



**CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE  
BY EQUIVALENCE  
(BIOMEDICAL SCIENTIST)**

**Guidance for Candidates**

*Version 3.3*

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) is a programme approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) which is a statutory regulator for biomedical scientists\*.

*\*Biomedical Scientist is a protected title regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council who define this as: "A biomedical scientist analyses specimens from patients to provide data to help doctors diagnose and treat disease".*

- 1.2 It is offered by the Institute of Biomedical Science (the IBMS) as an award for those who are working in the UK in biomedical science (see section 2.4), have a minimum qualification at honours degree level, and wish to become registered as a biomedical scientist with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

**The Institute of Biomedical Science** is the professional body for biomedical scientists in the United Kingdom. It aims to promote and develop biomedical science and its practitioners.

The Institute represents over 19,000 members employed mainly in the National Health Service, private laboratories, veterinary laboratories, NHS Blood and Transplant Service (NHSBT), Public Health England and Medical Research Council. Other members also work in related commercial fields and in academia. Most members live and work in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The IBMS is involved in the education and training of biomedical scientists - accrediting degree courses, assessing the competency of biomedical scientists to practise, approving laboratories for pre and post registration training and organising a programme of higher and advanced diplomas for its members. The Institute awards the Certificate of Competence which gives eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

**The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)** is a regulatory body for 16 professions, including biomedical scientists. One of its key functions is to maintain and publish a register of health and care professionals who meet their standards. Further information can also be found on the respective websites [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org) and [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)

- 1.3 This document contains guidance on the process for making an application for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist). It should be read in conjunction with the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) Programme Handbook, which gives further details on the concept of equivalence and knowledge/skills required for the award.
- 1.4 The fee for the entire equivalence assessment process can be found on the current application form. A non-refundable administration fee of £50 will be required on submission of the candidate's application for review by the assessment panel. This will be deducted from the overall fee should the candidate be accepted onto the programme. The full fee is non-refundable once the candidate has been admitted to the programme. Additional charges also apply for reassessment of the portfolio (£100) or a viva voce resit (£150).
- 1.5 Applications for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) are considered in stages: application and applicant screening; preparing the portfolio of evidence; portfolio assessment and candidate interview (*viva voce*).

- 1.6 Application and applicant screening: the applicant's qualifications and experience are reviewed against the entry criteria. The applicant should ensure they have the appropriate background (see section 2.4) to proceed to portfolio submission. This includes support in the workplace and access to resources (including a named mentor) sufficient, appropriate and available to enable them to meet the threshold level of practice for a biomedical scientist. Following successful screening, the applicant will be admitted to the programme and issued with electronic versions of the Registration Equivalence Portfolio.
- 1.7 Portfolio submission: once the applicant has been approved at this stage a portfolio of evidence mapped to the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio must be submitted to the IBMS within 12 months of the approval date, unless the applicant can demonstrate a mitigating circumstance, or a revised deadline has been agreed with the IBMS Education Department.
- 1.8 Portfolio assessment and candidate interview (*viva voce*): this will take place by prior arrangement with the candidate. The IBMS will appoint an assessment panel (a professional, an academic and a lay person) who will review the submitted portfolio against the standards and decide whether the candidate proceeds to Part 2. The interview (*viva voce*) will take place at a mutually agreed time and venue.
- 1.9 All applicants must ensure that they have read and understood this document and other referenced documents before submitting their application. If you have any questions, including about any disabilities that you feel might affect your equivalence application, please contact the Institute's Education Department before submission ([equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org)).
- 1.10 Applicants should be aware that if during the programme there are any issues or concerns about a candidate's profession related conduct this should be reported to the IBMS as the education provider because this may impact on the candidate's future registration with the HCPC. Concerns should be submitted to the IBMS Executive Head of Education in written form. A report will then be provided to the Education and Professional Standards Committee who will make a decision on whether or not the evidence of unprofessional conduct affects the candidate's eligibility to apply to the HCPC for registration as a biomedical scientist. The basis for judging this will be the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics (2016).
- 1.11 Should the Education and Professional Standards Committee decide that the candidate has not breached the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, then the outcome is communicated to the student after the meeting and a note is put in their file for information.
- 1.12 Should the Education and Professional Standards Committee decide that the candidate has breached the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, this will be communicated to the candidate who will be withdrawn from the programme.
- 1.13 Appeals can be made using the IBMS appeal process (contact [equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org) for further information). They can only be made on procedural grounds. The outcome of the appeal is final.

