

Senate

Paper Title	FMD and HSS proposal for a new cross-faculty virtual institute – the SHAPE Health initiative (initially referred to as the HEALS project).
Outcome requested	To approve the cross-faculty request to establish a virtual institute (SHAPE Institute for Health) that explores and cultivates the potential for interdisciplinary health education and research.
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>The virtual institute brings together staff and students from FMD, HSS & the wider QMUL community to work with local communities and other organisations to provide novel and innovative solutions to the challenges of modern healthcare. This project builds on the existing excellence of work in this area and strengthens new efforts to forge closer interdisciplinary links and collaborations.</p> <p>SHAPE (<i>Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy</i>) is a collective name for the Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. First developed by the British Academy and UKRI, it champions the fundamental role of these disciplines in understanding our world and making it a better place.</p> <p>It is accepted that health and healthcare need urgent review, intervention and fresh thinking (Lord Darzi 2024 review) to create systems that are fit for the 21st century and which meet the needs and demands of society.</p> <p>SHAPE Health reimagines health <i>through and with</i> the humanities, arts and social sciences, developing interdisciplinary synergies and syntheses to better examine and understand what matters to people in their everyday efforts to enjoy fulfilling and healthful lives.</p> <p>Through a programme of interdisciplinary education and research SHAPE Health aims to inform, shape and guide the design and implementation of cutting-edge policies and transformative practice within communities to create equity and innovation in health and healthcare.</p> <p>The goal is to build on Queen Mary’s social justice and inclusivity agenda by cultivating breadth and depth of critical thinking and creativity amongst those we are educating and equipping to lead, design and deliver healthcare, empowering them to find solutions that are effective, compassionate and responsive to our communities’ needs and aspirations.</p> <p>In the foundational phase, the project will be led by FMD staff sitting in the HSS Faculty and located on the Mile End Campus.</p>

Commented [DT1]: Translated this into more exploratory language

	The project has been presented to and approved by HSS and HSS Faculty Executive Boards. It was presented at SET by FMD and HSS VPs.
Questions for Senate to consider	Senate are asked to approve the formation of this virtual institute.
Regulatory/statutory reference points	N/A
Strategy and risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SHAPE Health is an exploratory project that scopes the potential for interdisciplinary education and research and as such poses low risk to faculties and university. As a virtual institute, supported by existing staff resource, it is overall cost neutral, while offering potentially significant benefits across multiple institutional KPIs. - We intend to apply for external grant funding to support additional research costs. - SHAPE Health was part of FMD 2022 enabling plan and additionally feeds into and compliments HSS faculty enabling plan. - This project seeks to have impact in communities through the programme of education and research. - Enables place-based innovation. - Meets 11 KPIs linked to the 2030 Strategy for Queen Mary University of London. - Aligns with the issues raised by Lord Ara Darzi's report (Sept 2024). - Potential to deliver on QM's strategy for TEF and REF framework. - Explores policy, strategy, process and practice. - Contributes largely to multiple sustainable development goals.
Reporting/consideration route for the paper	Senate to approve.
Authors	Professor Arundi Mahendran, Interim Director for SHAPE Health, FMD Ms Laura Debrincat, Interim Project Manager for SHAPE Health, FMD Professor Dan Todman, Deputy Vice-Principal, HSS Faculty .
Sponsor	Professor Sir Mark Caulfield, VP Health, FMD. Professor Frances Bowen, VP HSS.

Summary Request

The SHAPE Health project delivers on the FMD 2022 and 2023 enabling plan and the HSS enabling plan and vision for how the humanities and arts disciplines in particular can transform the design and delivery of health and healthcare.

The next stage of this exploratory project, for which Senate approval is requested, is the establishment of a virtual cross-faculty institute -- similar to the Mile End Institute and iHSS - - to drive, facilitate and deliver interdisciplinary health education and research.

The SHAPE Health strategic initiative has real opportunity to enhance the reputation of the university -- it is a great exemplar of place-based innovation where we draw on the strengths and advantages of QM to innovate in health and healthcare through our strong networks with local communities. To realise on this potential, we need the formal institutional presence of an Institute in order to support grant funding applications and develop research and educational partnerships with external partners.

Vision and Mission

The SHAPE Health Initiative is a groundbreaking new cross-disciplinary project at **Queen Mary University of London** that brings together the Faculties of **Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)** and **Medicine and Dentistry (FMD)**.

