



IBMS ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Raising
the profile
of our
profession



IBMS Institute of
Biomedical Science

Support • Progress • Promote



CONTENTS



About the IBMS 3

A message from our President in 2023 6

Introduction from our Chief Executive 7

Highlights of 2023 8

How we help our members 10

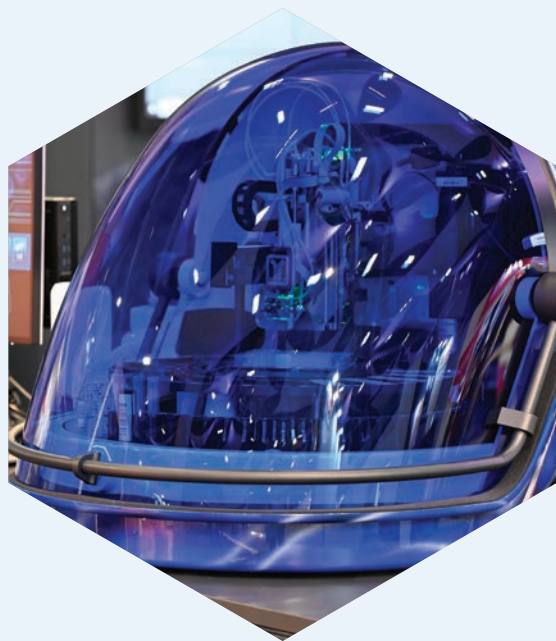
Our finances 43

Benefits of IBMS membership 44

About the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS)

We're the professional body for scientists, support staff and students working in biomedical science. For over 100 years, we've ensured our members operate to the highest professional standards.

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



WHAT WE DO

We:

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



ABOUT THE IBMS

“The biggest benefit of IBMS membership for me is Congress. I’m lucky to have attended quite a few times. I feel like a kid at a festival there, running from one band to the next. There’s so much going on and the presentations are top notch. When our staff go there, they come back to the department with extra enthusiasm and knowledge. Getting reduced prices to various courses is also a great benefit as I manage our department’s training budget.”

Lesley Cybichowski, Training and Health and Safety Lead in the Blood Sciences Department at Broomfield Hospital



ABOUT THE IBMS



OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

OUR VALUES

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

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



OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

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





THEME 1

WE WILL BUILD ON OUR EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

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

THEME 2

WE WILL BUILD AND DEVELOP OUR FUTURE

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

WHAT WE DO FOR OUR MEMBERS

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



SUPPORT

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



PROGRESS

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



PROMOTE

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



ABOUT THE IBMS





WELCOME



A message from our President in 2023

I have never seen such a groundswell of change and development in biomedical science as I have over the last 24 months. I am proud of the profession and to be a biomedical scientist.

There have been lots of highlights during my two years as President, but my main one has been meeting you – our wonderful, dedicated members. To those of you I have visited, thank you for your hospitality and honest feedback, which we have valued. Understanding your views is paramount in developing a professional body that best serves your future.

I would like to thank you for your resilience in the pandemic recovery response – the part we play in reducing the waiting list for planned care and the cancer backlog. Our role as development scientists, researchers, innovators and creative thinkers is critical in that recovery process.

Congress 2023 was another highlight. We had 19 lecture streams, hundreds of speakers and more delegates than ever passing through the doors of Birmingham’s International Convention Centre. This was a chance to discuss the IBMS’ work, including the active role it is now playing in politics and lobbying.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR IBMS MEMBERS

The IBMS is here to support members on every step of their journey. Whether you’re the future President of the IBMS or a potential consultant biomedical scientist, anything is possible if you want it enough. I am proof of that.

Being the IBMS President is an honour and a great privilege, but it cannot be done in isolation. I have had the pleasure of working alongside some wonderful people over the last two years. David Wells, Chief Executive, and I met weekly to make sure we were delivering the IBMS strategy and upholding our duties on behalf of our members.

Thank you to our Council colleagues. Without you, we would not have the profile we have achieved. You do your work as volunteers and continue to deliver our strategy for the benefit of members.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

I look forward to a bright future for the IBMS with Joanna Andrew as the newly elected President. Joanna has been closely involved with the work of the IBMS. Firstly, as a portfolio assessor, then as an employer representative for degree accreditations. Later, she joined the Clinical Chemistry Specialist Advisory Panel and was elected to Council. She is also the Chair of the Yorkshire Region and a member of the East Yorkshire Branch. Away from the IBMS, Joanna is the Network Lead for Blood Sciences for the Scarborough, Hull and York Pathology Service.

I know the IBMS President role is in safe hands with Joanna, who will do a fabulous job.

Debra Padgett
Past President



INTRODUCTION

Introduction from our Chief Executive

In 2023, we successfully raised the visibility of our profession, building on the foothold the pandemic gave us.

Members have helped the IBMS reach more people with messages about how vital our profession is to healthcare. As you will discover in this annual report, members have done this by helping with everything from Biomedical Science Day to Harvey's Gang laboratory tours.

The success of Congress this year was testament to the work that we have done raising our profile. The depth of the programme demonstrates the IBMS' expertise in biomedical science. We also hosted the UK's largest exhibition of leading diagnostic companies, suppliers and industry innovators at Congress.

The IBMS is unlocking the wider capacity of the biomedical science workforce, which has the ability to help medical colleagues to reduce waiting lists and deliver high-quality patient care. Our bold response to the *NHS Long Term Workforce Plan* sets out how we will work with the UK government to support the profession to do this.

INFLUENCING POLICY

At the request of NHS England, we produced guidance on point-of-care testing in May 2023. This type of clinical laboratory testing occurs near where patients are cared for or treated. The guidance explains why it is essential that laboratory experts help design, assess, and deliver diagnostic services outside the traditional laboratory.

We produced the point-of-care guidance in partnership with the Royal College of Pathologists and the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine. We have strong relationships with other professional bodies but are establishing a very clear, independent voice to represent our members.

One way we're establishing this voice is by hosting industry expert roundtables to inform regular white papers. In 2023, we published our first white paper with technology multinational Microsoft about digital pathology. Digital pathology can help our diagnostic workforce diagnose diseases faster and more accurately, improving care for patients.

SUPPORTING BIOMEDICAL SCIENTISTS

We are building the infrastructure to support the future of the profession. More of our qualifications are being delivered digitally, including registration portfolios. As you will read about in this annual report, we have also launched more advanced qualifications, which allow biomedical scientists to work alongside medical colleagues.

Looking ahead to 2024, with a general election expected, we will be working hard to influence manifestos. We want clear commitments from the new administration to support diagnostics and the biomedical science workforce.

I hope you enjoy reading about our achievements in 2023. I couldn't be prouder of where the IBMS has got to – thanks to our members and staff – and how the profession has seized opportunities as they have arisen.

David Wells
IBMS Chief Executive





HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023



2023



We're proud to share some of the highlights of our work in 2023

We assessed **1273** registration training portfolios and issued **1341** Certificates of Competence to biomedical scientists so they could register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

For all four of our HCPC-approved routes to registering as a biomedical scientist, members can now **SUBMIT THEIR PORTFOLIO DIGITALLY.** This allows trainers and verifiers to track candidates' progress.

We launched an Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in **BOWEL SCREENING HISTOPATHOLOGY REPORTING** and one in **CERVICAL HISTOPATHOLOGY REPORTING.** Biomedical scientists who take on these roles after qualifying will help to reduce waiting times for cancer diagnosis.

We processed **518** applications for IBMS laboratory training, so members across the UK could pursue the Certificate of Achievement, Certificate of Competence, and Specialist Diploma.

During Healthcare Science Week, we supported members to organise over **50 PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS,** showcasing biomedical science and its impact.

Social media messages about our seventh annual Biomedical Science Day were seen by **2 MILLION PEOPLE** in the UK.

MPs, All-Party Parliamentary Groups and Lords, plus a range of scientists and IBMS staff, came to our **BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE DAY EVENT** at the House of Lords.

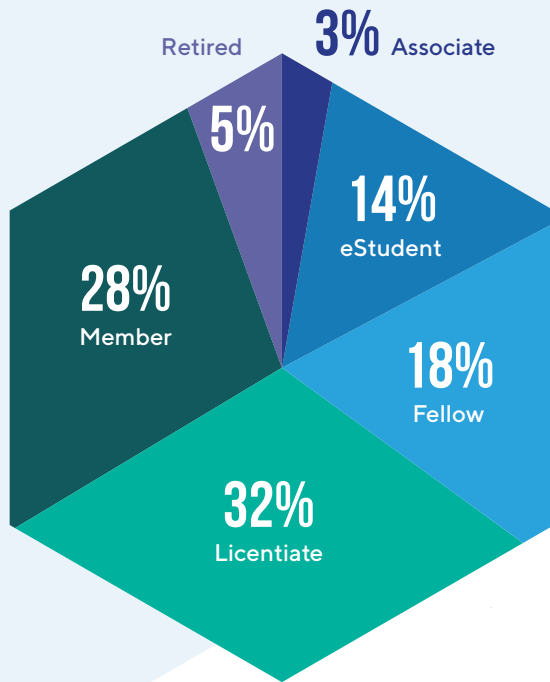
A record number of **3844** attendees and **123** exhibitors came to IBMS Congress in September 2023.

