis of freedom and liberty. Making good choices, ones that are sensible, safe and get you where you want to go means understanding the world and the people around you. So everything we do is focussed on that.



AIMS

- ❖ To provide a pathway to meet the educational needs of students with autism through consistent specialist ASD approaches.
- ❖ To provide a personalised Education Programme of Study to meet the needs of students through the outcomes of EHCP.
- ❖ To provide and equip all students with meaningful employment skills and the necessary independent life skills for adulthood.
- ❖ To support Tower Hamlets Local Authority in providing a high-quality provision, whilst supporting students to live with their families and participate in their local community.
- ❖ To advocate for adults with complex autism and support families / services to extend education to the home and in the community.

HOW WE SUPPORT

We are a team of professional people with strong expertise in autism and the differences and challenges that autism can bring. The team of professional teaching and lecturing staff are supported by trained support staff. We have access to the full range of therapists and to the wider Phoenix team, so we have depth in teaching, support, therapy, administration, finance, planning and the advice we need to provide competent and legally correct services. Where we need specific expertise to solve a problem, we access it.

All staff are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Staff are expected to act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills up to date and be self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interest of their young person.

The teaching team teach small groups (usually between 8-10 students) and every student has however much support to access the curriculum and the activities as they need from our support team. All staff receive regular training and training updates covering teaching methods, communication systems, Safeguarding, managing behaviour, safety in the workplace and many other topics. All staff have Advance DBS prior to employment.

Our teaching space is in the main College campus but we also make regular use of the community itself: providers of work experience, employers, voluntary work experience providers, Department for Work and Pensions and closely with Health and Adult Social Care. Each student has their own bespoke plan, derived from their Education Health and Care Plan (the EHCP), created (co-produced, as the statutory guidance calls it) together with the student and their family. Plans are reviewed termly to ensure that the student is progressing as much as they can and there is a formal annual review of the EHCP and plan when changes can be made and improvements integrated.

Our college days commence at 8:45am and finish at 3:20pm and we run courses Monday to Friday during usual college terms, offering 38 weeks a year of study.

In most cases transport to and from college can be organised through your local authority, though wherever it is safe and realistic to do so we encourage students to travel independently as part of their learning to be independent.



CARE AND SAFETY

It's hard to learn if you are feeling unsafe or afraid. The College team take every possible step to create a low stress and high safety environment. We intervene quickly to stop bullying, exploitation, prejudice and insist on respect for cultural, religious and dietary requirements. We teach respect for others, safety around vulnerable people and support students to understand relationships, including intimate relationships. Sufficient support staff are always on hand to avoid accidents and incidents, especially when exploring the community and learning about road safety, use of community facilities and use of transport. We make great efforts to prevent safeguarding concerns from arising and work very closely with the statutory services where such concerns arise.

We risk assess all trips and activities and we maintain our buildings carefully, they are kept clean and in good order, with the proper checks made of services such as water and electricity and the appliances we use. We do not seek to avoid all risk, managing risks is an essential part of independent living and we identify and work with risks that have to be mastered by our students, whilst keeping them safe.

Some students require support with personal care and we can provide that. We can also administer agreed medication and manage other medical matters where that is agreed and permitted. Additional costs associated with additional services will be worked out during student assessment.

PARENT / CARER SUPPORT SERVICES

Almost all of our students live at home with family when they join the College. A small number live with other carers. The process of College admission, agreeing the courses to be taken, managing the EHCP, transport and many other matters are complicated and of course rely to a considerable degree upon family and carers. It is obviously in everyone's interests that family and carers are involved, kept regularly and accurately informed and understand what the College are doing and why.

Where problems arise we do our best to solve them jointly with the student, their family and carers. We also provide termly parents evenings, Coffee Mornings, parent training and celebrations events every year to support families and carers with keeping up to date with changes to the systems and rules that affect the student, developments in how the College provide their services and opportunities to learn about new ideas and methods.

We use a Home-College planner system to aid communication and to arrange meetings. Family and carers are of course fully involved in the reviews and can ask for a meeting whenever one is needed. We undertake a wellbeing survey every year to check on the overall health of our relations with Students, families and staff morale. We have a complaints and compliments policy and we welcome all constructive criticism.