## 2. Stage 1: Application and Applicant Screening

2.1 In order to maintain an accurate record of application applicant data (including any sensitive personal data) is held the IBMS on a secure database.

Applications are made by submitting to the IBMS Education Department the following documents:

- Completed application form
- A summary of their current role<sup>1</sup> and professional experience to confirm the applicant is working at honours degree level and has the ability to demonstrate they can evidence the requirements of the IBMS Certificate of Competence Equivalence Portfolio. This should be a statement of no more than 1000 words and should contain a description of main duties currently undertaken and a brief summary of previous experience that is relevant to the application. The statement should also confirm that the applicant has had access to resources, sufficient, appropriate and available for them to use to support their training and development to a level commensurate with the threshold level required for registration as a biomedical scientist<sup>2</sup>. The applicant also needs to confirm they have access to an IBMS approved training laboratory in order to provide any supplementary training that may be required to gain additional knowledge and experience necessary to meet the biomedical scientist standards of proficiency. The focus for determining relevant information in the statement should be the detailed knowledge and ability listed in section 5 of the Programme Handbook and the Curriculum Handbook
- Portfolio development plan to indicate primary sources of evidence of knowledge and skills applied in practice
- Assessment fee (£310). Please note, unsuccessful applications will incur a £50 administration fee, the remainder of the fee will be refunded
- Proof of ID (copy of passport or government issued photo ID e.g. driving licence)
- Photocopy of your qualification certificate(s) and transcript of results.  
*Please note: Where a module contributes as a source of evidence of knowledge the full module descriptor must be provided in the portfolio of evidence.*
- Photocopy of change of name (if relevant)
- Evidence of English language (IELTS level 7), if English is not your first language
- Photocopy of UK NARIC<sup>3</sup> comparability for your non-UK qualification(s)
- Valid Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Candidates will only be considered if they are currently working in healthcare science in the UK. Individuals seeking HCPC registration who are working outside of the UK are advised to consult HCPC directly. Information for this can be found at <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/apply/international/>.

<sup>2</sup>Biomedical Scientist is a protected title regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council who define this as: "A biomedical scientist analyses specimens from patients to provide data to help doctors diagnose and treat disease."

<sup>3</sup>The National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (UKNARIC) is used to ensure overseas qualifications are equivalent to those in the UK and therefore a photocopy of UK NARIC comparability for any non-UK qualifications must be included.

<sup>4</sup>Candidates who have a conviction outside of the UK will be expected to declare this.

**Please note: All photocopied I.D. material and certificates must be signed by the candidate's manager as verification as to the authenticity of the document(s).**

- 2.2 Applicants are required to submit a valid Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check: this was previously known as the Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check. Applications that are not submitted with at least a Basic level version will not be processed. If your employer does not currently retain a valid DBS check on your behalf you can request a basic disclosure from Disclosure Scotland (<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/basicdisclosureonline/index.htm>). Please note that you do not have to be a Scottish national to do so. Applicants from Northern Ireland should consult the AccessNI website available at <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni-criminal-record-checks>.
- 2.3 Applicants who do not have English as their first language are required to provide evidence of English language skills with a minimum International Language Testing System (IELTS) score of 7.0 with no element less than 6.5, or a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet Based Test with a minimum score of 100/120.
- 2.4 To be eligible for the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) an applicant must demonstrate there has been at least three years of autonomous professional practice related to biomedical science and experience that includes the routine analysis of specimens from patients to provide data for disease diagnosis and healthcare of the patient. Less than three years will be deemed inadequate for the application of equivalence.

***IMPORTANT: Please note that applicants who have only worked as biomedical support staff/associate practitioners are not considered to have experience of autonomous practitioners.***

- 2.5 The application must be completed to confirm the applicant is working in a suitable training environment. Details of the IBMS standards for training and the self-assessment form (as part of the training approval application form) can be found on the IBMS website: <https://www.ibms.org/go/registration/lab-approval>.
- 2.6 Applicants must have access to a named mentor who is HCPC registered and has experience of producing evidence for the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio. The mentor must have access to an IBMS approved training laboratory in order to provide any supplementary training required to gain the knowledge and experience necessary to meet the biomedical scientist standards of proficiency. The mentor is required to confirm they have read and understood the information available on the IBMS website related to the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist) award. The mentor is expected to provide professional support and guidance for the applicant's application and submission of evidence.
- 2.7 The applicant must be able to meet all of the requirements of the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientist and therefore has a duty of care to ensure that health conditions or a disability do not affect their fitness to practice. Applicants are required to complete a health declaration to state that the standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists have been read and understood and they do not have any physical or mental health condition that would impair their fitness to practice as a biomedical scientist. They should, as part of their fitness declaration, understand that relevant vaccinations and occupational health assessments have been undertaken.
- 2.8 If the candidate has a disability that might affect the assessment interview, it must be declared upon application, and the panel will be provided with a declaration of disability form. The

panel must then consider how to mitigate the effects on the interview and ensure fairness. Any disability that is not declared beforehand cannot be taken into account at interview, unless it has occurred post application.

