



FARC MEETING ON	Tuesday 3 June 2025
PREPARED BY:	Debbie Buggs
PRESENTED BY:	David Wells
SUBJECT	IBMS Risk Register
PURPOSE: DECISION / DISCUSSION	Discussion
LINK TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVE	Good Governance
RISK IMPACT ASSESSMENT	As set out in risk register.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY <p>The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the updated risk register at its meeting on 3 September 2024 and the updated risk register went to Council later that month. The next review by Council is planned for October 2025, and the FARC will review it again in September 2025 if there are new members after the AGM.</p> <p>There has been an increase in likelihood of external threats, with well publicised hacks into retailers' IT systems and the turmoil in financial markets. Further, the changes to NHS England and the role of DHSC will require close monitoring for any developing risks to our profession or the Institute. Activities aimed at under 18 year olds with the IBMS Van may give rise to safeguarding risks, and these will be considered by the Comms team before the van comes into use.</p> <p>Risks that have crystallised are the costs of the Biomedical Scientist - this was addressed in the 2025 budgeting process by allocating some costs to the strategy budget. Mitigations that are being actively implemented are the replacement of the CRM system and website and finance system. A new post, Head of People Services was created and filled in March, this helps to mitigate the risks of employment problems.</p> <p>Risk 2.a (Infrastructure and IT) and 2.c (assessment turnaround times) will be reviewed post go-live of the new CRM and Website.</p> <p>Changes There have been no significant changes to the risk register since the previous version reviewed by Council in September 2024 although some items have been updated. A marked up version is attached.</p> <p>The Committee is invited to review the updated risk register and identify any new risks, changes to the risks and ratings set out and additional mitigations now in place.</p>	
PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION	Council – September 2024 FARC – September 2024 Council - April 2024 FARC – March 2024
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Staffing, cost of the magazine

Institute of Biomedical Science

Risk Register Council September 2024

Summary of High Risks

- 1.c - Government policy moves away from statutory regulation of the profession and national accreditation of laboratories for the four nations and crown dependencies. This would reduce the Institute's relevance for the profession.
- 2.a – Infrastructure and current IT systems do not allow the Institute to provide an updated digital member offering.
- 4.c - [Changing trends in advertising results in *The Biomedical Scientist* magazine being perceived to be too costly](#) ~~Failure to secure advertising revenue for *The Biomedical Scientist* magazine results in IBMS funding the publication.~~

Summary of Medium Risks

- 1.a - The Institute's aims and strategy is not understood or communicated by Institute representatives on external groups.
- 1.b - The Institute's fails to maintain its profile and influence with policy makers and external stakeholders which in turn reduces the effectiveness of the Institute.
- 2.b - Lack of capacity of stakeholders to take action to support the development of advanced biomedical science roles results in a loss of confidence from members of the Institute and other stakeholders.
- 2.c - Failure to maintain the timely assessment of registration portfolios and specialist portfolios which impacts on the work of laboratories.
- 2.d - Institute's on-line learning offering and/or content is not perceived by members as relevant for their personal development.
- 2.e - Failure to keep Institute qualifications relevant and easily accessible for members.
- 2.f - Failure to recruit sufficient examiners / advisors adversely impacts delivery of exams strategy.
- 3.a - Reporting lines for working groups (including conjoint boards) are not clearly defined resulting in inappropriate / ineffective decision making.
- 3.b - Current system of electing members to Council results in a skills gap on Council.
- 5.a - The Institute loses corporate / operational knowledge and experience as a consequence of the loss or long-term absence of member(s) of the executive and / or senior team.
- 5.b - A breach of IBMS IT security systems leading to unauthorised access to IBMS data results in damage to the reputation of the Institute and member dissatisfaction.
- 5.c - Failure of IT and communication hardware / software systems result in service disruption and potential membership dissatisfaction.
- 5.d - High staff turnover or employment disputes lead to unbudgeted costs or a degradation in service
- 5.e - Finance loss arising from fraud, theft or authorised expenditure

Summary of Low Risks

- 4.a - External events result in the significant loss of value of the Institute's investments and may compromise or limit the ability to deliver the aims of the Institute.
- 4.b - Charity commission and / or members raise concerns about the level of financial reserves held by the Institute.