We published the **LONG TERM BIOMEDICAL SCIENTIST WORKFORCE PLAN.** It sets out our commitment to making sure biomedical scientists will be a key part of successfully delivering on the *NHS Long Term Workforce Plan.*



OUR MEMBERSHIP GRADES

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

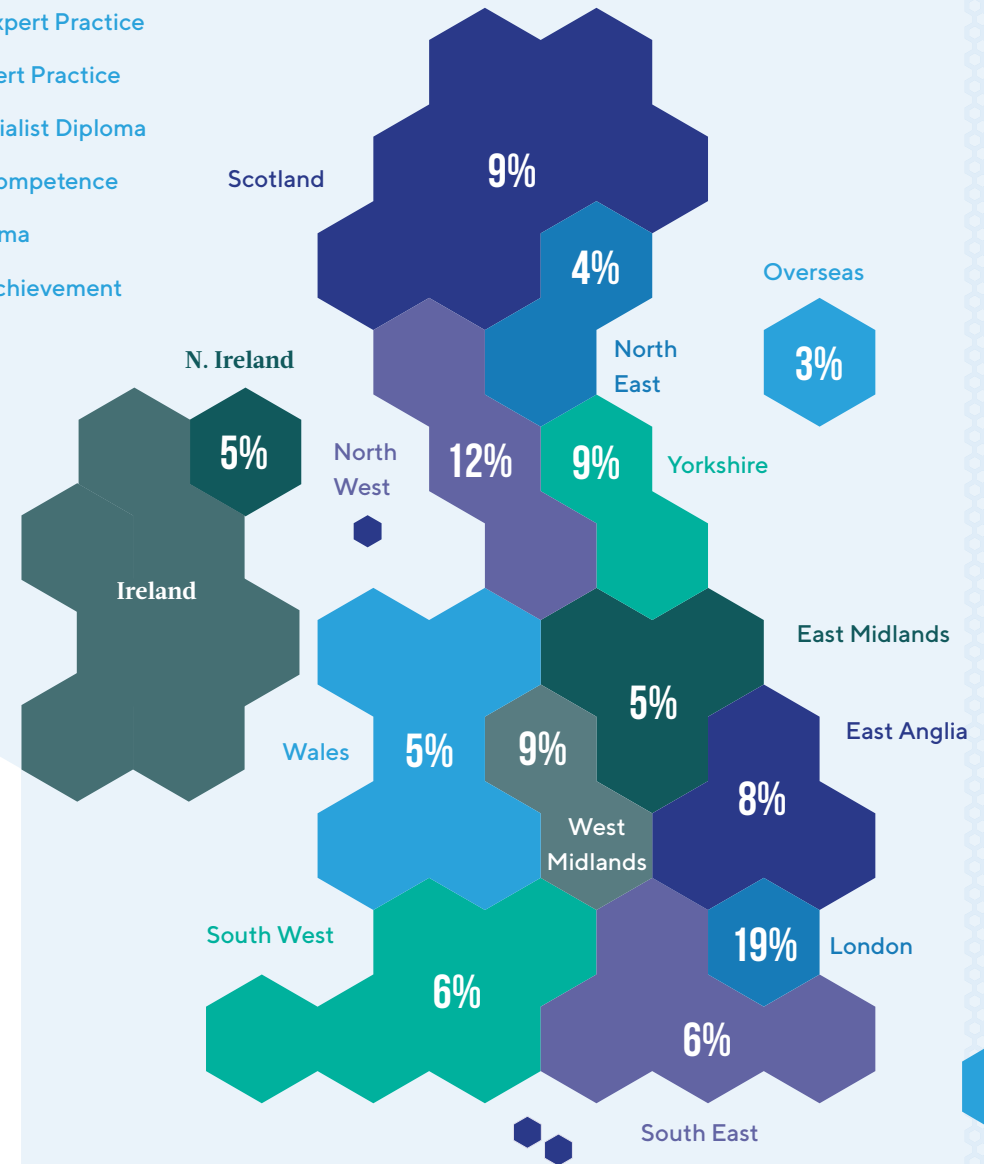


IBMS QUALIFICATIONS AWARDED IN 2023

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



OUR MEMBERS



“Being a member of the IBMS has a wealth of benefits, irrespective of what stage of your career you’re in. The IBMS offers valuable and informative support, including qualifications, CPD activities and journal-based learning. Access to *The Biomedical Scientist* magazine keeps members up to date with developments in biomedical science.”

Professor B. Cherie Millar, Clinical Scientist in Clinical Microbiology at the Northern Ireland Public Health Laboratory in Belfast City Hospital



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023



“The best Congress ever”

A record number of 3844 attendees and 123 exhibitors came to the IBMS Congress in September 2023. This made it the biggest Congress yet. The expansive education and lecture programme featured over 20 key specialisms around the theme “Linking learning to the laboratory”.

“The unsung heroes of the NHS workforce”. That’s what MP Maggie Throup, who is Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Diagnostics, called people who work in diagnostics in a Congress speech. The MP was discussing ways in which biomedical science could ease pressure in healthcare.



Speakers at Congress ranged from parliamentarians and chief scientists to younger members of the profession, driving their specialism forward with passion and innovation.

The role of the pathology workforce in tackling inequalities in healthcare was the topic of one session. Chris Sleight, Chief Officer for the Greater Manchester Pathology Network, led this. He said pathology networks have a role to play in standardising and putting best practice into place and creating equal access to their services.

Another speaker, Dr Katie Hopkins of the UK Health Security Agency, talked about the urgent need to develop new antibiotics for resistant infections.



CONGRESS

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CALENDAR

We launched the IBMS *Long Term Biomedical Scientist Workforce Plan* at Congress. IBMS Chief Executive, David Wells, talked through why it is needed. He said: “It is important because, as we know, there’s a massive workforce shortage in the NHS. We can help to fill these gaps, but not in our current situation – we need more staff.”

Over three days the exhibition halls were packed with companies and organisations showcasing the latest cutting-edge advances and technologies in biomedical science. There were also poster presentations showcasing novel and interesting work across 12 different disciplines.

“Congress is always the highlight of the biomedical science calendar,” said past IBMS President, Debra Padgett. “This year was the best Congress ever and an amazing opportunity to hear what’s going on in the profession and look at the latest technological advances too.”





HOW WE HELP



How we help our members

In this section, we report back on our strategic aims so you can see the difference we made in 2023, based on what we said we'd do. Our impact is always around supporting, promoting and progressing members.

THEME 1

BUILD ON OUR EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

A Support more access to the Health and Care Professions Council (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.

Every two years all HCPC-approved education providers submit a performance review report to the HCPC. Our performance review included feedback from IBMS members who took part in the programmes. The panel, which reviewed our five HCPC-approved programmes in 2023, was satisfied with the quality of the programmes. This shows that the IBMS programmes are equipping members with the knowledge and skills they need to become registered biomedical scientists with the HCPC.



Now members taking any of our four HCPC-approved routes to registration as a biomedical scientist can submit their portfolios digitally. This allows candidates to collect and store evidence of the work they are doing in different formats, including video. It also allows trainers and verifiers to track candidates' progress. For the IBMS, we can better fulfil our reporting duties to the HCPC as all the information is held in one central place.

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We issued **1273** registration training portfolios and **1341** Certificates of Competence to biomedical scientists so they could register with the HCPC.





HOW WE HELP

- B** Progress our current members' knowledge, experience and their careers through better and more relevant training and qualifications, using our existing structures but allowing a more agile application. Create a more inclusive approach to support greater diversity, championing our members' values such as sustainability and clear professional standards.
- Our Certificate of Achievement programme helps to develop the skills and knowledge of support staff working in laboratories. Issued in two parts, 150 people passed the first certificate stage in 2023 and 167 passed the second portfolio element. These qualifications guide and assess support staff and help them to progress their careers.
- We hosted 10 webinars on everything from how to write a CV to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in biomedical science. These are part of the IBMS Support Hub webinar series on our website. The hub supports biomedical scientists who are starting off in the profession, as well as those who are further along in their career.