We don't assume that the College and family/carers will necessarily agree about everything. Life just isn't like that! As our students are all adults in law, sometimes there can be differences in Best Interests matters. In the rare occasions that this can happen we talk it through with the student, their family and carers openly, so that our thoughts and recommendations are clear and well set out, logical and sensible.

There is a Student Voice body with regular meetings where students can make their voices heard and make recommendations to the College about any matter affecting College life.



ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The admission procedure begins with the College admissions administrator receiving a referral from either the student, their family, their school, the local authority or from any other statutory body such as Health.

We find it works best when we have received the referral well before the end of the students last school year and better still if we receive it in the year before their final school year. College does of course accept referrals of potential students who have left school, or may have been in another further education setting, though we cannot accept any referral of any person who does not have an EHCP, an Education Health and Care Plan. The reason for this is that it is not possible to fund the placement without an EHCP.

If the potential student does not have a current EHCP we can advise how to apply for an EHCP and also the process for making a change to the placement section of an existing EHCP. The local authority that wrote the EHCP is the legal 'owner' of the EHCP and only they can change the document, though there is an Appeal system that exists to deal with disputes about EHCPs, which we can advise on.

Within 4 weeks of receiving the referral College will arrange an admission discussion with the student, their family and the referrer. Where College receives an EHCP from a local authority with a request for an admission assessment this will be completed in the statutory period, currently this is a period of 15 days.

The assessment discussion will be followed as quickly as possible with an assessment undertaken by the college to ensure that the College is able to deliver the plan as set out in the EHCP. This will depend upon undertaking some baseline tests with the potential student, establishing that they fall within the type of special educational need that the College is registered to meet and that the funding will be available.

Where these steps are successfully completed then the potential student is encouraged to spend some time at College just to begin to feel comfortable with us.

There are of course forms to be completed and information in addition to the EHCP that College need to be able to make the admission and the first term at College work well. College support family and carers as well as the student with that process.



FUNDING

Funding is the met fee for attendance at Phoenix College, generally in full, by a cost sharing arrangement between central and local government funding. The costs are met in three parts, or elements. These elements make up the funding package for a 'HNS', a High Needs Student. All Phoenix College students are 'HNS'.

The College receives a sum for each student for the course they undertake. On top of this they receive a sum for the additional support that students with Special Education Needs have which require extra staffing, extra training and in some cases additional facilities and equipment. These are usually called Elements 1 and 2. They are met by central government through a department called the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency, which is part of the Department for Education).

Some High Needs Students require more support and more highly trained staff than the elements above can fund, in other words they cost more to support at College than the money available from the ESFA. This triggers Element 3 / top up funding which comes from the student's local authority. In some cases this will be as much or more money than is coming from central government, so local authorities quite rightly want to be sure that the placement is value for money and is right for the student.

Phoenix College has been developed in close partnership with Tower Hamlets Local Authority and they understand the College offer and the cost attached to the course.

It is not lawful for any Further Education setting, whether specialist like Phoenix College, or otherwise, to charge a person with an EHCP for their tuition. If additional activities are offered however, such as visits to the theatre or museums, that are not part of the syllabus, they may be charged for. We always make clear that such additional activities are optional and let the student and family know what the cost is should they want to take part.

In rare instances it is not possible to obtain funding, usually because the student's local authority will not name Phoenix College in the EHCP or because the local authority will not agree the cost. The College cannot then admit the student but will advise the student and their family of what alternatives they can pursue, which may include approaching another College, taking action in the SEND Tribunal to Appeal the local authority's decision, or looking for another type of placement.

Where we assess a potential Student as being suitable for admission we always support the student and family to sort out the funding, usually successfully. However Phoenix College is independent, it does not have the power or the right to grant funding.