1. Strategic risks

The Institute aims to be recognised as the leading membership body for biomedical science. It is dedicated to the promotion, development and delivery of excellence in all aspects of biomedical science.

The Institute draws its membership primarily from the UK and has a cohesive approach to the development of the profession in the home nations.

Pursuing an out-dated or poorly conceived strategy will lead to dissatisfaction amongst the membership and impact negatively on the Institute's financial health.

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
1.a	Dec 2021	The Institute's aims and strategy is not understood or communicated by Institute representatives on external groups reducing the impact of the Institute's message.	<p>Communication strategy demonstrates context of strategic aims.</p> <p>MMC agreed action plan in response to issues raised in 2022 membership survey.</p> <p>FAQs developed and made available.</p>	Possible	Significant	Medium	Planned actions in hand Q2 to Q3 2024.	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
1.b	Dec 2021	The Institute fails to maintain its profile and influence with policy makers and external stakeholders which in turn reduces the effectiveness of the Institute.	<p>Institute monitoring and responding (where appropriate) to policy developments in England, the devolved nations and Crown Dependencies.</p> <p>IBMS supporting the work in Northern Ireland on the blueprint programme and on workforce development.</p> <p>PLMR appointed to provide policy support and engagement with</p>	Unlikely	Significant	Medium	Review role of, and IBMS involvement with, APPGs. <i>Ongoing</i>	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

			<p>stakeholders and MPs has been positive.</p> <p>Published the profession's response to the Long-Term Workforce plan for England.</p> <p>Engaging with devolved nation requests for strategic workforce insights.</p>						
1.c	Dec 2021	Government policy moves away from statutory regulation of the profession and national accreditation of laboratories for the four nations and crown dependencies. This would reduce the Institute's relevance for the profession.	<p>Responded positively to HCPC consultation on professional standards and continuation of HCPC as the professional regulator.</p> <p>Monitor progress of the review of the GMC register carefully, including the position on Physician Associates and Anaesthetists Associates.</p> <p>Regular meetings with HCPC and UKAS to shape future policy developments.</p> <p>PLMR appointed to provide policy support.</p>	Possible	Severe	High	<p>IBMS to continue to engage actively with HCPC and UK government to identify ongoing risks. <i>Ongoing</i></p> <p>IBMS monitoring potential impact of HCPC financial position. <i>Ongoing</i></p>	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

2. Membership risks

The Institute's success relies almost exclusively on securing the confidence of its members, that it is the voice of biomedical science and that it can meet their needs now and in the future. This includes the ability of the Institute to fulfil its role as an education provider.

Additionally, the Institute's relationship with external stakeholders such as HEIs and employers is key to being able to act in the interests of current and future members.

Dissatisfaction among the membership and/or the Institute's key stakeholders has the greatest potential to damage the Institute.

