



**CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE
BY EQUIVALENCE
(BIOMEDICAL SCIENTIST)**

**Guidance for Candidates
2023-2024**

Version 5.0

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) is a programme that the IBMS is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) to deliver as an education provider.
- 1.2 This route is offered by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) as an award for those who are working in the UK in biomedical science, have a minimum qualification at honours degree level and extensive laboratory experience and wish to become registered as a biomedical scientist with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

The Institute of Biomedical Science is the professional body for biomedical scientists in the United Kingdom. It aims to promote and develop biomedical science and its practitioners.

The Institute represents over 21,000 members employed mainly in the National Health Service, private laboratories, veterinary laboratories, NHS Blood and Transplant Service (NHSBT), Public Health England and Medical Research Council. Other members also work in related commercial fields and in academia. The IBMS is involved in the education and training of biomedical scientists - accrediting degree courses, assessing the competency of biomedical scientists to practise, approving laboratories for pre and post registration training and organising a programme of higher and advanced diplomas for its members. The Institute awards the Certificate of Competence which gives eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is a regulatory body for 15 professions, including biomedical scientists. One of its key functions is to maintain and publish a register of health and care professionals who meet their standards.

**Biomedical Scientist is a protected title regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council who define this as: "A biomedical scientist analyses specimens from patients to provide data to help doctors diagnose and treat disease".*

Further information can also be found on the respective websites www.ibms.org and www.hcpc-uk.org

- 1.3 This document contains guidance on the process for making an application to complete the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) route. It should be read in conjunction with the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) Programme Handbook, which gives further details on the concept of equivalence and knowledge and skills required for the award.
- 1.4 The fee for the entire equivalence assessment process can be found on the current application form (£327 in total). A non-refundable administration fee of £50 will be required on submission of the candidate's application for review by the assessment panel. This will be deducted from the overall fee should the candidate be accepted onto the programme. The full fee is non-refundable once the candidate has been admitted to the programme. Additional charges also apply for reassessment of the portfolio (£100) or a *viva voce* resit (£150).

- 1.5 Applications for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) are considered in stages: application, applicant screening; preparation of the portfolio of evidence; portfolio assessment and a final oral assessment (*viva voce*).
- 1.6 Application and applicant screening: the applicant's qualifications and experience are reviewed against the entry criteria. The applicant should ensure they have the appropriate background and experience to proceed to portfolio submission. This includes support in the workplace and access to resources (including a named mentor) that is sufficient, appropriate and available to enable them to meet the threshold level of practice for a biomedical scientist. Following successful screening, the applicant will be admitted to the programme and issued with an electronic version of the Registration Equivalence Portfolio.
- 1.7 The applicant will collate relevant evidence mapped to the IBMS equivalence portfolio in consultation with their mentor that must be submitted to the IBMS within 12 months of the approval date, unless the applicant can demonstrate extenuating circumstance, or a revised deadline has been agreed with the IBMS Education Department.
- 1.8 Evidence within the portfolio should be clearly organised and mapped to the required HCPC standards of proficiency with the modules. Each piece of evidence should map to several HCPC standards of proficiency and it must be clearly articulated how and why the evidence has been chosen in the justification statement. Each piece of evidence should be signed and dated by both the candidate and their workplace mentor / trainer. Each piece of evidence should also clearly state which of the HCPC standards are being demonstrated using the Onefile system.
- 1.9 The equivalence portfolio evidence will be assessed by 3 reviewers: a lay person, academic and professional (biomedical scientist). The three reviewers will individually assess the portfolio, then the panel will meet to agree if the evidence in the portfolio meets the required threshold to proceed to the final assessment. If the portfolio is completed successfully, the panel will agree areas to explore further in the final oral assessment.
- 1.10 Following a successful portfolio review, the candidate will undertake their final oral assessment (*viva voce*) with the professional reviewer. This will take place by prior arrangement with the candidate at a mutually agreed time and venue (usually conducted online).
- 1.11 All applicants must ensure that they have read and understood this document and other guidance documents before submitting their application. If you have any questions, please contact the Institute's Education Department before submission (equivalence@ibms.org).
- 1.12 Applicants should be aware that if, during their completion of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio, any issues or concerns about their professional conduct should be reported to the IBMS as the education provider, because this may impact on the candidate's future registration with the HCPC. Concerns should be submitted to the IBMS Executive Head of Education in written form. A report will then be provided to the Education and Professional Standards Committee who will decide whether the evidence of unprofessional conduct affects the candidate's eligibility to apply to the HCPC for registration as a biomedical scientist. The basis for judging this will be the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics (updated in 2023).
- 1.13 Should the Education and Professional Standards Committee decide that the candidate has not breached the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, then the outcome is communicated to the candidate after the meeting and a note is put in their file for information.

