

UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

England & Wales · Charity number 1191037

Details

Other names UKBC

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2020-08-26

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address PO Box 377
Lytham St. Annes
Lancashire
FY8 9LY

Phone 07405 100563

Email contact@ukbiologycompetitions.org

Website <https://ukbiologycompetitions.org/>

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE TO ADVANCE EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SUBJECT OF BIOLOGY BY:- 1. PROMOTING THE STUDY OF BIOLOGY AND ENCOURAGING AND ENHANCING BIOLOGY EDUCATION, PARTICULARLY IN SCHOOLS. 2. ENCOURAGING EXCELLENCE IN BIOLOGY BY ORGANISING ANNUAL BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS. 3. SELECTING, TRAINING AND ORGANISING TEAMS OF BIOLOGY STUDENTS AND LEADERS TO REPRESENT THE UK AT THE INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD AND AT SUCH OTHER INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE. 4. MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP OF INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD E.V. AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND PARTICIPATE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THAT ORGANISATION. 5. PROVIDING RESIDENTIAL TRAINING FOR POST-16 SCHOOL STUDENTS. NOTHING IN THIS CONSTITUTION SHALL AUTHORISE AN APPLICATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE CIO FOR THE PURPOSES WHICH ARE NOT CHARITABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 7 OF THE CHARITIES AND TRUSTEE INVESTMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005 AND SECTION 2 OF THE CHARITIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2008.

Activities: We run biology competitions for school students. Currently, we run three competitions: British Biology Olympiad, Intermediate Biology Olympiad and Biology Challenge. We participate in the International Biology Olympiad, fielding a team from the winners of British Biology Olympiad and volunteering in the international jury.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People

Geography

- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-08-31	£85,285	£54,985	-	-
2023-08-31	£102,878	£72,407	-	-
2022-08-31	£80,129	£61,260	-	-
2021-08-31	£237,596	£73,461	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Adam Daizhen Wright		2025-02-02
Dr Andrew Treharne MBE		2020-08-26
Neil Thomas Richards		2020-08-26
Robert Starley		2022-08-20

UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

England & Wales - Charity number 1191037

Accounts

United Kingdom Biology Competitions

Registered charity №1191037

Also known as UKBC

Annual report

1st September 2023 - 31st August 2024

Trustees

Dr Matthew Johnston

Dr Andrew Treharne MBE

Prof Kevin Moffat

Dr Joshua Hodgson

Neil Richards

Katherine Lister

Kim Ngan Luu Hoang

Jiaqi Chen

Dr Robert Starley

Structure & governance

Governing document

→ Constitution, 25th August 2020

Trustee selection

→ Election by existing trustees

Constitution

→ Charitable incorporated organisation
(CIO)

Objectives & activities

Objects

The objects of the CIO are to advance education for the public benefit of young people in the subject of Biology by:

1. Promoting the study of biology and encouraging and enhancing biology education, particularly in schools
2. Encouraging excellence in biology by organising annual biology competitions for school students

2

3. Selecting, training and organising teams of biology students and leaders to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad and at such other international Biology competitions as may be considered appropriate
4. Maintaining membership of International Biology Olympiad e.V. and to contribute to and participate in the affairs of that organisation
5. Providing residential training for post-16 school students.

Activities

Trustees reviewed the Charity Commission [guidance on public benefit](#) upon appointment and also at their annual general meeting. All activities were planned in line with guidance, UKBC's charitable objects and the business plan submitted to the Charity Commission upon incorporation.

Academic olympiads are increasingly prominent as the most rigorous and reputable academic competitions. United Kingdom Biology Competitions (UKBC) runs the British Biology Olympiad (BBO), and takes responsibility for the UK's presence at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO is one of the big four Olympiads with >70 participating countries. For younger children, UKBC runs Biology Challenge (BC) and the Intermediate Biology Olympiad (iBO).

The BBO, iBO and BC are three rigorous online competitions which schools arrange for their students to participate in. Students took part within their school (or at home due to coronavirus regulations) under examination conditions. Students were allocated medals based on their performance, and e-certificates were sent to schools. For the BBO, medal badges were also posted to schools for each medalling student.

This year, UKBC introduced a *team selection* paper for any gold medalists who wanted a chance to be selected for the IBO. This involved pre-reading a published scientific paper we circulated to students, with an opportunity to read around the topics it covered, followed by online technical questions based on this paper. UKBC hoped this would increase access by giving students who surprised themselves (and/or their teachers) with good results in the BBO to study and revise.

UKBC organised training and assessment of practical biology skills for the top performers of the BBO and team selection paper in collaboration with the University of Warwick. This year,

3

UKBC limited places to a maximum of 2 per school, and a minimum of 6 girls, to increase diversity. Practical training and assessment was carried out by several academic staff, plus support staff, from the School of Life Science. This was to select a team of four students to participate in the IBO.

The IBO team undertook further practical training at Reading School immediately prior to the IBO. UKBC organised for the team to attend the IBO in Astana, Kazakhstan. UKBC organised for a jury of three volunteers to accompany the team throughout IBO and act on behalf of the UK at the IBO.

UKBC comprises solely of volunteers. The most active are members of the UKBC committee, who are trustees. The competitions were written and assessed entirely by volunteers. There are approximately half-a-dozen volunteers who help write the competitions, or assist with team selection, training or at the IBO.

The Royal Society of Biology administered the competitions via a continuation of an existing services contract for the early part of the year. They were then replaced with an independent contractor whom trustees deemed offered better value for money. Outsourced administration tasks included managing school registration, organising travel and accommodation, processing payments, advertising, and providing general administration support to UKBC (e.g. arranging annual general meetings).

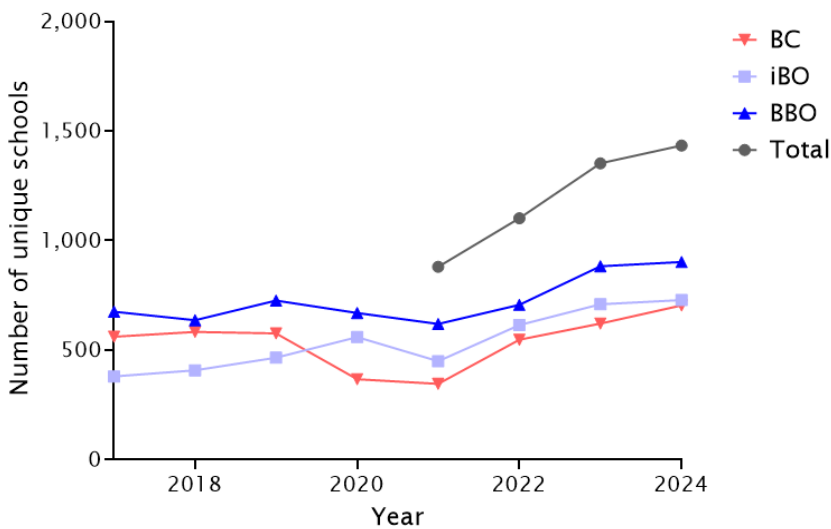
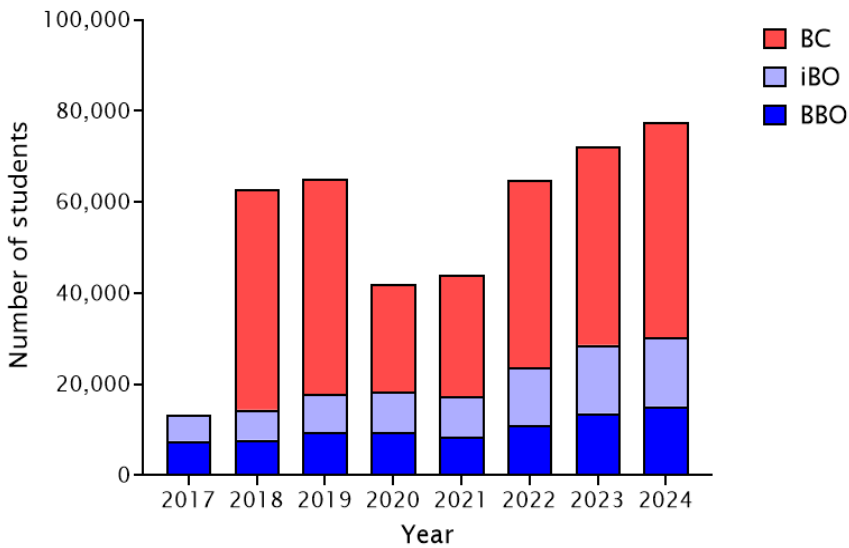
UKBC provided a mirror of its examination website to the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO, charity number 1146064) for a small fee (outstanding). UKBC has an agreement to provide the BBO, iBO and BC to ASDAN China which translates and runs the competitions in China. UKBC holds the UK's membership of IBO e.V, the governing body of the IBO. National members, such as UKBC, have joint sovereignty over IBO e.V.



Achievements & performance

Participation

The number of individual students and schools participating in each competition are shown in the tables below. These tables do not include students or schools participating via ASDAN China. Underlined figures indicate competitions which were disrupted by the pandemic.





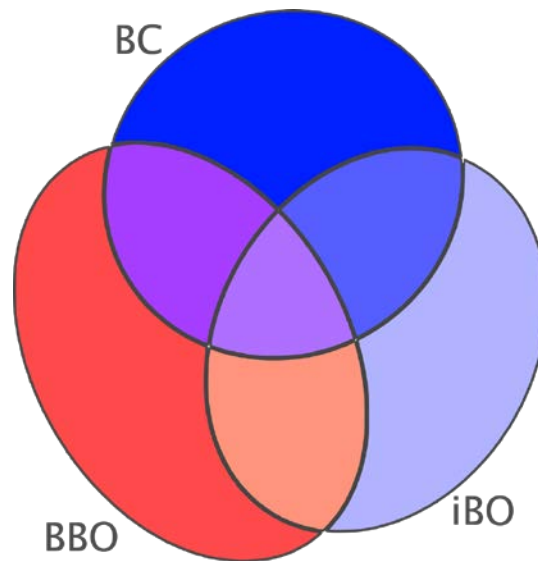
Year (number of students participating)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
BC	40000	48449	47336	<u>23695</u>	<u>26793</u>	41360	43641	47350
iBO	5667	6580	8282	<u>8757</u>	<u>8873</u>	12701	14961	15083
BBO	7500	7818	9465	9520	<u>8462</u>	<u>10897</u>	13659	15191
Total	53167	62847	65083	41972	44128	64958	72261	77624

Year (number of schools)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
BC	561	583	576	<u>367</u>	<u>346</u>	547	621	704
iBO	380	408	465	<u>559</u>	<u>449</u>	614	709	729
BBO	675	636	726	669	<u>619</u>	<u>707</u>	883	902
Total unique	NA	NA	NA	NA	880	1102	1353	1434

Most schools took part in two competitions, suggesting scope to recruit the same schools to take part in all three. Standalone sixth forms cannot participate in BC, whereas schools without sixth forms cannot participate in iBO or BBO, but any schools participating in the BBO could be recruited to the iBO and vice versa.

