



Support Progress Promote

STRATEGY 2022 - Update

Recap

Strategy 2022

Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

We are dedicated to the promotion, development and delivery of excellence in all aspects of biomedical science and will provide the highest levels of service to patients and the public.

We will support our members in their practice of biomedical science and set quality standards for the profession through training, education, assessments, examinations and continuous professional development.

Our Values

Member Focus

- We will offer the leadership, support and opportunities for development that our members need to fulfil their potential.
- We will listen to our members and address the issues that are important to them.
- We will provide our members with services of high quality and value, tailored to their needs.

Integrity

- We will act with honesty and integrity in all that we do.
- We will say what we will do and do what we say.
- We will use fair, open and transparent governance, management and administration processes.
- We will accept responsibility for our actions.

Professionalism

- We will take pride in what we do, and do it to the highest standards.
- We will be positive in the way we talk about the IBMS both to each other and with those outside it.
- We will value and protect the IBMS's reputation and heritage.

Respect

- We respect and value the diverse backgrounds, experiences, approaches and ideas of all individuals.
- We will be respectful and considerate in our dealings with our members, stakeholders, partners, public and each other.

Continuous Improvement

- We are forward looking and will embrace new ideas and change.
- We are open to learning from others and will embrace collaborative working.
- We are committed to professional and personal development.
- We acknowledge our mistakes and learn from them.
- We should have diversity and inclusivity at the heart of what we do.

Key Themes

As with previous years, our strategy is based upon the three pillars of our Member Value Proposition: Support, Progress, Promote.

Support

IBMS provides members with professional standards and support that help ensure safety, quality, well-being and peace of mind.

Progress

IBMS provides its members with simple and seamless access to training, qualifications, and knowledge to progress their careers and stay relevant as the profession changes.

Promote

IBMS provides its members with a strong, respected and progressive voice to promote the profession at all levels.

Our obligation as a charity is to ensure we use our reserves wisely. As we move into a post-pandemic era that will bring a period of considerable change and challenge, we must build upon our raised profile and ensure we maintain our public visibility and promote the profession's value.

Core aims

The strategy is divided into two halves each with three core aims, we aim to deliver this plan over **five years**.

1. Build upon our experience and expertise

- a. **Support** more access to HCPC registration through better uptake of our entry routes. Provide greater clarity of the routes to entry and encourage more students through the most efficient route to HCPC registration. Champion the role of trainers and training officers in the laboratory.
- 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 in sustainability and clear professional standards.

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

2. **Build and develop our future (time limited)**

- a. **Promote** our profile post-pandemic, to develop a policy and engagement capability at government level for each of the four nations
- b. **Progress** the numbers and range of members that the IBMS attracts, within the UK and globally.

Support the understanding of the benefit the profession and Biomedical Science delivers to society.

Review of progress to date

Part 1 – Build upon our experience and expertise

The longer-term future of the IBMS is rested in the future of the profession. The profession needs to be sustainable and the IBMS must recognise the long-term commitment to ensuring a flexible, relevant and fit for purpose offer to members.

- 1. Support more access to HCPC registration through better uptake of our entry routes. Provide greater clarity of the routes to entry and encourage more students through the most efficient route to HCPC registration. Champion the role of trainers and training officers in the laboratory.**

The foundation of the IBMS is the knowledge and expertise of its members. We recognise that to deliver our vision we must ensure we support members to develop their practice and deliver quality services. Ensuring that we support those entering the profession is vital.

We will aim to:

- Ensure that access to all routes of registration with the HCPC are clear and fit for purpose, with clarity on the career path available to those studying towards and becoming Biomedical Scientists.
- Work with Health Education England and all Devolved Administration equivalents on supporting uptake and funding of students in the workplace.
- Champion the role of trainers, training officers and practice educators in the workplace.
- Work with higher education institutes and employers on supporting uptake and work-based experience.
- Ensure our policies support the removal of social inequalities for students seeking to become Biomedical Scientists.

Review

The Institute has progressed in many areas to meet the demands of this strategic aim. We are currently publishing a “routes to registration” document and improving our literature to be sent out to Universities, as well as trade marking our accreditation logo, to demonstrate to HEI providers our commitment to championing the accredited degree and to increase the number of universities that accredit degrees with us. We have worked with NHSE and HEE on supporting the uptake of our qualifications at all levels. The position currently is that all candidates in England undertaking our qualifications above specialist portfolio are funded via a grant. In addition to this the Registration and

Specialist portfolio are supported with direct funding to the employing trusts, available through our lobbying and good working relationship.