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- 1.14 Should the Education and Professional Standards Committee decide that the candidate has breached the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, this will be communicated to the candidate who will be withdrawn from the programme.
- 1.15 Appeals can be made using the IBMS appeal process (contact equivalence@ibms.org for further information). They can only be made on procedural grounds. The outcome of the appeal is final.

2. Application and Applicant Screening

- 2.1 To maintain an accurate record of application, applicant data (including any sensitive personal data) is held the IBMS on a secure database.

Applications are made by submitting to the IBMS Education Department the following documents:

- Completed application form
- A summary of their current role¹ and professional experience to confirm the applicant is working at honours degree level and can demonstrate they can evidence the requirements of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio.
This should be a statement of no more than 1000 words and should contain a description of main duties currently undertaken, plus a brief summary of previous experience that is relevant to the application. The statement should also confirm that the applicant has had access to sufficient and appropriate resources to support their training and development to a level commensurate with the threshold level required for registration as a biomedical scientist².
The applicant also needs to confirm they have access to an IBMS approved training laboratory to provide any supplementary training that may be required to gain additional knowledge and experience necessary (for example of the other clinical specialism disciplines) to meet the biomedical scientist standards of proficiency.
- Portfolio development plan to indicate primary sources of evidence of knowledge and skills applied in practice
- Assessment fee (please refer to current application form). Please note, unsuccessful applications will incur a £50 administration fee, the remainder of the fee will be refunded
- Proof of ID (copy of passport or government issued photo ID e.g. driving licence)
- Completed basic DBS check
- Photocopy of all relevant qualification certificate(s) and transcript of results.
Please note: Where a module contributes as a source of evidence of knowledge the full module descriptor must be provided in the portfolio of evidence.
- Photocopy of change of name (if relevant)
- Evidence of English language (IELTS level 7), if English is not your first language
- Photocopy of ENIC³ comparability for your non-UK qualification(s)

¹Candidates will only be considered if they are currently working in healthcare science in the UK. Individuals seeking HCPC registration who are working outside of the UK are advised to consult HCPC directly. Information for this can be found at <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/apply/international/>.

²Biomedical Scientist is a protected title regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council who define this as: "A biomedical scientist analyses specimens from patients to provide data to help doctors diagnose and treat disease."

³The European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC) is used to ensure overseas qualifications are equivalent to those in the UK and therefore a photocopy of ENIC comparability for any non-UK qualifications must be included.

Please note: All photocopied I.D. material and certificates must be signed by the candidate's manager as verification as to the authenticity of the document(s).

- 2.2 As a HCPC approved education provider, the IBMS is required under the HCPC Standards of Education and Training section 2.4 to ask about criminal convictions as part of the admission to its approved programmes of study. To fulfil this requirement the applicant must undertake a basic DBS check as part of the application and admission process for the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) programmes. The outcome of the DBS check should be shared with tier mentor and laboratory manager.
- 2.3 Applicants are required to submit a self-declaration as part of the application to this route. Failure to disclose full information or any deliberate misrepresentation of information can be a serious matter and will invalidate the application for the equivalence route and may also affect their ability to register with the HCPC as a biomedical scientist
- 2.4 Applicants who do not have English as their first language are required to provide evidence of English language skills with a minimum International Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 7.0 with no element less than 6.5, or a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet Based Test with a minimum score of 100/120.
- 2.5 To be eligible for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) an applicant must demonstrate that they have at least three years of autonomous professional practice related to biomedical science. This experience should include the routine analysis of specimens from patients to provide data for disease diagnosis and healthcare of the patient. Less than three years will be deemed inadequate for the application of equivalence.