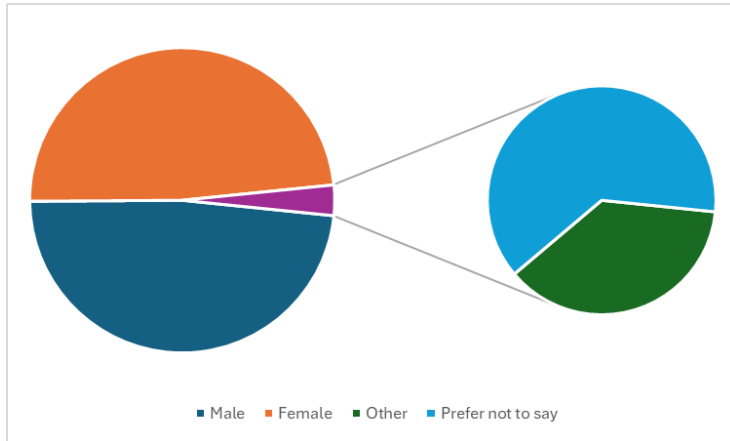


Area proportional euler diagram (number of unique schools, 2024).

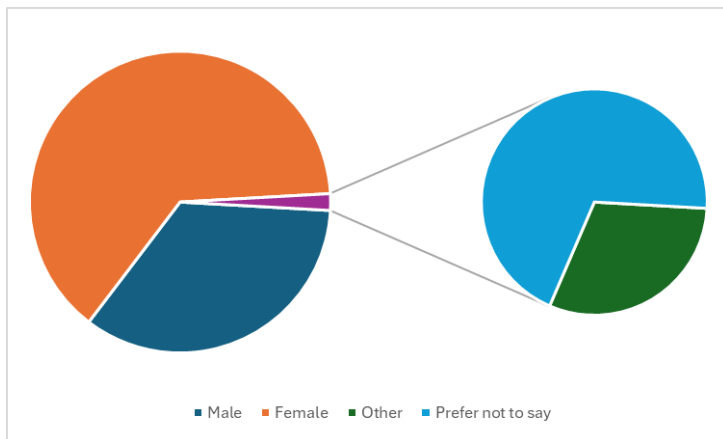
Participation grew strongly to record levels. The fee structure was reduced compared to 2022/3; the BBO was maintained completely free to all UK schools and BC, and the iBO were made free to all UK schools from a £30 flat-fee for unlimited places. A £30 flat-fee for unlimited places was charged for all international schools participating in the BBO, iBO and BC.

Overall, ~19% of participating schools (~12% of students) were overseas. Trustees will examine ways to grow overseas participation and continue to review the fees charged for this.

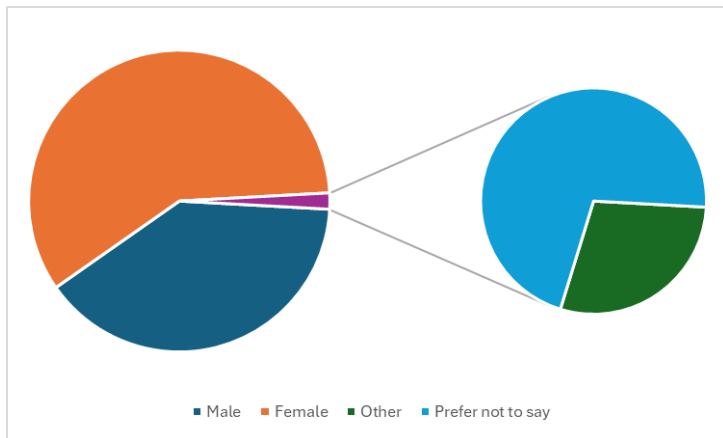
UKBC collects information on the gender of participating students for monitoring and outreach purposes. The gender breakdown of participants mirrors the gender breakdown of students studying biology in each age group in the UK, with a higher proportion of females at A Level.



Biology Challenge



Intermediate Biology Olympiad (Y12)



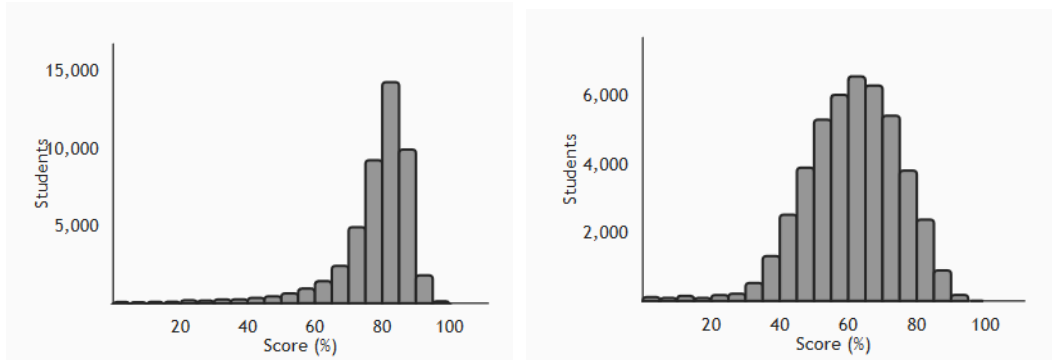
British Biology Olympiad (Y12 and Y13)



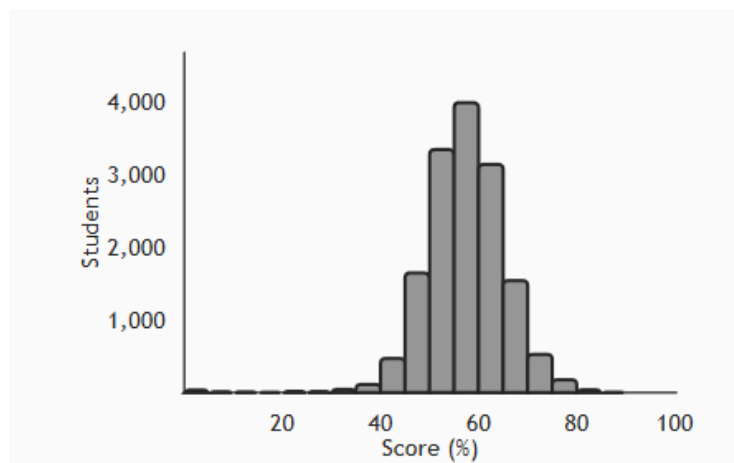
Academic rigour

Grade distributions for each competition had desirable characteristics. Paper 1 of Biology Challenge is designed to be a straightforward test of school biology, with Paper 2 having an emphasis on problem-solving. Distributions for iBO and BBO were similar overall, with the second BBO paper being slightly more difficult.

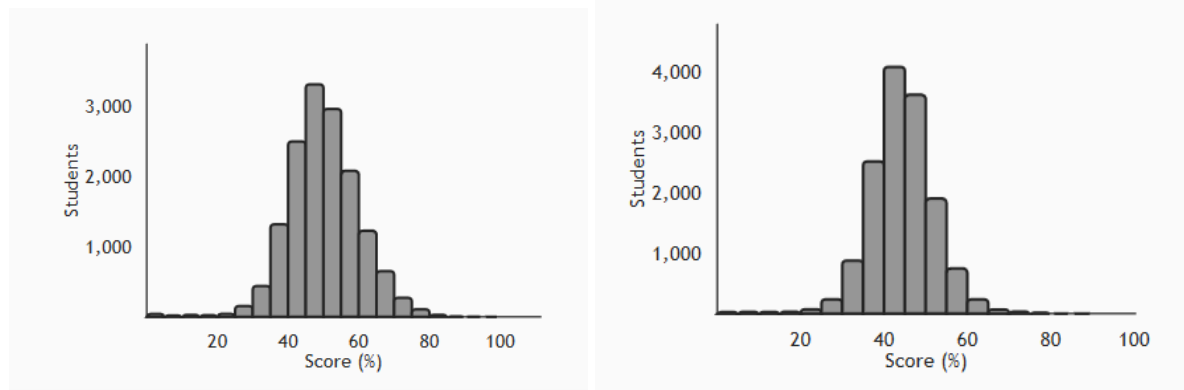
Biology Challenge (papers 1 & 2)



Intermediate Biology Olympiad



British Biology Olympiad (papers 1 & 2)



The UK team won three silver and a bronze medal at the Astana IBO 2024. UKBC will look to improve and expand training for the team selected to attend the next IBO. The assessments run by the University of Warwick for the winners of the BBO were outstanding. The attending students underwent a day of intensive training before being examined on the material the following day. Similarly, the practical training at Reading School was extremely useful for the team. Next year, UKBC will gather the students at Warwick a day or two early to teach basic skills so all students are primed to get the most out of the practicals undertaken with Warwick staff.

The winners of the iBO will attend a residential trip run by the Field Studies Council. The 2023 trip for winners of the preceding iBO was excellent. UKBC has decided to work with the Field Studies Council to offer more days, and a week-long course for winners of the iBO in future. Top students will be chosen by ballots, and also holistic measures of their access to similar opportunities.



Website

UKBC made a significant investment in a new online examination system in 2021. This year, more minor upgrades were carried out to add new functionalities. There is some evidence of improved participation by allowing better leverage of school data. UKBC has decided to invest more in advertising via the Association for Science Education next year.

UKBC phased out the option for schools to pay via invoice (transfer) by making everything free for UK schools and insisting on card payments for international schools. Our website is able to automatically process and account all such payments, greatly simplifying financial administration, eliminating payment delinquency and reducing the number of incorrect payments we receive.

ASDAN China

UKBC provided the BC, iBO and BBO competitions to ASDAN China. Participation rates in all three competitions grew strongly. In 2023, ASDAN began translating the competitions into Chinese to aid Chinese competitors.

Volunteers

Volunteers new to 2023/24 have been recruited based on contacts, ex-team members and their teachers. UKBC invited them to planning meetings and the AGM for next year. UKBC will attempt to recruit more current or retired school teachers, including by advertising for this with the ASE and on invites to FSC trips.

Policies

Data protection and safeguarding

Trustees reviewed and updated UKBC's data protection and safeguarding policies.

Sustainability

UKBC undertook a review of its environmental footprint and attempted to quantify its carbon emissions. At the AGM, trustees discussed these findings and undertook to

reduce its emissions where possible without reducing the beneficial impact of its activities, and to offset some of its carbon emissions. A copy of this review and undertakings are available on the UKBC website.

Financial review

Summary accounts are provided in a separate document.