We have consistently championed the roles of trainers and training navigators, being very public supporters of the Practice educator roles and offering grants for adoption of these roles – not needed in England, and currently being pursued in Wales and NI. We continue to strive on improving our interactions with HEI and employers to understand the barriers to supporting work based experience to enable more students to graduate with HCPC registration. We have some way to go on understanding barriers of social inequalities and how we, as an organisation, can support students better.

2. Progress our current members' 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 in sustainability and clear professional standards.

We recognise that, as the profession changes, to progress their careers and stay relevant members require access to support, qualifications, learning and development. This also includes our CPD offering, region and branch structure and more rounded public engagement. At the heart of the IBMS's vision we must provide members with accessible and seamless qualifications, support and information to help them progress.

We will aim to:

- a. Further expand usage and content in our e-learning platform.
- b. Increase the availability of learning material and qualifications to more members at different grades, supporting current and new roles that develop, including those in informatics and digital applications.
- c. Modularise all learning material to enhance flexibility of qualifications.
- d. Improve the membership grade educational offer. Targeted for different membership grades to support career development and to champion Fellowship as a grade to aspire to.
- e. Consider how region and branches, professional standards and public engagement (including philanthropic activities) can be used to better support members.

Review

We have recruited to a number of roles to build upon our e-learning and digital capabilities, including a new Head of learning and development and a new Head of digital education. These roles will support the delivery of this strategic goal. The Head of learning and development is already facilitating the adoption of a regional based training approach for the specialist portfolio through digital approaches, this is complete for Biochemistry with other disciplines to follow in the coming months. We have increased and extended our CEP programmes, adding an additional qualification, and extended the number of candidates that can undertake the qualifications in the oversubscribed programmes. We have also increased the number of

members that are eligible to undertake qualifications in POCT, IT and Molecular aware that these subjects are not solely the domain of registered Biomedical Scientists. The significant programme of work to modularise the specialist portfolio has commenced, with the agreement from Council for an approach to this, and more recently the expansion of the specialist advisory panels to support this work. This multi-year programme will be one of the most significant changes to the Institute's offering at this level for some years and therefore will take time to deliver ensuring that the level and depth of the qualification is fit for purpose and supports the onward progression of biomedical scientists. More CPD programmes have been run this year with more programmes to be added in the coming year; this has mainly concentrated on supporting areas of need, such as verifier training to ensure the Institute can meet its main aims and objectives - however a number of symposiums are proposed, alongside our usual congress, and Biomedical Science live events. We have also collaborated with Labvine to exclusively offer their educational programmes to our members at a discount or with free membership for those enrolled – delivered with mutual benefit. Work to build a Fellowship education offering is ongoing. The Institute team continues to explore opportunities and solution providers, to enable new and innovative ways to access educational content with a range of partners aimed at the different stages that each of our membership grades can benefit from. We have contributed to and are working to influence the work of our branches and public engagement. Continuing and improving successful initiatives such as biomedical science day, #IBMSChat and participation at conferences, we have extended our reach into EDI and sustainability, recognising our members values and the support needed in their working and community lives. Work to invigorate branches is ongoing and will need Councilmember support.

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

For the IBMS to deliver on its vision, it is key for our members to have access to the highest possible qualifications within Biomedical and Clinical Science, to ensure that our workforce remains demonstrably capable of delivering healthcare as autonomous practitioners.

We will aim to:

- a. Establish a full curriculum of advanced practice qualifications covering all relevant disciplines.
- b. Work with Health Education England and devolved administration equivalents on supporting uptake and funding.
- c. Work with partner organisations to champion and promote our qualifications and the roles that they support.
- d. Ensure that we have appropriate governance structures in place to support these aims.

Review

HEE continues to provide grant funding to support this area of our educational offering, seeing these roles becoming established in all parts of the UK with support of Councilmembers and vocal advocates. The Royal

College of Pathologists held a meeting, hosted by the Institute, to publicly support and advocate for reporting scientist roles across histopathology. We have jointly refreshed and refocused our position statements on reporting scientists and have seen NHS England and the devolved nations see adoption and growth in reporting scientists a strategic aim to reduce backlogs and bridge the gap across the shortage of medical colleagues in this area. Adding to the success of our advance clinical qualifications in Histopathology, work has been undertaken to progress our offering into other disciplines. We are ready to launch a haematology programme, and work to deliver a microbiology programme is also underway. Governance is still a challenging area, however the work to develop strong and effective relationships across the organisations that support the conjoint board is allowing for a greater level of oversight.

