



**IBMS** Institute of  
Biomedical Science

Support • Progress • Promote



# IBMS ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Leading  
the way in  
biomedical  
science

#IBMS

... hospital laboratory experts #AtTheHeartOfHealthcare



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# About the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)

The Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) is the professional body for scientists, support staff and students working in biomedical science. For over 100 years, we've ensured our members operate to the highest professional standards.

From students to advanced practitioners with decades of experience, our members work at all levels in biomedical science. Most work in healthcare, but some are based in universities, veterinary laboratories and government agencies. We also have diagnostic companies as members, which helps us to keep up to date with the latest developments in technology and advances in scientific techniques.



## WHAT WE DO

We:

- provide members with a range of academic and vocational qualifications and professional development opportunities, so they can progress in their careers
- support trainees and members to become registered as biomedical scientists with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and apply for professional registration with the Science Council
- provide a voice for our members with policymakers and promote the role of biomedical science in healthcare
- organise the biennial IBMS Congress, a biomedical science event that brings members together to learn, build skills and knowledge, and network with professionals across the field
- publish scientific journals, professional guidance and educational resources to inform people about the value of biomedical science and the impact it has on healthcare.



## ABOUT THE IBMS

**“I really love being a member of the IBMS. I joined 30 years ago because I wanted to learn more about the background to my profession, how it functioned and what was available to me. I love the way the IBMS is much more visible now. They make sure our voices are heard with other professional bodies, the public and government. It has been amazing to see three female IBMS Presidents in succession. It’s really empowering for women in science.”**

Victoria Bradley, a Reader in Biomedical Science Clinical Practice Education at Cardiff Metropolitan University and IBMS Council member for Wales



# ABOUT THE IBMS



## OUR MISSION

To promote, develop and deliver excellence in all aspects of biomedical science and to provide the highest levels of service to patients and the public.

## OUR VISION

To be recognised as the leading professional body for biomedical science.

## OUR VALUES

Our values guide our work and are split into five different areas:

- 1 Member focus**  
This means listening to members and addressing the issues that are important to them.
- 2 Integrity**  
We will act with honesty and integrity in all that we do.
- 3 Professionalism**  
This means taking pride in everything we do and doing it to the highest standards.
- 4 Respect**  
We value the diverse backgrounds of everyone we work with.
- 5 Continuous improvement**  
This means embracing new ideas and change and learning from mistakes.



## OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

Our five-year strategy is informed by members and was published in 2022. It sets out how we will continue to champion the important role of biomedical scientists and is split into two key themes with a series of aims.





## THEME 1

### WE WILL BUILD ON OUR EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

The long-term future of the IBMS will depend on the future of the profession. Biomedical science needs to keep pace with technology and advances in healthcare. To help achieve this, we must make sure that the IBMS remains relevant and fit for purpose for members.

## THEME 2

### WE WILL BUILD AND DEVELOP OUR FUTURE

This part of the strategy looks at how we will use our reserves over the next five years to support the IBMS, our work and our members.

## WHAT WE DO FOR OUR MEMBERS

Our strategic aims are split into our three member-focused pillars. These are:



### SUPPORT

We provide members with professional standards and support to make sure they practise safely and deliver high-quality work.



### PROGRESS

We provide members with access to training, qualifications, and knowledge to progress their careers and stay relevant as the profession changes.



### PROMOTE

We provide members with a strong, respected and progressive voice to promote the profession at all levels.



## ABOUT THE IBMS



## WELCOME



# A message from our President in 2024

It has been a privilege to lead the IBMS during a year of growth, collaboration, and recognition for our incredible profession.

## CELEBRATING PROGRESS

Reflecting on 2024, I am proud of all we have achieved in support of biomedical science. A standout moment was launching our very first **IBMS Awards** – a special event to celebrate the talent, dedication and innovation across our profession. It was a powerful reminder of the passion that drives our members and the impact we have on healthcare.

This year also deepened our commitment to equity and inclusion. The IBMS proudly took part in **Pride marches** once again, standing alongside LGBTQ+ members and allies to champion diversity in our profession. These moments matter – because representation makes a difference.

## SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE

Our work sharing the **IBMS Long Term Biomedical Scientist Workforce Plan** is providing meaningful support for members. From expanding advanced roles and digitising specialist diplomas to advocating for protected time and funding for training, we're building a future where biomedical scientists thrive at every career stage.

## CONNECTING WITH DECISION-MAKERS

With a change in UK government, it was vital we built strong relationships with parliamentary contacts. I attended a successful drop-in session in January, focusing on our Workforce Plan and the **Time to Test** report – a white paper published with AstraZeneca on creating capacity for future NHS cancer testing.

In September, I hosted MP **Rachael Maskell** at **York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**, showcasing the vital work of biomedical scientists in diagnostics and research. Later that month at the **Labour Party Conference**, I engaged with key decision-makers to champion our profession's role in healthcare.

## RAISING OUR PROFILE

Visibility remains at the heart of what we do. Thanks to the collective efforts of members, Council and staff, the profile of biomedical science has never been higher. This visibility attracts talent, inspires confidence in our profession, and ensures our voice helps shape healthcare policy.

Thank you for the dedication you bring to your work every day. Biomedical science is not just a career – it's a calling. I see it in every sample processed, every diagnosis made, and every trainee mentored. Your passion and expertise make our profession indispensable to healthcare.

Joanna Andrew  
IBMS President



# INTRODUCTION

# Introduction from our Chief Executive

In 2024, we focused on delivering tangible improvements for our members and ensuring the profession was recognised, supported and heard. We strengthened our qualifications and training pathways, responded to members' needs, and continued to speak up for biomedical science at every opportunity.

Our Special Advisory Panels helped shape refreshed Specialist Portfolios and new qualifications, including a Diploma of Expert Practice in Haematology. These were designed to reflect current practice and meet workforce needs. Most Specialist Portfolios moved online, making the process more accessible and flexible for candidates, training officers and examiners. We also launched the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio on OneFile, creating a single digital platform for trainees and their training teams.

## INFLUENCING AND COLLABORATING

With a general election approaching, we set out our priorities for the next government in an IBMS manifesto. This focused on the workforce, training, funding and the role of pathology in prevention. We began early engagement with the incoming Labour administration and held parliamentary sessions to inform and influence decision-making.

The IBMS continued to be recognised as a leading voice in pathology – trusted by members, partners and policymakers. Industry bodies and professional organisations increasingly sought to collaborate with us and we convened expert roundtables to develop white papers that made practical recommendations for improving services. One example – our paper on advancing cervical cancer screening – is featured later in this report.

In Northern Ireland, policymakers invited us to support the reconfiguration of pathology services, demonstrating the growing role of the IBMS in shaping the future of healthcare systems.

## FUTURE PLANS

In 2025, we will launch new qualifications to support the profession, including a Specialist Diploma in point-of-care testing. Congress will once again bring the profession together, and we will use it to showcase leadership, innovation and policy engagement.

As demand for pathology services grows worldwide, so too does the need for strong professional standards and leadership. We are therefore developing work to raise the profile of biomedical science internationally, contributing to efforts to improve global health outcomes.

I want to say thank you to our members, who remain at the centre of everything we do. Your input, professionalism and advocacy drive us forward. I also want to thank our Council, committees and Special Advisory Panels for their direction and insight, and our staff for their continued delivery under pressure.

Finally, my thanks to Joanna Andrew, our President, for representing the profession so powerfully throughout the year and ensuring the voice of biomedical science was heard in the places that matter.

As we look towards creating a new five-year strategy in 2025, we will continue to focus on what matters most: championing biomedical scientists, improving services, and ensuring the profession is prepared for the future.

David Wells  
IBMS Chief Executive





# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2024

## We're proud to share some of the highlights of our work in 2024



We held **27** events about accredited biomedical science degree courses at universities across the UK and overseas, raising awareness of the different routes into biomedical science.

We trained **230** verifiers, bringing the total number to **881**. We also increased the number of examiners from **426** to **563**, a 24% increase.

We issued **1320** Certificates of Competence to biomedical scientists so they could register with the HCPC and **652** specialist portfolios recognising post-registration training.

We published white papers with actionable recommendations from cross-sector experts to address key diagnostic challenges, including one on **EXPANDING ACCESS TO CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING.**

We provided materials and merchandise for over **450** members' events, including ones celebrating Pride, which celebrates LGBTQ+ communities.

The hashtags **#BiomedicalScienceDay2024** and **#AtTheHeartOfHealthcare** received over **15,000** mentions on X on Biomedical Science Day, reaching almost **1.5 MILLION** people in the UK.