Reserves policy

The trustees set a target reserve level of 1.5 years expenditure (approximately £100,000). The reserves grew to £243,776, from £213,475 at the start of the year. This was due to large savings on a new administration contract and steadily growing participation, outweighing increased expenditure on most activities and strongly reduced income due to making all the competitions free to UK schools.

At the end of the accounting period, trustees carefully reviewed the reserves policy and strategies to reduce them to the target level. UKBC intends to continue to markedly increase expenditure on charitable activities, including by expanding team selection and offering more FSC trips. UKBC also intends to invest in advertising and growing its volunteer base. UKBC continues to explore the appetite for a new international competition with overseas partners, for which our reserves would be a useful investment deposit.

Major expenditure

The largest single part of UKBC expenditure (£14,000) is the cost of a services agreement with to provide an administrator for the competitions. Trustees streamlined UKBC operations to reduce administrative workload, and trustees decided to terminate an older and more expensive agreement.

Expenses paid to trustees

The table below details all money transferred from UKBC to its trustees.

Trustee	Sub total	Total	Description
Joshua Hodgson	£258.34	£1,582.28	<i>IBO e.v. membership</i>
	£1,323.94		<i>Expenses & equipment for team selection in Warwick</i>
	£1,837.11		<i>Website hosting ⁽¹⁾</i>
Matthew Johnston	£648.10	£8,114.04	<i>Expenses for team selection in Warwick</i>
	£885.06		<i>AGM & awards dinner hotels, food, accommodation</i>
	£4,743.77		<i>IBO participation fee</i>
Robert Starley	£47.30	£315.25	<i>AGM attendance</i>
	£267.95		<i>Expenses from IBO</i>
Kim Ngan Luu Hoang	£1.69	£462.77	<i>AGM attendance</i>
	£53.05		<i>Expenses from team selection in Warwick</i>
	£408.03		<i>Expenses from IBO</i>
Andrew Treharne	£140.69	£15,715.70	<i>AGM attendance</i>
	£136.59		<i>Attendance at in person meeting with ASDAN</i>
	£396.00		<i>PO box fee</i>
	£498.65		<i>Expenses for team selection in Warwick</i>
	£846.69		<i>Medal postage & packaging</i>
	£192.00		<i>Volunteer safeguarding training</i>
	£125.04		<i>Email hosting</i>
	£6,580.04		<i>Flights, accommodation & expenses for the IBO</i>
	£6,800.00		<i>Administration contract ⁽²⁾</i>
Neil Richards	£65.00	£65.00	<i>Expenses for team selection in Warwick</i>
	Grand total	£26,190.04	

(1) Includes third party costs for servers etc and a £50 per quarter retainer for continued support, upgrading, bug-fixing.

(2) UKBC signed a services agreement with Andrew for him to provide administrative services as a self-employed contractor, £13,600 P.A.*

*Charity commission guidance on paying trustees, including determining value for money, monitoring performance, and making the decision independently of Andrew was followed.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above at a vote held on the 8th of April 2025



Dr Andrew Treharne, MBE

Trustee

5th May 2025



Mr Neil Richards

Trustee

9th May 2025



Dr Robert Starley

Trustee

9th May 2025

United Kingdom Biology Competitions

Registered charity N° 1191037



Annual accounts

1st September 2023 - 31st August 2024

Receipts

Item	2023/24 Unrestricted funds	Notes	2022/23	2021/22
Biology Challenge participation fees	£3,750	Made free to UK schools	£18,012	£16,335
Intermediate Biology Olympiad participation fees	£4,680	Made free to UK schools	£20,300	£17,979
British Biology Olympiad participation fees	£5,820		£6,690	£4,679
Selling papers to other charities	£67,850	To ASDAN China	£53,432	£40,136
Selling examination system to other charities	£1,000	To British Physics Olympiad	£0	£1,000
Interest	£1,390		£0	£0
Misc. inc. collection of arrears & mistaken payments	£795		£4,443	£0
Total receipts	£85,285		£102,877	£80,129

Payments

Administration	£14,196		£42,000	£42,000
Participation in the IBO	£12,372	All inclusive	£12,379	£8,558
University residential course	£9,535	At University of Warwick	£6,931	£6,674
Ecology site courses	£2,659	At Field Studies Council	£0	£0
Certificates / medals	£6,336		£3,065	£0
Advertising	£3,167		£720	£720
Awards ceremony /dinner	£1,112		£225	£0
Committee/volunteer expenses	£1,306	Including insurance, DBS checks	£1,038	£790
Professional fees	£400		£400	£400
Website maintenance	£1,962		£1,802	£1,399
Payment processing fees	£460	To Stripe	£723	£421
Account fees	£78	To CAF bank	£84	£159
Return of mistaken payments	£131	To sender / correct recipient, incl. some	£3,041	£137
Sub total	£53,713		£72,407	£61,260

Asset purchases

	£1,272	Pipettes	£0	£0
Total payments	£54,985		£72,407	£61,260

Net

Receipts less payments	£30,301		£30,471	£18,869
-------------------------------	----------------	--	----------------	----------------

Assets at year end

Item	2023/24 Unrestricted funds	Notes	2022/23	2021/22
Cash at end last year	£213,475			
Cash at end this year	£243,776		£213,475	£183,004
Outstanding invoices	£0	From the latest year only	£8,730	£7,440
Total assets	£243,776			

Liabilities at year end

Deferred income (2020-21)	£270		£270	£330
Deferred income (2021-22)	£2,118		£2,118	£2,388
Deferred income (2022-23)	£3,120		£3,120	£0
Deferred income (2023-24)	£454		£0	£0
Outstanding invoices	£0		£0	£0
Total liabilities	£5,962			

Declaration


The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.



Mr Neil Richards
Trustee
9th May 2025



Dr Andrew Treharne
Trustee
5th May 2025



Dr Robert Starley
Trustee
9th May 2025





Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

On accounts for the year ended

31/08/2024 Charity no (if any) 1191037

Set out on pages

14 of the ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & FAR

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
• the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
• the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 20/05/2025

Name: SAM CLARKE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

ACA (ICAEW)

(if any):

Address: 17 HORNBEAM CLOSE

DURHAM

DT 1 IEN

Section B Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

England & Wales - Charity number 1191037

Accounts

United Kingdom Biology Competitions

Registered charity № 1191037
53 Alexandra Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 3EA
Also known as UKBC



Annual report

1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023

Trustees

Dr Matthew Johnston

Dr Andrew Treharne MBE

Prof Kevin Moffat

Dr Joshua Hodgson

Neil Richards

Katherine Lister

Kim Ngan Luu Hoang

Jiaqi Chen

Dr Robert Starley

Structure & governance

Governing document

→ Constitution, 25th August 2020

Trustee selection

→ Election by existing trustees

Constitution

→ Charitable incorporated organisation
(CIO)

Objectives & activities

Objects

The objects of the CIO are to advance education for the public benefit of young people in the subject of Biology by:

1. Promoting the study of biology and encouraging and enhancing biology education, particularly in schools
2. Encouraging excellence in biology by organising annual biology competitions for school students

2

3. Selecting, training and organising teams of biology students and leaders to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad and at such other international Biology competitions as may be considered appropriate
4. Maintaining membership of International Biology Olympiad e.V. and to contribute to and participate in the affairs of that organisation
5. Providing residential training for post-16 school students.

Activities

Trustees reviewed the Charity Commission [guidance on public benefit](#) upon appointment and also at their annual general meeting. All activities were planned in line with guidance, UKBC's charitable objects and the business plan submitted to the Charity Commission upon incorporation.

Academic olympiads are increasingly prominent as the most rigorous and reputable academic competitions. United Kingdom Biology Competitions (UKBC) runs the British Biology Olympiad (BBO), and takes responsibility for the UK's presence at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO is one of the big four Olympiads with >70 participating countries. For younger children, UKBC runs Biology Challenge (BC) and the Intermediate Biology Olympiad (iBO).

The BBO, iBO and BC are three rigorous online competitions which schools arrange for their students to participate in. Students took part within their school (or at home due to coronavirus regulations) under examination conditions. Students were allocated medals based on their performance, and certificates were sent to schools.

UKBC organised training and assessment of practical biology skills for the top performers of the BBO in collaboration with the University of Warwick. Practical training and assessment was carried out by several academic staff, plus support staff, from the School of Life Science. This was to select a team of four students to participate in the IBO.

UKBC organised for the team to attend the IBO in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates. UKBC organised for a jury of three volunteers to accompany the team throughout IBO and act on behalf of the UK at the IBO. In addition, a third member was a member of the Emirati scientific committee and lead editor of the theory paper. They attended the IBO on behalf of the hosts to help finalise the papers and run the international jury / sub-jury.

3

UKBC comprises solely of volunteers. The most active are members of the UKBC committee, who are trustees. The competitions were written and assessed entirely by volunteers. There are approximately half-a-dozen volunteers who help write the competitions, or assist with team selection, training or at the IBO.

The Royal Society of Biology administered the competitions via a services contract, including managing school registration, organising travel and accommodation, processing payments, advertising, and providing general administration support to UKBC (e.g. arranging annual general meetings).

UKBC provided a mirror of its examination website to the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO, charity number 1146064) for a small fee (outstanding). UKBC has an agreement to provide the BBO, iBO and BC to ASDAN China (a British educational charity, charity number 1066927) which translates and runs the competitions in China. UKBC holds the UK's membership of IBO e.V, the governing body of the IBO. National members, such as UKBC, have joint sovereignty over IBO e.V.

Achievements & performance

Participation

The number of individual students and schools participating in each competition are shown in the tables below. These tables do not include students or schools participating via ASDAN China. Underlined figures indicate competitions which were disrupted by the pandemic.