Part 2 – build and develop our future

This part of the strategy considers how we will use our reserves over the next 3 to 5 years to support the IBMS, our work and our members. Funding for this programme of work is time-limited and limited to the reserves that we agree to set aside for this.

1. Promote our profile post-pandemic, to develop a policy and engagement capability at government level

The pandemic illustrated where we - as a profession and as a member of the diagnostic community - struggled to get our voice heard. Inroads made by our President and others on IBMS Council in raising the profile of the organisation was both difficult and hard fought. To guide, influence and contribute to Biomedical Science and patient care, the IBMS needs to establish its own capability to be on the front foot with politicians, governments and policy in the four home nations.

We will aim to:

- a. Establish a policy unit to promote the work of the IBMS and our members.
- b. Develop formal policy links with other professional and affiliated bodies to promote common areas of interest.
- c. Build robust and sustainable links with governments across the UK.

Review

The appointment of PLMR as our policy advisors has been a huge success in terms of reach and building a stage in which to influence government across the four home nations. We have built additional capacity to respond to calls for evidence and consultations, and we have ensured that our profile has not dropped as the pandemic has waned. We are starting to see our views being sought out for comment and for our expertise by government bodies such as MHRA, UKHSA, DHSC, Blueprint programme (NI). We are seeing NHS England seek our support in delivering strategic documents (POCT) and industry partners approaching us for association and collaboration on important topics – Citadel Health and Microsoft on digital and a number of diagnostic industries on common awareness and information campaigns to support the Biomedical science community. It is worth noting that this has not been delivered solely through our relationship with PLMR, demonstrating the building of an in-house capability. We work closely with sister organisations on common policy issues, issuing joint statements with RCPATH and ACB, but also collaborating with the Science Council. Critical successes have been the invite to submit evidence to the COVID Inquiry (module 1), submitting evidence to the health select committee and an invite to launch our POCT strategy at the House of Lords, as well as building policy links with Royal Colleges across medicine. There is still work to do to embed these links and ensure that they are sustainable over time and administrations. There is also more work to do in the devolved nations to bring our engagement up to this level across the UK. In the coming months an aim is to get some of our clear policy views and the voice of our members into the manifestoes of political parties as they prepare for the next general election.

2. Progress the numbers and range of members that the IBMS attracts, within the UK and globally

Since its inception the IBMS has attracted members from across the globe and in many sectors. Our core membership, those working in medical laboratories and academia have rightly taken centre stage of our focus.

However, changes within the UK's position in the global community and changes in the diagnostic industry present us with new opportunities to expand our membership and our influence to support, promote and progress Biomedical Science.

We will aim to:

- a. Further expand our membership grades to include industry and affiliated sectors, including genomics and andrology, but also those working in diagnostic innovation.
- b. Agree and develop an approach to increase our membership outside of the UK.
- c. Agree and develop an approach to increase our work and visibility outside of the UK, including increasing the uptake of our qualifications and providing a route to share learning and experience across different health systems.

Review

This is one of the areas of the strategy that has not progressed as far as other aims set out in this 5 year plan. We have been fortunate to see our membership grow internationally opportunistically. We hope to work with more universities to reach our accreditation standard, and also commence work to support the HCPC in international recognition approaches. We continue to work closely with the IFBLS, with Alan Wainwright the Past President and David Wells elected to the board of directors. We continue to explore bringing related disciplines into the fold more formally in terms of a membership offering, particularly around genomic technologists, and those working in Industry, exploring how and what the offering should be to provide an attractive proposition for them and their employers. We are also researching whether we should explore working with other statutory registers, supporting biomedical sciences in areas not traditionally within pathology but where our members may see their careers develop in the future.

3. Support the understanding of the benefit the profession and Biomedical Science delivers to society

The value our members bring to the delivery of healthcare is well known and highly valued by us. However, there is a lack of objective peer reviewed evidence of the value that highly trained, highly educated, competent regulated scientists bring to the community.

We will aim to:

- a. Commission academic research into the benefits that our Biomedical Science workforce brings to healthcare and science.

- b. Fund postgraduate studies and PhDs to build a body of peer reviewed evidence.
- c. Work with other professional and affiliated bodies to promote common areas of interest in research, funding and through commissioning joint work.

Review

The work in this area is progressing slowly but in the right direction with the establishment of the Strategic Research Group to guide the thinking and planning of research into this area. The groundwork of understanding the need, together with identifying potential partner and researcher, is underway. We have also discussed informally the appetite for other organisations to take part in this work to demonstrate academically the importance of biomedical science's contribution to healthcare.

