

**Training grant availability for candidates in England on the Advanced Specialist Diploma (ASD) in Histopathology Reporting** **(Updated August 2021)**

In November 2020 the IBMS and the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) in Health Education England (HEE) announced the availability of funding to support scientists working in England to undertake IBMS/Royal College of Pathologists (RCPath) histopathology qualifications.

The funding will have a direct and positive impact on IBMS members’, and it demonstrates a tremendous mark of confidence in the Institute’s professional examinations and underlines their value in the training of scientists to undertake advanced and consultant roles.

The funding was initially limited to those undertaking Reporting and Dissection qualifications but has now been expanded to include those undertaking Cytology qualifications. The candidates who are now eligible for support are those **employed in England** who:

* were enrolled on the ASD in Histopathology Reporting as of 1 November 2020
* commence the ASD in Histopathology Reporting in 2021 or 2022
* undertake the DEP in Histological Dissection, DEP in Non-Gynaecological Cytology, ASD in Histological Dissection or ASD in Cervical Cytology exam in 2021 or 2022.

More information on the funding available to those undertaking the Dissection and Cytology qualifications can be found on the relevant pages of the IBMS website.

**Reporting Qualification**

Funding of up to **£9,000 per candidate** is available to support the training and assessments of candidates on the IBMS/RCPath ASD in Histopathology reporting qualification throughout the duration of the contract to support them in their training and assessment of this qualification. This covers claims made by both the candidate and the employer.

If a candidate starts the Reporting qualification in 2021 or 2022 or was enrolled on Stage A or B of the qualification on 1/11/2020 they are eligible for funding up to £9,000 towards covering the costs of their completion of the reporting qualification. If the candidate was enrolled on Stage C of the qualification on 1/11/2020 they are eligible for funding of up to £3,000 towards covering the costs of their completion of the reporting qualification. There is no funding support for candidates who were enrolled on Stage D as of this date.

These figures refer to the total amount of funding available for each candidate toward the completion of the qualification rather than what is available at each stage.

The training grant can be used to cover the following costs incurred on, or after, the 1/11/2020 until 31 October 2025:

* Portfolio and exam fees
* Course fees for the candidate(s) to attend training courses to support the achievement of the qualification
* Travel and subsistence incurred by the candidate(s) for attending exams and training courses
* Providing staff backfill cover for candidate(s) undertaking training for the qualification
* Textbook(s) to support training for the qualification

Funding is not available to cover the cost of purchasing laboratory equipment or items such as PCs or tablets. The grant cannot be used by the candidate to cover their IBMS membership fee and the candidate must maintain their IBMS membership throughout the time they are undertaking this qualification.

Candidates must still apply to the IBMS to submit their portfolio and apply to the RCPath to sit the examination by the stated deadline in the same way as the current arrangements and these will be applications will be invoiced as they are now. Grant instalments will be paid retrospectively after costs have been incurred.

The employer will **usually** reclaim the expenses incurred by the candidate from the Institute through the presentation of an appropriate invoice. The invoice should clearly itemise what is being claimed but there will not normally be a need to provide any additional evidence however the IBMS may request such evidence if there is uncertainty over the funding that is being claimed. Only an employer can make a claim for staff backfill. The invoice must include the bank details to which the IBMS should pay the grant once it has been approved.

Each invoice must be accompanied by a signed declaration from the candidate’s educational supervisor or departmental manager confirming that the costs claimed for on the invoice were properly incurred to support the candidate’s training for the qualification. The candidate should also sign this statement to confirm this as well. (See Appendix 1).

If an employer is receiving support for multiple candidates, a separate statement and invoice must be submitted for each candidate. If an employer charges VAT, as this is not recoverable by the IBMS this will come out of the training grant allocated for each candidate.

If a candidate incurs relevant costs which are not reimbursed by the employer, the candidate may submit a claim directly to the Institute. The claim must be signed by the employer to confirm that the costs have not been met by the employer and they were to support the candidate as part of the qualification. The candidate must provide evidence, such as receipts, to support any claim they make for funding and details of their bank account to which the funds should be paid. (See Appendix 2)

The employer and candidate can submit multiple claims for training related expenses, but these must not exceed the total fund allocation permitted for the qualification. Grant claims dated after 31 October 2025 will not be accepted, even if an employer has not utilised the candidates’ whole allowance.