- 2.9 Senior members of the IBMS Education Team will check the application and submitted documentation to confirm the criteria for admittance to the programme have been met. At this stage further information may be requested if the application is not sufficiently explicit.
- 2.10 This application screening process will ensure the validity of qualifications and periods of experience are appropriate to the potential candidate's ability to gather evidence to fulfil the requirements of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio.
- 2.11 If the criteria for admittance have been met, candidates will be issued with electronic copies of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio and given 12 months from the date of issue to submit the required documentation. Submission of evidence can occur at any time during this period.
- 2.12 The focus for completing the portfolio of evidence should be:
  - a. Evidence of academic and vocational qualifications where relevant to the standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists;
  - b. Evidence of structured training and competence assessment appropriate to their current scope of practice;
  - c. Evidence of experiential learning and CPD in their current practice;
  - d. Evidence of their scope of practice (witness testimonies, case studies, presentations, audits, research projects, for example).
  - e. Evidence of supplementary training or learning that has been assessed to meet HCPC standards of proficiency not addressed by the above.

**Please note: if 'e' is not achievable in 12 months applications should be deferred until such time as the applicant is in a position to produce the evidence.**
- 2.13 Following initial screening, applicants who are not accepted are provided with a report summarising the reasons for their rejection. Applicants will not be eligible to re-apply within 12 months and must be able to demonstrate they have engaged in further professional development through systems that ensure periods of education and training are effective in meeting the standards of proficiency.
- 2.14 The candidate and their mentor will be asked to complete a feedback report after three months in order to monitor progress and provide an opportunity for any problems to be highlighted and resolved before final submission of evidence. A designated email address [equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org) will provide access to IBMS staff for advice during working hours and a designated forum will be managed by the IBMS providing an online community for support. Additional guidance is available from the IBMS website information and guidance documents.
- 2.15 Once accepted onto the programme, candidates (if not already on an HCPC register) will be expected to comply with the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics and be able to demonstrate their understanding of the implications of these standards to their practice.

### 3. Stage 2: Completion of the Registration Equivalence Portfolio and Portfolio of Evidence

- 3.1 Assessments of equivalence are made against the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio and thereby the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists, regardless of the specialism or role. Applicants will be issued with the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio only if they successfully meet the admission criteria. This portfolio is the framework against which their qualifications, professional training, experience and competence are mapped.
- 3.2 The portfolio is the framework against which the candidate is required to provide evidence of pre-existing qualifications, professional training, experience and assessment of competence that has enabled them to practice in their current role, and is relevant to the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists.
- 3.3 The focus for gathering evidence for the portfolio should be the candidate's current practice with not less than 3 years autonomous practice and their achievement of competence to reach this level. However, candidates must recognise that registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a biomedical scientist is not discipline specific and requires a threshold level of knowledge of the key pathology disciplines: **Cellular Pathology; Clinical Biochemistry; Clinical Genetics; Clinical Immunology, Haematology and Transfusion Science; Medical Microbiology**. Please refer to Curriculum Handbook for more details. It is likely therefore, that a candidate may need to undertake some supplementary education or training to address any shortfall against the programme curriculum learning outcomes that cannot be met through their current qualifications and experience.
- 3.4 Applicants must present their evidence against the sections of the portfolio in the order in which the portfolio is constructed. All evidence must be dated and signed by the candidate. The content and level of the curriculum detailed in the Programme Specification and Programme Handbook should be used to guide the choice of evidence. Candidates are required to provide evidence for the entire curriculum learning outcomes.
- 3.5 A mapping template is provided as an integral part of the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio. The applicant must demonstrate, using the mapping template provided, how the portfolio of evidence supports each standard of proficiency. There must be no gaps or blank areas. One piece of evidence can be used in support of more than one standard and cross-referenced.
- 3.6 The portfolio of evidence should contain a contents list, a covering statement explaining how the standards of proficiency are demonstrated (i.e. a summary of the primary sources of evidence) and the supporting evidence. The supporting evidence must be clearly indexed and cross referenced to the mapping template. This portfolio may contain a number of differing types of evidence from periods of relevant education and training or employment/experience. Applicants are strongly advised to study the curriculum and outcomes carefully to ensure that their training and experience covers the range of standards of proficiency contained therein.