SHAPE (Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy) is a collective name for the Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. First developed by the British Academy and UKRI, it champions the fundamental role of these disciplines in understanding our world and making it a better place.

SHAPE Health challenges traditional views of health by asking the essential question: **What does it mean to be well?**

It aims to go beyond the biomedical perspective of illness and disease by exploring health from the broader concept of living a fulfilling, meaningful, and healthful life. Through an interdisciplinary approach, SHAPE seeks to inspire new ways of understanding and improving individual and community efforts to be well through an approach that resonates with people's everyday experiences of health. We believe that this approach will have a transformative impact on healthcare design, accessibility, and delivery.

Professor Arundi Mahendran and Ms Laura Debrincat were seconded from FMD to undertake this project. Over the past 8 months they have engaged in a wide-ranging consultation and scoping exercise that has included all the schools and institutes in both faculties (over 150 academics and professional services colleagues), the wider QM community (35 colleagues) as well as external stakeholders including community organisations (20 organisations). The project has been endorsed by the faculty executive boards at FMD and HSS and a number of research projects and educational opportunities have been identified. The formation of SHAPE HEALTH will bring new momentum and opportunities to initiatives across the faculties.

In the short term, a successful SHAPE Health will contribute to the development of a national model for the 'neighborhood NHS' -- a key policy initiative for the Labour government -- in collaboration with community partners. In the long term, SHAPE Health will

position QM as a pioneering institution for interdisciplinary health education and research excellence that informs the design and implementation of cutting-edge policies and transformative practice that creates equity and innovation in health and healthcare.

Other objectives over the wider 5 year period include:

- Formalise interdisciplinary working between the two faculties, achieving visibility and legitimacy for interdisciplinary educators and researchers.
- Establish SHAPE HEALTH as a centre of excellence for the study and advancement of innovative solutions to challenges in health at a local, national and global level.
- Provide an intellectually stimulating and diverse environment for the development of talented staff and high-quality researchers.
- Develop a high-quality education offer at the intersection and overlap of HSS and FMD, operating at a range of scales, duration and levels of education.
- Achieve the highest impact from our research through influencing, developing and implementing and evaluating new policies and practices.

Details/Delivery:

a) Project Timeline

Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Onwards
Scoping						
Develop vision and mission for initiative						
Development of communications plan internally						
Approval from Faculty						
Approval from Senate						
Apply for QMUL Internal funding to support Interdisciplinary research						
Networking with potential external stakeholders						
Development of communications plan externally						
Apply for QMUL Internal funding to support Interdisciplinary Education						
Develop more formal structure for FMD/HSS academics to bring potential projects to HEALS at a formative stage						
Formalise external partnerships						
Advance research projects						
Apply for Grant Funding						
Maintain and expand research						
Seek Impact						
Develop programme of Education						
Pursuit of new educational opportunities						

b) Under the SHAPE Health umbrella, several projects are underway that explore critical issues at the intersection of health, humanities, and social sciences.

1. **Oral Health in North East London:** Exploring how oral health is understood and experienced by diverse communities in North East London.
2. **Intergenerational Communities:** Understanding the impact of intergenerational communities on health and being well.
3. **Shared Decision-Making in Surgery:** Investigating the relationship between patient beliefs and clinician conscience in shared decision-making processes in surgery and interventional medicine.
4. **Medical Education and Patient Experience:** Examining how medical students and trainees, interact and engage with secular, objective approaches in medical education. Exploring the impact of this approach on patient experience and care.
5. **Children and Digital Well-being:** Investigating how children and young people engage with digital technologies and AI in their pursuit of being well.

c) **Governance and Review**

The interim SHAPE Health leadership team (Arundi Mahendran and Laura Debrincat from FMD and Dan Todman and Lorna Ireland from HSS) report to the VPs and FDOs for FMD and HSS on a fortnightly basis.

This leadership team provide regular updates to HSS and FMD faculty executive board meetings.

An informal institutional board has been in existence since August 2024 to bring expertise from both faculties to help inform the conceptual and design work of a future education offering as well as exploratory research projects. We aim to formalise this board in the new year once there is approval from Senate.

An advisory board is to be established in the new year with board members drawn from health and humanities/social sciences disciplines both within QM and from external organisations. Potential candidates have been approached already. This board will provide guidance, expert insights and recommendations on the strategic direction and development of SHAPE Health.

Progress is reviewed and assessed annually with written reports and presentations to Faculty Executive boards.