+

We processed **518** applications for IBMS laboratory training so members could complete the Certificate of Achievement, Certificate of Competence and Specialist Diploma in laboratories around the UK.





HOW WE HELP

Completing an IBMS Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD)

The IBMS/Royal College of Pathologists ASD in Histopathology Reporting allows biomedical scientists to train and take on consultant level roles in the pathology reporting team. In 2023, Mary McElroy, Senior Dissector and Trainee Consultant Healthcare Scientist in GI Pathology at the Western Health and Social Care Trust in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, passed the ASD in Gastrointestinal (GI) Histopathology Reporting. Sandie Iles, Advanced Specialist Biomedical Scientist at North West London Pathology, passed the ASD in Gynaecological Histopathology Reporting. Here, Mary and Sandie share their experiences of completing the qualification and how it's helping their careers.

MARY'S STORY

“In Northern Ireland, cancer dissection was traditionally carried out by medical professionals. The ASD in Histopathology Reporting enables biomedical scientists to train and develop their skills in tissue dissection through various programmes and qualifications.

I have completed the Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection and the ASD in Lower GI Dissection. These qualifications have helped me to progress in my career as they have given me the skills and knowledge to manage a fully scientist led cut up in my histopathology department. I also mentor biomedical scientists to help them continually advance in cancer dissection.

The guidance notes provided by the IBMS and the updates and communication from the Head of Examinations helped me to navigate the different stages of the four-and-a-half-year programme. I am now in stage D, which allows me to do independent reporting and continue to present the pathology at the upper and lower GI multidisciplinary team meetings.

The IBMS histopathology qualifications benefit biomedical scientists as they help people to progress in their careers. The qualifications also benefit hospital departments as having consultant biomedical scientists on a pathology team can improve communication between laboratory staff and consultants.”





HOW WE HELP



“As a member of the IBMS, you’re part of a community. Members have a shared common goal and an understanding of what is important. It provides a network to share your experiences and collaborate with others.”

Mary McElroy, Senior Dissector and Trainee Consultant Healthcare Scientist in GI Pathology at the Western Health and Social Care Trust in Londonderry, Northern Ireland

SANDIE’S STORY

“The proudest moment of my career is passing the ASD. When I started researching the ASD, I initially thought it was going to be impossible to do. But with the guidance and support provided by the IBMS, I felt it was achievable, so I took on the challenge. Through the different stages of the ASD, I built my competence as a member of the gynaecology reporting team.

Completing the ASD is a huge undertaking. You need support as you will spend a lot of your own time building your breadth of knowledge. You will gain confidence by presenting audits to the multidisciplinary team and to wider clinical colleagues. As a consultant biomedical scientist is a relatively new role, you may also be challenged by healthcare colleagues, which helps to build your resilience. It’s hard work and worth it in the end.

Pathologists have always diagnosed within cellular pathology, with the support of biomedical scientists. The addition of the consultant biomedical scientist role brings a different perspective to the diagnostic and laboratory teams.

I have now passed the ASD, so I am in stage D. This is the post-qualification stage where you build your experience and confidence. Now I can independently sign out cases. With the support of my colleagues and employer, I’m in a position to reach my career goal to be a consultant biomedical scientist in gynaecological pathology.”





HOW WE HELP



- C** Promote our highest qualifications, widening the disciplines that these are available in and increasing the number of members accessing them.
- Our IBMS Accredited programmes now align with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's 2023/24 Subject Benchmark Statement. This ensures our accredited undergraduate and postgraduate biomedical science degrees meet the latest standards. The standards now include point-of-care testing and quality management so that graduates understand how to provide safe and high-quality care for patients. This will better support graduates to find jobs in laboratory settings.
- From 2023, members who complete the Diploma of Expert Practice, an MSc and have five years of relevant professional experience can become a Fellow. We've expanded the pathways to becoming an IBMS Fellow. This distinguished membership level recognises specialised knowledge and commitment to upholding high professional standards.



We processed **776** non-accredited degree assessments and **861** specialist portfolios and issued **379** Specialist Diplomas.

We held **8** online training webinars, which increased the number of active verifiers from **510** to **651** and examiners from **337** to **426**, helping to assess biomedical scientists.

8 candidates enrolled on our Certificate of Competence by Equivalence to qualify as a biomedical scientist.

We reviewed **56** undergraduate and **16** postgraduate programmes delivered by **25** universities with IBMS accreditation. We also reviewed new courses at three universities, which gained IBMS accreditation for the first time.



HOW WE HELP

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6 existing degree apprenticeship programmes were successfully re-accredited.

+

35 candidates sat the Diploma of Expert Practice Histological Dissection exam in November 2023. This qualification develops the knowledge and skills of a candidate beyond a Specialist Diploma to a higher level of professional practice.

+

42 candidates sat the Higher Specialist Diploma, with **32** passing and upgrading their membership to become Fellows.

+

Our **2** training events supported **10** people to become trained assessors to help improve IBMS laboratory training approval applications. This has reduced the backlog of applications.

+

Grants totalling over **£350,000** were given to employers in England to support candidates taking the IBMS Histopathology, Cytology, HSD and CEP qualifications. The grants were provided by Health Education England and paid through the IBMS.

+

14 candidates sat the Stage C exam for the Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in Histopathology Reporting. We also launched the ASD in Bowel Screening Histopathology Reporting and ASD in Cervical Histopathology Reporting qualifications.

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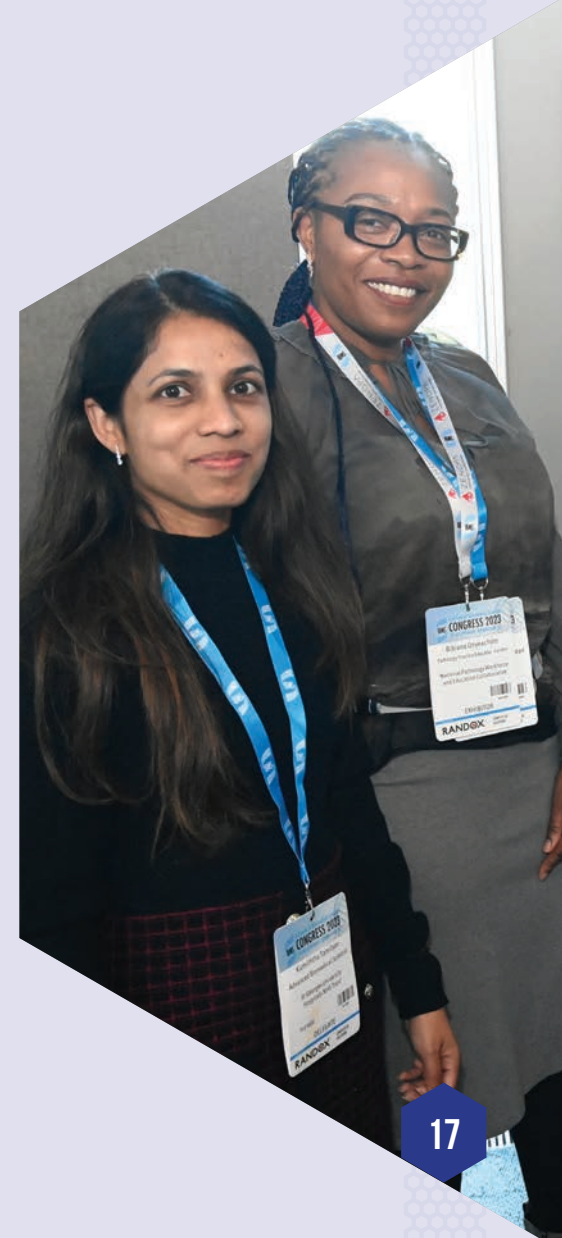
We held **5** Specialist Portfolio Train the Trainer webinars to assist laboratory trainers to support candidates. The webinars encouraged members to become specialist portfolio examiners and provided refresher training for existing examiners.

+

Some **260** candidates passed one of six IBMS Certificate of Expert Practice (CEP) qualifications. This is the largest number to pass in one year and includes **17** candidates who passed the IBMS CEP in Laboratory Information Technology and Clinical Informatics.

+

We have **1605** members who are Chartered Scientists (CSci), **85** who are Registered Scientists (RSci) and **27** Registered Science Technicians (RSciTech) with the Science Council. Members of the IBMS can apply for professional registration with the Science Council.





HOW WE HELP

Being an IBMS Verifier or Examiner

IBMS Verifiers and Examiners assess registration training and specialist qualifications for biomedical scientists. Here, one of our members shares their experience of volunteering in these roles.

Jadranka Vidak is a health and safety lead for cellular pathology at North West London Pathology. She is an IBMS Verifier and Examiner.