	Year (number of students participating)						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
BC	NA	48449	47336	<u>23695</u>	<u>26793</u>	41360	43641
iBO	5667	6580	8282	<u>8757</u>	<u>8873</u>	12701	14961
BBO	7500	7818	9465	9520	<u>8462</u>	<u>10897</u>	13659
Total	NA	62847	65083	41972	44128	64958	72261

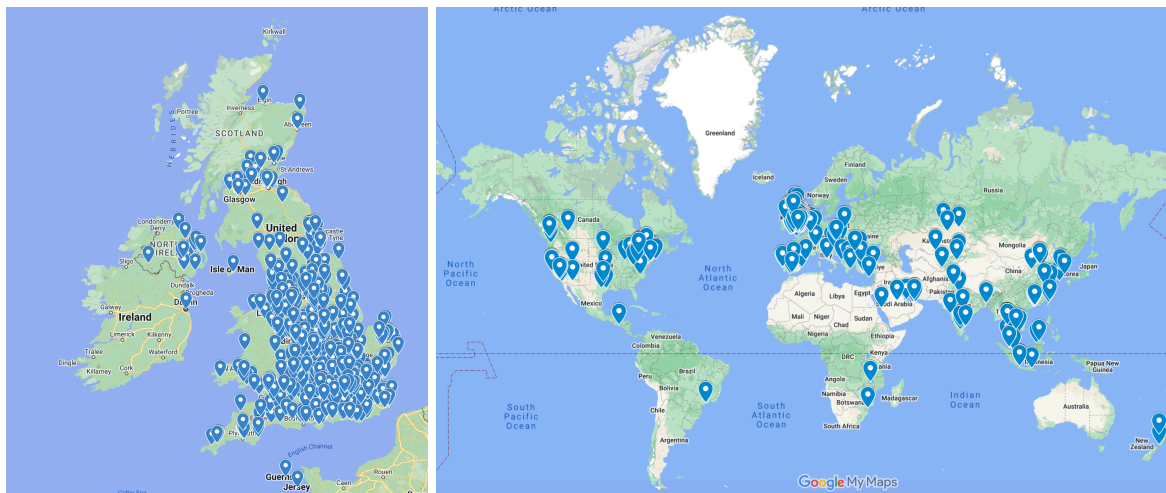


	Year (number of schools)						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
BC	561	583	576	<u>367</u>	<u>346</u>	547	621
iBO	380	408	465	<u>559</u>	<u>449</u>	614	709
BBO	675	636	726	669	<u>619</u>	<u>707</u>	883
Total unique	NA	NA	NA	NA	880	1102	1353

Most schools took part in two competitions, suggesting scope to recruit the same schools to take part in all three.

Participation grew strongly to record levels. The fee structure was maintained from 2022; the BBO was completely free to all UK schools. A £30 flat-fee for unlimited places was charged for BC, the iBO and international schools participating in the BBO. Trustees agreed to make all competitions free to all UK schools in 2024.

Schools were predominantly based in the UK, although schools from across the world took part in all competitions, as shown in the maps below.





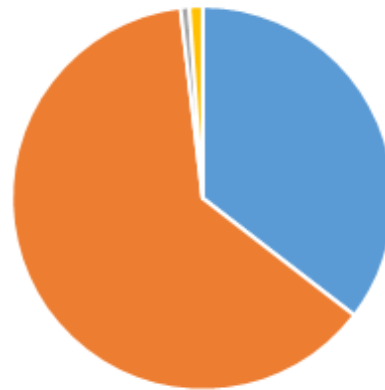
5

Overall, ~20% of participating schools (~10% of students) were overseas. Grade boundaries were set based on UK schools alone, to protect the competitions from distortions created by growing numbers of overseas schools. Trustees will examine ways to grow overseas participation and examine fair participation fees for them.

UKBC collects information on the fee-paying status and gender of participating students for monitoring and outreach purposes. Overall, ~60% of students participated from non-fee-paying UK schools. This is lower than the proportion of all students at non-fee-paying schools, suggesting outreach and advertising could be focused on this sector. The gender breakdown of participants mirrors the gender breakdown of students studying biology in each age group in the UK: older years are increasingly dominated by females.



Biology Challenge



Intermediate Biology Olympiad

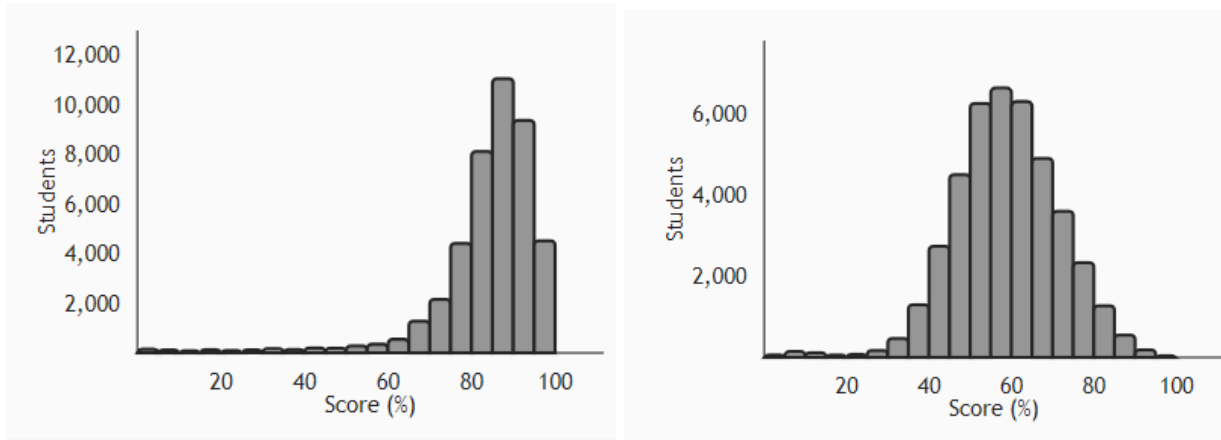


British Biology Olympiad

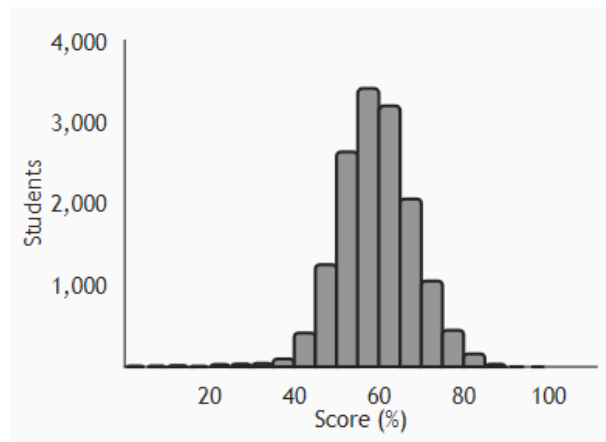


Academic rigour

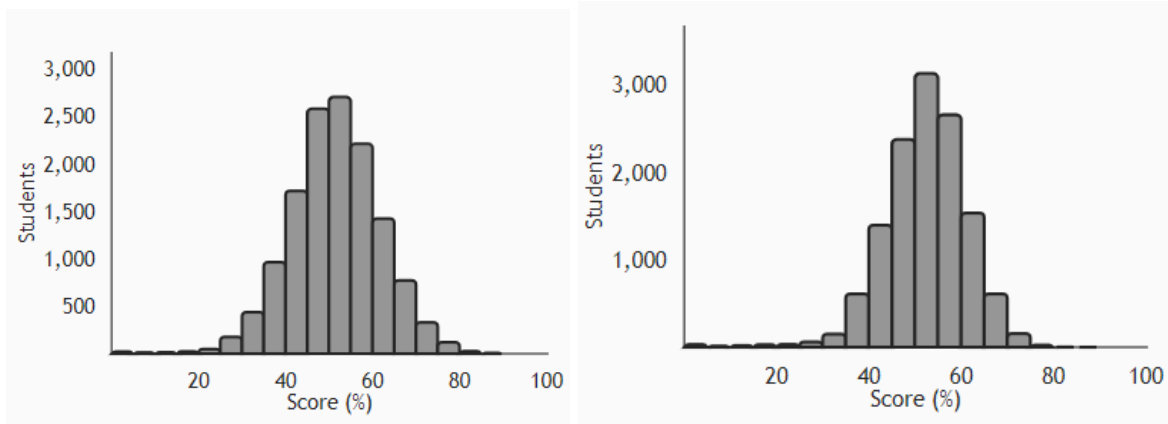
Grade distributions for each competition had desirable characteristics, with successive papers from the BC to BBO increasing in difficulty, as shown in the figures below. Trustees will continue to work to include questions of a variety of difficulties to stretch the distributions further, while maintaining to engage students at all levels.



Biology Challenge (papers 1 & 2)



Intermediate Biology Olympiad



British Biology Olympiad (papers 1 & 2)

The UK team won one gold, two silver and a bronze medal at the AI Ain IBO 2023. UKBC will look to improve and expand training for the team selected to attend the next IBO. The assessments run by the University of Warwick for the winners of the BBO were outstanding. The attending students underwent a day of intensive training before being examined on the material the following day. The winners of the IBO will attend a residential trip run by the Field Studies Council.

New website

UKBC made a significant investment in a new online examination system in 2021. This year, more minor upgrades were carried out to add new functionalities. There is some evidence of improved participation by allowing better leverage of school data (see next section).

In 2022, UKBC stopped distributing paper certificates as they came with high financial costs, were environmentally wasteful, and there was often a long lead time for schools to receive them. Instead, the UKBC website is now able to automatically generate e-certificates instantaneously for teachers to download and distribute. In 2023, due to popular demand, UKBC purchased and distributed medals as mementos.

ASDAN China

UKBC provided the BC, iBO and BBO competitions to ASDAN China. Participation rates in all three competitions grew strongly. ASDAN began translating the competitions into Chinese to aid Chinese competitors.

Volunteers

UKBC appointed new trustees. Volunteers new to 2022 attended team selection and the IBO in Al Ain. These were past participants in the IBO, and have relevant expertise for running the senior programs. UKBC will attempt to recruit more current or retired school teachers.

Policies

Data protection and safeguarding

Trustees reviewed and updated UKBC's data protection and safeguarding policies.

Sustainability

UKBC undertook a review of its environmental footprint and attempted to quantify its carbon emissions. At the AGM, trustees discussed these findings and undertook to reduce its emissions where possible without reducing the beneficial impact of its activities, and to offset some of its carbon emissions. A copy of this review and undertakings are available on the UKBC website.

Financial review

Summary accounts are provided in a separate document.

Reserves policy

The trustees set a target reserve level of 1.5 years expenditure (approximately £100,000). The reserves grew to £213,475, from £183,004 at the start of the year. This was due to unexpectedly strong income due to greater than trend participation growth, despite increased expenditure on hosting an awards dinner, team training and attending the IBO.

At the end of the accounting period, trustees carefully reviewed the reserves policy and strategies to reduce them to the target level. Trustees decided to expand the number of free entries to the competitions to constrain income and prepare outreach and training programmes

to increase expenditure. An accountant will also be hired to instigate VAT filings when the appropriate income threshold is crossed.

Major expenditure

The major part of UKBC expenditure (£42,000 inc. VAT) is the cost of a services agreement with RSB to provide an administrator for the competitions. Trustees have streamlined UKBC operations to reduce administrative workload, and trustees decided to terminate this agreement to be replaced with a cheaper alternative early in the next financial year.

Expenses paid to trustees

The table below details all money transferred from UKBC to its trustees.