***Please Note: Under no circumstances should any piece of evidence submitted contain patient details. All personal data are to be redacted prior to submission. Any portfolios submitted with this will be returned immediately.***



3.7 Candidates are advised that the portfolio of evidence must include:

- a. Evidence of academic and vocational qualifications where relevant to the standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists
- b. Evidence of structured training and competence assessment appropriate to their current scope of practice
- c. Evidence of experiential learning and CPD in their current practice
- d. Evidence of their scope of practice (witness testimonies, case studies, presentations, audits, research projects, for example)
- e. Evidence of supplementary training or learning that has been assessed to meet the HCPC standards of proficiency not addressed by the above

Please note: if 'e' is not achievable in 12 months, applications should be deferred until such time as the applicant is in a position to produce evidence.

3.8 Tables 1, 2 and 3 set out some typical sources for evidence that needs to be submitted against the three main curriculum categories.

Please note, this is for guidance purposes and applicants may submit more or less information in different formats for each standard of proficiency. All personal reflection must be authenticated to confirm competence/understanding.

**Table 1: Examples of Evidence for Academic Curriculum**

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Source for Evidence</b>	<b>Examples of Evidence</b>
Academic Subject Content (based on education, qualifications and experience)	Type of qualification, subject areas, dates qualified, curriculum	Relevance against standards is summarised in a personal statement
	Current Knowledge	Examples how applicant has maintained theoretical knowledge and developed new knowledge
	Employment	CV and employment history Statements of competence from appropriately qualified supervisors  Employers reference  <b>Please note: statements by the candidate alone are not acceptable as evidence of their knowledge</b>

**Table 2: Examples of Evidence for Professional Skills and Standards Modules**

Module	Examples of Evidence
Application of Professional Knowledge	Employer reference Evidence of training Job description Case studies Participation on scientific meetings
Health and Safety	Personal statement to reflect application in practice Health reference Risk assessments
Quality Assurance	Evidence from working practices Personal statement to reflect application in practice Audit
Quality Control	Evidence from working practices Personal statement to reflect application in practice
Performing Standard Investigations	Evidence from working practices Personal statement to reflect application in practice Employer reference Evidence of training Job description
Research and Development	Module descriptors from academic programmes Degree project (abstract only required) Extracts from published papers to show where the candidate has applied research skills Posters/presentations

**Table 3: Examples of Evidence for Professional Conduct Modules**

<b>Module</b>	<b>Examples of Evidence</b>
Personal Responsibility and Development	Personal reflection Personal development plan/CDP
Equality and Diversity	Personal statement
Communication	Minutes demonstrating participation in team meetings Presentations
Patient Records and Data Handling	Evidence from working practices
Professional Relationships	Personal reflection Staff structure Job role (e.g. team leader) Representative appointments e.g. committee membership, advisory panel, specialist interest group

- 3.9 The portfolio of evidence is the applicant's opportunity to demonstrate how the experience they have gained and competency achieved is relevant to the HCPC standards of proficiency. The layout should be clear and the content should be well chosen, explicit, concise and clear. Statements of attendance or participation in meetings are on their own insufficient. They must be supported by personal reflection and a concise description on how the experience helped in achieving a particular competence. Similarly, statements or declarations by the candidate of their knowledge and ability are not acceptable. Statements of attendance or participation in meetings are on their own insufficient. **Statements by the candidate of their knowledge and ability without other evidence of how the knowledge was achieved and assessed are not acceptable.** Evidence of knowledge should demonstrate what has been learned and how it was assessed. Evidence of training and 'hands-on' experience should be supported by witness testimonies from qualified and where appropriate, professionally registered, individuals.
- 3.10 The portfolio of evidence must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter. Evidence should be carefully selected – a few well-chosen examples will be more valuable than a mass of poorly organized material. The portfolio of evidence should NOT include a detailed day to day diary or logbook, the full text of any case studies, theses, projects or essays – summaries should be provided. All content should observe best practice in respect of confidentiality.
- 3.11 Evidence must be specific to the applicant and the demonstration of how they meet the standards of proficiency. The portfolio should **NOT** contain any personal details or original reference material, standard operating procedures, or other published documents unless it is being used as an example of evidence and is annotated.
- 3.12 Particular attention is drawn to the following:

- a. We do not state that knowledge must be acquired via an academic course, other than applicants must have an honours degree or equivalent level qualification. This a new route as it allows candidates who are working at a level commensurate to a registered biomedical scientist to demonstrate they meet the standards of proficiency through knowledge and experience that is already acquired in practice.
- b. This route therefore, recognises there should be little need for further training, although there may be shortfalls in the wider knowledge of biomedical science disciplines. However, this route has the flexibility for candidates to demonstrate they are able to address any shortfalls through self-directed study or focussed training.
- c. Evidence must be appropriate to the standard and clearly demonstrate how the standard has been met. If a subject has been covered at university, evidence of this can be presented in the form of the university transcript to show the module has been passed and module descriptor to show the content/learning outcomes of the modules.
- d. Candidates are expected to evidence their understanding of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics and the implications and application of these standards to their practice.
- e. Candidates are required to provide evidence on how they have involved service users, other professionals and learners in other professions in their own development and learning.
- f. Candidates are required to be able to provide the bulk of evidence that they meet the HCPC standards of proficiency based on their qualifications, experience and current scope of practice (i.e. experiential learning that enables them to be competent in their current scope of practice). If there is a shortfall in specific areas of practice or knowledge, this will need to be addressed through further training or learning. Suitable types of evidence are listed above in section 3.8.
- g. You must be able to evidence you meet the knowledge and skill requirements for the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists. Biomedical scientists work in all biomedical science disciplines and are expected to have a threshold level of generic knowledge and skill in biomedical science that reflects this, not just a single discipline.
- h. If you require additional training to meet some standards of proficiency the length of training will depend on your own knowledge and skills base. As you need to be working at a level commensurate to a biomedical scientist to be accepted onto the programme, the expectation is you will already have the experience that will enable you to assimilate your new knowledge and skills required to meet the curriculum learning outcomes more quickly than a new trainee without experience. If you are being trained in a particular technique, you must be able to reach a threshold level of knowledge and basic skills sufficient to be able to perform the task. The training staff within the host IBMS approved laboratory will assess your competency in the same way that they do with their trainees undertaking conventional training.
- i. The application form requires you and your employer to confirm an understanding of requirements and commitment to complete the programme. If you are unable to commit the time to gather the evidence to demonstrate that you meet **ALL** of the HCPC standards of proficiency for your portfolio, this programme is not suitable for you.

- 3.13 Evidence provided must meet these basic criteria in order for the candidate to proceed to Part 2 of the assessment (the *viva voce*).
- 3.14 Each candidate accepted onto the programme is required to submit to the Education Department the **electronic copy** of their completed IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio **electronic copy** of their portfolio of evidence within 12 months of acceptance onto the programme plus an electronic version of each. Evidence must be clearly indexed and cross- referenced to the sections of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence Portfolio and HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists.
- 3.15 Candidates can apply for extensions to periods of evidence collection and portfolio completion by writing to the IBMS Registration Department and formally setting out extenuating circumstances for the extension. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the IBMS senior education staff and an extension may be granted. Extenuating circumstances include matters that affect welfare and wellbeing of candidates once they have been admitted to the programme.

#### **4. Stage 3: The Equivalence Assessment Process**

Institute of Biomedical Science, 12 Coldbath Square, London EC1R 5HL

Tel 020 7713 0214 Fax: 020 7837 9658 E-mail [equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org) Website: [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org)

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- 4.1 The assessment process begins once an applicant submits a completed portfolio triggering the appointment of an assessment panel. Applicants are required to submit to the IBMS Education Department **1 paper copy** of their completed Registration Equivalence Portfolio and **1 paper copy** of their evidence portfolio, together with electronic versions of both.
- 4.2 An assessment panel is selected from the IBMS pool of professional, academic and lay representatives who have been trained as assessors for the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio. The panel will be comprised of one professional and one academic assessor (one of whom will take the lead as the Panel Chair for the subsequent interview) and one Lay assessor. Assessors are asked to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to each assessment.
- 4.3 All assessors will be appointed by the IBMS and will have undergone IBMS training to be assessors for the Registration Equivalence Portfolio.
- 4.4 There are two parts to the assessment:
- 4.5 **Part One:** Each assessor will be sent a copy of the candidate's IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio and a Part One assessment report form.

Assessors will be considering the documents presented in a portfolio of evidence in the context of the threshold standards for HCPC registration and practice as a biomedical scientist.

By reviewing the evidence and mapping template the assessors will make a professional judgment based on the curriculum, learning outcomes and standards of proficiency on whether or not the applicant has the appropriate qualifications, experience and level of competence in their current practice appropriate to be eligible to apply for registration as a biomedical scientist.