JADRANKA'S STORY

"I am driven by a desire for professional development and commitment to advance the biomedical science profession. This was my reason for undertaking IBMS training to become both a verifier and an examiner.

My workplace has experienced tangible benefits through the presence of trained IBMS Verifiers and Examiners. Their expertise has had a positive impact on the professional development of individuals and enhanced the overall competency of the team. It's fostered a culture of excellence within the workplace, as well as contributing to a more efficient and effective workflow.

There is personal gratification from guiding candidates through the verification and examinations processes. I get to witness their growth and achievement. Networking and interacting with other verifiers and examiners from diverse backgrounds offers an opportunity to exchange ideas. It also fosters collaboration, which contributes to the continuous improvement and innovation in the biomedical science profession."

It takes around half a day to do the training to become a verifier or examiner and the same amount of time to assess a candidate. Find out more about becoming an IBMS Verifier or Examiner:

www.ibms.org/verifiers-and-examiners/

Looking ahead

In 2024, we will:



SUPPORT

- Host regular webinar sessions to bring members and training officers together. They can discuss training plans, how to prepare for the verification process, and any other issues raised at IBMS Training for Trainers events. The drop-in sessions will create a forum for experienced and new training officers to share ideas and problem solve in a collaborative environment.
- Host more Support Hub webinars on topics that members have requested, including interpreting neurodiversity and people management in laboratories. These will help members to carry out their jobs.
- Invest in new technology to provide members with one central place to access education, training and CPD. We will deliver all Specialist Portfolios online and as modular courses in 2024.
- Recruit and train more verifiers and examiners by holding more Train the Trainers events on the updated Registration Training Portfolio and Specialist Portfolios.



- Provide online resources for training officers such as videos to explain the updated HCPC Standards of Proficiency. We will also host monthly online drop-in support sessions for training officers to ask advice and share best practice.
- Continue to support trainers and verifiers to embed the updated digital system for Registration Training Portfolios – OneFile – within their training structures and verifications.
- Offer training for candidates, training officers, verifiers and other colleagues who use OneFile for completing the Registration Training Portfolio.



PROMOTE

- Hold 30 accreditation events at universities around the UK and abroad. These are for students, academic staff, those who manage university programmes and employers. The events help to scrutinise the content taught on IBMS Accredited undergraduate degrees, masters and apprenticeship programmes to make sure it's of a high quality.
- Recognise the efforts of our verifiers and examiners by awarding physical pin badges to those who undertake assessments for the IBMS.



PROGRESS

- Continue to provide funding for employers in England to pay for their biomedical scientist staff to do any of the Certificate of Expert Practice qualifications, as well as the Cytology, Dissection, Reporting and Higher Specialist Diploma.
- Launch a new limited-scope Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in Placental Histopathology Reporting and a full updated version of the ASD in Ophthalmic Pathology.
- Launch two new qualifications in Red Blood Cell Disorders and Haemostasis and Thrombosis to complement the existing Diploma of Expert Practice (DEP) in Routine Haematology. We will also launch a new DEP in Medical Microbiology.
- Update our Certificate of Achievement portfolios for biomedical science support staff working in laboratory services, so they can complete their work online.
- Enable training officers to create bespoke training and assessments within OneFile to provide a high-quality experience for Registration Training Portfolio candidates.



HOW WE HELP



THEME 2 BUILD AND DEVELOP OUR FUTURE

- A** Promote our profile post-pandemic, to develop a policy and engagement capability at government level for each of the four nations.
- Following the UK government's separate pay offer to nurses, we raised our concerns to MPs and ministers nationwide. Any new NHS pay structure must ensure equal progression, regulation, and development opportunities for all healthcare professions, including biomedical scientists.
- We expressed concerns to the health secretary and shadow health secretary in a joint letter with the Royal College of Pathology (RCPATH) and the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (ACB) that direct patient access to pathology results could overburden primary care.
- To highlight the vital work of biomedical scientists in advanced roles in cytopathology, we issued a joint statement with RCPATH and the British Association for Cytopathology (BAC), providing guidance for diagnostic cytopathology services in England.
- We collaborated with RCPATH on a statement outlining advanced roles in biomedical histopathology reporting, including practice, skills, and the integration of biomedical scientists into dissection, independent reporting, and multidisciplinary team presentations. We're advocating to policymakers for support of these roles to future-proof NHS cancer services.
- In support of NHS England's Transforming Histopathology in England plan, we collaborated with RCPATH to emphasise the significance of histopathology and the value of biomedical scientists in advanced roles for improved cancer diagnosis.

- We published our *Long Term Biomedical Scientist Workforce Plan*, outlining our commitment to supporting biomedical scientists in keeping pace with the evolving profession and patient needs, and ensuring their key role in the *NHS Long Term Workforce Plan*.
- Our partnership with Microsoft on a digital pathology white paper aims to inform IT companies about the profession's needs and drive advancements in the biomedical science workforce for faster, more accurate disease diagnosis.
- We issued a statement expressing our disappointment in the Health and Care Professions Council's (HCPC) 20% registration fee increase, having previously voiced member concerns during the consultation phase.
- Our national guidance on point-of-care testing, developed with RCPATH and ACB, has been widely shared with the UK government. It emphasises the importance of laboratory expert involvement in the design, assessment, and delivery of non-traditional diagnostic services.
- Our post-pandemic engagement with the UK government has increased. The IBMS President addressed the need for biomedical science investment at an All-Party Parliamentary Group, and we hosted a Conservative party conference panel on earlier diagnosis. Our CEO continued to actively build relationships with MPs, policymakers, and other professional bodies to champion members' priorities.





HOW WE HELP

AWARDS FOR OUR MEMBERS

IBMS awards recognise the incredible work that our members do and support biomedical science to progress.

There have been lots of highlights during my two years as President, but my main one has been meeting you – our wonderful, dedicated members. To those of you I have visited, thank you for your hospitality.

SPONSORING EXTERNAL NATIONAL SCIENCE AWARDS

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

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

IBMS members were among the winners of the UK Advancing Healthcare Awards and the following were highly commended:

- ◆ Biomedical Scientist of the Year – **Ian Davies**
- ◆ Rising Star award – **Carl Onwochei**
- ◆ Highly Commended – **Lucinda Streeter**

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



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH SCIENCE WRITERS (ABSW) MEDIA FELLOWSHIP

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

Following the selection process, the IBMS-sponsored ABSW Media Fellowship for 2023 was awarded to Sheri Scott, Principal Lecturer for Biomedical Science at Nottingham Trent University, who completed her placement with the *Financial Times*.

MARY MACDONALD PRIZE FOR ACHIEVEMENT AND BURSARY

This prize aims to support biomedical science staff to do the IBMS Certificate of Achievement Part I or Part II qualification. This was awarded to **William Nicholson**.

LIFE MEMBERS AND HONORARY FELLOWSHIP

Life Membership is awarded to recognise consistent, long and valuable service to the IBMS at a national or international level.

Life Membership was awarded to:

- ◆ **Dr Michelle Brereton, John Ringrow and Neil Bentley.**

Honorary Fellowship was awarded to **Professor Mike Osborn.**





HOW WE HELP



47

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



17 new Chartered Scientists, eight Registered Scientists and six Registered Science Technicians were admitted to the Science Council register.

PRESIDENT'S PRIZE AWARDS

We gave 36 eStudent members the President's Prize Award for graduating with academic distinctions.