IMPORTANT: Please note that applicants who have only worked as biomedical support staff/associate practitioners are not considered to have experience of autonomous practitioners.

- 2.6 The application must be completed to confirm the applicant is working in a suitable training environment. Details of the IBMS standards for training and the self-assessment form (as part of the training approval application form) can be found on the IBMS website: <https://www.ibms.org/go/registration/lab-approval>.
- 2.7 Applicants must have access to a named mentor who is HCPC registered and has experience of training colleagues to produce relevant evidence for the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio. The mentor must have access to an IBMS approved training laboratory to provide any supplementary training required to gain the knowledge and experience necessary to meet the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists. The mentor is required to confirm they have read and understood the information available on the IBMS website related to the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) award. The mentor is expected to provide professional support and guidance for the applicant's application and submission of evidence.

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- 2.8 The applicant must be able to meet all the requirements of the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists and therefore has a duty of care to ensure that health conditions or a disability do not affect their fitness to practice. Applicants are required to complete a health declaration to state that the standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists have been read and understood and they do not have any physical or mental health condition that would impair their fitness to practice as a biomedical scientist. They should, as part of their fitness declaration, understand that relevant vaccinations and occupational health assessments have been undertaken.
- 2.9 If the candidate has a disability that might affect the preparation of portfolio evidence or the oral assessment, it must be declared upon application, and the panel will be provided with a declaration of disability form. The panel must then consider how to mitigate the effects on the interview and ensure fairness. Any disability that is not declared beforehand cannot be taken into account during the viva, unless it has occurred post application.
- 2.10 Senior members of the IBMS Education Team will check the application and submitted documentation to confirm the criteria for admittance to the programme have been met. At this stage further information may be requested if the application is not sufficiently explicit.
- 2.11 This application screening process will ensure the validity of qualifications and periods of experience are appropriate to the potential candidate's ability to gather evidence to fulfil the requirements of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio.
- 2.12 If the criteria for admittance have been met, candidates will be issued with an electronic copy of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio on Onefile and given 12 months from the date of issue to submit the required documentation.
- 2.13 The focus for completing the portfolio of evidence should be collating evidence that demonstrates the areas below and how these have informed and enhanced the candidate's practice:
- a. Evidence of academic and vocational qualifications where relevant to the standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists
 - b. Evidence of structured training and competence assessment appropriate to their current scope of practice
 - c. Evidence of experiential learning and CPD in their current practice
 - d. Evidence of their scope of practice (direct observations of practice, case studies, presentations, sample audits or a research projects, for example)
 - e. Evidence of supplementary training or learning that has been assessed to meet HCPC standards of proficiency not addressed by the above
- Please note: if 'e' is not achievable in 12 months applications should be deferred until such time as the applicant is able to produce the evidence.**
- 2.14 Following initial screening, applicants who are not accepted are provided with a report summarising the reasons for their rejection. Applicants will not be eligible to re-apply within 12 months and must be able to demonstrate they have engaged in further professional development through systems that ensure periods of education and training are effective in meeting the standards of proficiency.

- 2.15 The candidate and their mentor will be asked to complete a feedback report after three months to monitor progress and provide an opportunity for any problems to be highlighted and resolved before final submission of evidence. A designated email address equivalence@ibms.org will provide access to IBMS staff for advice during working hours. Additional guidance is available from the IBMS website information and guidance documents.
- 2.16 Once accepted onto the programme, candidates (if not already on a HCPC register) will be expected to comply with the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics and be able to demonstrate their understanding of the implications of these standards to their practice.