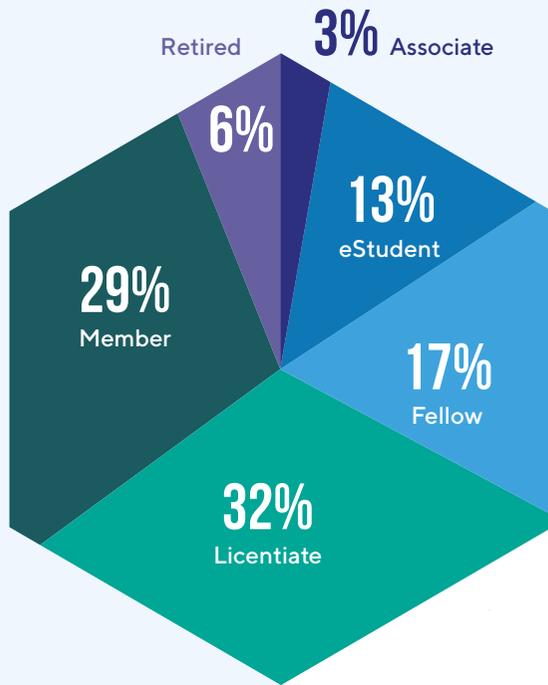
Latest figures were published showing that the impact factor for the *British Journal of Biomedical Science (BJBS)* **INCREASED FROM 1.9 TO 2.7**, highlighting the importance of the journal in its field.

Findings from an independent report found that the presence of biomedical scientists in the bowel cancer patient pathway benefits the NHS by an estimated **£115 MILLION TO £571 MILLION A YEAR.**



## OUR MEMBERS

The IBMS has 20,431 members made up of the following grades:



## IBMS QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED IN 2024

- 32 Higher Specialist Diploma
- 262 Certificate of Expert Practice
- 38 Diploma of Expert Practice
- 16 Advanced Specialist Diploma
- 1,359 Certificate of Competence
- 400 Specialist Diploma
- 154 Certificate of Achievement

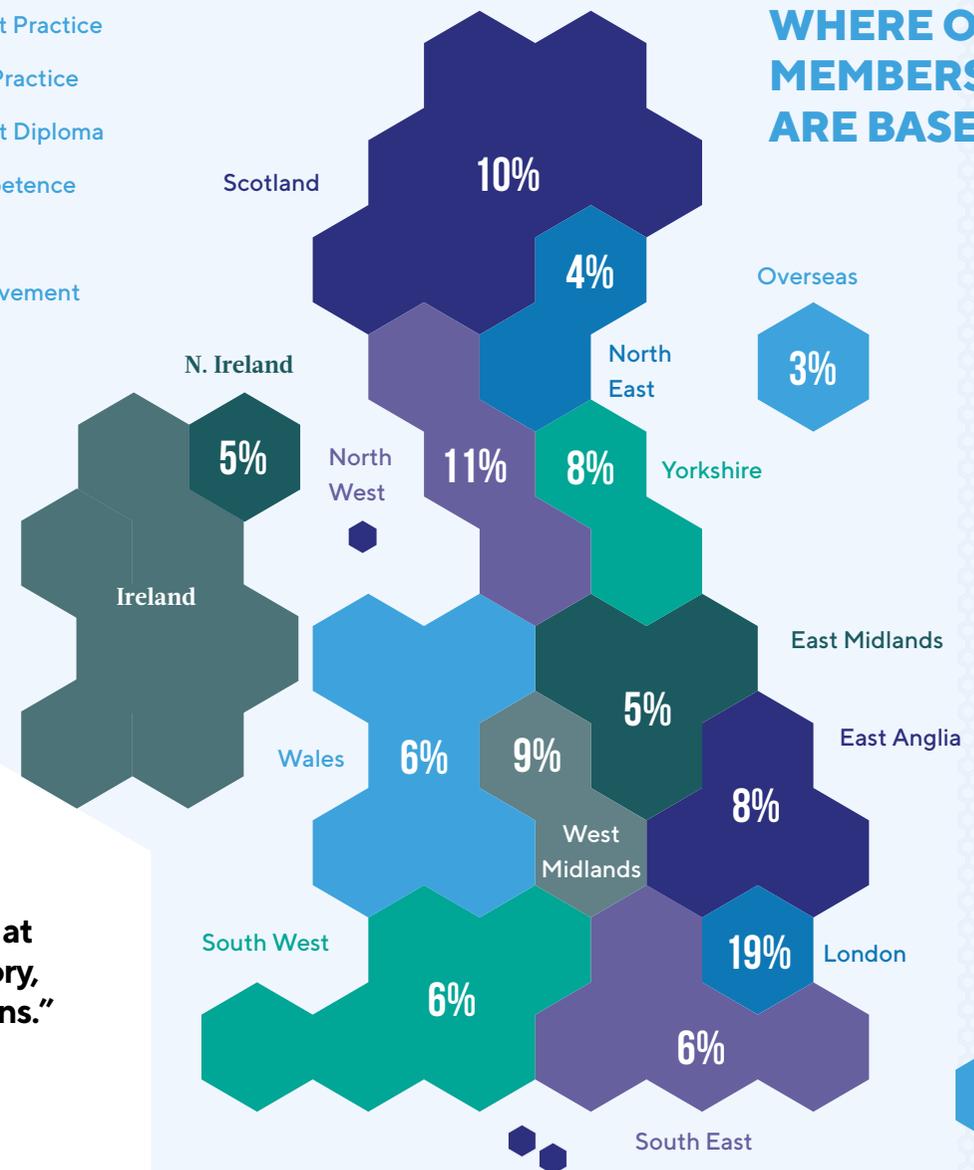


**"I joined the IBMS for the educational resources. I've done the Registration Portfolio, the Specialist Portfolio and the Certificate of Expert Practice in training. Without these opportunities, I wouldn't be at the point in my career that I am today. As a training lead for my laboratory, I'm now supporting other biomedical scientists to do these qualifications."**

Chloe Aman, Advanced Biomedical Scientist in the Blood Transfusion department at Southampton General Hospital

## OUR MEMBERS

### WHERE OUR MEMBERS ARE BASED





## HOW WE HELP



# How we help our members

In this section, we report back on our strategic aims so you can see the difference we made in 2024, based on what we said we'd do. Our impact is always around supporting, promoting and progressing members.

## THEME 1

### BUILD ON OUR EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

- A** Support wider access to Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) registration by increasing uptake of IBMS entry routes. Provide greater clarity of the routes to entry and encourage more students to follow the most efficient route to HCPC registration. Champion the role of trainers and training officers in the laboratory.
- We held 27 events about IBMS Accredited biomedical science degree courses at universities across the UK and overseas. This covered 56 undergraduate and 21 postgraduate programmes, including courses at five new universities. The accreditation events helped to raise awareness of the different routes into biomedical science.
- We supported university staff setting up 12 degree apprenticeship programmes to align them with the Level 6 Biomedical Scientist standard. The standard was introduced in 2023 as part of the new requirements set out by the HCPC to become a qualified biomedical scientist. People completing the degree apprenticeship programmes will be registered with the HCPC.



- To support trainers and training officers in the laboratory, we started hosting regular webinar sessions on our Support Forum. These are supporting experienced and new training officers to share ideas and solve problems together.
- We processed 16% more IBMS Registration Training Portfolio applications in 2024 compared to 2023. To meet the increase in applications, we trained 230 new verifiers.

+

**1320**

people received the IBMS Certificate of Competence in 2024, allowing them to register with the HCPC.



## CASE STUDY

### “We promoted biomedical science in a positive way”

This year, we produced new videos for our ‘Become a Biomedical Scientist’ campaign to raise awareness of the four different routes to HCPC registration. Muneebah Jasat, a Trainee Specialist Biomedical Scientist in the Clinical Immunology department at Leeds General Infirmary, featured in one of the four new videos. In the video, she talked about working her way up from a medical laboratory assistant (MLA) to a trainee biomedical scientist.

Here, Muneebah shares her experience of taking part in the campaign and why it’s important.

“The ‘Become a Biomedical Scientist’ campaign shows that anybody can go into the profession if they have the passion for it. This includes people like me who don’t have an IBMS Accredited degree and have to do top-up modules and work their way up. The campaign is reassuring and shows people that it’s doable.

I got involved in the campaign to show other MLAs that they can also be a biomedical scientist. The MLA role gave me the skills I needed to become a biomedical scientist and made the transition easier.

Most importantly, by taking part in the campaign, I was representing other Muslim women in the biomedical science field, as well as encouraging Muslim women to consider joining the profession.