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
2.a	Dec 2021	Infrastructure and current IT systems do not allow the Institute to provide an updated digital member offering.	Existing systems maintained to ensure continuity of service to members. External consultant appointed to support the implementation of the new CRM to link with other Institute digital platforms.	Very likely	Significant	High	Implement new CRM. Q1 to Q24 2025.	EHS	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
2.b	Dec 2021	Lack of capacity of stakeholders to take action to support the development of advanced biomedical science roles results in a loss of confidence from members of the Institute and other stakeholders.	Working with RCPATH and the 4 home nations to try to resolve this. Stakeholder engagement plan developed. Institute members participate in Long Term Plan / People Plan workforce planning groups (President and two others) Position statements on pay banding for scientists undertaking specimen dissection and tissue pathology reporting published and well received. Widened pool of individuals on advisory panels and exam boards to spread the workload.	Possible	Significant	Medium	Garner support from new RCPATH President. Ongoing Monitor performance of competitor sister bodies (RCPATH, ALM) Ongoing	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
2.c	March 2024	Failure to maintain the timely assessment of registration portfolios and specialist portfolios which impacts on the work of laboratories	<p>Both online or face-to-face assessments are still permitted, retaining flexibility and offering time savings for assessors.</p> <p>Education team pro-actively target urgent assessments and encouraging existing assessors to undertake more assessments.</p> <p>Regular Training for Trainers events for both verifiers and examiners delivered in 2025⁴, plus extensive Onefile training sessions for trainers and verifiers <u>(including the OneFile learning week in April) to allow people to become version 5 portfolio verifiers-</u></p> <p>The pool of <u>active verifiers and examiners has increased to 972 for the version 4 registration training portfolio; is currently 867, including 303 -120 for the version 5 registration training portfolio verifiers; and a total of 545 588 specialist portfolio examiners.</u></p> <p>More Education officers trained on using Onefile to improve turnaround times for processing portfolio applications, <u>and uploading candidates and trainers and organising portfolio verifications.</u></p>	Possible	Significant	Medium	<p>Further verifier and examiner training events to be offered to continue to boost number of assessors. Q1-Q4 2025⁴</p> <p>Performance against KPI turnaround times continuously monitored. Verifications and examinations <u>well</u> within target in Q1 <u>and Q2</u> 2025⁴. Streamlining of the process for uploading candidates to the digital portfolios is being investigated and the integration with the new CRM will simplify and</p>	E&PSC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

							speed up these processes. <i>Ongoing</i>		
2.d	Dec 2021	Institute's online learning offering and/or content is not perceived by members as relevant for their personal development.	<p>Head of Learning and Development involved in pilot and delivery of network wide initiative to deliver training materials to support Specialist portfolio.</p> <p>Digital Certificate of Achievement and online top up modules under development, to be delivered in 2025/26</p> <p><u>The OneFileNew e-portfolio for registration portfolio has beenwas created, developed, successfully launched in 2024.and well received.</u><u>An evaluation survey has been completed in Q1 2025. The evaluation data will be scrutinised at EPSC to inform the Institute's ongoing digital offer.</u></p> <p>The updated and digital specialist portfolios are beingwere launched in Q1-Q3 2024 <u>on Brightspace.</u></p> <p><u>The CEP courses in 2025 are being delivered for the final time through Ulster University. The Head of Digital Education and Head of Examinations are working on alternative VLE platforms to support the CEP delivery in 2026.</u></p>	Possible	Moderate	Medium	<p>Head of Digital Education to continue to review on-line learning offering and delivery modes as part of the IBMS Digital Strategy Review Q1 to Q2<u>4</u> 2025<u>4</u>.</p> <p>Rollout of <u>support resources for the</u> digital-specialist portfolios to <u>be created and rolled out</u>continue. Q2 to Q4 2025<u>4</u>.</p> <p><u>An update on the VLE platform and lunch of the CEPs 2026 will be provided in Q2-Q4 2025.</u></p> <p><u>A review of the funds awarded</u></p>	E&PSC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

			IBMS grant funding to enable health systems to develop training solutions for biomedical scientists launched.				<u>in 2024 for training solutions grants and progress with projects should take place in Q2-Q4 2025. Monitor and evaluate the rollout of the digital registration and specialist portfolios. Q2 to Q4 2024.</u>		
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Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
2.e	Dec 2021	Failure to keep Institute qualifications relevant and easily accessible for members whilst maintaining standards and ensuring deliverability.	<p>Continuing programme in place to revise and update qualifications in response to changes in regulation and service.</p> <p>Limited scope histopathology reporting qualification launched Q4 2023.</p> <p><u>New DEP in haematology launched. Q3 2024</u></p> <p><u>Update, digitisation and launch of specialist portfolio and specialist level education approach and structure.</u></p>	Unlikely	Significant	Medium	<p>New DEP in haematology launched. Q3 2024</p> <p><u>A Placental Pathology reporting qualification is being created and will be launched in Q3 2025</u></p> <p>A New DEP in microbiology to be considered by the SAPs and review how this will fit with existing qualificaitons and the updated specialist portfolios. Q2-Q4 2025 launched. Q1 2025.</p>	E&PSC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
2.f	March 2024	Failure to recruit sufficient examiners / advisors adversely impacts delivery of	<p>Increasing engagement with advisors and panels and new panels set up.</p> <p>Engaged with relevant partner organisations through conjoint board.</p> <p>Co-opting examiners and advisors where appropriate.</p>	Possible	Moderate	Medium	<p>Other approaches to recruiting examiners to be <u>continued in Q2-Q4 2025 explored. Q2 2024 to Q1 2025</u></p>	E&PSC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

		exams strategy.							
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3. Governance Risks