Trustee	Sub total	Total	Description
Joshua	£477.28	£702.28	<i>IBO travel & jury refreshments</i>
Hodgson	£225.00		<i>Awards dinner</i>
	£1,616.59	£9,297.71	<i>Website hosting (1)</i>
Matthew	£618.90		<i>Food at team selection</i>
Johnston	£359.97		<i>Hotel for AGM</i>
	£6,702.25		<i>IBO flights for team & jury</i>
Robert Starley	£101.55		<i>IBO travel & team / jury refreshments</i>
	£14.48	£479.35	<i>Spring meeting refreshments</i>
Kim Ngan	£37.05		<i>Travel to team selection</i>
Luu Hoang	£427.82		<i>IBO travel & team / jury refreshments</i>
	£146.90	£917.59	<i>Travel to team selection</i>
Andrew	£269.13		<i>IBO e.V. membership fee</i>
Treharne	£316.61		<i>IBO travel & team / jury refreshments</i>
	£184.95		<i>Email server hosting (includes previous years costs)</i>
	Grand total	£11,394	

Foot notes

(1) Includes third party costs for servers etc and a £50 per quarter retainer for continued support, upgrading, bug-fixing.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above at a vote held on the 30th May 2024.



Dr Matthew Johnston

Chair

12th June 2024

Dr Andrew Treharne, MBE

Secretary

12th June 2024



Dr Joshua Hodgson

Treasurer

12th June 2024



Annual accounts

1st September 2022 - 31st August 2023

Receipts

Item	2022/23		2021/22	2020/21
	Unrestricted funds	Notes		
Biology Challenge participation fees	£18,012		£16,335	£9,720
Intermediate Biology Olympiad participation fees	£20,300		£17,979	£11,760
British Biology Olympiad participation fees	£6,690	Made free in 2021 due to pandemic	£4,679	£0
Selling papers to other charities	£53,432	To ASDAN China	£40,136	£26,460
Selling examination system to other charities	£0	To British Physics Olympiad	£1,000	£0
Misc. inc. collection of arrears & mistaken payments	£4,443		£0	£656
Total receipts	£102,878		£80,129	£237,596

(Including 189000 grant)

Payments

Administration	£42,000	To Royal Society of Biology	£42,000	£42,000	
Participation in the IBO	£12,379	All inclusive	Virtual in 2021	£8,558	£1,025
University residential course	£6,931	At University of Warwick		£6,674	£0
Certificates / medals	£3,065	Surplus for subsequent years		£0	£4,489
Advertising	£720			£720	
Awards ceremony /dinner	£225			£0	£1,434
Committee/volunteer expenses	£1,038	Including insurance, DBS checks		£790	£1,097
Professional fees	£400			£400	£1,800
Website maintenance	£1,802			£1,399	£1,293
Payment processing fees	£723	To Stripe		£421	£218
Account fees	£84	To CAF bank		£159	£105
Return of mistaken payments	£3,041	To sender / correct recipient, incl. some rec. in prev. year		£137	
Sub total	£72,407			£61,260	£53,461

Asset purchases

	£0	New website built in 2021	£0	£20,000
Total payments	£72,407		£61,260	£73,461

Net

Receipts less payments	£30,471		£18,869	£164,135
-------------------------------	----------------	--	----------------	-----------------

Assets at year end

Item	2021/22		2021/22	2020/21
	Unrestricted funds	Notes		
Cash at end last year	£183,004			
Cash at end this year	£213,475		£183,004	£164,135
Outstanding invoices	£8,730	From the latest year only	£7,440	£0
Total assets	£222,205			

Liabilities at year end

Deferred income (2020-21)	£270		£330	£420
Deferred income (2021-22)	£2,118		£2,388	£0
Deferred income (2022-23)	£3,120		£0	£0
Outstanding invoices	£0		£0	£0
Total liabilities	£5,508			

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.

Dr Matthew Johnston
Chair
12th June 2024

Dr Andrew Treharne MBE
Secretary
12th June 2024

Dr Joshua Hodgson
Treasurer
12th June 2024



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's
report on the accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

On accounts for the year
ended

31/08/2023

Charity no
(if any)

1191037

Set out on pages

11 OF THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND TAR (if additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2023.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Sam Clarke

Date:

14/06/2024

Name:

SAM CLARKE

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ACA (ICAEW)

Address:

11 HORNBEAM CLOSE
DURHAM
DH1 1EN.

UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

England & Wales - Charity number 1191037

Accounts

United Kingdom Biology

Competitions

Registered charity N° 1191037
53 Alexandra Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 3EA
Also known as UKBC



Annual report

1st September 2021 - 31st August 2022

Trustees

Dr Matthew Johnston

Dr Andrew Treharne MBE

Dr Joshua Hodgson

Neil Richards

Katherine Lister

Kim Ngan Luu Hoang

Jiaqi Chen

Dr Robert Starley

Structure & governance

Governing document

→ Constitution, 25th August 2020

Trustee selection

→ Election by existing trustees

Constitution

→ Charitable incorporated organisation
(CIO)

Objectives & activities

Objects

The objects of the CIO are to advance education for the public benefit of young people in the subject of Biology by:

1. Promoting the study of biology and encouraging and enhancing biology education, particularly in schools
2. Encouraging excellence in biology by organising annual biology competitions for school students



2

3. Selecting, training and organising teams of biology students and leaders to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad and at such other international Biology competitions as may be considered appropriate
4. Maintaining membership of International Biology Olympiad e.V. and to contribute to and participate in the affairs of that organisation
5. Providing residential training for post-16 school students.

Activities

Trustees reviewed the Charity Commission [guidance on public benefit](#) upon appointment and also at their annual general meeting. All activities were planned in line with guidance, UKBC's charitable objects and the business plan submitted to the Charity Commission upon incorporation.

Academic olympiads are increasingly prominent as the most rigorous and reputable academic competitions. United Kingdom Biology Competitions (UKBC) runs the British Biology Olympiad (BBO), and takes responsibility for the UK's presence at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO is one of the big four Olympiads with >70 participating countries. For younger children, UKBC runs Biology Challenge (BC) and the Intermediate Biology Olympiad (iBO).

The BBO, iBO and BC are three rigorous online competitions which schools arrange for their students to participate in. Students took part within their school (or at home due to coronavirus regulations) under examination conditions. Students were allocated medals based on their performance, and certificates were sent to schools.

UKBC organised training and assessment of practical biology skills for the top performers of the BBO in collaboration with the University of Warwick. This was to select a team of four students to participate in the IBO. UKBC organised for the team to attend the IBO in Yerevan, Armenia. UKBC organised for a jury of two volunteers to accompany the team throughout IBO and act on behalf of the UK at the IBO.

UKBC comprises solely of volunteers. The most active are members of the UKBC committee, who are trustees. The competitions were written and assessed entirely by volunteers. There are approximately twenty volunteers who help write the competitions, or assist with team selection, training or at the IBO. The Royal Society of Biology administered the competitions via a services contract, including managing school registration, organising travel and accommodation,

processing payments, advertising, and providing general administration support to UKBC (e.g. arranging annual general meetings). Practical training and assessment took place at the University of Warwick. Training and assessment was carried out by two academic staff, plus support staff, from the School of Life Science. UKBC provided a mirror of its examination website to the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO, charity number 1146064) for a small fee. UKBC has an agreement to provide the BBO, iBO and BC to ASDAN China (a British educational charity, charity number 1066927) which runs the competitions in China. UKBC holds the UK's membership of IBOe.V, the governing body of the IBO. National members, such as UKBC, have joint sovereignty over IBO e.V.

Achievements & performance

Participation

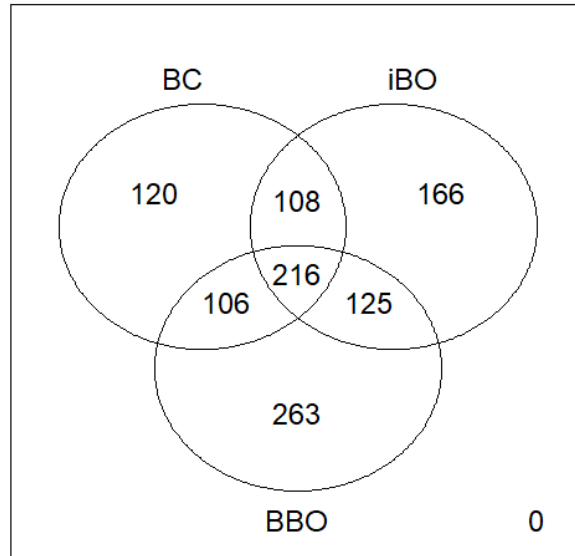
The number of individual students and schools participating in each competition are shown in the tables below. These tables do not include students or schools participating via ASDAN China. Underlined figures indicate competitions which were disrupted by the pandemic.

	Year (number of students participating)					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
BC	NA	48449	47336	<u>23695</u>	<u>26793</u>	41360
iBO	5667	6580	8282	<u>8757</u>	<u>8873</u>	12701
BBO	7500	7818	9465	9520	<u>8462</u>	<u>10897</u>
Total	NA	62847	65083	41972	44128	64958

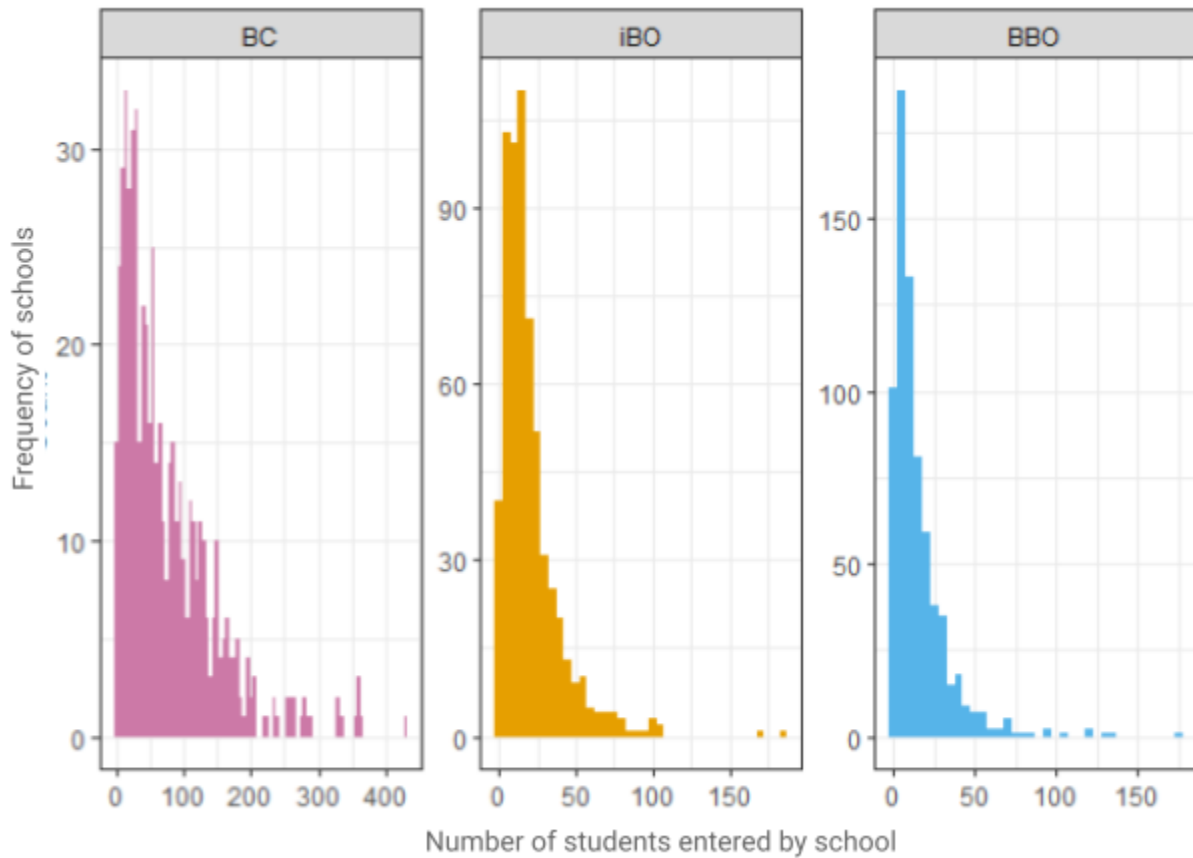
	Year (number of schools)					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
BC	561	583	576	<u>367</u>	<u>346</u>	547
iBO	380	408	465	<u>559</u>	<u>449</u>	614
BBO	675	636	726	669	<u>619</u>	<u>707</u>
Total unique	NA	NA	NA	NA	880	1102