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Can the funds go towards more than one attempt at the Stage A or Stage C exam?

The funds can be used for multiple attempts at any stage of the Reporting exam.

What happens if a candidate moves to a different place of work during the training period – Can the new place of work claim any remaining funds?

If a candidate moves to another employer in England during the contract, their new employer can claim the balance of the grant remaining. If a candidate moves to an employer outside of England during the contract, funding will cease. Any training grant already paid by the IBMS will not be re-claimed from the initial employer if the candidate moves to a different laboratory.

The candidate who we were claiming for no longer works with us – can we use the remaining funds for a different individual?

Any training grant already paid will not be re-claimed from the employer if the candidate moves elsewhere however the remainder of the grant cannot be used for another individual as the funds are linked to the individual rather than the employer.

What happens if a candidate drops out of the Reporting qualification?

Any training grant already paid will not be re-claimed from the employer if a candidate drops out of the qualification.

Can the employer claim for funding to cover the use of locums to support backfill? Can the employer claim for funding to cover the work of the pathologists whilst they support the training of those undertaking the qualification and what evidence would you need to support that claim?

The claim for grant funding can only be made retrospectively and cannot therefore be used prospectively to enable the appointment of a new member of staff. It can be used to cover the costs of backfill (including locums) of the candidate undertaking the reporting qualification and for pathologists’ time whilst they support the candidate’s studies during the qualification.

The supporting statement will need to include the job role of the individual(s) providing the backfill, their hourly rate(s), the number of hours being claimed and a brief description of the work that was undertaken by them. If you charge VAT, as this is not recoverable by the IBMS this will come out of the training grant allocated for each candidate.

This document will be regularly updated as the project progress and further questions arise. If you have any further queries, please contact the IBMS Head of Examinations (Chris Ward) via email: [examinations@ibms.org](mailto:examinations@ibms.org)



**Appendix 1 – Statement to support employer claim for disbursement of HEE funding to support candidates on IBMS/RCPath ASD in Histopathology Reporting Qualification**

This statement must accompany the invoice from the employer to the Institute of Biomedical Science and be signed by the candidate’s educational supervisor or departmental manager (whichever is appropriate).

I confirm that the following costs were incurred by [insert name of employer] to support the training of [insert candidate name] for the IBMS/RCPath Histopathology Reporting qualification:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Details of cost** | **Date incurred** | **Amount** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

I agree to provide the IBMS with supporting evidence for the costs claimed above if requested.

**Signature:** …………………………………………………

**Name:** …………………………………………………

**Position:** …………………………………………………

**Date:** …………………………………………………

I [insert candidate name] confirm that the costs stated in the table were incurred in relation to my undertaking of the IBMS/RCPath Histopathology Reporting qualification:

**Signature:** …………………………………………………

**Name:** …………………………………………………

**Position:** …………………………………………………

**Date:** …………………………………………………

The statement together with an appropriate invoice should be sent to [examinations@ibms.org](mailto:examinations@ibms.org) for processing.



**Appendix 2 - Candidate claim for disbursement of HEE funding to support candidate on IBMS/RCPath ASD in Histopathology Reporting Qualification**

**Candidate**

I [insert your name here] confirm that I personally incurred the following costs as part of my training for the IBMS/RCPath Histopathology Reporting qualification and these have and will not be reclaimed from my employer:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Details of cost** | **Date incurred** | **Amount** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

I have attached supporting evidence for the costs claimed above.

**Signature:** …………………………………………………

**Name:** …………………………………………………

**Position:** …………………………………………………

**Date:** …………………………………………………

**Educational Supervisor or Departmental Manager**

I confirm that the costs stated in the table were incurred by the individual concerned as part of them undertaking the IBMS/RCPath Histopathology Reporting qualification and that to the best of my knowledge the employer has not and will not refund the individual the same costs.

**Signature:** …………………………………………………

**Name:** …………………………………………………

**Position:** …………………………………………………

**Date:** …………………………………………………

This should be signed by the educational supervisor or departmental manager of the candidate (whichever is appropriate).

**Bank Details of Claimant**

The claimant should provide the following bank details to enable the IBMS to pay the claim:

**Account Name:** ……………………………….

**Sort Code:**  ……………………………

**Account Number:**  …………………………