3. Completion of the Equivalence Portfolio and Portfolio Evidence

- 3.1 Assessments of equivalence are made against the HCPC standards of proficiency (SoPs) for biomedical scientists (updated in 2022 and implemented from 1st September 2023), regardless of the specialism or role. Applicants will be issued with the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio only if they successfully meet the admission criteria. This portfolio is the framework against which their qualifications, professional training, experience and competence are mapped.
- 3.2 The portfolio is the framework within which the candidate is required to provide evidence of pre-existing qualifications, professional training, experience and assessment of competence that has enabled them to practice in their current role and effectively demonstrate the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists.
- 3.3 The focus for gathering evidence for the portfolio should be the candidate's current practice with not less than 3 years autonomous practice and their achievement of competence to reach this level. However, candidates must recognise that registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a biomedical scientist is not discipline specific and requires a threshold level of knowledge of the key pathology disciplines: **Cellular Pathology; Clinical Biochemistry; Clinical Genetics; Clinical Immunology, Haematology and Transfusion Science; Medical Microbiology**. Please refer to Module Information guidance document for more details. It is likely therefore, that a candidate may need to undertake some supplementary reading and self-study or training to address any shortfall against the subject specific curriculum learning outcomes that cannot be met through their current qualifications and experience.
- 3.4 Applicants must present their evidence against the sections and modules of the portfolio in the order in which the portfolio is constructed. **All evidence must be dated and signed by the candidate and their mentor / trainer**. The content the curriculum and allocation of the HCPC standards of proficiency to each module (as detailed in the Programme Specification and Programme Handbook) should be used to guide the choice of evidence. Candidates are required to provide evidence that they meet each set of module learning outcomes and demonstrate the HCPC standards of proficiency in their practice.
- 3.5 The Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio will be hosted in the Onefile digital platform. The applicant must show how their pieces of evidence demonstrate all standard of proficiency. There must be no gaps or blank areas. Each piece of evidence should be used to demonstrate more than one standard and each piece of evidence must clearly state with SoPs it demonstrates.

The portfolio may contain a number of differing types of evidence from periods of relevant education and training or employment/experience. Applicants are strongly advised to study the curriculum and learning outcomes carefully to ensure that their training and experience covers all the HCPC standards of proficiency contained in the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio.

Please Note: Under no circumstances should any piece of evidence submitted contain patient details. All personal data are to be redacted prior to submission. Any portfolios submitted with this will be returned immediately.

3.6 Appendix 1 in the Programme Specification and Portfolio Development Plan templates sets out some typical sources of evidence that can be submitted against each module of the portfolio to effectively demonstrate the HCPC standards of proficiency.

Please note, this is for guidance purposes and applicants may submit different formats of evidence against the standards of proficiency. All evidence should contain some personal reflection to confirm competence/understanding and how the candidate's practice has been affected.

3.7 The portfolio of evidence is the applicant's opportunity to demonstrate how the experience they have gained and competencies achieved are relevant to the HCPC standards of proficiency. The content should be well chosen, explicit, concise and clear. Statements of attendance or participation in meetings are not sufficient evidence. They must be supported by personal reflection and a concise description on how the experience helped in achieving a particular competence and have influenced the candidate's practice. **Statements by the candidate of their knowledge and ability without other evidence of how the knowledge was achieved and assessed are not acceptable.** Evidence of knowledge should demonstrate what has been learned and this has been applied to practice. Evidence of training and 'hands-on' experience should be supported by witness testimonies from qualified and where appropriate, professionally registered, individuals.

3.8 The portfolio of evidence must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter. Evidence should be carefully selected – a few well-chosen examples will be more valuable than more pieces of poorly organized material. The portfolio of evidence should NOT include a detailed day to day diary or logbook, the full text of any case studies, theses, projects or essays – summaries with reflection, analysis and evaluation of how the activity has informed practice should be provided. All content should observe best practice in respect of confidentiality.

3.9 Evidence must be specific to the applicant and the demonstration of how they meet the standards of proficiency. The portfolio should **NOT** contain any personal details or original reference material, standard operating procedures, or other published documents unless it is being used as an example of evidence and is annotated.