Each member of the assessment panel will determine, on a case by case basis, whether the evidence mapped by the candidate to the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio is at the level required to meet the HCPC standards of proficiency for biomedical scientists. They will confirm this for each standard of proficiency. A final collated report will be agreed by the assessors indicating whether or not there is sufficient evidence to initially confirm the standards of proficiency have been met. This collated report will make a recommendation whether or not the candidate should proceed to Part Two based on the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Candidate has met all of the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio and may proceed to Part Two;
- Outcome 2: Candidate has partially met the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio and is required to submit further evidence to address specific standards of proficiency before they proceed to Part Two;

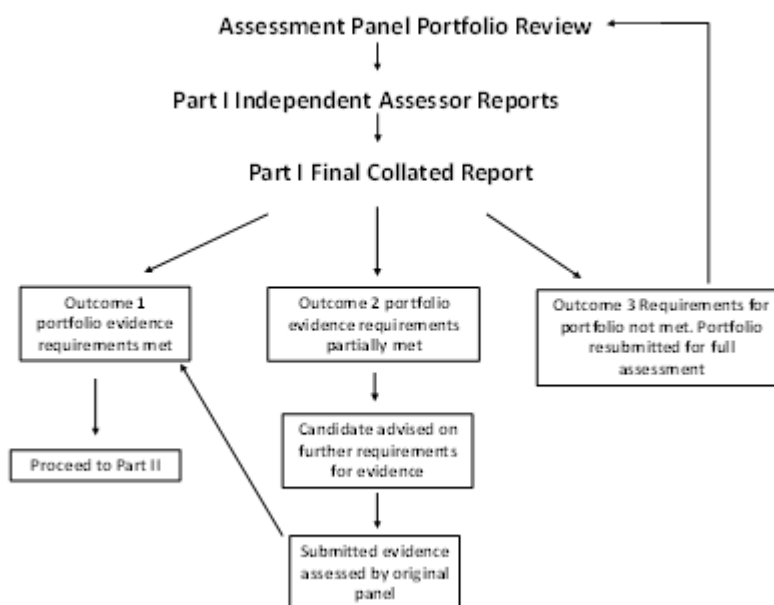
They will be advised on the possible sources of evidence specific for the standard that would be suitable to demonstrate the standard has been met. Candidates will be allowed a maximum of 6 months to submit further evidence. Only the standards requiring additional evidence will be reassessed. If the evidence submitted by the candidate is insufficient further advice will be provided and the candidate will have a further 3 months to provide suitable evidence. Following this stage either outcome 1 or outcome 3 of the portfolio assessment will apply.

- Outcome 3: Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for mapping evidence against the IBMS Registration Equivalence Portfolio and a period of further education or training is required. Advice will be given on the nature of this and whether it needs to be achieved through formal academic learning from an IBMS accredited programme, self-directed learning or secondment to an IBMS approved training laboratory. Candidates will need to resubmit their portfolio of evidence for full assessment. A charge of £100 will apply for re-assessment of the portfolio.

4.6 If the evidence provided has been accepted and a recommendation made for the candidate to proceed to Part Two of the assessment process, the candidate will be sent a copy of the final Part One report by the IBMS and invited to attend a *viva voce* with the assessment panel. If the evidence provided is not accepted as sufficient and the recommendation in the final Part One report is not to proceed to Part Two the candidate will be advised in accordance with the recommendations of the report.

4.7 In the event of the assessors being unable to reach a consensus opinion on the assessment outcome the candidate is still referred to Part Two and areas of concern are specifically examined in addition to other areas of the portfolio. However, in this instance a fourth assessor will automatically be appointed to the viva panel, with a requirement that they are a registered biomedical scientist.

#### 4.8 Diagram 1 Flowchart Summary for Part I



4.9 **Part Two:** A *viva voce* will be held in order for the panel to explore aspects of the candidate's education and training, and their understanding of the standards of proficiency based on the evidence submitted in the portfolio and questions related to their scope of practice. This is to confirm the candidate's suitability for the award. Each assessment will normally last between 30-60 minutes.

The assessors will together, produce a final Part Two outcome report and a recommended outcome of the assessment process for submission to the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee for ratification.

Institute of Biomedical Science, 12 Coldbath Square, London EC1R 5HL

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The assessors will be expected to make one of the following summative recommendations in their report:

- Outcome 1: Candidate has met all of the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist);
- Outcome 2: Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist).  
Candidates who are unsuccessful after Stage Two will be allowed one opportunity to re-sit the *viva voce*. This will incur a charge of £150.

