



19 March 2020

**Advice on students completing an integrated placement for an IBMS accredited  
Applied Biomedical Science or Healthcare Science degrees**

In response to the unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 virus the Institute is offering the following temporary advice to universities who have students completing the end stages of their placement. These students may experience problems completing some of the competences in their IBMS Registration Training Portfolio due to shortage of laboratory staff or restrictions on accessing laboratory time due to the current COVID-19 crisis. This advice is in line with advice being issued by the HCPC.

As a preferred option we suggest that where the knowledge base of the standard is completed, but the student is unable to complete the competence in practice sections, the student completes a virtual scenario report, or witness statement following a scenario discussion with the trainer, to evidence what they would do in practice.

An alternative could be to consider extending the placement but this also has on-going implications for the student and laboratory and if not achievable, thereby causing additional concern. At present it is hoped that those in employment will be able to extend their training period and not require this approach.

In doing so, we expect training laboratory staff and universities staff to ensure that any measures put in place continue to provide the quality of teaching, learning and training required to meet relevant proficiency standards on completion of the award. Changes should also be in accordance with university regulations to ensure students meet requirements for the degree award.

The HCPC in their March 3<sup>rd</sup> statement on the COVID-19 situation have emphasised that their standards of proficiency are designed to be flexible and provide a framework for decision-making in a wide range of situations. They also support professionals by highlighting the key principles which should be followed, including working collaboratively to keep people safe and recognising limits of competence. Our members are highly trained professionals and we trust them to use their professional expertise to judge whether a candidate for the IBMS Certificate of Competence is eligible for registration with the HCPC.

The HCPC website has guidance that emphasises the flexibility of the standards and the expectation that registrants will use professional judgement and experience to inform the implementation of changes to manage COVID-19 risks.

Please note this statement will be reviewed in line with published advice from the HCPC and changing circumstances.

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/covid-19/advice/advice-for-education-providers/>

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/covid-19/advice/advice-for-students/>

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/covid-19/advice/registrants/>