

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

A look at the topline results from this year's IBMS member engagement survey.



The IBMS recently undertook qualitative and quantitative research to understand what members really value about the IBMS, what members engage with and to understand what bonds them to the Institute. We commissioned

Research by Design, a leading market research agency in the membership body sector. Over 2,000 members contributed and we would like to say a big thank you to everybody who took part.

We are still digesting the feedback and identifying our next steps, which we will communicate to you throughout the year. However, in the meantime, we wanted to share a few of the main findings with you.

Understanding your challenges

Members identified a multitude of challenges in the profession, with several really standing out.

“I feel IBMS takes the concerns of its members seriously and is a good active voice for the profession”

You told us that the things which were affecting you most were:

Retaining staff (44%), changes due to laboratory mergers/acquisitions (44%), limited opportunities and support for career progression (44%), managing time and workloads (42%) and recruiting qualified staff at the required levels (42%).

Understanding the challenges members face will enable us to develop new initiatives (such as webinars, publications, or events) aimed at supporting you in your workplace.

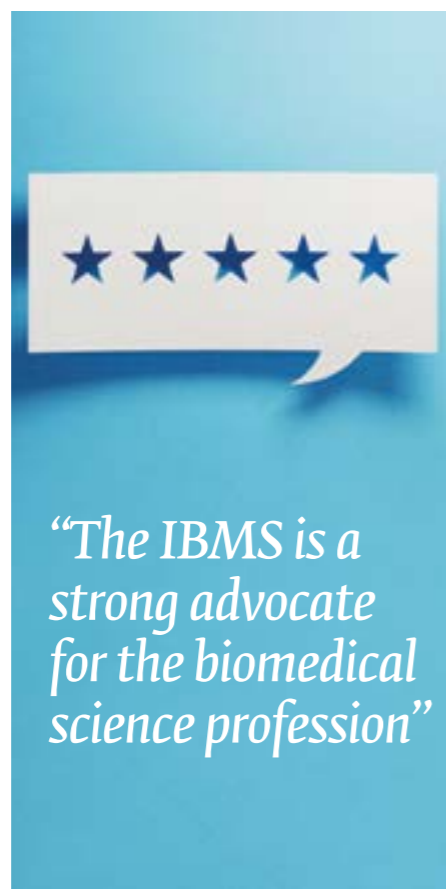
Reasons for joining and staying

Supporting career progression and being part of the professional body for biomedical science are the key drivers to membership for more than six in 10 members. Keeping up to date/enhancing knowledge and accessing IBMS qualifications are also cited by many. The majority of members suggest they are likely to renew their membership, citing the wish to remain part of the appropriate professional body for biomedical science and keep up to date with the profession.

Overall perception

In 2012, when we last undertook a large scale membership survey, 50% of members agreed that we perform very well or well as a membership body. In 2018 this fell slightly to 48%. Whilst we are pleased to have maintained roughly the same levels of satisfaction in very challenging times, it leaves a growing number of members who don't agree. This decline in satisfaction is something that we are committed to turning around and the survey is the first step in helping us identify what we need to change.

Students, Fellows and those members who are involved with Council,



committees and advisory panels rated the IBMS more positively, compared to other members.

Value for money

In 2012, 63% of members believed their membership offered value for money.

This fell to 59% during 2018.

The survey indicates that fewer Licentiates and

Members working in the NHS perceive their IBMS membership as value for money.

The most popular words to describe us, were "professional" and "informative". Looking forward, members would like to describe us as

"supportive" "forward-thinking" and "leaders in their field".

Benefits

The most valued member benefits are qualifications and training (46%), publications (42%), and the CPD scheme (40%). Congress was also well praised as an event that delivers much learning and opportunity to network.

However, the survey demonstrated that a number of members, particularly students and associates, were not aware of our full range of benefits. So we are looking at ways to improve how we communicate our benefits to members, encourage uptake and look at what new benefits we could offer.

CPD scheme

Whilst members value the CPD scheme and rate its delivery positively, proportionally fewer are satisfied with it. Some of the concerns relate to personal preferences for the old points-based system over the current reflective practice system and others were to do with the perceived lack of user friendliness and other technical issues.

As so many members join and renew because of a desire to enhance their knowledge through CPD, it is important to us that we provide a scheme that members are satisfied with. Over the coming months we will be looking in more detail at your feedback and putting in place plans to address your concerns.

One message was very clear to us from your feedback - the majority of members would be interested in more online learning activities that align to their career pathways. Strategy 2020 already makes provision for better use of technology through e-learning, so we will continue to explore options in this area and inform members of our progress and ideas.

Member engagement

By creating meaningful relationships

SURVEY STATISTICS

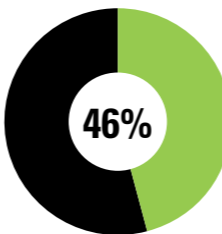


2,000+
The number of members who took part in the survey

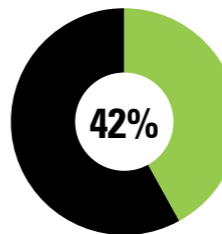


42%
said recruiting qualified staff at the required levels was their biggest issue

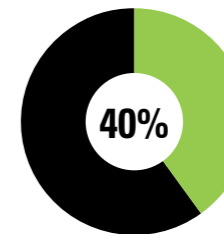
44%
said retaining staff was their biggest challenge



46%
of respondents value qualifications and training



42%
of respondents value publications



40%
of respondents value the CPD scheme

"I am proud to be part of a professional body that supports its members with qualifications, CPD and professional advice"

with our members and providing them with the most relevant services, we hope to ensure our own long-term growth through an increase in renewals and upgrades - with members also more likely to recommend membership to their work colleagues.

This relationship starts when a member joins and includes any further interactions with us or our membership community. Hopefully, by forming

these meaningful relationships and providing the best services we also create engaged members who are aware of the profession and its place in the "bigger picture"; people who are passionate and proud to be associated with our organisation.

In the IBMS survey, our member engagement levels came out relatively poor - with fewer members feeling that they could see what we are trying to

achieve. Locally and regionally, there appears to be little desire to engage with our IBMS branches. Whilst two fifths of members feel they could get more from the Institute. The bond members have with the IBMS is typically around career progression and CPD. However, nearly half of members suggest all biomedical science students and those working in the profession should be encouraged to join the IBMS, which correlates with the desire that many have for the Institute to act as the voice of the profession.

Over the coming months we will be looking in detail at the membership survey and developing plans aimed at improving our relationships with members and providing them with the level of engagement that they require.

Future priorities

Prioritising the accessibility of qualification paths and professional development opportunities are key priorities for students, associates and licentiates. Providing a high quality CPD scheme is also a priority for Licentiates and Members, whereas acting as a voice of the profession is important to Members and Fellows.

Next steps

Work is already underway to translate the findings into actions. Some of the feedback will be easier to address than others. Council and IBMS staff are currently digesting the feedback and developing plans to ensure that we do more of what we're doing right, and look at ways of improving where we need to. We will communicate these plans of action throughout the coming year via the website, e-newsletter, *The Biomedical Scientist* and through our social media channels.

If you have any questions about the survey, contact Lynda Rigby, Executive Head of Marketing and Membership, via lyndarigby@ibms.org