3.10 Particular attention is drawn to the following:

- a. We do not state that knowledge must be acquired via an academic course, other than applicants must have an honours degree or equivalent level qualification. This a new route as it allows candidates who are working at a level commensurate to a registered biomedical scientist to demonstrate they meet the standards of proficiency through knowledge and experience that is already acquired in practice.

- b. This route therefore, recognises there should be little need for further training, although there may be shortfalls in the wider knowledge of biomedical science disciplines. However, this route has the flexibility for candidates to demonstrate they can address any shortfalls through self-directed study or focussed training.
- c. Evidence must be appropriate to the standards of proficiency cited and clearly demonstrate how the standards have been met. If a subject has been covered at university, evidence of this can be presented in the form of the university transcript to show the module has been passed and module descriptor to show the content/learning outcomes of the modules, with some reflection on how this has informed practice.
- d. Candidates are expected to evidence their understanding of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics and the implications and application of these standards to their practice.
- e. Candidates are required to provide evidence on how they have involved service users, other professionals and learners in other professions in their own development and learning.
- f. Candidates are required to be able to provide the bulk of evidence that they meet the HCPC standards of proficiency based on their existing qualifications, plus their current experience and scope of practice (i.e. experiential learning that enables them to be competent in their current scope of practice). If there is a shortfall in specific areas of practice or knowledge, this will need to be addressed through further training or learning.
- g. Candidates must be able to evidence how they meet the knowledge and skill requirements to demonstrate the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists. Biomedical scientists work in all biomedical science disciplines and are expected to have a threshold level of generic knowledge and skill in biomedical science that reflects this, not just a single discipline.
- h. If candidates require additional training to meet some standards of proficiency, the length of training will depend on their existing knowledge and skills base. As candidates need to demonstrate that they are working at a level commensurate to a biomedical scientist to be accepted onto the programme, the expectation is that they will already have experience and will be able to assimilate any new knowledge and skills required to meet the curriculum learning outcomes more quickly than a new trainee without experience. When being trained in a particular technique, you must be able to reach a threshold level of knowledge and basic skills sufficient to be able to perform the task. The training staff within the host IBMS approved laboratory will assess your competency in the same way that they do with their trainees undertaking conventional training.
- i. The application form requires you and your employer to confirm an understanding of requirements and commitment to complete the programme. If you are unable to commit the time to gather the evidence to demonstrate that you meet **ALL** of the HCPC standards of proficiency for your portfolio, this programme is not suitable for you.

3.11 Evidence provided must meet the criteria above for the candidate to successfully pass the portfolio review and proceed to the final assessment (the *viva voce*).

- 3.12 Each candidate accepted onto the programme will be sent log in details for Onefile to access their digital IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence portfolio. The portfolio must be completed within 12 months of acceptance onto the programme. **Evidence must be clearly organised within the sections and modules of the portfolio and cross-referenced to HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists.**
- 3.13 Candidates can apply for extensions to periods of evidence collection and portfolio completion by writing to the Education Manager and Executive Head of Education and formally setting out extenuating circumstances for the extension. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the IBMS senior education staff and an extension may be granted. Extenuating circumstances include matters that affect welfare and wellbeing of candidates once they have been admitted to the programme.

4. The Equivalence Route Assessment Process

- 4.1 The assessment process begins once a candidate and their mentor confirm that the portfolio of evidence is complete and ready for assessment, triggering the appointment of a review panel.
- 4.2 A review panel is selected from the IBMS pool of professional, academic and lay representatives who have been trained as assessors for the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist). The panel will be comprised of one professional and one academic assessor and one lay assessor. Reviewers are asked to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to each assessment.
- 4.3 All reviewers will be appointed by the IBMS and will have undergone IBMS training to be assessors for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) portfolio.
- 4.4 There are two parts to the assessment:
- 4.5 **Part One:** Each assessor will be given access to the electronic copy of the candidate's IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) portfolio on Onefile.

Assessors will consider the documents presented in the portfolio of evidence in the context of the threshold standards for HCPC registration and practice as a biomedical scientist.