Funding can be complicated and can sometimes include other types of local authority funding, such as adult social care. We do our best to steer the student and family through the types of funding and to answer questions.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

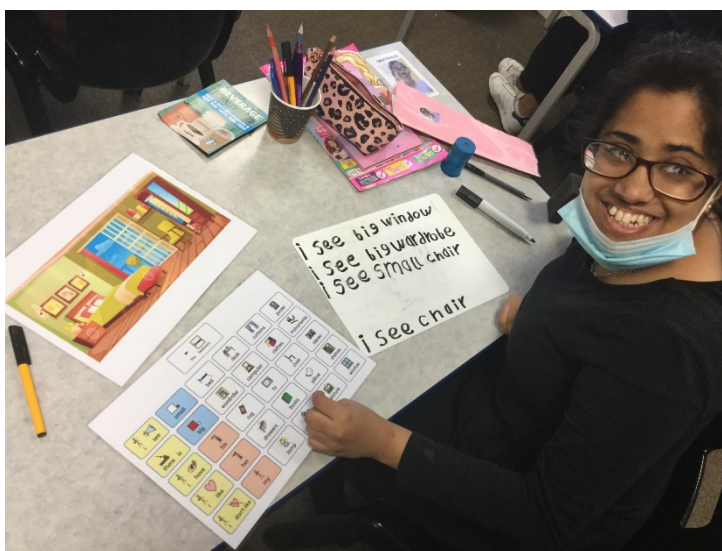
The Programme of Study is designed to give student the same rights and breadth of experience as all young people, specifically:

- ❖ **The individual's right to exercise control over his/her own life*.**
 - Enhance their communication and interaction skills through real-life and age-appropriate experiences.
 - Be involved, as far as possible, in decision making regarding themselves, their education and plans for the future.
 - Acquire skills that will be of benefit to them at the next stage of their lives, whether in employment or supported living.
 - Promote self-advocacy skills where students are encouraged to make their views known, as well as being supported to live as independently as possible.
- ❖ **The right to participate in activities with others, and to be part of the community and workplace.**
 - Socialise with other young people and adults in a range of environments, irrespective of need.
 - Form relationships with other young people and have opportunities to meet socially outside the college environment.
- ❖ **The right to be treated as an individual of worth.**
 - Feel safe, happy and confident in meeting life's challenges.
 - Be shown respect and treated as young adults in their interactions with staff.
 - Enjoy their experience of post 16/19 education.
 - Have their progress and achievements celebrated through nationally recognised accreditation (NCFE Functional Skills)

*At Phoenix College we understand the mental capacity act and where necessary take appropriate best interest decisions always seeking to enhance and improve student capacity.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

- Students follow a personalised, structured programme of study within small teaching groups to ensure a well-rounded and broad curriculum.
- Students' timetables are a combination of discrete lessons such as Maths, English and ICT. Schemes of work focus on the functional real-life applications of each subject with the aim of making the subject knowledge relevant to students' lived experiences.
- Students have daily access to the local community in structured sessions that focus on using public transport accessing the wider community and independent living skills.
- We deliver the program of study through both non-regulated (RARPA) and regulated (NCFE) courses; these are both internally assessed and externally verified.
- Students have a personalised weekly work experience programme. Students can take part in onsite enterprise projects as well as supported work placements with external businesses; placements are matched to students' individual skills and interests.
- We offer different learning Pathways as a way of creating courses that are focussed on the long-term outcomes stated in students' EHCPs.



PROGRESSION PATHWAYS



Programme of Study Pathways



Programme of Study Overview

	1st Semester	2nd Semester	3rd Semester
2020-2021	Emergency Services	Sustainability & Conservation	Art and Culture
2021-2022	The High Street	Natural World	Sports and Leisure
2022-2023	Identity and Diversity	Farm and Food	Parks and Recreation

Programme of Study Areas



INDEPENDENT LIVING

This area focuses on supporting students to lead as independent a life as is possible and to take as much responsibility for their everyday lives as they can.

The course includes:

- Travel using public transport, develop road safety awareness and how to be safe out and about*
- Personal Care routines, presentation skills , choosing the right clothes and footwear for the weather and occasion, fashion and dressing for special occasions.*
- SoSafe Curriculum, being safe and understanding common risks*
- Use of money, keeping it secure and using it to make your choices.*
- Where to shop, finding what you want and social expectations*
- Meal preparation, how to cook, healthy eating, presenting food, storing food safely, cleaning up*
- Home management, safety, security and cleanliness, vacuum, cleaning, bed making and changing, using everyday appliances*
- Laundry, when and how to wash clothes, dry clothes and store clothes.*
- How to choose what you like but need and what you can afford*
- Managing changes to routines and how to cope with changes*



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

This area supports students to express themselves and develop a sense of belonging in the community. It gives learners the opportunity to experience a wide range of community activities within the local area and further afield.