Conclusion

The first year of the strategy has been one of quiet success, much of the groundwork to deliver upon our plans having been started or complete ready to take the strategy to the next level in terms of delivery. You will see from the review above and the appendix below that it has been a very busy year for staff, officers and Council in bringing this strategy to life – alongside delivery of the day-to-day business of the Institute. The Institute is showing itself to be adaptive, creative, and able to deliver significant work at a pace and this is encouraging. We are, and have been, able to bring our stakeholders and sister organisations with us as we make these changes strengthening our relationships in the process. The Institute is a very different place to even last year, with more staff, more to offer and a louder voice. There have been no major obstacles to delivery of the strategy, and the membership survey in essence supports this overarching strategy. There is still much to do, however this review shows that complete delivery of this strategy is achievable and that the direction of travel remains one that Council is recommended to continue.

Appendix - Activity and successes during 2022

Supporting the profession and our members

- **Reviewed our guidance policy for professional best practice on the supervision of biomedical support staff.**
- **Co-wrote a response to the NHS England's elective care recovery plan with the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH) and Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (ACB), highlighting the investment required in diagnostics and the biomedical science workforce for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care.**
- **Issued a COVID-19 response to highlight how the capability to resume testing at scale, and the associated workforce support, must be part of the Government's contingency plan.**
- **Recorded and promoted 11 presentations from IBMS Congress 2022, available for our members to watch and record for their continuing professional development (CPD) records.**
- **Undertook a membership survey to understand the concerns of our members and to further develop our services to support them better.**
- **Issued professional guidance and key facts around the emergence of new cases of Monkeypox, polio and Group A Strep in the UK.**
- **Submitted extensive feedback on the initial Terms of Reference for the UK COVID-19 Inquiry.**
- **Responded to the NHS England's report on blood culture practice as IBMS President Debra Padgett commented on its key recommendations.**
- **Published a response to the Health and Social Care Select Committee report on Workforce: recruitment, training and retention in health and social care.**
- **Held training webinars to increase the number of active verifiers to support our registration and specialist qualifications and to support training in the laboratories.**
- **Hosted a two-day Biomedical Science Day Live virtual event for members to support their CPD.**

- Issued a joint statement with RCPATH and ACB on the updated ISO 15189:2022 laboratory accreditation standards.
- Held a highly successful Congress, deferred due to the pandemic from 2021, which achieved a record number of attendees and exhibitors.
- Accredited 21 biomedical science degree courses, covering 58 undergraduate and 10 post graduate programmes and including two new universities.
- Accredited three new degree apprenticeship programmes and re-accredited 10 existing degree apprenticeship programmes.
- In recognition of high academic achievement on an IBMS accredited undergraduate degree course, 39 President's Prize Awards were given to IBMS eStudent members who graduated and achieved academic distinctions.
- Reviewed and implemented revised criteria for the accreditation of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in biomedical science for 2022/23.
- Increased the pool of registration training portfolio verifiers (two verifier training events (250 attendees) in September 2022, plus one "Supporting Successful Laboratory Training" event (115 attendees) in Nov 2022).
- Established stronger links with training networks in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and throughout England with the Practice Educators nations.
- The number of trained non-accredited degree assessors has been doubled. Whilst the number of trained lay, professional and academic assessors for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence route has been significantly expanded.
- Work on clarifying the routes to registration has been started with UCAS for degree entry requirements and by the co-creation of a new biomedical science subject guide.
- The Equivalence route (Certificate of Competence by Equivalence) has been updated and guidance clarified for 2022/23.

Progressing the profession and the careers of our members

- Submitted nominations for and promoted winners of the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) Associate and Honorary Fellowships.

- **Established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to ensure that a diverse range of our members voices are heard and to improve our diversity and inclusion, guided by the Science Council Benchmarking Framework.**
- **Responded to the Government’s plan to increase capacity, reach and efficiency of the UK’s diagnostic service, the Health Secretary’s Our Plan for Patients policy paper and to the Public Account Committee’s inquiry on managing NHS backlogs and waiting times.**
- **Sponsored PRIDE marches in Manchester, London and Belfast for LGBTQ+ members to celebrate their hard-won rights and freedoms.**
- **Launched a campaign to celebrate Black History Month and the contributions of our members to biomedical science.**
- **Continued to develop our virtual learning platform to include online portfolios.**
- **Created and launched three new specialist advisory panels in Quality Management, Point of Care Testing and Molecular Pathology.**
- **Collaborated with Labvine and Power of Process to offer our members discounted rates on an online Laboratory Transformation course.**
- **Collaborated with Practice Educators for the delivery of specialist portfolio training sessions in clinical chemistry, haematology, immunology and microbiology with blood transfusion, cellular pathology and virology.**
- **Developed and published a new specialist portfolio module to cover Rapid On-Site Evaluation (ROSE).**
- **Appointed PLMR to continue to grow our profile post-pandemic and to develop a policy and engagement capability at government level.**
- **Attended the launch of the Professional Standards Authority’s new report Safer care for all – solutions from professional regulation and beyond at the House of Lords.**
- **Attended a political party conference to investigate how to increase our visibility at government level.**
- **Issued guidance to our members on expectations of professionalism following the news of a former member being struck off Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) register.**
- **Highlighted HCPC consultations to our members for proposed fee increases and to help them develop their guiding principles for preceptorship across health and care professions.**