By reviewing the evidence and its mapping to the HCPC SoPs, the assessors will make a professional judgment on whether or not the applicant has the appropriate qualifications, experience and level of competence in their current practice appropriate to be eligible to apply for registration as a biomedical scientist.

Each member of the review panel will determine whether the evidence mapped by the candidate to the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio is at the level required to meet all HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists. A final outcome will be agreed by the assessors indicating whether or not there is sufficient evidence to initially confirm the standards of proficiency have been met. The review panel will make a recommendation whether the candidate should proceed to the final assessment based on the following outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Candidate has met all of the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) and may proceed to the viva voce;
- **Outcome 2:** Candidate has partially met the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) and is required to submit further evidence to address specific standards of proficiency before they proceed to the viva voce;

The candidate will be advised on the possible sources of evidence specific for the standard that would be suitable to demonstrate the standard has been met. Candidates will be allowed a maximum of 6 months to submit further evidence. Only the standards requiring additional evidence will be reassessed. If the evidence submitted by the candidate is insufficient further advice will be provided and the candidate will have a further 3 months to provide suitable evidence. Following this stage either outcome 1 or outcome 3 of the portfolio assessment will apply.

- **Outcome 3:** Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) and a period of further education or training is required. Advice will be given on the nature of this and whether it needs to be achieved through formal academic learning from an IBMS accredited programme, self-directed learning or secondment to an IBMS approved training laboratory. Candidates will need to resubmit their portfolio of evidence for full assessment. A charge of £100 will apply for re-assessment of the portfolio.

- 4.6 If the evidence provided has been accepted and a recommendation made for the candidate to proceed to the final assessment, the candidate will be invited to attend a *viva voce* with the professional reviewer. If the evidence provided is not accepted as sufficient and the recommendation of the review panel is not to proceed to the final assessment, the candidate will be advised accordingly with the recommendations on how to address any areas of concern.
- 4.7 The three members of the review panel will agree areas to be explored in more detail with the candidate in the viva, to be conducted by the professional reviewer.
- 4.8 The *viva voce* will be held for the professional reviewer to explore aspects of the candidate's education and training, and their understanding of the standards of proficiency based on the evidence submitted in the portfolio and questions related to their scope of practice. Each assessment will normally last between 30-60 minutes and will be used to confirm the candidate's suitability for the award.

The professional reviewer will produce a final report and a recommended outcome of the viva voce assessment for submission to the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee for ratification.

The professional reviewer will be expected to make one of the following summative recommendations in their report:

- **Outcome 1:** Candidate has met all of the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist);
- **Outcome 2:** Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist).

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Candidates who successfully pass the portfolio but are unsuccessful in the viva assessment will be allowed one further opportunity to re-sit the *viva voce*. This will incur a charge of £150.

- 4.9 In the event of the reviewers being unable to reach a consensus opinion on the portfolio assessment outcome, it is referred to the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee for the appointment of an independent assessor. This individual would be required to review all material submitted by the candidate and reviewer comments and to discuss the issues raised to enable a final recommendation to be reached.
- 4.10 Following consideration of assessment reports by the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee, candidates will be notified in writing of the outcome of their assessment and invited to complete a feedback form to enhance process monitoring.
- 4.11 If all the necessary outcomes of the programme have been met, the letter to the candidate will include the award of an IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist), confirmation that their name has been forwarded to the HCPC and that they are eligible to apply for admittance to the register as a biomedical scientist.
- 4.12 If the necessary outcomes of the programme have not been met the candidate will be advised in the letter whether a period of education/training is required to meet a shortfall against the standards. Where a period of education or training is required, advice will be given on the nature of this and whether it needs to be achieved through formal academic learning from an IBMS accredited programme, self-directed learning or secondment to an IBMS approved training laboratory.
- 4.13 Unsuccessful candidates will have the opportunity to appeal on procedural matters related to the assessment process. Appeals must be made within 28 days of the applicant being notified of their assessment outcome. Appeals must be made in writing to the IBMS Executive Head of Education and clearly state the reasons for the appeal with supporting evidence where appropriate. Appeals will be considered by an appeals panel of the external examiner and two HCPC registered members of the IBMS Council who are not associated with any aspect of the application.
- 4.14 Candidates should note that a successful outcome of the assessment process leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a biomedical scientist does not provide any further guarantees regarding terms and conditions of employment.