The following members received the award:

- ◆ Abertay University: **Olivia Morgan**
- ◆ Anglia Ruskin University: **Andreea-Mirela Haraga**
- ◆ Aston University: **Aimee Clyne**
- ◆ Atlantic Technological University: **Cindy Chong**
- ◆ University of Bedfordshire: **Tanzina Razzaque**
- ◆ University of Bradford: **Rebecca Zephyr**
- ◆ University of Brighton: **Emily Dalmon**
- ◆ University of Central Lancashire: **Toluwani Folarin**
- ◆ De Montfort University: **Raeesa Patel**
- ◆ University of Essex: **Zoe Anthony**
- ◆ Glasgow Caledonian University: **Mya Kelly**
- ◆ University of Greenwich: **Murshida Islam**
- ◆ University of Hertfordshire: **Mohamed Patel**
- ◆ The Hong Kong Polytechnic University: **U Kwun Wan Ng**
- ◆ University of Hull: **Sarah Shodunke**
- ◆ International Medical University: **Lee Qi Long**
- ◆ Keele University: **Samia Ibrar**
- ◆ Kingston University: **Craig Chipfuwamiti**
- ◆ Leeds Beckett University: **Goncalo Martinho Rodrigues**
- ◆ Liverpool John Moores University: **Ellie Harland**
- ◆ Manchester Metropolitan University: **Nabeeha Attique**
- ◆ Oxford Brookes University: **Mathyruban Selvaratnam**



- ◆ University of Plymouth: **Rebecca Brittain**
- ◆ University of Portsmouth: **Daniel Quizon**
- ◆ Robert Gordon University: **Erin McInally**
- ◆ University of Roehampton: **Katherine Rose Birditt**
- ◆ University of Salford: **Rachel Gowrie**
- ◆ Sheffield Hallam University: **Grace English**
- ◆ Staffordshire University: **Julia Banciu**
- ◆ University of Strathclyde: **Pascale Rae**
- ◆ University of Surrey: **Helen Iroanya**
- ◆ Ulster University: **Rebecca McKeown**
- ◆ University of the West of Scotland: **Chloe Currue**
- ◆ University of Worcester: **Sophie Smith**
- ◆ York St John University: **Thomas Ketley**



THE COMPANY MEMBERS' PRIZE OF THE HIGHER SPECIALIST DIPLOMA

This prize is awarded annually to the candidates who, in their first attempt, earned the highest mark in each discipline of the Higher Specialist Diploma examination. In 2023, we presented the awards for 2022 to:

- ◆ **Rebecca McAvoy** based at Ulster Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Clinical Chemistry.
- ◆ **Shona Traynor** based at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in Scotland for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Leadership and Management.
- ◆ **Samantha Kitchener** based at Freeman Hospital Newcastle for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Virology.
- ◆ **Nicola Chadburn** based at Nottingham City Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Transfusion Science.
- ◆ **Emily Gallimore** based at Manchester Royal Infirmary for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Immunology.
- ◆ **Richard Hull** based at Royal Oldham Hospital for the Higher Specialist Diploma Company Members' Prize in Cellular Pathology.
- ◆ **Sarah Chir** based at Southmead Hospital Bristol for the Company Members' prize for achieving the highest mark across all Diploma of Expert Practice qualifications in her Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection.

CONGRESS AWARDS

The Jen Johnson Bursary and Mary MacDonald Congress Awards are in honour of the late IBMS Council members, Jen Johnson and Mary MacDonald. The awards reflect their desire for more members to attend Congress to support their careers.

This year, 21 members were awarded a Jen Johnson Bursary. This included funding of up to £1,000 to attend Congress 2023. Members were: Philip Logue, Jessica Smalley, Kathryn McClelland, Naomi Gordon, Iva Dasheva, Mickael Simoes, Tasnim Ruma, Jennifer Gandi, Mark Housley, Lucy Carter, Malachi Dubarry, Olivia Douglass, Dionne Jacques, Kirsten Robson, Maxine Smith, Gemma Dawson, Alison Brooks, Amanda Thorn, Tzoanna Sara Hossain, Nicholas Sanger and John Burns.



HOW WE HELP

“The Jen Johnson bursary offered me an experience I might otherwise have hesitated to pursue, especially in financially challenging times. Attending the IBMS Congress was an eye-opening experience. Meeting and discussing the world of diagnostic healthcare with industry-leading experts and peers has raised my expectations of the aims and roles of biomedical scientists. The evident passion, enthusiasm and drive to raise the standards of healthcare through biomedical scientist practice and leadership makes me excited for the future. What an exciting time to be a biomedical scientist.”

Mark Housley, Senior Biomedical Scientist at Queens Medical Centre Nottingham, who won a Jen Johnson Bursary.



HOW WE HELP



THE RJ LAVINGTON PRIZE

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

A SPECIAL RESOLUTION

A special resolution was passed to elect former IBMS President **Professor Allan Wilson** as Vice-President in recognition of his ongoing contribution to the IBMS and the profession. During his time as IBMS President, which began in January 2020, Allan helped to lead the profession through the worst of COVID-19 by voicing the insights and concerns of IBMS members in the media.



THE ACADEMY FOR HEALTHCARE SCIENCES (AHCS) 2022 HONORARY FELLOWS

AHCS presented its Honorary Fellowship Awards to several IBMS members. These were: **Jane Blower, Bamidele Farinre, Mike Gray, Dr Sarah Pitt, Dr Robert Shorten, David Wells** and **Professor Allan Wilson**.

The awards recognise outstanding contributions in a leadership role to healthcare science in the UK.



HOW WE HELP

‘Become a Biomedical Scientist’ films

As part of our ‘Become a Biomedical Scientist’ awareness campaign, we released four short videos, each highlighting an IBMS route to HCPC registration. They have been viewed over 500,000 times. Hasan Rao, Biomedical Scientist in Haematology and Blood Transfusion at Barnsley Hospital, and Alex Ellwood, Specialist Biomedical Scientist in Microbiology at James Cook University Hospital, featured in two of the videos. Below, they share their experience of the campaign.

HASAN’S STORY

“It was a privilege to be in the video about doing an accredited degree without the IBMS Training Portfolio. I was happy to be involved because getting more registered biomedical scientists will have a positive impact on the workforce and hospitals across the UK.

On the filming day, I was gobsmacked about how much effort and work goes into doing a short video. I talk to the camera in a fast-paced and modern style, which I think will grab people’s attention.

I was in a fortunate position because I did an IBMS Accredited degree with a placement year and got a job straight after. But truth be told, I didn’t know anything about accreditation before I applied for the degree.

The videos give people the right information about getting registered. They show that even if people haven’t taken the typical route to becoming a biomedical scientist, there are different ways to become one. It’s good for people to have this information as soon as possible so they can make informed decisions about their future.”



ALEX’S STORY

“It was an honour to promote the profession through the campaign. I wanted to inspire people to go into the field I love.

I didn’t know what a biomedical scientist did when I started my IBMS Accredited degree. I wish there had been a campaign like this when I was younger to help people make more informed choices.

The video I’m in is about completing a Certificate of Competence by Equivalence. It’s nice to know that there are different routes for everybody. It doesn’t matter whether you’re 18 and going to uni, or you’ve been working in a lab for 20 years.

It was my first time with a professional film crew and it was really fun. I think filming in the lab interests people as it shows what they could be doing.

The campaign is important because we want to inspire future biomedical scientists. I’d like people to watch the videos and know their options as early as possible. The more biomedical scientists we have, the better it is for patients.”

Watch the videos that Hasan and Alex feature in:
[becomeabiomedicalscientist.com](https://www.becomeabiomedicalscientist.com)





HOW WE HELP



Virtual reality space lab to promote biomedical science

“Do you have what it takes to become a biomedical scientist?”

This was the question we asked students who tried out our virtual reality (VR) biomedical science world. The VR technology was launched at the National School and College Leavers Festival 2023 at the Birmingham NEC in November 2023.

The NEC event was attended by more than 30,000 people over two days, meaning we were reaching thousands with our Become a Biomedical Scientist campaign.

Young people making decisions about their careers tried out the immersive VR experience set in a space lab. The VR experience reveals the indispensable role of biomedical scientists in healthcare. For example, participants can take charge of a simulated urine sample and witness the complexities of microbiology, from collecting samples to analysing results.

Following the event, our “Become a Biomedical Scientist – Track 1” video was viewed over 1,000 times using a QR code.

Members can now use the three VR headsets and controllers that make up the IBMS Accredited Space Lab at their own public engagement events.



“I am glad there are events such as this that young people can attend to discover the options available in biomedical science, and the steps they need to take to work as biomedical scientists. Who knows, maybe they will be working in laboratories as futuristic as the VR headsets one day!”

IBMS member Helen Markland, Senior Biomedical Scientist and Training Lead at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, who attended the National School and College Leavers Festival 2023 with the IBMS.



HOW WE HELP

- B** Progress the numbers and range of members that the IBMS attracts, within the UK and globally.
- Wales-based IBMS members shared marketing materials in the Welsh language at the Cardiff Science Festival and annual National Eisteddfod cultural event. They were Become a Biomedical Scientist marketing materials and *SUPERLAB II*, our comic for 7- to 11-year olds. The comic informs young people about what biomedical science is and why it's important. We translated materials in response to a member's request for promotional items in Welsh. We plan to translate additional marketing materials in Welsh.
- For Black History Month, we highlighted the contributions that our black members make to biomedical science. This included couple Akinola Adewunmi and Olubukola (Olu) Adewunmi who set up PathLab Support, which aims to improve the quality of healthcare for people living with sickle cell disease.

"I would like to see the vital contributions of black women being recognised and celebrated in workplaces and by professional organisations."

Olu Adewunmi, PathLab Support co-founder, in an article on the IBMS website about Black History Month in 2023

"I've shared the IBMS *SUPERLAB* comic with my 7-year-old brother and said: 'This is what a scientist does.' It might help inspire him to be a biomedical scientist. He's an absolute champion at his blood tests, because he knows scientists like his big brother are going to test his sample in the labs."