This course includes:

- My Community and how do I get involved?*
- Café, clubs and cinemas, having fun safely and being with other people*
- Young People: how to be good community members and keep safe*
- Annual Residential trip and celebration events, including Christmas Lunch and Graduation Ceremony.*
- Exploring cultural and religious experiences to gain a better understanding of self and others.*
- Community projects with local charities and providers*
- Communicating needs and views safely within the community, Using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems where appropriate.*



HEALTHY LIVING

This area will support students to keep as well; physically, emotionally and mentally as possible. It covers a broad spectrum of topics including healthy lifestyles, relationships, keeping yourself and others safe and accessing medical care.

This course includes:

- Seeking medical care from doctors and dentists, what they do and why, how to tell them you need help, knowing if you're unwell, signs and symptoms*
- Staying fit, exercise, sport, fresh air and eating enough..... but not too much*
- Eating healthy affordable food*
- Sleeping well, what you need and how to get tired, what to do if you cannot sleep also includes preparing healthy snacks, fitness and leisure activities.*
- How to ask for help, asking the right way*
- When to give consent and how to say No!*
- Friends and friendship: mates, dates, love and affection*
- What to do when you feel anxious: learning the art of being calm, not upsetting other people: saying and doing the right thing*



MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

Having meaningful and valid occupation is an overarching goal for all our students. For some students this will mean a strong focus on gaining the skills needed to access supported or paid employment when they leave college. For others the emphasis may be on the ability to work alongside others on a social enterprise project.

In order to meet the range of needs, this pathway is sub-divided into:

- Learning how to work,
- Learning about people at work,
- Purposeful occupation and vocational profiling

The balance between these 3 areas will vary for individual students.

This course includes:

- What is work? What job would I like and be good at?
- Workplace behaviour and rules, how to behave in work, what might happen if you behave in a way others don't understand
- Following instructions, why do they matter, when to question them
- Social Enterprise projects, Work tasters, work experience and Project Search QMUL Supported Internship.
- Personal information, application filling, CV writing and vocational profiling
- Reflection on strengths and needs.



SAMPLE STUDENT TIMETABLE

		09:15 - 09:45	09:45 - 10:30		10:45 - 11:30	11:30 - 12:00		12:45 - 1:30	1:30 - 2:15	2:15-3:00		
M	Tutorial - 08:45 - 09:15	Target setting	English	Break	Computing	Computing	Lunch	Swimming	Swimming	Personal care	3:00-3:20 End of Day Review	
T		English	Maths		Cooking	Cooking		PSD - ILS	PSD	PSD		
W		Maths	Mini-Recipe		English	Maths		English	So Safe	Enrichment		
T		Travel Training	Travel Training		PSD - ILS	Maths		World of Work		Horticulture		
F		Business & Enterprise	Business & Enterprise		Fitness	Personal Care		Volunteer Work	Volunteer Work	Review Targets		



LOCATION, VISITS AND TOURS



Welcome to our brand new Phoenix College site at Paton Close, Bow, London, E3 2QE. It is situated close to public transport to promote daily community participation and promote independence.

We have two classrooms, catering, fitness, horticulture and library facilities to offer our outstanding curriculum delivery as well as employability and independent skills.



If you would like more information about Phoenix College or arrange a visit please contact Elizabeth Robinson on 02086298700 or email info@phoenixcollege.london

SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

QMUL PROJECT SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a partnership between Queen Mary University of London, Phoenix College, Kaleidoscope Saber Supported Employment Agency and LBTH Local Authority. The goal is to provide a 1 year on-site internship experience and provide the necessary skills for young adults with autism to compete for employment. This internship programme currently has 5 interns in their 2nd rotation at Queen Mary University of London.



PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Supported Internships provide on-site practical work training, for young adults with special educational needs to gain work skills, leading to competitive paid employment.

They are designed to develop transferable skills, knowledge and attitudes in readiness for paid employment. Students can develop Employability, Customer Service, Confidence, Maths, English and ICT whilst working alongside employees in a real employment setting. The classroom based learning at the workplace enables young people to try out different work roles with ten weeks in each role, supported by an instructor and job coach. Work placements are unpaid.