- Welcomed over 50 new members from Malaysia and supported an Ukrainian member to secure a placement in the UK.
- To support career progression of support staff via Certificate of Achievements, we issued 185 portfolios and 161 certificates.
- To support HCPC registration of biomedical scientists, we issued 1179 registration training portfolios, 1267 Certificates of Competence and assessed 15 Certificate of Competence by Equivalence candidates (from 2020 and 2021 cohorts).
- To support career progression of biomedical scientists we issued 813 specialist portfolios, 440 Specialist Diplomas and issued 443 non-accredited degree assessments.
- We have recruited a new Head of Digital Education who will lead the development and delivery of our online training and qualifications to support members' careers.
- Passed 198 candidates in the IBMS Certificate of Expert Practice distance learning qualifications, the largest number to pass in one year.
- Ran the largest ever single exam series for the Higher Specialist Diploma in 2022 with 63 candidates sitting the exam in September 2021 with 46 candidates passing all of whom could upgrade to Fellow.
- A record 45 candidates sat the IBMS Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection exam in November 2022, which 30 passed. Four candidates passed the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Histological Dissection.
- 11 candidates sat the Stage C exam for the Advanced Specialist Diploma in Histopathology Reporting exam.
- Launched the revised Diploma of Expert Practice in Ultrastructural Pathology.
- Launched a new distance-learning online Certificate of Expert Practice in Laboratory Information Technology and Clinical Informatics.

Promoting the profession and the successes of our members

- Part-funded and promoted a series of videos that showcased the roles of laboratory staff in healthcare as part of a digital #PathologyROAR campaign.
- Supported members taking part in public engagement events throughout the year including at national events for Healthcare Science Week and Biomedical Science Day, providing them with promotional materials and funding to highlight biomedical science to the public.

- **Sponsored external national science awards – STEM for Britain and the Advancing Healthcare Awards ‘Biomedical Scientist of the Year’ award.**
- **Sponsored a media fellowship, enabling a member to attend and undertake a 3-week placement with a national media organisation.**
- **Celebrated 100 years of women in the profession with a promotional campaign to highlight the role of women in membership throughout the years.**
- **Held our sixth annual Biomedical Science Day, the biggest celebration so far as our campaigns trended in the top 5 trends on social media and reached an audience of over four million people.**
- **Celebrated the contribution of technical staff and to promote ourselves to a wider audience we took part in the Crick Institute’s Technicians Week.**
- **Our publication the British Journal of Biomedical Science launched five special issues that focused on research and the contribution our profession makes to healthcare.**

Ensuring organisational robustness

- **Agreed a new five-year strategy to support and develop the profession and members’ practice.**
- **Created a new Council sub-group to commission strategic research projects that supports the delivery of the new strategy.**
- **Developed and implemented a new investment strategy to strengthen the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) element of the strategy. The portfolio now has more of a focus on sustainability and an element of the portfolio adopts a thematic approach, focusing on healthcare and science.**
- **Work continued on developing a new website, although technical issues around integration with our membership database has delayed the launch.**

The Future:

- **More verifiers and examiners**
- **Better digital tools to support learning and education – Supported with the appointment of a new Head of Digital Education.**
- **More CPD opportunities**
- **New approach to Specialist Portfolios to support more Biomedical Scientists into advance practice**
- **Continued closer working with the NHS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Scotland**
- **More research into the value of Biomedical Science and the role and value to healthcare that Qualified Biomedical Scientists bring to medicine.**
- **Further progression of Advance Clinical Practice in more areas, with greater adoption in practice.**
- **A greater voice at government level, working closely with other professional body colleagues. Comment more often on government policy affecting our members.**
- **Responding to the membership survey.**
- **Continuing with our strategy**