Hasan Rao, Biomedical Scientist in Haematology and Blood Transfusion at Barnsley Hospital.

- We made the decision to introduce a new pricing structure for members from low- and medium-income countries. We changed from using the United Nations list of Least Developed Countries to applying the discount to overseas members through the World Banking List. Now, the number of members who benefit from the 50% discount has increased from 46 to 138.





HOW WE HELP

“I want diversity within our profession and the IBMS”

In 2023, our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group started to meet. It is chaired by Tahmina Hussain, Programme Lead for the Biomedical Science Degree Apprenticeship and Lecturer in Biomedical Science at the University of Salford. Here, Tahmina talks about what the group has done in its first year.

“In my 2021 IBMS Council election statement, I said I wanted to work with the IBMS to break down barriers related to EDI. This was to ensure diversity within our profession and the IBMS. Since then, I have worked with the IBMS to improve representation from all communities and co-founded the IBMS EDI Working Group.

The group has 19 members from various backgrounds. It includes IBMS staff, Council members and members from the IBMS regions and branches.

We meet quarterly and prioritise our work using benchmarking data from the Science Council Diversity and Inclusion Progression Framework. In April 2021, the IBMS Council used the framework to score where the organisation is with EDI against various categories, such as training and governance. We are working towards improving the scores in each of the areas in the benchmarking exercise.

RAISING AWARENESS OF EDI

In 2023, the working group focused on communications and raising awareness of EDI. I led on organising a monthly article about EDI issues in *The Biomedical Scientist* magazine. This increased IBMS communications focused on diversity and inclusion. The articles are written by the IBMS EDI working group and IBMS members. They cover different monthly awareness days – from deaf awareness to suicide prevention and menopause. We’ve worked with the IBMS communications team on social media posts and news stories about the different topics.

Group members have also reviewed the IBMS EDI policy, providing feedback on what is included, such as how complaints are managed.

EDI reps disseminate what we talk about in the group within their labs, regions and branches. They organise local events throughout the year. For example, I led a hybrid EDI event with sessions on everything from celebrating diversity to the underrepresentation of staffing and leadership. Over 100 IBMS members joined the event.

We would not have been able to do as much as we have done without the commitment of the EDI working group members.

OUTREACH WORK

Being involved has given me more confidence to raise awareness of EDI. I now also hold EDI Lead roles at the university I work at.

I am eager to continue supporting the IBMS to: remove barriers to diversity in education and training; increase disability awareness; and create and embed strategies to improve career progression for underrepresented members.

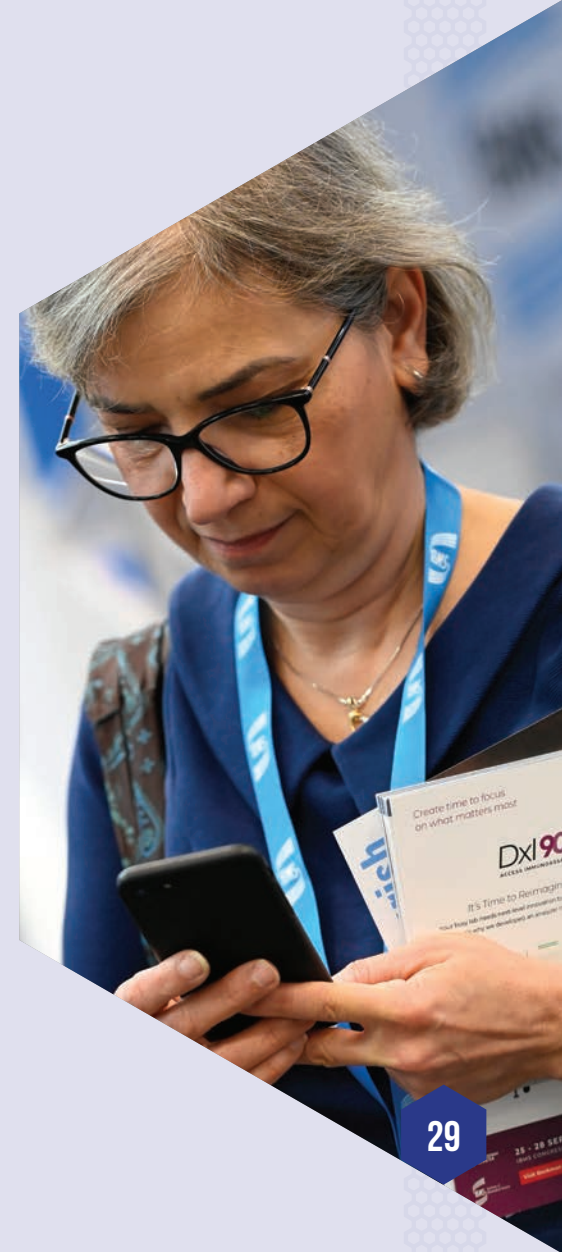
The working group is planning to visit schools and colleges to raise awareness of the role of biomedical scientists. I wish I had seen female role models in the scientific profession when I was younger. By continuing to do outreach work, we hope to help inspire the next generation to pursue a career in science.”

C Support the understanding of the benefit the profession and biomedical science delivers to society.



+

13
presentations from IBMS
Congress 2023 were
recorded for members
to watch as CPD.



HOW WE HELP



HOW WE HELP

Shaping Congress as a panel member

The IBMS Specialist Advisory Panels are experts in their specialist area and advise the IBMS. Chris Elliott, Assistant Director Pathology – Business Development and Transformation at NHS Blood and Transplant, was chair of the Transfusion Science Specialist Advisory Panel for 12 years. He stepped down at the end of 2023 and remains on the panel as a member. Dr Mairiead MacLennan, Quality and Training Manager in Medical Microbiology at NHS Fife, is a member of the Quality Management Specialist Advisory Panel. Here, Chris and Mairiead talk about the role of the panels and planning the Congress programme for their disciplines.

CHRIS'S STORY

“I specialised in transfusion science early on in my career. At the time, a senior member of my lab told me I would never get anywhere specialising in transfusion science as there aren't many opportunities in this area. But the discipline is now better understood.

Transfusion science has a direct impact on patients. Many of the therapies that we take for granted these days would not be possible without biomedical scientists who specialise in this discipline.

In the last few years, the Transfusion Science Specialist Advisory Panel has been focusing on education for IBMS members. Together, we have developed IBMS qualifications, including the new IBMS Specialist Diploma in transfusion.

A big part of our work in 2023 was preparing the transfusion science programme for Congress. Our main session was on immunohaematology, which is the study of blood group antigens and antibodies for blood transfusions. The session was well attended. This was extremely encouraging as it shows that people recognise the importance of transfusion science.

“I'm really proud of the panel. All the members interact at a high level in healthcare. We have people who sit on national committees that are dominated by medics. There, biomedical scientists are seen as equals and their contributions are valued as much as those of other healthcare professionals.”





HOW WE HELP

“Being a member of the IBMS, and getting involved with meetings and building connections, has given me a voice in the profession. It has built my portfolio and CV and made me a credible candidate when I’ve moved up in my career.”

Chris Elliott, Assistant Director Pathology – Business Development and Transformation at NHS Blood and Transplant

standard and provided guidance to IBMS members to support them to implement these when they manage quality in their labs.

The challenge is engaging people with quality management and supporting them to understand how to apply it to their day-to-day work. Everyone thinks ‘quality’ is a dry subject. The panel’s job is to demonstrate how it is part of the day job, not an added chore.

Quality and training are my passions. As a Technical Assessor for UKAS, I see recurring themes of where the difficulties are experienced in labs. One of those areas is the verification and validation of different processes used in the lab.

At Congress 2023, I delivered a workshop on verification of laboratory processes and how to work to the revised standard. People said that the workshop helped to make the subject easier to understand and apply in the lab.

If you are an IBMS member and love what you do, then join a panel. Share your skills, interests, knowledge and enthusiasm with others in the profession and those who are thinking of becoming a biomedical scientist.”

MAIRIEAD’S STORY

“Quality management in laboratory medicine is vital as it ensures the delivery of high-quality patient care. As a biomedical scientist working hard at the day job, understanding how to embed a new international standard for quality into your practice is challenging. In 2022, ‘ISO 15189 Medical laboratories – Requirements for quality and competence’ was significantly revised, with more focus on patients, point-of-care testing and continuous improvement in labs.