4.15 Summary table of assessment outcomes:

Assessment Outcome Indicators		
Assessment Outcome Portfolio	Action	Reason
Portfolio is rejected	Candidate advised further training is required before resubmission of the portfolio for full assessment	Many of the standards lack appropriate evidence. There may be omissions or lack of depth in the evidence that indicate candidate lacks experience in the scope of practice required to meet the standards or proficiency for a biomedical scientist
Portfolio partially accepted	Candidate asked to address shortfall in evidence against specific HCPC standards of proficiency and resubmit evidence within 6 months	Evidence demonstrates majority of standards of proficiency have been met but evidence for some may be limited in depth and extent
Portfolio accepted	Action proceeds to the final assessment of the assessment process	Evidence is sufficient to demonstrate HCPC standards of proficiency have been met or can be met based on further exploration in the <i>viva voce</i>

Assessment Outcome Viva voce	Action	Reason
Candidate has met all the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate recommended for award of Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate displays a sound understanding of the central issues. There are no significant absences in evidence of knowledge and ability relevant to the subject specific areas of speciality
Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for the award of the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate not recommended for award of Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) Candidate is offered a second <i>viva voce</i> and given feedback on areas that require further work to meet the required threshold	Candidate attempted to address the questions but answer contains some significant factual or conceptual errors. There may be major omissions related to knowledge or ability indicating insufficient understanding of biomedical science to practice to merit a pass

5. Additional Resources and Reference Documents available on the Institute of Biomedical Science Website www.ibms.org

The IBMS is committed to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of candidates (and service users) once they have been admitted to the programme and to ensuring candidates are supported to enable them to raise concerns about themselves, or the safety and wellbeing of service users. This includes support to recognise where there may be a risk and ensuring action is taken in response to concerns that have been raised. The following resources are available from the IBMS and may be used in addition to the usual employment policies.

5.1 Provided directly by the IBMS personnel:

- IBMS education team: telephone contact 020 7713 0214 and via email address equivalence@ibms.org
- IBMS Council (some of whom are members of the Education and Professional Standards Committee)

All details of extenuating circumstances (including periods of sickness) submitted by a candidate for an extension to periods of evidence collation and portfolio completion will be dealt with in confidence. Candidates and mentors should also note that advice on further training to produce evidence will only be provided **prior to the application**. As this is an experiential route, all training must be completed before the application, as evidence must be based on retrospective learning and practice only. Advice on further training **will not be provided** once the candidate had been admitted to the programme.

5.2 Documentation for this route is accessible to all candidates on the IBMS web pages here: <https://www.ibms.org/education/certificate-of-competence-by-equivalence/>

5.3 The following information may also be helpful.

<https://www.ibms.org/registration/become-a-biomedical-scientist/>

Details of all the IBMS routes and processes, supporting individuals seeking HCPC registration.

Good Professional Practice for Biomedical Scientists

Benchmark guidance summarises current regulations and guidance relating to laboratory medicine, provides information on generic requirements set by regulation and clarifies how these relate to biomedical science.

IBMS Code of Conduct

The Code consists of principles, which IBMS members are expected to observe in the interests of patient care and to promote confidence in the profession of biomedical science.

Clinical Laboratory Standards for IBMS qualifications

The IBMS approves laboratories for training of its portfolio-based qualifications. These standards look at laboratory training and standards of good practice.

<https://www.ibms.org/resources/documents/ibms-laboratory-training-standards/>

Complaints Process

<https://www.ibms.org/contact-us/customer-service/>

In addition for IBMS members only:

IBMS CPD scheme The IBMS CPD scheme is a member benefit which enables members to collate evidence demonstrating that they are developing and extending their knowledge, skills and practice for the purpose of maintaining Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

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IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Guidance for Candidates

About this document

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