4.10 In the event of the assessors being unable to reach a consensus opinion on the assessment outcome, it is referred to the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee for the appointment of an independent assessor. This individual would be required to review all of the material submitted by the candidate and assessor reports and to discuss the issues with each of the two professional assessors to enable a final recommendation to be reached.

4.11 Following consideration of assessment reports by the IBMS Education and Professional Standards Committee, candidates will be notified in writing of the outcome of their assessment and invited to complete a feedback form to enhance process monitoring.

4.12 If all of the necessary outcomes of the programme have been met, the letter to the candidate will include the award of an IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist), confirmation that their name has been forwarded to the HCPC and that they are eligible to apply for admittance to the register as a biomedical scientist.

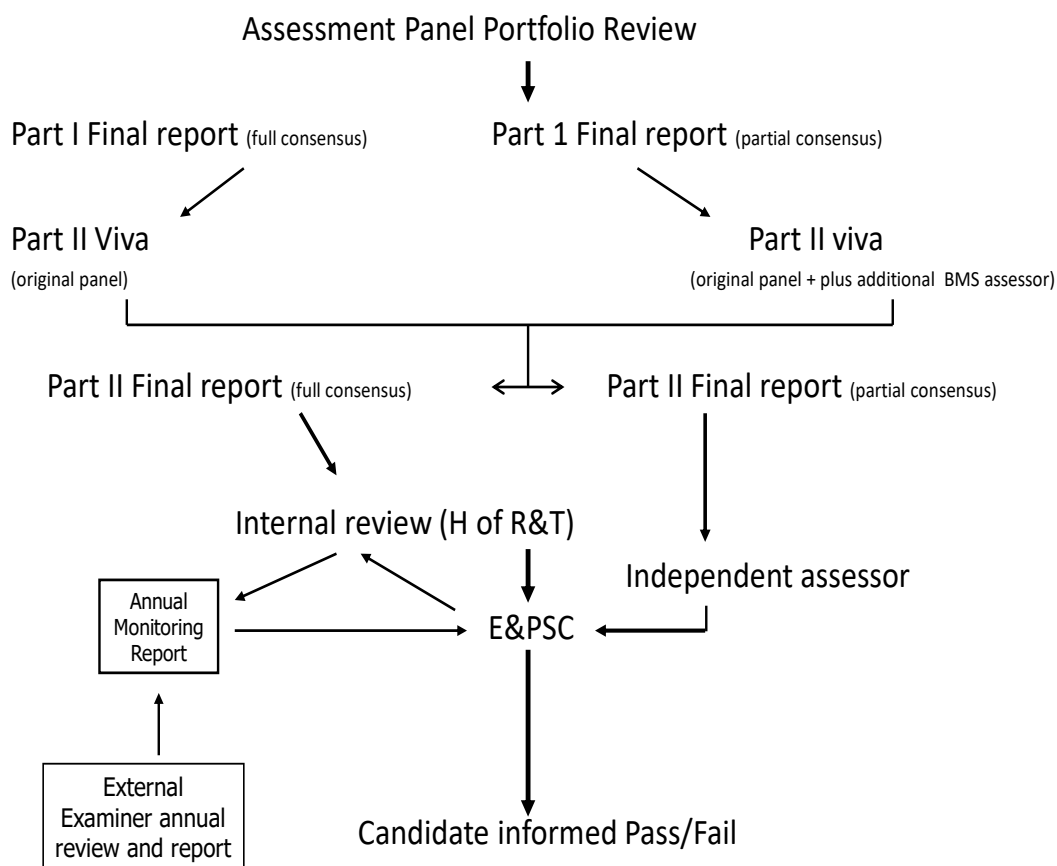
4.13 If the necessary outcomes of the programme have not been met the candidate will be advised in the letter whether a period of education/training is required in order to meet a shortfall against the standards. Where a period of education or training is required, advice will be given on the nature of this and whether it needs to be achieved through formal academic learning from an IBMS accredited programme, self-directed learning or secondment to an IBMS approved training laboratory.

4.14 Unsuccessful candidates will have the opportunity to appeal on procedural matters related to the assessment process. Appeals must be made within 28 days of the applicant being notified of their assessment outcome. Appeals must be made in writing to the IBMS Executive Head of Education and clearly state the reasons for the appeal with supporting evidence where appropriate. Appeals will be considered by an appeals panel of the external examiner and two HCPC registered members of the IBMS Council who are not associated with any aspect of the application.

