

I am trying to decide whether we have gone wrong somewhere along the way, or if we're simply seeing the consequences of over-stretched people without the time to read and inwardly digest information.

We are currently analysing the responses to the recent Institute membership survey and I'm looking at the "free text" comments that are additional to the more structured answers. I have to confess, I am more than a trifle worried at the apparent misunderstanding and resentment from some about Institute qualifications and their purpose.

In response to comments about the Higher Specialist Diploma (HSD), it was not introduced to discourage people from progressing as older members retire; far from it. The HSD was designed to equip the current and future generations to fill the knowledge gaps that arise as senior people, many of whom hold the old Fellowship examination, leave. Band 7 roles require a masters level (or equivalent) qualification and we all know that the time and money to enrol on such a course is out of reach for most, which is why the HSD is the obvious and affordable alternative choice. It is not designed to punish or impede, but to provide a route to promotion that might otherwise be closed.

"The Institute has helped to dumb down the profession". How exactly? We offer the widest range of professional qualifications of all the non-medical

# ROUTES TO PROGRESS



Sarah May, IBMS Deputy Chief Executive, addresses some of the responses to a recent Institute survey.

healthcare professions? We have had people undertaking reporting roles in cytology since 2002 and now we have individuals dissecting and reporting histopathology. Does this comment refer to the increase in the number of non-registered support staff? I suspect it does, but to try and prevent the change that is happening in the pathology workforce would be akin to King Canute trying to command the waves to retreat – and about as successful. Our position has not been to stop the unstoppable but to offer routes to progress in the changing and very challenging climate.

I am putting away my soapbox now, but am smarting from the stinging statement that "the IBMS has made it harder for the

young people coming into the profession by adding levels of needless bureaucracy in achieving higher grades". I'm really not too sure where to go with that one; the only mandatory qualification for biomedical scientists is HCPC registration, thereafter it is up to each individual to choose their route and how best to get there. Institute qualifications are there to help, not hinder and I am truly sorry if that is not how they are viewed.

**Sarah May**  
Deputy Chief Executive



Institute of Biomedical Science is the professional body for the biomedical science profession.

**INSTITUTE OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE**  
12 Coldbath Square  
London, EC1R 5HL  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0)20 7713 0214  
+44 (0)20 7837 9658  
Email: [mail@ibms.org](mailto:mail@ibms.org)  
Web: [www.ibms.org](http://www.ibms.org)

**PRESIDENT**  
Alison Geddis CSci FIBMS

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
Jill Rodney

**DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
Sarah May CSci FIBMS

**EXECUTIVE HEAD OF EDUCATION**  
Alan Wainwright CSci FIBMS

**EXECUTIVE HEAD OF MARKETING AND MEMBERSHIP**  
Lynda Rigby

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**  
[education@ibms.org](mailto:education@ibms.org)

**EXAMINATIONS**  
[examinations@ibms.org](mailto:examinations@ibms.org)

**MEMBERSHIP**  
[mc@ibms.org](mailto:mc@ibms.org)

**CHARTERED SCIENTIST**  
[chartered@ibms.org](mailto:chartered@ibms.org)

## FOLLOW THE INSTITUTE

Join us on  
[facebook.com/  
biomedicalscience](https://facebook.com/biomedicalscience)

Follow us on Twitter  
[@IBMSscience](https://twitter.com/IBMSscience)

Find us on  
[LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ibms)