### SHOWING DIVERSITY IN THE PROFESSION

I really enjoyed making the video for the campaign. It was nerve-racking, but sometimes you need to step out of your comfort zone. We had to do a lot of reshoots. When I saw the final video, I thought ‘wow’.

I love the diversity of the people selected for the campaign. The biomedical scientists in the videos have different backgrounds. I was really proud of everyone who took part and I think we promoted biomedical science in a positive way.

### SUPPORTING ASPIRING BIOMEDICAL SCIENTISTS

This route to registration involves a lot of work. Some days I used to think I wasn’t going to make it. I had to work my way up from the bottom. As well as doing my top-up modules, I had to apply for trainee positions. It’s very competitive and the positions don’t come up often. I had seven interviews before I got my trainee role in Leeds.

I’m now able to give advice to other MLAs who want to become biomedical scientists. I tell them: ‘It is going to be a long process but keep going and don’t give up. Trust the process, enjoy it and you will make it.’

Hopefully the IBMS campaign will help other aspiring biomedical scientists to pick IBMS Accredited degrees in the future.”

◆ Watch Muneebah in our ‘Become a Biomedical Scientist’ campaign: [youtu.be/aAKoTG5JaCc](https://youtu.be/aAKoTG5JaCc)



“One of the reasons I joined the IBMS was because it gave me access to the Biomedical Scientist magazine. I love reading about all the changes happening in the profession. Reading the magazine is a great way to see what’s happening in other laboratories and improve what you do in your own.” – Muneebah



## HOW WE HELP



- B** Progress our current members' knowledge, experience and their careers through better and more relevant training and qualifications, using our existing structures but allowing a more agile application. Create a more inclusive approach to support greater diversity, championing our members' values such as sustainability and clear professional standards.
- IBMS registration training is now available online through the Onefile platform. This allows training officers to create tailored training and assessments for candidates and simplifies the administration of the Registration Training Portfolio. To support candidates to complete the portfolio and use OneFile, we created resources and held over 60 training sessions at venues across the UK. We also provided best practice information on using OneFile and working with candidates completing the online portfolio for training officers and verifiers.
- New webinars for members were added to the IBMS Support Hub. These covered topics such as biomedical scientist careers in the armed forces and celebrating excellence and achievement in biomedical science. The IBMS Support Hub was set up following a *Biomedical Scientist* study, which found that there was a perceived skills gaps in pathology laboratories, and this has an impact on the workforce and services.
- We ran a campaign to recruit new verifiers to assess registration training and specialist qualifications for biomedical scientists. In 2024, we trained 230 verifiers, bringing the total number to 881. We also increased the number of examiners from 426 to 563, a 24% increase.

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We ran  
**50**  
bespoke face-to-face and  
online training events on  
OneFile.

+

Health Education England  
gave training grants totalling  
**£237,500**  
to employers in England. These  
paid for their biomedical science  
staff to take any of the Certificate  
of Expert Practice qualifications,  
as well as the Cytology,  
Dissection, Reporting and Higher  
Specialist Diplomas.





## HOW WE HELP

# “Doing the IBMS qualification gave me a new passion for my job”

Deborah Craddock is Senior Biomedical Scientist at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. In March 2024, Deborah found out she had passed the Diploma of Expert Practice (DEP) in histological dissection. The DEP – which takes a minimum of two years to complete – allows biomedical scientists with five years of post-registration experience to advance their careers in a specialist subject area.

Here, Debbie shares her experiences of doing the DEP.

“When you’ve done a job for 20 years, you don’t often find something new to get your teeth into. But doing the DEP gave me a new passion for my job. I love histological dissection and looking at the pathology specimen down the microscope.

When I was doing the DEP, I would often go back and look at the pathology reports to find out what the final diagnosis was. I remember one of the consultant histopathologists saying to me: ‘It’s a bit like being a detective trying to work out what’s going on’. Knowing I’ve been a part of that process and my dissection has had a direct impact on the patient’s diagnosis and their treatment plan, gives me a sense of pride and purpose in what I’m doing.

## REDUCING WAITING TIMES

There is a national shortage of qualified consultant histopathologists in the UK, which leaves a lot of hospital departments in a tricky situation. There are reporting backlogs and patients are waiting a long time to get their results.

Doing the DEP reduces the burden for consultants as biomedical scientists are taking away some of the work that they would traditionally have to do. The consultants can then concentrate on the more complex dissection and reporting, and patients can get their results quicker.

## GETTING SUPPORT

It is challenging to fit the DEP in alongside work. You need the support of your colleagues to do it. Before I started the DEP, I was the lead for immunohistochemistry in my laboratory, but I had to move away from that role to focus on my qualification. I worked in a more general role, looking after the day-to-day running of the lab. I was lucky to have a good manager and a consultant supervisor who were supportive.

The IBMS provides a lot of resources about the DEP. If I needed help, I would email the exams team.

If it wasn’t for the IBMS, none of this would be possible. They’re giving biomedical scientists the opportunity to do these qualifications so we can explore different career pathways. My aim, in the future, is to do the Histopathology Reporting qualification and start to diagnose cases. I would like to focus on gastrointestinal pathology.”

◆ Read more about the DEP and what it involves:  
[www.ibms.org/diploma-of-expert-practice/](http://www.ibms.org/diploma-of-expert-practice/)



**“I became an IBMS member because of all the different resources it offers. This includes continuing professional development, educational materials and courses to advance your career. There are also networking opportunities and events, such as Congress. I think it’s essential that all biomedical scientists become IBMS members and I would recommend joining to everyone.” – Deborah**



## CASE STUDY



# “We revised the Specialist Portfolios to better reflect current and evolving laboratory practice”

Specialist Portfolios are the first qualifications that most biomedical scientists complete after HCPC registration. They provide an opportunity to demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in either a single discipline or across multiple disciplines. Completing a Specialist Portfolio helps a biomedical scientist to advance in their career. In 2024, the IBMS reviewed and revised the Specialist Portfolios, including moving them online.

**Donna Torrance, Head of Learning and Development at the IBMS, explains the main changes to the Specialist Portfolios:**

“The Specialist Portfolios hadn’t changed since their inception in 2005, but laboratories have changed significantly in this time. For example, COVID-19 and the reconfiguration of pathology services have changed the way biomedical scientists work. To reflect the evolution of laboratories, we reviewed and revised these qualifications so they are more flexible and support members to demonstrate current and changing scopes of practice.

The IBMS worked with the Specialist Advisory Panels to update the Specialist Portfolios and launched four new portfolios to cover newly emerging specialisms of biomedical science. These were: infection sciences, cell sciences, andrology, and genomics and molecular pathology. This will support the evolving healthcare landscape by equipping biomedical scientists with new skills and knowledge.

Most of the Specialist Portfolios were moved online in 2024 to make them more accessible to members. Candidates can now submit all their evidence on a single platform, examiners can review and assess submissions digitally, and training officers can review evidence before it is submitted and track it after. Also, all the portfolios were restructured into modules, with supplementary resources included.

Going forward, the IBMS will regularly review and update the Specialist Portfolios to make sure they are in line with practice requirements for biomedical scientists. We will also send a survey to training officers, examiners and those undertaking the qualifications to get their views on the changes.”

**Lee Peters, Blood Science Service Manager for Hywel Dda University Health Board in Wales, is on the IBMS Biochemistry and Point of Care Testing (POCT) Specialist Advisory Panels. He talks about developing a new Specialist Portfolio in POCT and why it’s important to move the portfolios online.**

“The IBMS asked the Specialist Advisory Panels to review all of the Specialist Portfolios, including the learning outcomes for each one. It was important to make sure there is consistency across all of the portfolios and that the structure and format is the same for whichever one you complete.

Members of the POCT advisory panel have produced a new Specialist Portfolio in POCT as the number of biomedical scientists going into this area is increasing. This was launched in March 2025. We sat down together to discuss what we need a Biomedical Scientist working in POCT to do. We’ve initially written a portfolio to cover the core work of a biomedical scientist in POCT and then we’ll review it in the future and add more content if required.

Making the Specialist Portfolios digital is important. Pathology teams work in networks so being able to download a file and send it electronically is much easier than sending a physical copy of your portfolio across sites. This will make it easier for the training teams to manage.”



## HOW WE HELP

**C** Promote our highest qualifications, widening the disciplines that these are available in and increasing the number of members accessing them.



+  
We issued **1320** Certificates of Competence and **652** specialist portfolios in 2024.

+  
We supported **297** candidates to complete Certificate of Expert Practice qualifications, including **59** in Laboratory Information Technology and Clinical Informatics.