The Institute is the professional body for those practising in the field of biomedical science. It is a member organisation run, on a voluntary basis, by members for the benefit of members. It must be, and be seen to be, well run with due regard to its charitable status and its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The trustees, who are elected, have responsibility for decision-making and demonstrating benefit to the public and to members.

The Institute needs to ensure that it has the right people, with the right skills, supported by the right processes, in place now and in the future to deliver for its members.

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
3.a	Dec 2021	Reporting lines for working groups (including conjoint boards) are not clearly defined resulting in inappropriate / ineffective decision making.	Continued conversations at CEO and President level with partner organisations. Engaging with re-invigorated Pathology Alliance.	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Reporting lines to be formalised in the Institute's governance document. Q3 2024 <i>The EDI working group are developing draft terms of reference which will be sent to July MMC</i>	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
3.b	Dec 2021	Current system of electing members to Council results in a skills gap on Council	Co-option of Council members where required to address skills gaps.	Possible	Significant	Medium	Entry criteria for Council members to be reviewed following strategy discussions.	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

							Q3 to Q4 202 <u>5</u> 4.		
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4. Financial risks

The Institute relies on key income streams, member subscriptions and event income, to underpin its financial health. Internal controls are in place to provide assurances to trustees and members that the Institute is well run. Financial reporting needs to be timely, regular and relevant to allow good decision-making.

Business developments need to be fully costed and assessed for member support and value delivered.

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
4.a	Dec 2021	External events result in the significant loss of value of the Institute's investments and may compromise or limit the ability to deliver the aims of the Institute.	Professional advisers engaged Investment strategy in place and investment manager performance monitored by Finance Audit and Risk Committee on a regular basis. Day to day management of the investment portfolio delegated to professional investment managers. Institute not reliant on funds from the investment portfolio to fund ongoing activity.	Unlikely	Minor	Low	F&RC to monitor impact of recent world events on investment portfolio and take advice from investment advisors – Ongoing	F&RC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
4.b	Dec 2021	Charity commission and / or members raise concerns about the level of financial reserves held by the Institute	Council aware of excess reserves position and need to utilise excess reserves for the benefit of the profession. Budget for Strategy 2022 to 2025 agreed.	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Council to continue to consider how excess reserves to be used for benefit of profession. <i>Ongoing</i>	Council	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
4.c	Sept 2023	Changing trends in advertising results in <i>The Biomedical Scientist</i> magazine	Financial support agreed for 2025 2023 and 2024 to ensure magazine remains available as a member benefit.	Very likely	Significant	High	MMC to consider how the magazine can	MMC	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC

		being perceived to be too costly	<p>External independent advice sought.</p> <p>Performance management of contract.</p> <p>In 2025 a combination of paper and electronic issues will be produced</p>				<p>best be delivered going forward.</p> <p><u>Members attending IBMS Awards will be invited to a focus group as a first step in gathering feedback on electronic options.</u></p>		C Sept 2025
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5. Operational risks

The Institute is staffed by a relatively small staff, many working in specialist areas requiring specific knowledge and expertise, and supported by technology to carry out their roles. Staff are often the first point of contact that members and potential members have with the Institute.