Benefits of the programme:

- Participate in a variety of placements at a high-status local employer
- Acquire competitive, transferable and marketable job skills
- Gain increased independence, confidence, self-esteem and friendship groups
- Receive work-based individual instruction, coaching, support and feedback from the job coach, tutor and host business managers
- Access to qualification in Work Skills.

Programme Date Sept – July

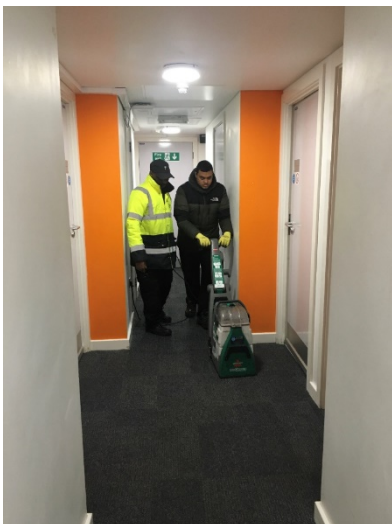
Queen Mary University of London is the first English University to embrace Project SEARCH.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

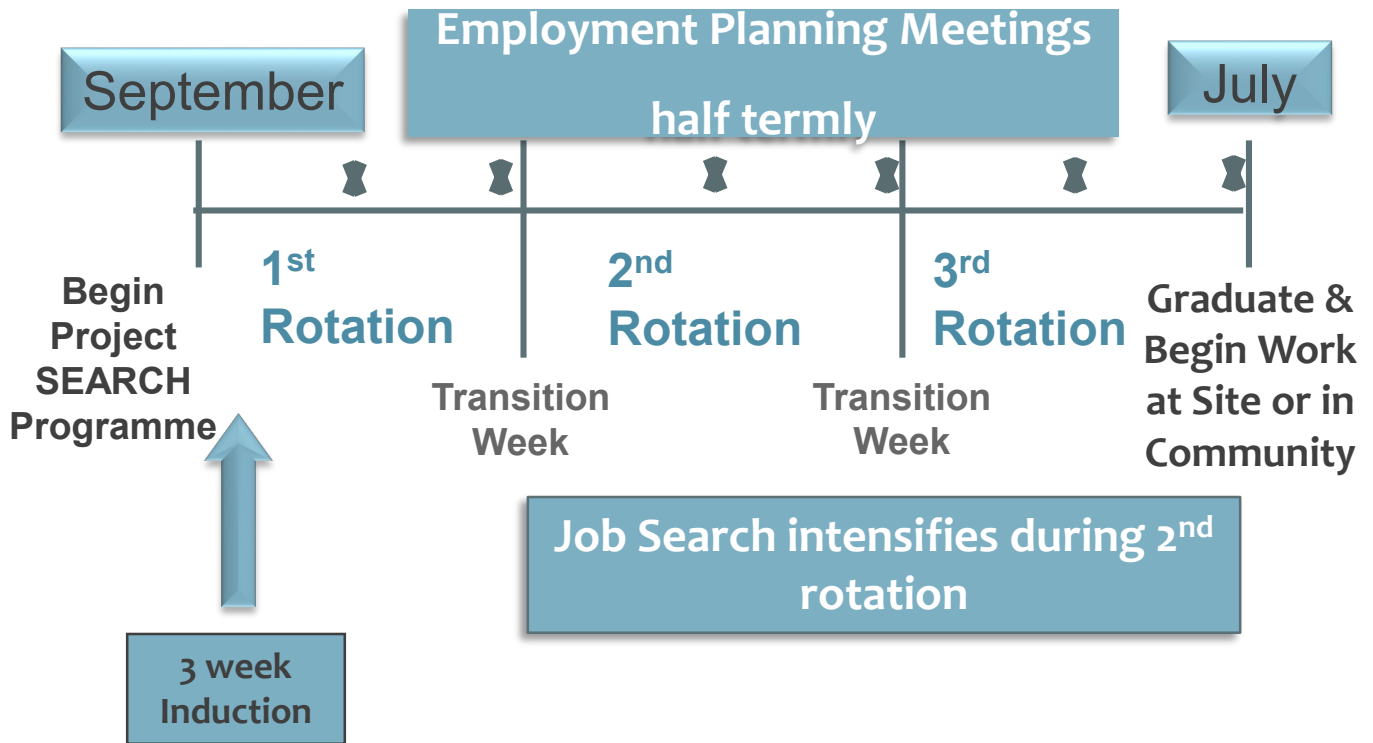
Entry Requirement for this programme is that students are aged 19-24 on the 1st September in the year of the programme and have an Education, Health and Care Plan in place. The student must commit to a 5 day a week programme and be an independent traveller or be undertaking travel training.