+  
**56** candidates sat the Higher Specialist Diploma, and **48** passed the exam. We ran **10** online training events for IBMS members who were thinking about, or already, completing the qualification.

+  
**6** candidates passed the Diploma of Expert Practice in Diagnostic Cytopathology.

+  
**2** candidates passed the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Diagnostic Cytopathology exams.

+  
**9** candidates passed the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Cervical Cytology.

+  
**21** candidates passed the Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection.

+  
**7** candidates passed the written exam for the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Histological Dissection. Three candidates studied breast pathology and four did lower GI pathology.

+  
**3** candidates passed the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Histopathology Reporting in 2024.



## LOOKING AHEAD



In 2025, we will:



## SUPPORT

- Continue to run monthly webinars on our Support Forum for training officers to share ideas and best practice, and work together to solve problems.
- Host webinars on a range of topics on our Support Hub to support IBMS members in the workplace. These will include: “embedding equity, diversity and inclusion in training and the workplace”; “from preparation to practice: a student’s guide to placements”; and “creating respectful workspaces: addressing microaggressions and bullying”.
- Continue to provide funding for employers in England to support biomedical scientist staff undertaking Higher Specialist Diploma qualifications.



## PROMOTE

- Launch a campaign to show the range of IBMS qualifications available to biomedical scientists after they have become registered with the HCPC. The aim of the campaign is to advance careers in biomedical science. As well as a series of short videos, we will create posters and leaflets to explain different qualifications and how they support our range of members.



## PROGRESS

- Complete work on a new limited-scope Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in Placental Histopathology Reporting, an updated version of the ASD in Ophthalmic Pathology. We will launch two new Diploma of Expert Practice (DEP) qualifications. These will be in Red Blood Disorders and Haemostasis and Thrombosis.
- Launch an updated and digital Certificate of Achievement qualification, aimed at biomedical science support staff working in laboratory services. This will meet employers’ and individuals’ training needs and expand the range of qualifications we offer digitally.
- Refine the qualifications we offer online by streamlining internal processes associated with their administration. We will introduce digital application and progression forms for the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio and Specialist Portfolios, overhaul and re-launch the Certificate of Achievement for support staff and replace the hosting platform for the Certificate of Expert Practice.





## HOW WE HELP

## THEME 2

### BUILD AND DEVELOP OUR FUTURE

- A** Promote our post-pandemic profile, to develop a policy and engagement capability at government level for each of the four nations.
- After he came to our January 2024 drop-in session in Parliament, MP Greg Smith raised awareness of the need for a sustainable supply of biomedical scientists into the NHS. He wrote to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Health to emphasise the importance of early diagnostic testing, particularly for conditions like cancer. The focus for attendees to the drop-in session was the *IBMS Long Term Biomedical Science Workforce Plan*, which sets out how the UK can develop the biomedical scientist workforce. They also looked at our *Time to Test* report about cancer testing capacity in the NHS.
- IBMS President Joanna Andrew hosted MP Rachael Maskell at York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in September, showcasing the valuable work of biomedical scientists in diagnostics and research. The visit helped to raise awareness of the contribution the sector makes and the challenges it faces.
- By investing in biomedical science, political parties invest in the future of healthcare. That was the message of our manifesto for the new government, which we published ahead of the General Election in July. It focused on how the new government can invest in the biomedical scientist workforce, improve cancer testing, and harness technology and data to improve care for patients. We sent briefings about our manifesto to candidates ahead of the election.

- We collaborated with other scientific bodies to address changes in immigration policy, contributing to a paper drafted by NHS Employers at the request of the Department of Health and Social Care. We worked with NHS England, the Health and Care Professions Council and the Department of Health and Social Care to address the increased pay thresholds for international recruitment and changes to how occupations are considered for visas.
- IBMS Council member Dr Victoria Bradley attended Wales Labour Conference panels exploring the state of the NHS in Wales ahead of Senedd elections in 2026. We were also present at Liverpool's Labour Conference, where IBMS President Joanna Andrew connected with key decision-makers to highlight the critical role of biomedical science. We built on these connections, congratulating new ministers and select committee members.
- We published white papers with actionable recommendations from cross-sector experts to tackle key diagnostic challenges. This included modernising diagnostics, expanding access to cervical cancer screening, strengthening community diagnostics, and building capacity for future NHS testing. The papers came out of roundtable discussions with representatives from partner organisations, including: technology consultancy PA Consulting; Hologic, which develops medical technologies; BD, a medical technology company; Abbott, which develops diagnostics; and AstraZeneca, a pharmaceutical company.
- The white papers reinforce the role of the IBMS as a trusted authority in the profession, demonstrating how we translate collective expertise into policy guidance. The aim of this work is to support the development of more efficient, patient-centred and technologically advanced healthcare services.





## CASE STUDY



# “Working with the IBMS brought visibility to alternative cervical cancer screening”

In September 2024, we partnered with global medical technology company BD to launch a report on advancing cervical cancer screening. The report was shared with the government, media, healthcare, and diagnostics sectors. It followed recent statistics indicating that around one in three women in the UK don't attend cervical screenings.

**Luke Nottage, Medical Affairs Manager at BD, explains why his company collaborated with the IBMS to highlight the need for a more equitable screening programme.**

When BD and the IBMS brought together 13 experts for a roundtable discussion on cervical cancer screening, I attended the two-hour discussion along with cervical screening facilitators, clinical researchers, laboratory professionals and a representative from a gynaecological cancer charity.

There was a consensus that self-sampling for lab-based human papillomavirus (HPV) testing could benefit those who currently don't attend their cervical screening appointments. Many people avoid screenings due to fear, embarrassment, cultural and religious beliefs, or difficulties getting time off work. Under-screened individuals are at a higher risk of developing cervical cancer. Offering self-sampling at home and in clinics could expand the reach of the UK's screening programme, making it more accessible and equitable.

The more people we encourage to come forward for regular screening, the sooner we can eliminate cervical cancer as a significant public health concern.

## INCREASED WORKLOAD

We're behind other national screening programmes in introducing self-sampling in the UK. For example, the Netherlands' programme has already adopted this approach using molecular tests to detect high-risk HPV types linked to cervical cancer. Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Australia and the US have also implemented self-sampling. It is important that validated HPV tests are used for self-collected samples.

The YouScreen trial estimated that by offering self-sampling kits opportunistically to non-attenders in England, participation in cervical screening could increase by around 8%. This is equivalent to around 1 million tests over a three-year period. So it would increase the workload of biomedical scientists who process screening samples. We need to consider if they are going to have to process samples in a different way and whether there may be more manual steps in the laboratory. Or, they may need new equipment.

## ADDING CREDIBILITY

Partnering with the IBMS was a positive experience that helped bring visibility to this important issue. Collaboration adds impact and credibility.

Our roundtable work contributed to evidence we submitted to the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC) in support of self-sampling. The committee then reviewed responses to a public consultation on introducing self-sampling for under-screened populations. They are considering introducing HPV self-sampling for people who don't engage in the Cervical Screening Programme from early 2026.”

◆ **Read the Advancing Cervical Cancer Screening report at: [www.ibms.org/resources/documents/advancing-cervical-cancer-screening-integrating-self-sampling](http://www.ibms.org/resources/documents/advancing-cervical-cancer-screening-integrating-self-sampling)**



- An independent report commissioned by the IBMS and produced by economics consultancy Oxera has estimated that biomedical scientists contribute savings of between £115 million and £571 million per year to the NHS through their role in the bowel cancer diagnostic pathway.

The findings highlight the essential role of the biomedical science workforce and the urgent need for greater recognition from government.

- We responded to key policy reports and inquiries, reinforcing our voice of the biomedical science profession:
  - In our response to Lord Darzi's independent investigation into the NHS, we called for more investment in diagnostics and community-based services to help deliver more personalised care.
  - Following the UK COVID-19 Inquiry's findings, we called for the unique capabilities of the biomedical science community to be integrated into future pandemic preparedness plans.
  - We highlighted the importance of investing in innovative diagnostics, such as AI-driven tools in laboratories and telehealth, in our response to the UK government's 10 year Health Plan.

## AWARDS FOR OUR MEMBERS

From the new IBMS Awards to the Mary MacDonald Bursary, our members were recognised for the incredible work they do.

## IBMS AWARDS 2024

We held the first IBMS Awards in 2024 to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our members and inspire the next generation of biomedical scientists.