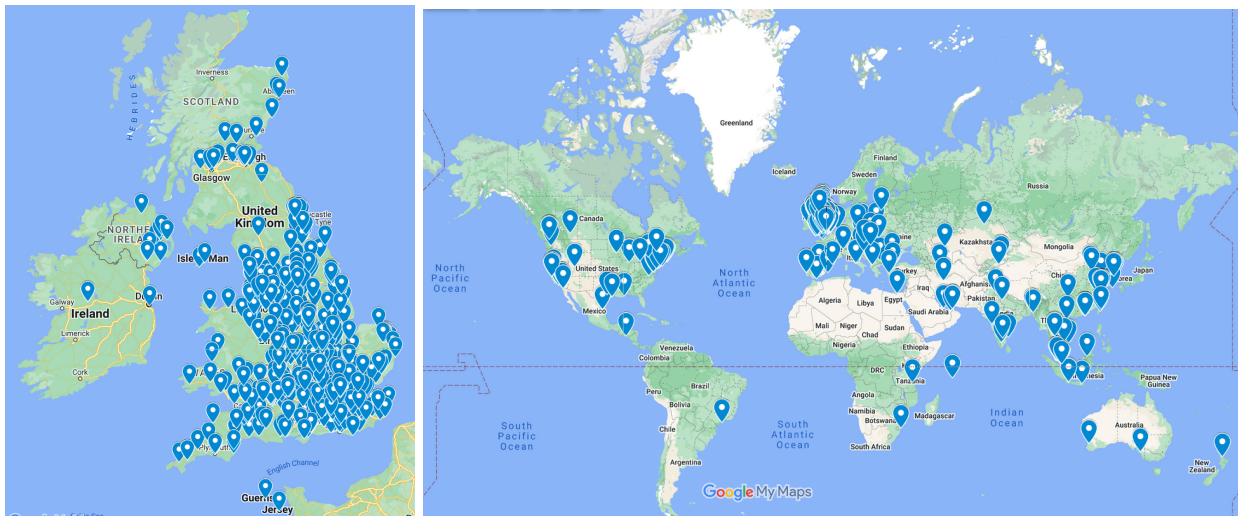
The Venn diagram below shows that most schools took part in two competitions, suggesting scope to recruit the same schools to take part in all three.



Participation rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, despite schools and students being under severe ongoing pandemic-related stress. A new fee regime was in place this year, after competitions falling during lockdowns being made free in recent years. The BBO was made completely free to all UK schools. A £30 flat-fee for unlimited places was charged for BC, the iBO and international schools participating in the BBO. Trustees will assess a fee regime which will maximise participation in 2023. Trustees will take account of the number of students entered from each school (shown below) to do this.



Schools were predominantly based in the UK, although schools from across the world took part in all competitions, as shown in the maps below.





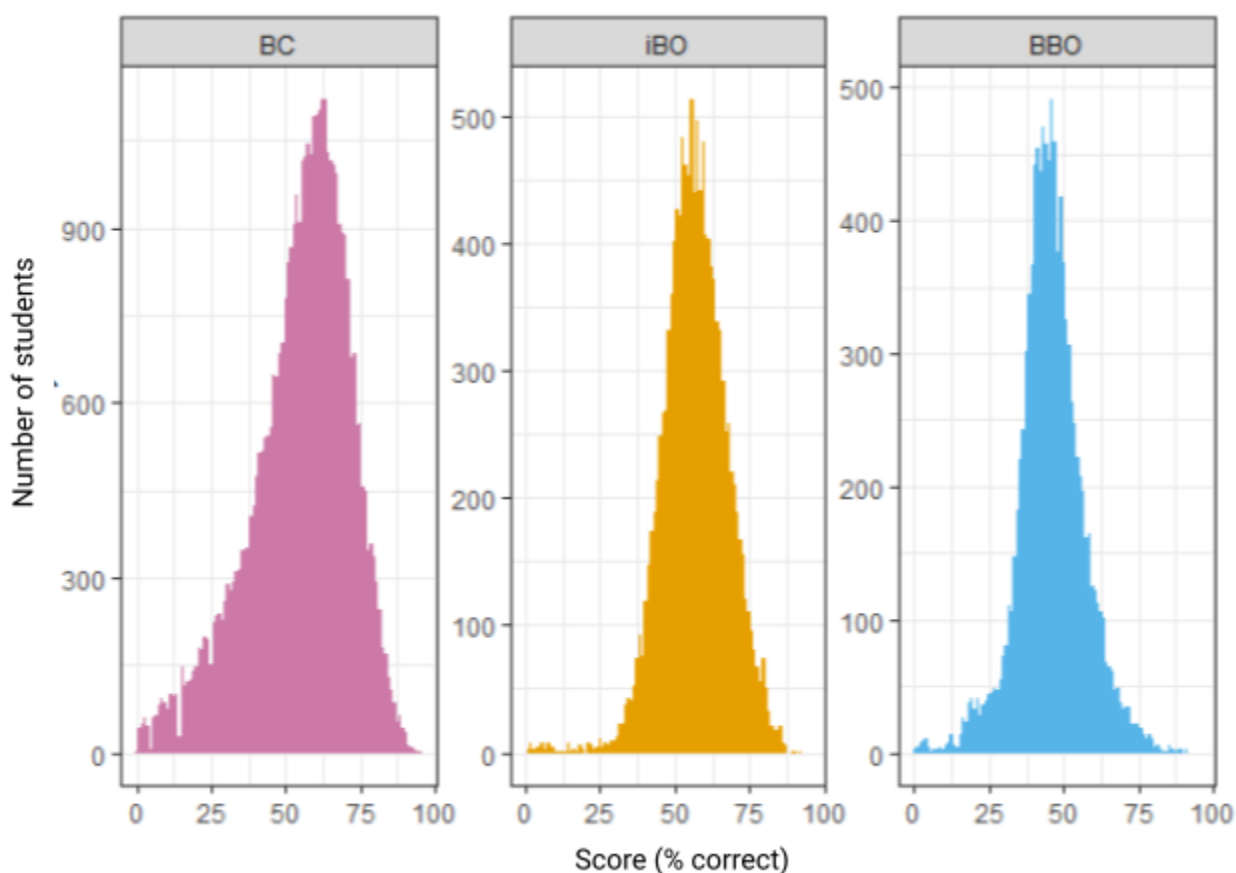
6

Overall, ~20% of participating schools (~10% of students) were overseas.

Grade boundaries were set based on UK schools alone, to protect the competitions from distortions created by growing numbers of overseas schools. Trustees will examine ways to grow overseas participation and examine fair participation fees for them.

Academic rigour

Grade distributions for each competition were excellent, with appropriate difficulty for each age-group, as shown in the figures below. Trustees will continue to work to include questions of a variety of difficulties to stretch the distributions further, while maintaining to engage students at all levels.



The UK team won three silver medals and a merit at the Yerevan IBO 2022. UKBC will look to improve and expand training for the team selected to attend the next IBO. The assessments run by the University of Warwick for the winners of the BBO were outstanding. The attending students underwent a day of intensive training before being examined on the material the



7

following day. The winners of the iBO will attend a residential trip run by the Field Studies Council.

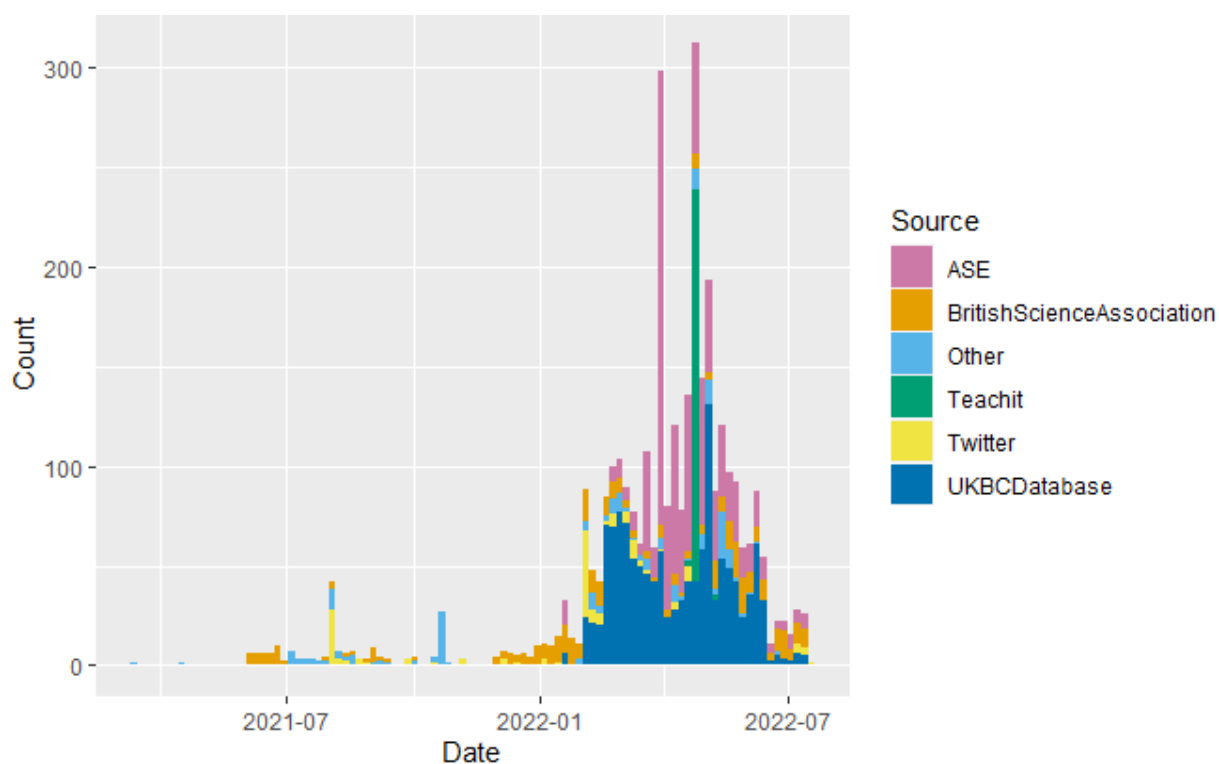
New website

UKBC made a significant investment in a new online examination system in 2021. This year, more minor upgrades were carried out to add new functionalities. There is some evidence of improved participation by allowing better leverage of school data (see next section).