The premises and supporting infrastructure need to be safe, compliant with legislation and provide a professional working environment where staff feel valued. The offices of the Institute need to be, and be seen to be, well run and make best use of resources in support of members

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future Action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
5.a	Dec 2021	The Institute loses corporate / operational knowledge and experience as a consequence of the loss or long term absence of member(s) of the executive and / or senior team.	Corporate knowledge shared where appropriate. Stronger team of middle managers in place to mitigate risk.	Possible	Significant	Medium	CEO to review succession planning for executive team and potential compound effect of staff leaving. <i>Q4 2024</i>	Officers / CEO / EHs	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
5.b	Dec 2021	A breach of IBMS IT security systems leading to unauthorised access to IBMS data results in damage to the reputation of the Institute and member dissatisfaction	<p>New firewall and antivirus services have been installed in Q2-24 that provide greater integration with IBMS DR services/products prior to version end of life of previous products.</p> <p>Password policies in place across network and online accounts and data encryption used for data transfers outside of the office network</p> <p>User Management Policy completed (referenced to several Cyber Essential standards).</p> <p>Datto SIRIS products installed provides cyber protected onsite hourly restore points of the system and overnight cloud restore and improved cloud backup diversification.</p> <p>Duo two factor authentication used to access IBMS office network.</p> <p>MS 365 email backup system deployed.</p> <p>Protocol in place to manage a data breach.</p> <p>Audit of network cyber security by external IT support in May 2023</p>	Possible	Significant	Medium	Cyber essentials accreditation to be completed. Q3 2024	CEO / EHs	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

Ref	Date added	Risk Description	Mitigating actions taken	Risk Rating			Future Action to be taken	Owner	Next Review date
				L	I	Score			
5.c	Dec 2021	Failure of IT and communication hardware / software systems results in service disruption and potential membership dissatisfaction	<p>IT system managed by external IT company and data backed up to external data centre.</p> <p>IT hardware kept up to date and replaced as required. Software updates and security patches applied when required.</p> <p>All staff set up for remote access via terminal server to IBMS IT systems.</p> <p>Insurance cover in place for increased cost of working.</p> <p>Disaster recovery plan tested Q4 2023. Plan scenario invoked and coped well with actual one server hardware failure in Q3-24</p> <p>New MS Dynamics CRM is being developed to replace end of life OE CRM. New CRM to deliver migration of existing data, integration with new website and provide API capability to interface with other IBMS systems. Third party professional IT project manager supporting IBMS to successfully deliver the project.</p>	Possible	Significant	Medium	Ongoing monitoring of CRM project plan, budget objectives and coordination of internal resource ongoing by IBMS Operations team. Q2-24 to Q2-25	CEO / EHs	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025
5.d	Aug 2024	High staff turnover or employment disputes lead to unbudgeted costs	Standard HR processes for hiring, appraisals, training, performance management and exit interviews. External provider of HR advice.	Possible	Significant	Medium	Continue to provide training to supervisors and managers.	EHs	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

		or a degradation in turnaround times for members	Appointment of a Head of People services.				Employee benefits to be enhanced.		
5.e	Aug 2024	Financial loss arising from fraud, theft or unauthorised spend	Standard controls e.g. segregations of duties, authorisation levels, actual to budget monitoring, physical security.	Possible	Significant	Medium	Ongoing operation of controls Standing Financial Instructions External Audit	EHS	FA&RC Mar 2025 FA&RC Sept 2025

Risk matrix to assess the severity of the risk

Likelihood of Risk

Look at what is being assessed and ask the likelihood of the risk occurring given the existing control/precautions that are already in place.

Impact or consequence of risk occurring

If the risk identified happened, what are the consequences for the Institute both from a financial and reputation perspective?

Scoring Matrix

Plot the consequence value and the likelihood value on the matrix below to give a risk rating (red, amber, green) which helps inform the urgency of the action required to mitigate the risk.

LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT/CONSEQUENCE				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Very likely	Low	Med	High	High	High
Likely	Low	Med	Med	High	High
Possible	Low	Low	Med	Med	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Med	Med	Med
Very unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Med	Med

Low risk The majority of control measures are in place. The risk is acceptable.

Medium risk The risk is manageable and cost effective actions should be implemented to remove or reduce the risk over a reasonable timescale.

High risk Immediate action required to remove or reduce risk.