The following awards were presented:

### ORGANISATION AND INDIVIDUAL AWARD

- **Public engagement**  
Winner: **Lesley Cybichowski**, Blood Sciences Department, Broomfield Hospital, Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

### ORGANISATION AWARDS

- **Training and development and biomedical science champion**  
Winner: **HCA Healthcare UK Laboratories**
- **Best Use of Research, Innovation or Technology – sponsored by bioMérieux**  
Winner: **Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – Pathology and Transfusion**  
  
**Highly Commended: Synnovis Analytics Tissue Sciences** – Pathology Services for Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- **Partnership Working – sponsored by Source LDPATH**  
Winner: **University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust** with the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and the Defence Medical Academy
- **Sustainability – sponsored by Sarstedt**  
Winner: **The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** – Integrated Laboratory Medicine



## HOW WE HELP



51

medals were awarded to IBMS members to celebrate their 50-year membership.



## HOW WE HELP



- ⬡ **Educational Institution**  
Winners: **Staffordshire University** and **University of Salford**
- ⬡ **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**  
Winner: **HCA Healthcare UK Laboratories**
- ⬡ **Team of the Year – sponsored by Cirdan**  
Winner: **Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust – Laboratory Medicine Divisional Training Team**
- ⬡ **Laboratory of the Year – sponsored by BD**  
Winner: **The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – Newcastle Advanced Therapies**

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

- ⬡ **Rising star**  
Winner: **Grant Lumgair**  
– NHS Lothian, Western General Hospital Edinburgh
- ⬡ **Biomedical Science Leader**  
Winner: **Daniel David Kearns CSci FIBMS** – Centre for Liver and Gastrointestinal Research at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and the Institute of Immunology and Immunotherapy, University of Birmingham  
**Highly Commended:**  
**Francis Yongblah** – Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Foundation Trust



## SPONSORING EXTERNAL NATIONAL SCIENCE AWARDS

Each year, we sponsor a number of external awards. We have sponsored the award for Biological and Biomedical Sciences at STEM for Britain since 2012. The awards are for early career research scientists to exhibit their work at a poster exhibition in Parliament.

We also sponsored the Advancing Healthcare Awards, which celebrate the achievements of allied health professionals, healthcare scientists and those who work alongside them.

IBMS members were among the winners of the UK Advancing Healthcare Awards:

- ⬡ **Biomedical Scientist of the Year 2024**  
Winner: **Leonie Wheeldon**, Consultant Biomedical Scientist at Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust.
- ⬡ **Rising star**  
Winner: **Yushu Wu**, Associate Practitioner at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust.

The IBMS also sponsored the Leadership Awards for Northern Ireland and Wales, as well as the Advancing Healthcare Awards Cymru and the Advancing Healthcare Awards Northern Ireland.



## HOW WE HELP

### CELEBRATION OF SCIENCE EVENT HOSTED BY THE SCIENCE COUNCIL

In November, the Science Council hosted its annual Celebration of Science event at the Geological Society of London, recognising the achievements of people involved in the science community. One of the highlights of the event was the continuing professional development (CPD) Awards. These celebrated those who demonstrate exceptional commitment to CPD.

The IBMS was proud to see three of its members recognised at the event: Katy Johnson (RSciTech), Matthew Smith (CSci) and Emma Victory (CSci).

### ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH SCIENCE WRITERS (ABSW) MEDIA FELLOWSHIP

The ABSW Fellowships provide a unique opportunity for practising scientists, clinicians and engineers to spend two to six weeks working at the heart of a media outlet such as *The Guardian*, *BBC Breakfast* or *Sky News*. The chosen Fellow gains the chance to work within the media, understand why and how stories are selected, and collaborate with journalists.

Following the selection process, the IBMS-sponsored ABSW Media Fellowship for 2024 was awarded to Dr Declan McLaughlin, who completed his placement with BBC Ideas.

### SCOTLAND'S CHIEF SCIENTIFIC OFFICER AWARDS

Scotland's Chief Scientific Officer, Professor Catherine Ross, announced the winners as part of Healthcare Science Week 2024.

IBMS award-winning members were:

- ⬡ **Healthcare Scientist of the Year**  
 Winner: **Karen Brazier**
- ⬡ **Improvement in Action**  
 Winner: **Tamara Hanson**
- ⬡ **Rising Star**  
 Winner: **Laura Green**
- ⬡ **Inspiring the Future Workforce**  
 Winner: **Max Bowler**



**"I feel very honoured and grateful for receiving this award. It was not something I was expecting so it's very humbling to win. I love the work that I do and wouldn't want to be doing anything else.**

**I would like to thank everyone who has given me such wonderful support in my career up until now. A big congratulations to all the other winners and nominees."**

Laura Green, Trainee Biomedical Scientist at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, winner of the Scotland's Chief Scientific Officer Rising Star Award





## HOW WE HELP



### VICE-PRESIDENT

Sarah May was honoured for her leadership, pioneering work, and role in guiding the Institute through key transitions. Her election as Vice President reflects her dedication and vision for the future of biomedical science.

### LIFE MEMBERS AND HONORARY FELLOWSHIP

Life Membership recognises consistent, long-standing and valuable service to the IBMS at a national or international level.

Life Membership was to: **Nick Bentley OBE**, **Dr Jane Needham**, **Gordon McNair**, **Sean Conlan** and **Alison Geddis**.

Honorary Fellowship was awarded to **Dr Rachael Liebmann OBE**. This was for her remarkable contributions to pathology and her advocacy for the role of biomedical scientists in advancing care for patients and diagnostic standards.

### MARY MACDONALD PRIZE FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND BURSARY

This prize aims to support biomedical science staff to complete the IBMS Certificate of Achievement Part I or Part II qualification. This was awarded to **Martin Baker** and **Kevin Waugh**.





## HOW WE HELP

## PRESIDENT'S PRIZE AWARDS

We gave 41 eStudent members the President's Prize Award for graduating with academic distinctions in accredited undergraduate programmes.

The following members received the award:

- **Aleksandra Necel** – Abertay University
- **Megan Lee** – Anglia Ruskin University
- **Natalie Fuller** – Aston University
- **Sayed Qasim Ali Kazmi** – University of Bradford
- **Maria Camacho Millan** – University of Brighton
- **Emily France** – Cardiff University
- **Ivy Lo** – University of Central Lancashire
- **Taha Bilal** – Coventry University
- **Om Ashwin** – De Montfort University
- **Hanya Elsayed Ragab Elsayed Ibrahim Eid** – University of East London
- **Taqwa Khamis Mansoor Khamis Al Dughaisi** – University of Essex
- **Bronwyn Doherty** – Glasgow Caledonian University
- **Serene Regi John** – Gulf Medical University
- **Rebecca Jane Morris** – University of Hertfordshire





## HOW WE HELP



- **Abigail Leia Smith** – University of Huddersfield
- **Alfie Foster** – University of Hull
- **Yong Qiao Ru** – IMU University
- **Rukaiya Azad** – Kingston University
- **Amy Barnes** – Lancaster University
- **Briony Holt** – Leeds Beckett University
- **Anneliese Furlong-Muir** – University of Lincoln
- **Matthew Hurst** – Liverpool John Moores University
- **Susana Sofia Carrajana Martins** – London Metropolitan University
- **Neda Shahedy** – Manchester Metropolitan University
- **Lauren Charlton** – Northumbria University
- **Ethan Iles** – Nottingham Trent University
- **Lauren Ritson** – Oxford Brookes University
- **Ellie Jones** – University of Plymouth
- **Samuel Eaton** – University of Portsmouth

- **Haris Hussain Qurashi** – Queen’s University Belfast
- **Isabella Mezzani** – Robert Gordon University
- **Yasamin Mehrasa** – University of Roehampton
- **Divyani Mistry** – Sheffield Hallam University
- **Jae Ababio** – Staffordshire University
- **Aimee Sinclair** – University of Strathclyde
- **Noor-E-Huddah Malik** – University of Sunderland



- **Chloe Moss** – University of Surrey
- **Stephanie Forsythe** – Ulster University
- **Annie Harper** – University of the West of Scotland
- **Santhushi Kumari Tennekoon** – University of Westminster
- **Jodie Black** – University of Wolverhampton
- **Rebecca Ham** – University of Worcester



## HOW WE HELP

### THE COMPANY MEMBERS' PRIZE OF THE HIGHER SPECIALIST DIPLOMA

This prize is awarded annually to the candidates who, on their first attempt, achieved the highest mark in each discipline of the Higher Specialist Diploma examination. In 2024, we presented the awards for 2023 to:

- ⬢ **Cátia Alexandra Alberto Candido** – Northwick Park Hospital, Cellular Pathology
- ⬢ **Nathan Timbrell** – Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, Clinical Chemistry
- ⬢ **Laura Wright** – Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, Leadership and Management
- ⬢ **Justina Spyrka** – Calderdale Royal Hospital, Medical Microbiology
- ⬢ **Cassandra Hemmings** – Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital, Transfusion Science

**Deborah Craddock** from Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading also received a Company Members' Prize for her achievement in the IBMS Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection.