UKBC stopped distributing paper certificates as they came with high financial costs, were environmentally wasteful, and there was often a long lead time for schools to receive them. Instead, the UKBC website is now able to automatically generate e-certificates instantaneously for teachers to download and distribute. Trustees will investigate purchasing and distributing more durable medals as a memento in future years.

Advertising

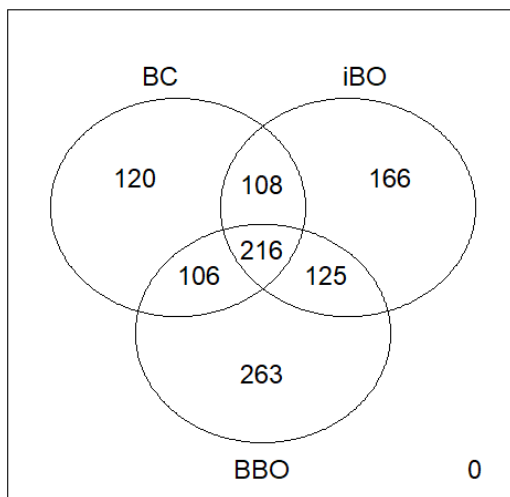
UKBC tracked interaction with digital adverts through the use of unique URLs. Emails to the UKBC website database of teachers generated the most interactions, but paid-for adverts placed with the Association of Science Educators, amongst others, also drive website traffic.





8

Surprisingly, half of the schools only took part in a single competition, so there is great scope to use the UKBC database to encourage teachers to sign up to our other competitions.



ASDAN China

UKBC provided the BC, iBO and BBO competitions to ASDAN China. Participation rates in all three competitions grew strongly.

Volunteers

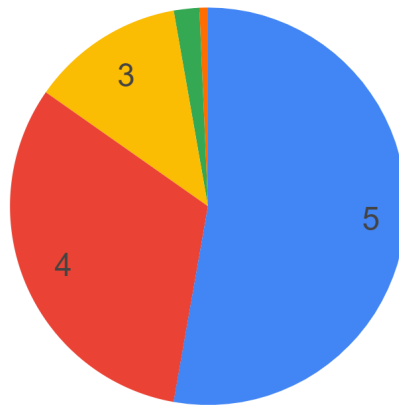
UKBC appointed new trustees to replace those ending their term. New volunteers attended team selection and the IBO in Yerevan. These were past participants in the IBO, and have relevant expertise for running the senior programs. UKBC will attempt to recruit more current or retired school teachers.

Feedback from participating schools

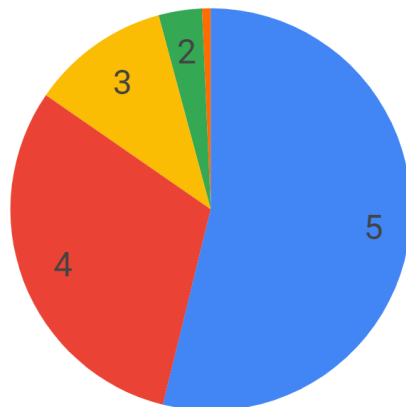
UKBC carried out a survey of participating teachers. Key results and testimonials are shown below. Trustees will monitor this feedback, and use it to inform decisions.



Rate the general support provided before, during and after the competitions?

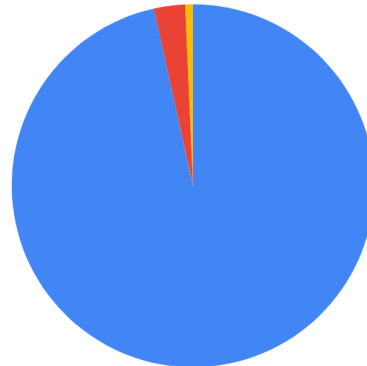


How would you rate running our biology competitions on the competition website?



Would you recommend our school biology competitions to others?

● Yes ● Maybe ● Prefer not to say



*They are, and have been for many years, regular fixtures in our Biology calendar for Years 9, 10, 12 & 13.
Thank you for offering them.*

Being part of this program I was able to motivate my students to take interest in Biology and pursue it professionally.

These competitions are a great opportunity for all students to show what they can do (particularly the top academic students) It's a challenge and an interesting academic experience. It gives them an opportunity to test their understanding in an unfamiliar assessment format, with stretching questions. It's also likely to be their first formally invigilated online exam.



The Biology Olympiad suite provides a challenge for all our GCSE/A level Biology groups from yr9 to yr13 and take up is excellent in this school. Results are very good and students appreciate merit awards and the opportunity to add this experience to UCAS statements if appropriate. Good value for students and school alike.

The beauty of the competitions is they inspire interest, reward wider reading and while the advantages of doing well are numerous there is no downside to doing badly. This encourages students to have a go and while they are challenging this mode is also highly supportive.

Personally, I am just grateful that you have allowed us to run this challenge for our students. We are an online school, based in London but with students all over the World. We have a number of highly able students that have had to make the difficult decision to transfer into an online education due to a variety of health problems, including anxiety. Allowing us to run a competition and including them via a remote setting not only meant that they are able to have the same opportunities as their peers in a "normal" education setting, but also further fuelled their interest in this fascinating science.

An opportunity to participate, refresh, renew, benchmark student's knowledge of biology on a global platform instils confidence in the learner and ignites interest in the subject.

The BBO is a great competition for the more able and gifted students of biology who want to challenge themselves on their depth and breadth of knowledge as well as their application of skills and acumen in this subject. Highly recommended.

The biology competitions are an excellent way to challenge and promote interest in this wonderful subject.

Excellent opportunity for students to further their interests in Biology. Very good range of questions that students found engaging. Well run competition with ease of access online before and after the competition. Results are delivered promptly and students are very happy to obtain their certificates. Highly recommended.

Used the competitions for many years now. They are an excellent opportunity for Biology students to show their ability outside of the curriculum.

The pupils had never heard of it, but I hope that by word of mouth younger pupils might want to do it and see the value in doing something harder than AS. Especially those that want to try for Oxbridge. Quite good for the clever clogs to realise they are not geniuses

Really worth doing, even for the less able students, although I have a lot of foreign students and some of the language was difficult for them, after the exam a number asked what a blue tit was!

Financial review

Summary accounts are provided in a separate document.

Reserves policy

The trustees set a target reserve level of 1.5 years expenditure (approximately £100,000). The reserves grew to £183,004, from £164,135 at the start of the year. This was due to unexpectedly low expenditure due to not hosting an awards dinner or team training. The trustees will review the reserves policy and strategies to reduce them to the target level at their next meeting. The UK is being asked to bid to host the IBO again, in 2027, which may warrant running surpluses to cover upfront costs.

Major expenditure

The major part of UKBC expenditure (£42,000 inc. VAT) is the cost of a services agreement with RSB to provide an administrator for the competitions. This price is valid until November 2023, and must be met by UKBC unless a 12-month termination clause is triggered. Trustees have, and will continue to, streamline UKBC operations to reduce administrative workload, and evaluate the performance of the service provider at their meetings.

Expenses paid to trustees

The table below details all money transferred from UKBC to its trustees.

Trustee	Sub total	Total	Description
Joshua Hodgson	£251.81	£2,151.81	<i>IBOe.v. (international body) annual membership</i>
	£1,900.00		<i>Participation fee for IBO (Yerevan State University)</i>
Matthew Johnston	£1,399.47	£1,825.67	<i>Website hosting (1)</i>
	£426.20		<i>Refreshments and venues for students and volunteers at International Biology Olympiad</i>
Rebecca Peel	£19.65		<i>Refreshments during UKBC meetings</i>
Kim Ngan Luu Hoang	£598.72	£598.72	<i>Team accommodation and refreshments in Yerevan</i>
Grand total		£4,576.20	

Foot notes

(1) Includes third party costs for servers etc and a £50 per quarter retainer for continued support, upgrading, bug-fixing.



Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above at a vote held on the 25th February 2023.

Dr Matthew Johnston

Chair

25th February 2023

Dr Andrew Treharne, MBE

Secretary

25th February 2023

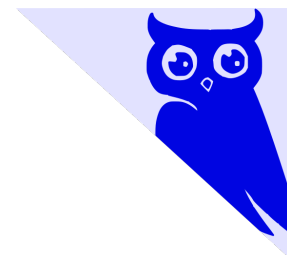
Dr Joshua Hodgson

Treasurer

25th February 2023

United Kingdom Biology Competitions

Registered charity № 1191037



Annual accounts

1st September 2021 - 31st August 2022

Receipts

	2021/22			2020/21
Item	Unrestricted funds	Notes		
Biology Challenge participation fees	£16,335			£9,720
Intermediate Biology Olympiad participation fees	£17,979	Made free in 2020 due to pandemic		£11,760
British Biology Olympiad participation fees	£4,679	Made free in 2021 due to pandemic		£0
Selling papers to other charities	£40,136	To ASDAN China		£26,460
Selling examination system to other charities	£1,000	To British Physics Olympiad		£0
Misc. inc. collection of arrears				£656
Sponsorship	£0			£0
Total receipts	£80,129			£237,596 (Including 189000 grant)

Payments

Administration	£42,000	To Royal Society of Biology	£42,000
Participation in the IBO	£8,558	All inclusive	£1,025
University residential course	£6,674	To University of Warwick	£0
Certificates	£0		£4,489
Advertising	£720		
Awards ceremony /dinner	£0		£1,434
Committee/volunteer expenses	£790	Including insurance, DBS checks	£1,097
Professional fees	£400		£1,800
Website maintenance	£1,399		£1,293
Payment processing fees	£421	To Stripe	£218
Account fees	£159	To CAF bank	£105
Return of incorrect payments	£137	To sender	
Sub total	£61,260		£53,461

Asset purchases

	£0	New website built in 2021	£20,000
Total payments	£61,260		£73,461

Net

Receipts less payments	£18,869		£164,135
-------------------------------	----------------	--	-----------------

Assets at year end

	2021/22		2020/21
Item	Unrestricted funds	Notes	
Cash at end last year	£164,135		
Cash at end this year	£183,004		
Outstanding invoices	£7,440		
Total assets	£190,444		

Liabilities at year end

Deferred income (2020-21)	£330		£420
Deferred income (2021-22)	£2,388		
Outstanding invoices	£0		
Total liabilities	£2,718		

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.