In 2023, the Quality Management Specialist Advisory Panel spent a lot of time looking at ISO 15189:2022 and what it means for biomedical scientists. We picked out the critical changes in the





HOW WE HELP



- We supported members to organise over 50 events to promote biomedical science to the public in Healthcare Science Week. To celebrate the week, we launched the latest in our series of videos detailing the journey of samples. The short video follows the journey of a semen sample that is processed through an andrology department and has been watched nearly 3000 times.
- The IBMS History Committee produced a poster exhibit for Congress, which traced the development of blood testing and its different uses throughout history. It showcased the important role that blood plays in studying diseases. The display, “Blood lines: a resource not to be taken in vein”, covered topics such as the saving and healing power of blood in the ancient world, blood culture in microbiology and the role of bloodletting. This is the practice of withdrawing blood from a person’s veins for therapeutic reasons, which was common thousands of years ago.
- Social media messages about our seventh annual Biomedical Science Day were seen by 2 million people in the UK alone. Saying the same thing on the same day every year means biomedical science is being talked about more on social media and that we can get our message out to the public.



- Our Biomedical Science Day Activity Fund supported 40 members with over £15,000 to use for events promoting biomedical science on the day. It is the world’s largest biomedical science awareness campaign.
- MPs, All-Party Parliamentary Groups and Lords, plus a range of scientists and IBMS staff, came to our Biomedical Science Day event at the House of Lords. It highlighted how the biomedical science profession presents a ready-made resource for the UK government to address the challenges facing healthcare. The event also celebrated the launch of new point-of-care testing guidance.





- Our two-day The Biomedical Scientist Live 2023 virtual event was free for members and featured a packed line-up of seminars, presentations and discussions. Sessions were viewed more than 4000 times and covered everything from artificial intelligence (AI) to how the profession can tackle health inequality. The sessions were available to watch online after the event.
- Our online COVID-19 Symposium event in March featured healthcare leaders who held pivotal roles in the pandemic. Experts from the wider healthcare sector joined them in reflecting on the role of biomedical science. Some 120 people came to the event, which raised awareness of the essential role of biomedical scientists in the pandemic.
- We launched a prize to support biomedical scientists at the start of their research careers. *The British Journal of*

Biomedical Science (BJBS) Publishing Prize aims to inspire biomedical scientists to submit their research to the journal. The winner's research will feature in the *BJBS* and they will be considered for a talk at the next IBMS Congress in 2025.

- IBMS Chief Executive David Wells responded to a letter published in the *Metro* newspaper, which stated that NHS laboratories were “overstaffed with unproductive people”. He said that many laboratories have minimum staffing levels and the vital laboratory testing they do will help the NHS get through the backlog of patients waiting for planned care.



Our publication, the *British Journal of Biomedical Science (BJBS)*, launched **9** special issues focused on research and the contribution our profession makes to healthcare.

We published **29** papers in the *BJBS* about everything from using games to teach biomedical science to diagnosing cancer of the colon or rectum.



HOW WE HELP





HOW WE HELP

“The special issue of the BJBS has been a great success”

In January 2023, we published a special issue of the *British Journal of Biomedical Science* (BJBS) on education and training in biomedical science. It was co-edited* by Professor B. Cherie Millar, Clinical Scientist in Clinical Microbiology at the Northern Ireland Public Health Laboratory in Belfast City Hospital. Cherie also works part-time at Ulster University, teaching and supervising undergraduate and MSc biomedical science students.

Here, Cherie talks about some of the topics that the issue covered and why there’s been so much interest in it from IBMS members and education providers.

“The special issue has received the most submissions from IBMS members in the UK in the whole of the journal’s history. It has been a great success.

There is excellent pedagogical research being conducted by IBMS members, and there is a lot of appetite for publishing this. The special issue provided a valuable opportunity for education providers to share best practice and reflections, which will help guide others to develop their teaching and assessment practices.



PREPARING GRADUATES FOR THE WORKPLACE

We can’t underestimate the role that education plays in developing biomedical science graduates for whatever career path they take. Education providers shape students for all areas of the profession, whether they go on to work in healthcare service delivery; research careers in the environmental, pharmaceutical, nutrition and forensic sectors; or teaching, communication and bioinformatics.

The aim of the special issue was to showcase best practices in pedagogical approaches that have had a significant impact on teaching, workplace training and assessment. These approaches are giving graduates the knowledge and skills to find jobs within biomedical science.





HOW WE HELP

ONLINE COMMUNITIES TO SIMULATION-BASED LEARNED

So far, 12 articles written by 34 authors have been published in this special issue of the online journal. We have continued to welcome further articles, and a further three are in the review process and will be added soon.

The articles have covered a range of topics, including lessons learned from the pandemic and preparing graduates for the workplace with digital and communication skills. We also had articles on building online learning communities for distance-learning courses and simulation-based learning to develop people's core knowledge. There's been something for everyone."



By the end of March 2024, the total views for this special issue were 13,220 and there were 1788 downloads.

*Cherie was supported by two co-editors: Sheri Scott, Principal Lecturer for Biomedical Science at Nottingham Trent University, and Professor Stephen McClean, Head of School of Biomedical Sciences at Ulster University





HOW WE HELP

Our experience of running Harvey's Gang lab tours

In April 2023, we took over running Harvey's Gang lab tours as the charity wound down. We provide members with everything they need to run the tours for children who are often undergoing intensive treatment. Members who have run the tours include David McIntyre, Spoke Laboratory Manager for South West London Pathology at Kingston Hospital, plus Lesley Cybichowski, Training and Health and Safety Lead in the Blood Sciences Department at Broomfield Hospital.



After Lesley approached us to set up a tour we put her in touch with David to get some advice. Below, they share their experiences.

LESLEY'S STORY

“We'd love to,” was my response when the IBMS contacted me to say there was a child in our area who wanted a Harvey's Gang tour. They put us in touch with the family and we had conversations with them about their requirements.

The tour was with a 12-year-old boy called Luciano who had autism spectrum disorder and sensory issues with needles and blood. The aim was to make him feel comfortable enough to have the blood test he needed.

The IBMS sent example risk assessments and visitor guidelines, which were helpful. They put me in touch with David as I had a question about insurance. It was reassuring to talk to him and get his tips for running a tour.

We took Luciano to the phlebotomy department and he sat in a chair where he might have his blood taken. He toured our labs with his sister and mum and saw how his sample would be processed. Luciano saw the big analysers, loaded samples into a centrifuge and looked down a microscope at a blood sample with parasites in it, which he loved!

The tours are important for helping children like Luciano and for the team to share their knowledge. It was really nice to be able to put a face to a potential tube of blood.”



HOW WE HELP

DAVID'S STORY

“A parent wrote to the IBMS and asked if her eight-year-old son Austin could go on a local lab tour. His younger sister Mabel had leukaemia and Austin thought he'd caused it. His mum wanted to dispel those notions and demystify what happens to her blood samples.

We had never done a tour before but I said we'd happily do it. The IBMS were very supportive and liaised with the family. They sent us lab coats, Harvey's Gang T-shirts and other freebies.

The IBMS put us in touch with Austin's family and we talked with them ahead of the visit. On the day, we issued Austin with a lab coat and took him into blood transfusion. He held a bag of blood and was fascinated by haematology, where a team member went into what causes leukaemia. He looked down the microscope at different slides and helped process a blood test.

The team found the visit rewarding and Austin had a better understanding of what the lab does and why his sister was sick. When the IBMS put me in touch with Lesley about doing a Harvey's Gang tour, I said: 'Go for it.' Talking to her confirmed in my own mind that it was a positive thing to do.”





HOW WE HELP



IBMS REGIONS AND BRANCHES

The IBMS regions and branches provide members with networking opportunities, connection with local employers and support to have a say in the issues that affect them.

The IBMS regions and branches are run by members for members. All IBMS members are assigned a branch and region when they join the IBMS. This is usually based on the address of where they work or study.

To find out more about IBMS regions and branches, have a look at: www.ibms.org/about/regions-and-branches/



Setting up IBMS branches

In 2023, the IBMS Reading and Tayside branches started up again after being inactive for some time. Tayside hadn't been active since before the pandemic and Reading was inactive for around 10 years. Lavanya Kanapathypillai, Specialist Biomedical Scientist in Cellular Pathology at Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, is Chair of the Reading branch. Gemma Watt, Specialist Biomedical Scientist in Clinical Biochemistry at NHS Tayside, is Chair of the Tayside branch. Lavanya and Gemma explain why they wanted to get their IBMS branches back up and running and how we supported them to do it.

LAVANYA'S STORY

"I set up the Reading IBMS branch so I could become an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) representative for the area. I am part of the IBMS EDI Working Group and I share what we are talking about in meetings with other members and engage them on EDI issues.