### THE RJ LAVINGTON PRIZE

This prize, which consists of a cheque for £500 and a silver medal, is awarded to the candidate who, at their first attempt, receives the highest mark in the Higher Specialist Diploma examination across all disciplines. This year it was presented to **Cassandra Hemmings**.

### THE ACADEMY FOR HEALTHCARE SCIENCES (AHCS) 2023 HONORARY FELLOWS

The AHCS awarded an Honorary Fellowship to former IBMS President **Debra Padgett** in recognition of her outstanding leadership in healthcare science in the UK.





## HOW WE HELP



### AWARDS FOR THE IBMS

Our 'Become a Biomedical Scientist' video campaign won two Association Excellence Awards in November 2024. The campaign received Gold for Best Awareness Campaign and Silver for Best Video.

In March 2024, we won three Memcom Excellence Awards. These were:

- **Best Strategy for Member Engagement or Recruitment**  
This was for our work to inspire young students who are unaware of biomedical science as a career and simplify their path to becoming HCPC-registered biomedical scientists.

We have offered students a hands-on introduction to the profession through the IBMS Accredited Space Lab Virtual Reality (VR) experience. After engaging with the VR, students



are guided to our 'Become a Biomedical Scientist' videos, which clearly outline entry routes. This approach has allowed members to act as recruiters at careers events, where they have used the VR experience and directed students to further resources through QR codes.

- **Best use of Video for our 'Become a Biomedical Scientist' videos**  
The videos were engaging and accessible for younger audiences. The TikTok-inspired videos used easy-to-understand animations and a retro video game style to break down different steps to becoming a biomedical scientist, clearly and concisely.
- **Best Use of Innovative Technology for showcasing the crucial work of biomedical scientists**  
We developed the IBMS Accredited Space Lab VR experience, an immersive VR tool, to bring biomedical science directly to students.



## CASE STUDY

# “Winning at the IBMS Awards helped staff feel recognised by the profession”



HCA Healthcare UK Laboratories, a private healthcare company, won three IBMS Awards in 2024: Training & Development and Biomedical Science Champion; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI); and Overall Winner. Vikki Moyse, Training and Organisational Development Manager at HCA, talks about the impact of winning the awards.

“A team of us went to London for the first IBMS Awards and we were all surprised when we won because there were so many other good nominees. Winning has helped lab staff to feel recognised and valued by HCA and the profession.

It was really nice to be able to share the news with the rest of our organisation and say: ‘Look what your labs have done’, especially as labs are often a bit of a back office function.

## EMBEDDING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

I entered the awards because I’m really proud of the team at HCA. It was a surprise for us to be named Overall Winner. I think it was because both of our entries were about how we engaged with staff and responded to what they asked for.

In our bi-annual staff survey, a number of members of our team asked why they can’t do IBMS portfolios at HCA. They said they had to leave if they wanted to progress. My role was created in response to this feedback. In 2020, six months after I started, we got IBMS approval for pre-registration training. Since then, we’ve supported 41 people to undertake Registration Training Portfolios and eight of our biomedical scientists are currently doing Specialist Diplomas across five disciplines.

The award recognised the speed and efficiency with which we’ve put this in place and made it work. Now, we’ve put more staff members from our laboratory workforce of around 200 people through their portfolio than some sizable trusts.

## PRIORITISING EDI

I put HCA forward for the EDI category because of the evidence I see when trainees complete this module in their Registration Training Portfolios. They could write about formal processes, like how recruitment isn’t discriminatory, but trainees choose to give examples of how they think their department supports different people. They shared how this enables them to speak up and makes the workplace inclusive.

I think our EDI strategy, which began in 2022, has worked because it has come from the top, being clearly supported by the CEO and senior leadership. The staff member who is leading on it has created social groups for different celebratory months.

If you’re reading this thinking of applying for the awards, I’d say ‘Go for it’. If your service wins, you get more recognition within your organisation or trust and that can help with funding or resources.”





# HOW WE HELP



- B** Progress the numbers and range of members that the IBMS attracts, within the UK and globally.
  - Over February and March, we made 542 calls to welcome new Licentiate and Fellow IBMS members. Overall, members were receptive to the calls and of the 129 who engaged with them, 88% (113) completed a questionnaire providing us with their feedback about why they joined and what the process was like. Some 94% of members were satisfied with the service they had received so far. The aim was to test assumptions about why people join and make sure the joining process is satisfactory.
  - In November, the IBMS Equity Diversity and Inclusion Working Group started the process of assessing our progress against the Science Council Diversity and Inclusion Progression Framework. Findings tracking our progress on diversity and inclusion have been available from April 2025. The group, which meets online throughout the year, also organised a number of regional activities, including continuous professional development sessions, outreach events, taking part in Pride celebrations and supporting members with protected characteristics.

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The hashtags  
#BiomedicalScienceDay2024  
and #AtTheHeartOfHealthcare  
received over **15,000**  
mentions on X on Biomedical  
Science Day, reaching almost  
**1.5 MILLION**  
people in the UK.



- C** Support the understanding of the benefit the profession and biomedical science delivers to society
  - The impact factor for the *British Journal of Biomedical Science (BJBS)* increased from 1.9 to 2.7 in 2023. This latest figure measures the importance of a journal by calculating the number of times selected articles are cited within the last few years. The increase shows the importance of the *BJBS* in its field.
  - More broadly, in 2024, the *BJBS*:
    - published 30 articles, received 160 submissions, and produced five special issues
    - waived the article processing charges (APC) for members, meaning they can publish their work freely
    - received over 22,000 views for the most popular article about antimicrobial resistance, including the inappropriate use of antibiotics.
  - In its seventh year, we supported a record 50 member events for Biomedical Science Day, providing £19,200 in funding, and delivering 310 event packs across the UK. Biomedical scientists and laboratory staff came together to showcase their workplaces, colleagues, and expertise, promoting their profession and work.



- Following feedback from members, we redesigned the *Biomedical Scientist* print magazine and website. The print magazine was modernised so it is easier to read and breaks down key content for readers. The website is easier to navigate with landing pages for emerging areas such as point-of-care testing and artificial intelligence.



## HOW WE HELP



- As the 80th anniversary of the D-Day operations took place on the same day as Biomedical Science Day 2024, we held an evening event for members who currently serve or have served in the armed forces. Over 100 members attended the event held at the Imperial War Museum, which was also supported by the IBMS History Committee.
- Cataloguing of the IBMS Mercer Collection is nearly complete, with updated records to be added to the website. Bound volumes of the *Biomedical Scientist* and *BJBS* are now shelved, and historical journals are being collated. Additional archival materials, instruments, and photographs are being catalogued for storage and potential digitisation.
- Members also held awareness-raising events to promote biomedical science for National Pathology Week in November. This is the annual week-long celebration of activities and events promoting the disciplines and professions in pathology.
- IBMS members marched in London and Cardiff Pride events in June, wearing custom-designed IBMS rainbow lab coats in a colourful celebration of diversity and inclusivity. The members came together to show their support for LGBTQ+ rights and visibility in the profession.

- SUPERLAB* is our comic for 7- to 11-year-olds, which features fun activities designed to inform them about how biomedical science is at the heart of healthcare. In 2024, a Welsh language version of *SUPERLAB* was created for the National Eisteddfod cultural festival and other public engagement events in Wales.
- This year, we rebranded Harvey's Gang to reach more people. Now the initiative has become Harvey's Lab Tours. They help young patients and their families feel more at ease by connecting them with the biomedical science staff who process and analyse their samples. Now there are 59 UK hospitals running Harvey's Lab Tours.
- Thousands of young people attending the National School and College Leavers Festival in November were able to find out more about a career in biomedical science by talking to three of our members. They joined the IBMS stand at Birmingham's NEC, which offered attendees the opportunity to try out a virtual reality (VR) headset.



We provided materials and merchandise for over **450** members' events, including ones celebrating Pride and Biomedical Science Day.

Our virtual reality headsets were used by members across the UK at over **25** events involving members of the public, raising awareness of the profession.



## CASE STUDY



# “Being involved with Harvey’s Lab Tours is a reminder of why we do the job”

This year, we rebranded Harvey’s Gang to Harvey’s Lab Tours to make it clear what the activity involves and bring positivity to the children and families we support. The tours help young patients to feel more at ease by connecting them with biomedical scientists who process and analyse their samples.