4.15 Candidates should note that a successful outcome of the assessment process leading to eligibility to apply for registration as a biomedical scientist does not provide any further guarantees regarding terms and conditions of employment.

4.16 **Diagram 2 Flowchart for Part II**





4.17 Table of assessment outcome indicators.

Assessment Outcome Indicators		
Assessment Outcome Part One	Action	Reason
Portfolio is rejected	Candidate advised further training is required before resubmission of the portfolio for full assessment	Many of the standards lack appropriate evidence. There may be omissions or lack of depth in the evidence that indicate candidate lacks experience in the scope of

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		practice required to meet the standards or proficiency for a biomedical scientist
Portfolio partially accepted	Candidate asked to address shortfall in evidence against specific HCPC standards of proficiency and resubmit evidence within 6 months	Evidence demonstrates majority of standards of proficiency (<80%) have been met but evidence for some may be limited in depth and extent
Portfolio accepted	Action proceeds to Part Two of the assessment process	Evidence is sufficient to demonstrate HCPC standards of proficiency have been met or can be met based on further exploration in the <i>viva voce</i>

<b>Assessment Outcome Part Two</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Candidate has met all of the requirements for the award of the IBMS Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate recommended for award of Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate displays a sound understanding of the central issues. There are no significant absences in evidence of knowledge and ability relevant to the subject specific areas of speciality
Candidate has failed to meet the requirements for the award of the Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)	Candidate not recommended for award of Certificate of Competence by Equivalence (Biomedical Scientist)  Candidate must resubmit their application if a second <i>viva voce</i> is failed	Candidate attempted to address the questions but answer contains some significant factual or conceptual errors. There may be major omissions related to knowledge or ability indicating insufficient understanding of biomedical science to practice to merit a pass

## 5. Additional Resources and Reference Documents available on the Institute of Biomedical Science Website [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org)

The IBMS is committed to supporting the welfare and wellbeing of candidates (and service users) once they have been admitted to the programme and to ensuring candidates are supported to enable them to raise concerns about themselves, or the safety and wellbeing of service users. This includes support to recognise where there may be a risk and ensuring action is taken in response to concerns that have been raised. The following resources are available from the IBMS and may be used in addition to the usual employment policies.

### 5.1 Provided directly by the IBMS personnel:

- IBMS education executive team: telephone contact 020 7713 0214 and via designated email address [equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org)
- IBMS education administrative staff: telephone contact 020 7713 0214 and via email address [equivalence@ibms.org](mailto:equivalence@ibms.org)
- IBMS Council (some of whom are members of the Education and Professional Standards Committee – contact details in IBMS diary)

The IBMS senior education team are experienced in offering advice or counselling on all aspects related to completion of evidence for the HCPC approved routes to registration offered by the IBMS.

All details of extenuating circumstances (including periods of sickness) submitted by a candidate for an extension to periods of evidence collation and portfolio completion will be dealt with in confidence. Candidates and mentors should also note that advice on further training in order to produce evidence will only be provided **prior to the application**. As this is an experiential route, all training must be completed before the application, as evidence must be based on retrospective learning and practice only. Advice on further training **will not be provided** once the candidate had been admitted to the programme.

### 5.2 Documentation for this route may be accessible to all candidates upon the request of an application pack.

### 5.3 The following information may be helpful.

<https://www.ibms.org/go/registration/become-hcpc-registered>

Details of all the IBMS routes and processes, supporting individuals seeking HCPC registration.

#### **Good Professional Practice for Biomedical Scientists**

Benchmark guidance summarises current regulations and guidance relating to laboratory medicine, provides information on generic requirements set by regulation and clarifies how these relate to biomedical science.

#### **IBMS Code of Conduct**

The Code consists of principles, which IBMS members are expected to observe in the interests of patient care and in order to promote confidence in the profession of biomedical science.

#### **Clinical Laboratory Standards for IBMS qualifications**

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The IBMS approves laboratories for training of its portfolio based qualifications. These standards look at laboratory training and standards of good practice.  
<https://www.ibms.org/resources/documents/ibms-laboratory-training-standards/>

**Equal Opportunities and Diversity Monitoring Policy IBMS QM 801**

<https://www.ibms.org/go/members/join-ibms/application-forms>

**Complaints Handling Process**

<https://www.ibms.org/go/contact-find-us>

In addition for IBMS members only

**IBMS CPD scheme** The IBMS CPD scheme is a member benefit which enables members to collate evidence demonstrating that they are developing and extending their knowledge, skills and practice for the purpose of maintaining Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

## About this document

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