I had never done anything like setting up a branch before but the IBMS supported me through the process. The IBMS put me in touch with members who had recently set up branches in their local areas, and with our local IBMS council representative. It was helpful to get their advice. The IBMS emailed people who used to be part of the Reading branch to see if anyone would be interested in helping me to get it back up and running. Some people got in touch and we set up a committee. It's been a team effort.



HOW WE HELP

We held our first branch meeting on Biomedical Science Day in June 2023. It was great to speak to members and hear what they do in their labs. They told me about the challenges they face and what they want out of the branch. A lot of people said they were interested in EDI, which is positive.

Now we meet around every three months and are planning future events based on feedback from members. Members have said they want events to focus on EDI, career development, outreach activities, socialising and networking opportunities.”

GEMMA'S STORY

“I relaunched the Tayside branch to give IBMS members in the area support with their continuing professional development (CPD). The biomedical science profession struggles with doing CPD as there is limited funding and time.

In December 2023, we held an AGM and our first CPD event. Debra Padgett (past IBMS President) presented on the IBMS in Scotland. This was followed by some free, ad hoc CPD sessions for branch members. The next step is to hold monthly CPD sessions and let people know the topics in advance. This will help members to plan sessions they want to attend and get time away from work.

The IBMS has sent out emails to local members to let them know about the Tayside branch and CPD opportunities. Our plan is to start sending out regular newsletters to people through the IBMS to let them know about CPD sessions and other things happening with the branch.

We want to get more members across different disciplines joining the Tayside branch to help broaden CPD opportunities. We currently only have members from biochemistry, haematology, microbiology and virology. When biomedical scientists train in their disciplines, they are required to focus on making sure their CPD fits their own role. But it can be useful to access a wide range of CPD so we understand how all of the disciplines work together to support patient care.”

“As members we need to engage with the IBMS to make sure we are getting what we need to do our jobs effectively. This includes getting involved with your local IBMS branch and speaking to Council members. There’s a lot of learning that can be shared by biomedical scientists at all levels. If everyone engages with the professional body and shares their views, the IBMS will capture the whole picture.”

Gemma Watt, Specialist Biomedical Scientist in Clinical Biochemistry at NHS Tayside





HOW WE HELP



HOW WE ARE GOVERNED

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

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

Find out more about governance at the IBMS:
www.ibms.org/about/governance/

OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS

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

Read more about our Council:
www.ibms.org/council/



IBMS COMMITTEES

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

We have five committees. Information about them can be found on the IBMS website: www.ibms.org/about/council-and-committees/

Looking ahead

In 2024, we will:



PROMOTE

- Create new resources for tour organisers to give to people on Harvey's Gang laboratory tours. These will include a *SUPERLAB* comic, certificates, videos and new merchandise. We will also review the Harvey's Gang name and logo and encourage more hospitals across the UK to run the tours.
- Raise the profile of the profession and demonstrate the value of biomedical science by contributing to policy papers, consultations and All-Party Parliamentary Groups. With a general election on the horizon, we will create a manifesto that sets out a clear plan to maximise the potential of the profession's work and expertise. Doing so will transform patient outcomes and strengthen the NHS.
- Continue to promote our Routes to Registration campaign to highlight the different ways people can become a biomedical scientist and the importance of taking an IBMS Accredited degree. This will involve:

- ◆ Highlighting the 'Become a Biomedical Scientist' videos to students who are considering taking a biomedical science degree, through social media targeted adverts, leaflets and posters, and at national careers events.
- ◆ Creating new videos that feature current IBMS Accredited students talking about their course and an IBMS Accredited graduate discussing their route into the profession.
- ◆ Using the IBMS Spacelab VR experience at careers fairs to teach young students about biomedical science.



PROGRESS

- Survey members to gauge their feedback on *The Biomedical Scientist*. The results will develop the content of the magazine and website as well as shaping future ideas for IBMSChat (live monthly audio conversations on social media), podcasts and live events.
- Work with leading diagnostic and healthcare organisations to create more roundtable events. These will inform white papers that set out our proposals and recommendations for the future of biomedical science in the UK.



SUPPORT

- Work with our Special Advisory Panels, Committees and external partners to provide new and innovative ways for members to access educational content and qualifications. External partners include OneFile and Brightspace, which provide access to our qualifications, plus our new website provider Pixl8, which is creating a central place for members to access CPD. This work is part of our digital strategy, which we will continue to develop in 2024.
- Use our commissioned research to show the value of biomedical science and the contribution that biomedical scientists make to healthcare. This will demonstrate the need to register and retain more biomedical scientists.
- Sponsor awards and support events to promote and celebrate biomedical science. These include the IBMS Awards, Advancing Healthcare Awards, STEM for Britain, Biomedical Science Day, Pride, and the National School and College Leavers Event.
- Identify a new customer relationship management system to provide members with a better experience of our website and their membership.



OUR FINANCES - SUMMARISED ACCOUNTS

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:				
<u>Charitable activities</u>				
Subscriptions	2,380,586	-	2,380,586	2,390,123
Qualifications	395,383	384,214	779,597	629,775
Portfolios, assessments and accreditations	476,927	-	476,927	373,983
Publications	1,900	-	1,900	6,671
Regions and branches and discussion groups	16,073	-	16,073	121,031
Other income	2,449	-	2,449	2,110
<u>Congress and other trading activities</u>	1,895,041	-	1,895,041	1,600,093
<u>Investments</u>				
Listed investment income	164,221	-	164,221	196,220
Property rental	62,981	-	62,981	63,107
Bank interest	130,501	-	130,501	29,361
Total Income	5,526,062	384,214	5,910,276	5,412,474
Expenditure on:				
<u>Raising funds</u>				
Congress and other trading activities	1,340,958	-	1,340,958	1,120,784
Investment management fees	81,032	-	81,032	79,489
<u>Charitable activities</u>				
Education, qualifications and registration	1,588,216	384,214	1,972,430	1,656,514
Publications	222,210	-	222,210	109,312
Regions and branches and discussion groups	116,597	-	116,597	191,134
Member events, representation and benefits	1,559,448	-	1,559,448	1,232,172
Grants and prizes	37,448	-	37,448	38,043
Total expenditure	4,945,909	384,214	5,330,123	4,427,448
Net gains/(losses) on investments	765,847	-	765,847	(1,310,233)
Net income / (expenditure)	1,346,000	-	1,346,000	(325,207)
Other recognised gains / (losses)				
Loss on revaluation of investment property	(300,000)	-	(300,000)	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR	1,046,000	-	1,046,000	(325,207)
Total funds brought forward	16,755,848	-	16,755,848	17,081,050
Total funds carried forward	17,801,848	-	17,801,848	16,755,840

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

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	1,179,287	1,267,207
Listed investments	11,425,990	10,600,327
Investment property	<u>850,000</u>	<u>1,150,000</u>
	13,455,277	13,017,534
Current Assets		
Stock	356	975
Debtors	470,445	798,931
Listed investments – money market deposits	1,023,372	–
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>4,722,030</u>	<u>4,829,540</u>
	6,216,203	5,629,446
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(1,869,632)</u>	<u>(1,891,132)</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>4,346,571</u>	<u>3,738,314</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>17,801,848</u>	<u>16,755,848</u>
Net Assets	<u>17,801,848</u>	<u>16,755,848</u>
Unrestricted Funds		
Accumulated fund	16,222,143	14,996,897
Designated fund	36,992	51,996
Listed investment revaluation reserve	1,118,180	982,422
Investment property revaluation reserve	<u>424,533</u>	<u>724,533</u>
	<u>17,801,848</u>	<u>16,755,848</u>

The summarised accounts are a statement of information extracted from the annual accounts and certain information relating to both the group statement of financial activities and the group balance sheet.

These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, the full accounts and the Council members' annual report should be consulted: copies of these can be viewed online at www.ibms.org/annualreport

The full accounts have been subjected to external examination by an independent auditor and received an unqualified audit report. The full annual accounts were approved by the Council members on 19 April 2024 and have been submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.



OUR FINANCES - SUMMARISED ACCOUNTS

Benefits of IBMS membership

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

- helping you to progress your career through accredited qualifications and training
- giving you access to professional standards and support
- enhancing your knowledge and skills through our continuing professional development scheme
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- discounts on cinema tickets, holidays and health clubs

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“Being a member of the IBMS allows me to access more opportunities. I’m doing a Master’s in medical microbiology and use the CPD portfolio to keep track of all the seminars and lectures I go to. It’s all nice and organised and available if I ever get called by the HCPC. I’ve also done training to become an IBMS Verifier. At Congress, I gave a presentation to students on being a biomedical scientist in microbiology, which I enjoyed.”

Alex Ellwood, Specialist Biomedical Scientist in Microbiology at James Cook University Hospital