**Chloe Aman, Advanced Biomedical Scientist in the Blood Transfusion department at Southampton General Hospital, has been organising tours since 2022. In 2024, she organised 15 tours. Chloe explains why she decided to get involved with Harvey’s Lab Tours and the difference they are making to young patients.**

“When there was talk of getting the tours back up and running after the pandemic, I expressed an interest in running them. I’ve always been interested in training and education. I’m the training lead for my department. I also have three children who are inquisitive and love asking questions about my job. So, it was great to get involved with young patients who are interested in what we do.

We make the tours fun by doing experiments and hands-on activities. That’s the easiest way for young patients to understand what biomedical scientists do with their samples. For example, when we go through to haematology, if they’ve brought their own

blood sample with them, they can run it on an analyser. We’ve named the analysers after Pokémon characters and the children can choose which one they want to use.

## CREATING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

Since becoming Harvey’s Lab Tours, the IBMS has provided teddy bears that the children absolutely love. They get to wear lab coats on their tours and take them home with them, which puts a big smile on their faces. It’s important for them to have some mementos of the day to show their family and friends.

I get a lot of messages from parents saying their children have taken the lab coats into school for show and tell. So, the tours turn what could be quite a negative experience into a positive one.

## A MORALE BOOST

We have a big team of volunteer biomedical scientists at the hospital who help with tours. Between us, we are able to cover a tour most days of the week. If you ask the patients when they can come for tours – rather than give them set times – you provide more flexibility.

I recommend that other IBMS members get involved in Harvey’s Lab Tours. It’s really fun – not only for the patients and their families, but for staff. It’s such a morale boost. Most people go into a job in healthcare because they want to help patients. But when you work in the lab and don’t see patients, it can be quite easy to just think of samples rather than people. By bringing patients into the lab, it reminds everybody why we’re doing what we’re doing.”

**“I recommend that other IBMS members get involved in Harvey’s Lab Tours. It’s really fun – not only for the patients and their families, but for staff. It’s such a morale boost.” – Chloe**



## CASE STUDY

# Using virtual reality to inspire young people to become biomedical scientists

The IBMS is using an immersive virtual reality (VR) tool – called the IBMS Accredited Space Lab – to promote the profession at careers events. Helen Markland, Senior Biomedical Scientist and Training Lead, who works in the Microbiology department at Manchester Royal Infirmary, borrowed the VR headsets for events in 2024. Here, she shares what it’s like to use the VR tool and how it engages young people.

“When you say the word ‘laboratories’, a lot of people think of stuffy school science labs. But the IBMS has used VR to make the laboratory experience exciting, modern and futuristic. You put a headset on and you’re transported into a spaceship hangar. There’s a lab bench in front of you with all your equipment on, and you can see robotic hands. They are your hands that you need to use to work your way through a practical simulation and process a sample.

My colleague and I were invited to help manage the IBMS stand at a young person’s careers event at the NEC in Birmingham in November 2023. The VR headsets were very popular. It was my first experience of using one and I was amazed by what the IBMS had come up with.



## OPENING UP CONVERSATIONS

We borrowed the VR headsets for a few careers events after using them at the NEC. This included a small local event in Manchester for young people aged 11 to 18. The headsets drew an impressive crowd. People saw others using VR from the other side of the room and came over to find out what they were looking at. Once they heard the word ‘VR’, they asked to have a go.

I find that the VR headsets open up conversations. You get people to your stand who maybe wouldn’t come to a science stand if the VR headset wasn’t there.

## PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE ROUTE TO REGISTRATION

The VR experience explains what biomedical science is in a fun way and gets people thinking about a career in the profession. When you use the headset, you see a sample in front of you and the results going back to the patient. We then explain to people that medical colleagues use the sample results to pick treatment options for different infections.

Once someone has tried the headset, we can then give them advice on career paths and let them know what they need to do to become a registered biomedical scientist.

It’s amazing that we’re engaging the younger generation while they’re making choices about their careers. If it’s an option they want to take, providing information at the time they make decisions about their education means they can do exactly what they need to do to become a biomedical scientist. I really hope that other IBMS members take up the opportunity to borrow the VR headsets. They are a crowd puller.”





# HOW WE HELP



## 5 FACTS ABOUT IBMS REGIONS AND BRANCHES

◆ To find out more about IBMS regions and branches, have a look at: [www.ibms.org/about/regions-and-branches/](http://www.ibms.org/about/regions-and-branches/)



1  
IBMS regions and branches bring members together across the UK and internationally to promote the profession.

2  
The groups connect IBMS members, employers and students in the local area and provide a forum to discuss local issues about biomedical science.

4  
All IBMS members are assigned a branch and region when they join the IBMS. This is usually based on the address of where they work or study.

3  
Run by IBMS members, our regions and branches support events, public engagement, and collaborate with local employers and universities.

5  
Many IBMS regions and branches support local discipline-specific discussion groups.





## CASE STUDY

## Team Wales

Victoria Bradley is a Reader in Biomedical Science Clinical Practice Education at Cardiff Metropolitan University and an IBMS Council member for Wales. In late 2023, she set up the IBMS Wales Region Events Committee (REC), which includes representatives from branches across Wales. Victoria discusses the highlights of 2024 for the all-Wales group.

“Biomedical scientists tend to work behind closed doors, so it’s really important to make us visible. This is what our IBMS Wales Region REC group does. We’re a group of like-minded people who want to promote our profession and be involved in public engagement events.

There are three IBMS branches in Wales with varying levels of activity. There’s the north, south-west and south-east groups. The all-Wales group has representatives from each branch, as well as from the seven local health boards and all of the different biomedical science disciplines. We meet every three or four months online and decide which events to attend.

Now we have an all-Wales group, we have more volunteers and a wider range of people wanting to participate. Working together makes us feel like we’re Team Wales, despite geographical challenges.



## PRIDE CYMRU AND THE NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD



In June 2024, members of the group went to Cardiff Pride. It was the first time the IBMS had been represented at Pride Cymru and the 50th anniversary of Cardiff Pride. It was a vibrant atmosphere and amazing to see everyone celebrate being who they are. As we wore our lab coats, with a rainbow on the breast pocket, and waved flags, we chanted: “Two, four, six, eight, science does not discriminate. Four, three, two, one, science is for everyone.”

We wanted to be at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd in August to engage with a wider range of people. The festival is a national celebration of what it is to be Welsh. We translated IBMS promotional materials into Welsh. We got the SUPERLAB2 comic translated, as well as stickers, badges, careers leaflets and a pop-up banner.

The DNA bead bracelets were a draw to our stand. People get different coloured beads depending on their answers to simple questions, like what colour eyes they have. We also had a 3D periodic table puzzle and the IBMS Accredited Space Lab VR experience. We talked to people interested in what our profession does, and about how they interact with us throughout their lives. We also talked to them about how to become a biomedical scientist.

## GETTING INVOLVED

In 2025, the IBMS President Joanna Andrew will be joining us at Cardiff Pride. The group will also be at Swansea Science Festival again.

Do think about getting involved in your local region or branch. You don’t necessarily have to go with a brand new idea or vast amounts of experience. It’s about participating, learning, and finding out what you enjoy about public engagement.”





## HOW WE HELP



## HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

As a company limited by guarantee and a charity, we're committed to open and transparent governance.

We're governed by a board of Council members and executives who make sure we meet our charitable objectives and that we're effectively managed. Day-to-day leadership of the organisation is undertaken by our executive team, which is led by our Chief Executive.

- ◆ Find out more about governance at the IBMS: [www.ibms.org/about/governance/](http://www.ibms.org/about/governance/)

## OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS

Elected by IBMS members, Council members work together to make key decisions and develop policy on behalf of the biomedical science profession. They are directors of the company and trustees of the charity and must fulfil the responsibilities of both roles.

- ◆ Read more about our Council: [www.ibms.org/council/](http://www.ibms.org/council/)



## IBMS COMMITTEES

Our committees are made up of IBMS Council members and staff who develop key areas of our work. Each committee meets four times a year.

- ◆ We have five committees. Information about them can be found on the IBMS website: [www.ibms.org/about/council-and-committees/](http://www.ibms.org/about/council-and-committees/)



# LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we will:



## PROMOTE

- Launch a range of Harvey's Lab Tours resources, using the new logo and branding to promote the initiative to patients and their families. We will create a video that highlights the impact of the tours on families, patients and laboratory staff, increasing awareness.
- Create new content for our IBMS Accredited Space Lab Virtual Reality (VR) experience. New content will feature an expanded laboratory for blood sciences and an experiment to explain what biomedical science is to a younger audience.
- Purchase a van for IBMS teams to use around the UK to promote biomedical science to people attending schools, hospitals and careers events. This will help us to highlight the role of our members in healthcare, and the public engagement work will showcase: Harvey's Lab Tours; our IBMS Accredited Space Lab VR experience; and campaigns promoting what happens to samples and how to become a biomedical scientist.