What sort of jobs could I do on Project SEARCH at QMUL:

- *Reception*
- *Helpdesk*
- *Grounds and Estates*
- *Hospitality - Taste*
- *Post Room*
- *Maintenance*
- *Painting*
- *Portering*
- *Domestics*
- *Catering Assistant*
- *Kitchen Porter*
- *Shop Assistant*



PROGRAMME OF STUDY ANNUAL PROJECT SEARCH SCHEDULE



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PROJECT SEARCH INTERN

9:00am Employability Skills Class: Interns sign in, lessons are based on daily living/employability skills, i.e. problem solving, team work, decision making, budgeting, nutrition and CV writing. Instruction follows an approved Project SEARCH Curriculum.

10:00am Rotation in QMUL departments: Interns participate in non-paid job internship and learn the core skills of entry level jobs. New skills are added as interns master basic tasks.

12:30pm Lunch: Interns buy lunch or bring their own. Interns are encouraged to eat with their co-workers and peers within departments.

1:15pm Rotation in QMUL departments: Return to sponsoring department to learn job specific and employability skills.

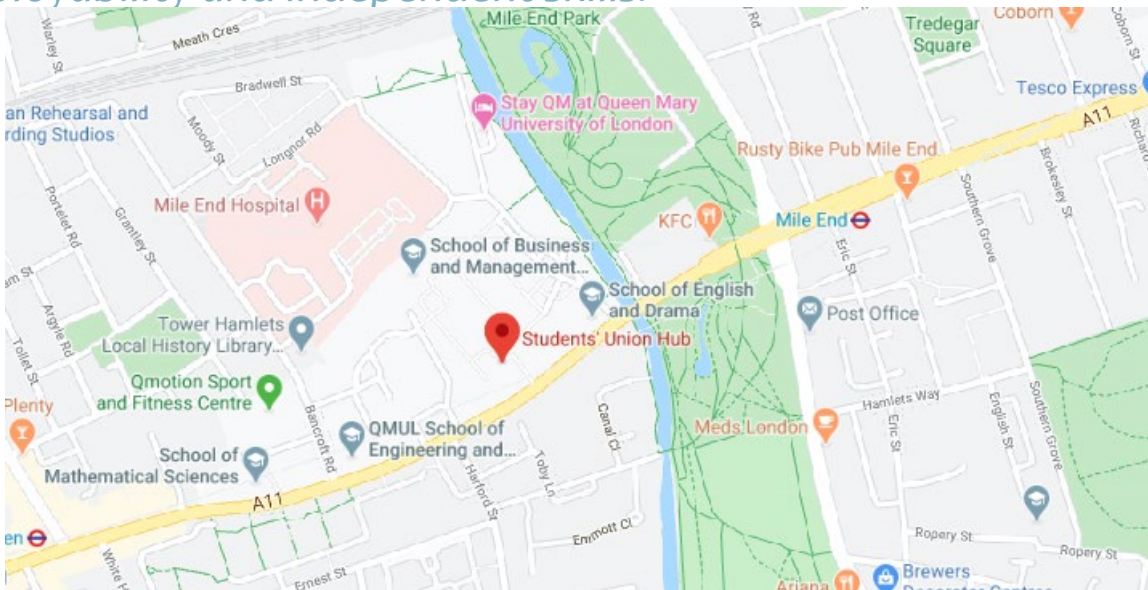
3:00pm Review, Plan, Journal in class: Students sign out at 4:00pm and if available take public transport home.

LOCATION, VISITS AND TOURS



Phoenix College is based at Queen Mary University of London within the **Student's Union Hub, 329 Mile End Road, Bethnal Green, London, E1 4NT**. It is situated close to public transport to promote daily community participation to promote independence.

We have one base room with catering, fitness and wellbeing facilities to offer our outstanding Programme of Study as well as employability and independent skills.



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