- Continue working with diagnostic and healthcare organisations to deliver roundtable events that produce reports setting out recommendations for the future of biomedical science in the UK.
- Publish an independent report about the importance of biomedical science in maternity care. From looking after patients' samples when they're received in the laboratory, to analysing them and issuing diagnostic reports, the focus will be on how biomedical scientists have different diagnostic specialities. The report will also show how laboratory support staff play a role at various stages.
- Sponsor and support events that promote and celebrate biomedical science, including: the IBMS Awards; Advancing Healthcare Awards; STEM for Britain; Biomedical Science Day; Pride; and the National School and College Leavers Festival.
- Honour members who have been with the IBMS for 25 years with our '25 in 25' campaign. This will highlight their achievements and contributions to biomedical science. As a token of our appreciation, each milestone member will receive a commemorative badge to mark this special occasion and some will be featured in the *Biomedical Scientist*.





## LOOKING AHEAD



## PROGRESS

- Advocate for greater investment in the biomedical workforce to strengthen the diagnostics sector and ease pressures in the NHS. To meet growing demands, we're calling on the UK government to increase capacity in biomedical science, improve retention of staff, and unlock funding for training positions. We know that 81% of qualified biomedical science graduates don't enter the profession because of limited training opportunities. So, securing funding from the UK government is crucial to maintaining a robust talent pipeline and making sure patients receive earlier, more effective treatments.
- Take part in events to engage policymakers across the UK. Plans include: drop-in sessions in Parliament for MPs and Lords; responding to a proposal about reconfiguring hospital networks in Northern Ireland to deliver better patient care; and a Biomedical Science Day event at Holyrood.
- Launch a new website and member database to improve how members interact with the IBMS and personalise their online experience. A new continuing professional development (CPD) platform will make it easier to find content, and record information in line with the HCPC requirements for registration.



- Create a Faculty of International Laboratory Medicine (FILM), bringing together biomedical scientists from across the globe to discuss key topics, identify themes affecting the profession and promote international membership.
- Carry out member focus groups to gauge interest in producing more digital content for the Biomedical Scientist magazine. The results will have an impact on how frequently we create new content for the magazine's website.



## SUPPORT

- Host our most comprehensive and largest Congress event yet. It will offer a wealth of knowledge and inspiration through diverse educational programmes, cutting-edge exhibitions, and unparalleled networking opportunities.
- Introduce two new additions to the Congress programme. The academic programme is designed to bring together leading educators and researchers to explore the latest advancements in biomedical science education and practice. The pathology IT programme will showcase the pivotal role of technology and IT specialists in driving laboratory innovation and efficiency.
- Launch a Sustainability Working Group to promote environmentally responsible practices in biomedical science. The aim will be to increase awareness, provide education and share best practice.
- Support the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group to complete the Science Council's Diversity and Inclusion Progression Framework, a self-assessment exercise. We will promote the results to members and prioritise any areas that need attention. We will continue to embed EDI principles across all IBMS activities and aim to grow the membership of the Working Group.

**"I originally joined the IBMS because I wanted to complete my Specialist Portfolio. I then retained my membership so I could do other IBMS qualifications and progress in my career. This includes the Certificate of Expert Practice in training, which has been especially helpful for my role as Training Lead. There are also networking opportunities for members. For example, the IBMS has set up Support Forums to bring training officers from different hospitals together. We share tips and advice with each other and ask questions about anything we're struggling with."** – Helen Markland, Senior Biomedical Scientist and Training Lead at Manchester Royal Infirmary.



## LOOKING AHEAD





# OUR FINANCES - SUMMARISED ACCOUNTS

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Subscriptions	2,364,497	-	2,364,497	2,380,586
Qualifications	436,090	252,090	688,180	779,597
Portfolios, assessments and accreditations	416,181	-	416,181	476,927
Publications	3,860	-	3,860	1,900
Regions, branches and discussion groups	120,071	-	120,071	16,073
Other income	21,535	-	21,535	2,449
<b>Congress and other trading activities</b>	28,655	-	28,655	1,895,041
<b>Investments</b>				
Listed investment income	119,722	-	119,722	164,221
Property rental	63,263	-	63,263	62,981
Bank interest	142,017	-	142,017	130,501
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,715,891</b>	<b>252,090</b>	<b>3,967,981</b>	<b>5,910,276</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
<b>Raising funds</b>				
Congress and other trading activities	151,687	-	151,687	1,340,958
Investment management fees	76,154	-	76,154	81,032
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Education, qualifications and registration	1,809,729	252,090	2,061,819	1,972,430
Publications	322,965	-	322,965	222,210
Regions and branches and discussion groups	213,979	-	213,979	116,597
Member events, representation and benefits	1,673,020	-	1,673,020	1,559,448
Grants and prizes	312,801	-	312,801	37,448
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>4,560,335</b>	<b>252,090</b>	<b>4,812,425</b>	<b>5,330,123</b>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	993,623	-	993,623	765,847
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>149,179</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>149,179</b>	<b>1,346,000</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / (losses)</b>				
Gain/ (loss) on revaluation of investment property	50,000	-	50,000	(300,000)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>199,179</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>199,179</b>	<b>1,046,000</b>
Total funds brought forward	17,801,848	-	17,801,848	16,755,848
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>18,001,027</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,001,027</b>	<b>17,801,848</b>

All activities are continuing and there are no other recognised gains and losses other than those recognised above.

# CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible assets	1,237,638	1,179,287
Listed investments	12,405,810	11,425,990
Investment property	<u>900,000</u>	<u>850,000</u>
	14,543,448	13,455,277
<b>Current assets</b>		
Stock	4,181	356
Debtors	614,726	470,445
Listed investments – Money Market Deposits	1,880,743	1,023,372
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>2,743,891</u>	<u>4,722,030</u>
	5,243,541	6,216,203
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<u>(1,785,962)</u>	<u>(1,869,632)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<u>3,457,579</u>	<u>4,346,571</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	18,001,027	17,801,848
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>18,001,027</u>	<u>17,801,848</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>		
Accumulated fund	15,414,947	16,222,143
Designated fund	36,992	36,992
Listed investment revaluation reserve	2,074,555	1,118,180
Investment property revaluation reserve	<u>474,533</u>	<u>424,533</u>
	<u>18,001,027</u>	<u>17,801,848</u>

The summarised accounts are a statement of information extracted from the annual accounts and certain information relating to both the group statement of financial activities and the group balance sheet. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full accounts and the Council members' annual report should be consulted: copies of these can be viewed online at [www.ibms.org/annualreport](http://www.ibms.org/annualreport). The full accounts have been subjected to external examination by an independent auditor and received an unqualified audit report. The full annual accounts were approved by the Council members on 25 April 2025 and have been submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.



## OUR FINANCES - SUMMARISED ACCOUNTS

# Benefits of IBMS membership

Being a member of the IBMS has a number of benefits, including:

- helping you to progress your career through accredited qualifications and training
- giving you access to professional standards and support
- enhancing your knowledge and skills through our continuing professional development scheme
- accessing professional and scientific publications
- free legal advice on workplace issues and other personal matters, such as being involved in an accident or buying a property
- discounts on cinema tickets, holidays and health clubs.
- ◆ To find out more about being a member of the IBMS, call **020 7713 0214** or email [mail@ibms.org](mailto:mail@ibms.org)

Call: +44 (0)20 7713 0214

Email: [mail@ibms.org](mailto:mail@ibms.org)

Visit our website: [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org)

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Watch us on YouTube:

[InstituteofBiomedicalScience](https://www.youtube.com/InstituteofBiomedicalScience)



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**“If you’re not an IBMS member, you don’t get as much of a say in how the profession develops. As a member, you can help shape its future. I have really enjoyed being a verifier and examiner for portfolios. I love to go and look in other people’s labs and see what they’ve been up to. It’s a great way to share ideas and meet others in the profession. I’ve spoken at Congress, which was a terrifying but very good experience. I’ve joined the Specialist Advisory Panel for biochemistry, which I wouldn’t have even known about if I wasn’t an IBMS member. That’s been really positive.”**

Vikki Moyse, Training and Organisational Development Manager at HCA Healthcare UK Laboratories

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