Dr Matthew Johnston
Chair
25th February 2023



Dr Andrew Treharne MBE
Secretary
25th February 2023



Dr Joshua Hodgson
Treasurer
25th February 2023





Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

On accounts for the year ended

31/08/2022

Charity no (if any)

1191037

Set out on pages

1 & 2 OF THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
• the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 14/04/2023

Name: SAM CLARKE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

ACA (ICAEW)

Address:

11 HORNBEAM CLOSE
DURHAM
DH1 1EN

UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

England & Wales - Charity number 1191037

Accounts

United Kingdom Biology Competitions

Registered charity N° 1191037
53 Alexandra Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 3EA
Also known as UKBC



Annual report

1st September 2020 - 31st August 2021

Trustees

Dr Matthew Johnston	Dr Joshua Hodgson	Rebecca Peel
Dr Andrew Treharne MBE	Neil Richards	Norma Broadbridge MBE
	Katherine Lister	David Rigby

Structure & governance

Governing document

→ Constitution, 25th August 2020

Trustee selection

→ Election by existing trustees

Constitution

→ Charitable incorporated organisation
(CIO)

Objectives & activities

Objects

The objects of the CIO are to advance education for the public benefit of young people in the subject of Biology by:

1. Promoting the study of biology and encouraging and enhancing biology education, particularly in schools
2. Encouraging excellence in biology by organising annual biology competitions for school students
3. Selecting, training and organising teams of biology students and leaders to represent the UK at the International Biology Olympiad and at such other international Biology competitions as may be considered appropriate



2

4. Maintaining membership of International Biology Olympiad e.V. and to contribute to and participate in the affairs of that organisation
5. Providing residential training for post-16 school students.

Activities

Trustees reviewed the Charity Commission [guidance on public benefit](#) upon appointment and also at their annual general meeting. All activities were planned in line with guidance, UKBC's charitable objects and the business plan submitted to the Charity Commission upon incorporation.

Academic olympiads are increasingly prominent as the most rigorous and reputable academic competitions. United Kingdom Biology Competitions (UKBC) runs the British Biology Olympiad (BBO), and takes responsibility for the UK's presence at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO). The IBO is one of the big four Olympiads with >70 participating countries. For younger children, UKBC runs Biology Challenge (BC) and the Intermediate Biology Olympiad (iBO).

The BBO, iBO and BC are three rigorous online competitions which schools arrange for their students to participate in. Students took part within their school (or at home due to coronavirus regulations) under examination conditions. Students were allocated medals based on their performance, and certificates were sent to schools.

UKBC organised online training and assessment of practical biology skills for the top performers of the BBO in collaboration with the University of Warwick. This was to select a team of four students to participate in the IBO. UKBC organised training for the IBO team covering various skills with different partners. UKBC organised for the team to attend the virtual IBO challenge, hosted from Lisbon. UKBC organised for a jury of five volunteers to accompany the team throughout IBO and act on behalf of the UK at the IBO.

UKBC comprises solely of volunteers. The most active are members of the UKBC committee, who are trustees. The competitions were written and assessed entirely by volunteers. There are approximately twenty volunteers who help write the competitions, or assist with team selection, training or at the IBO. The Royal Society of Biology administered the competitions via a services contract, including managing school registration, organising travel and accommodation, processing payments, advertising, and providing general administration support to UKBC (e.g. arranging annual general meetings). Practical training and assessment took place virtually at

the University of Warwick. Training and assessment was carried out by two academic staff, plus support staff, from the School of Life Science. UKBC provided a mirror of its examination website to the British Physics Olympiad (BPhO, charity number 1146064) for a small fee. UKBC has an agreement to provide the BBO, iBO and BC to ASDAN China (a British educational charity, charity number 1066927) which runs the competitions in China. UKBC holds the UK's membership of IBOe.V, the governing body of the IBO. National members, such as UKBC, have joint sovereignty over IBO e.V.

Achievements & performance

Participation

The number of individual students and schools participating in each competition are shown in the tables below. These tables do not include students or schools participating via ASDAN China. Underlined figures indicate competitions which were disrupted by the pandemic.

	Year (number of students participating)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
BC	NA	48449	47336	<u>23695</u>	<u>26793</u>
iBO	5667	6580	8282	<u>8757</u>	<u>8873</u>
BBO	7500	7818	9465	9520	<u>8462</u>
Total	NA	62847	65083	41972	44128

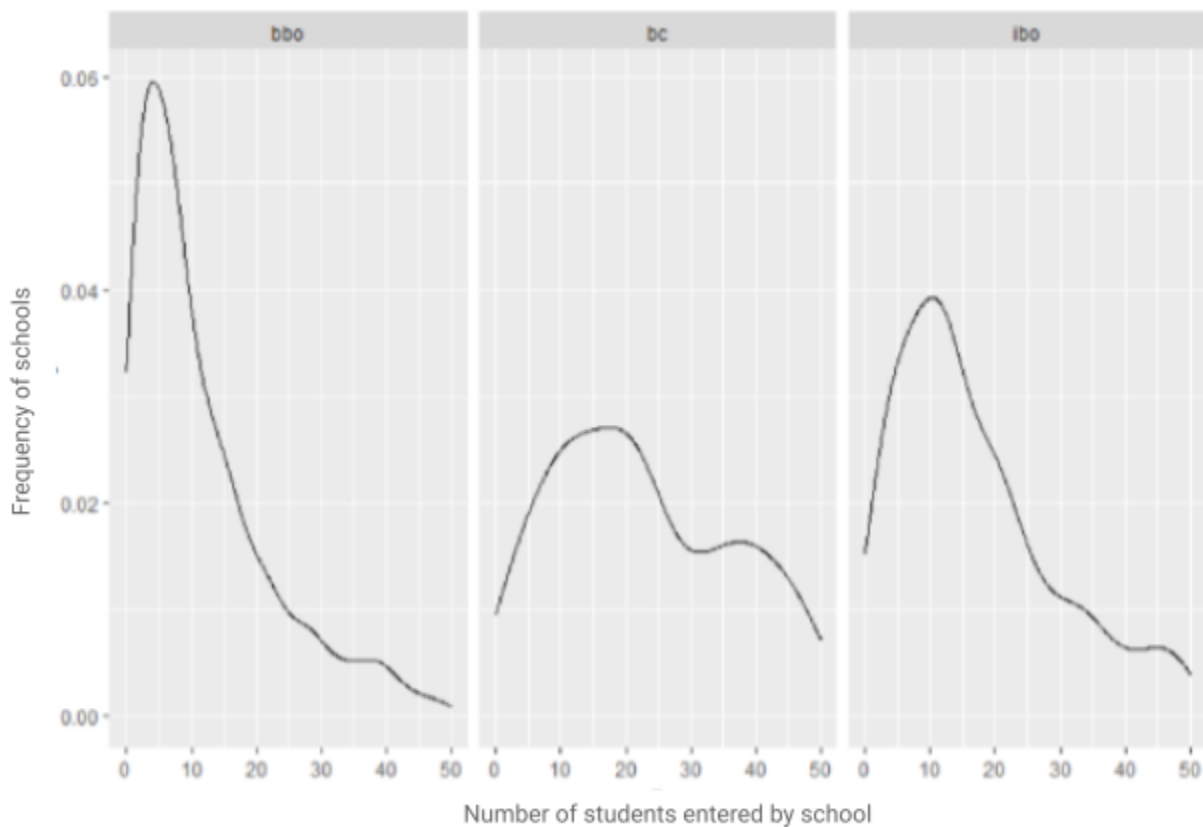
	Year (number of schools)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
BC	561	583	576	<u>367</u>	<u>346</u>
iBO	380	408	465	<u>559</u>	<u>449</u>
BBO	675	636	726	669	<u>619</u>
Total unique	NA	NA	NA	NA	880

Participation was hampered by the ongoing pandemic which placed schools under severe stress. The dates of 2021 competitions were changed to better accommodate this, and the BBO

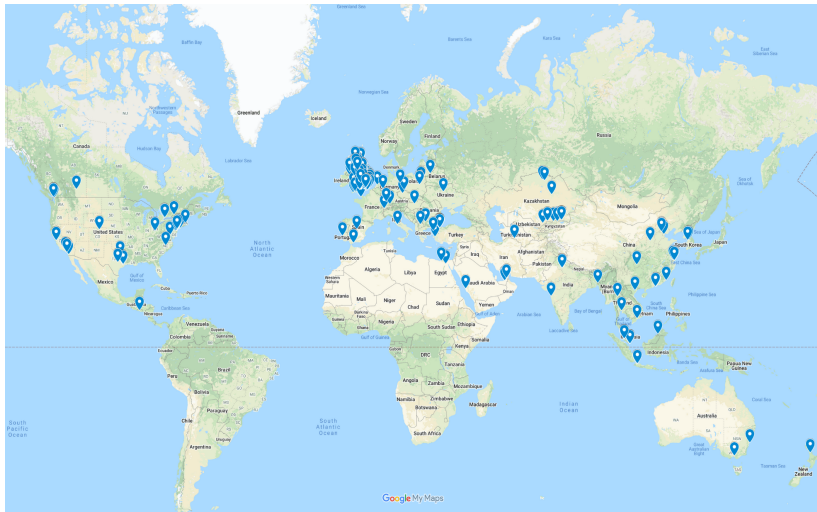
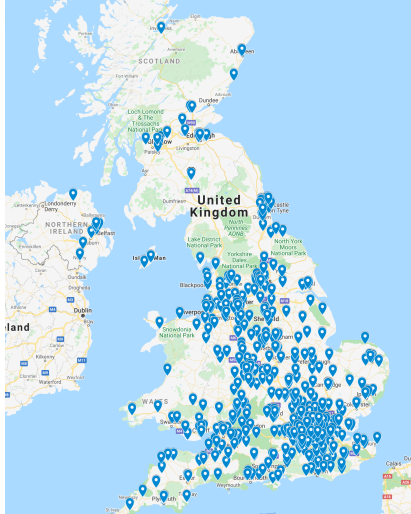


4

was made completely free to all schools. Trustees will assess a fee regime which will maximise participation in 2022 as schools return to a new normal. Trustees will take account of the number of students entered from each school (shown below) to do this.



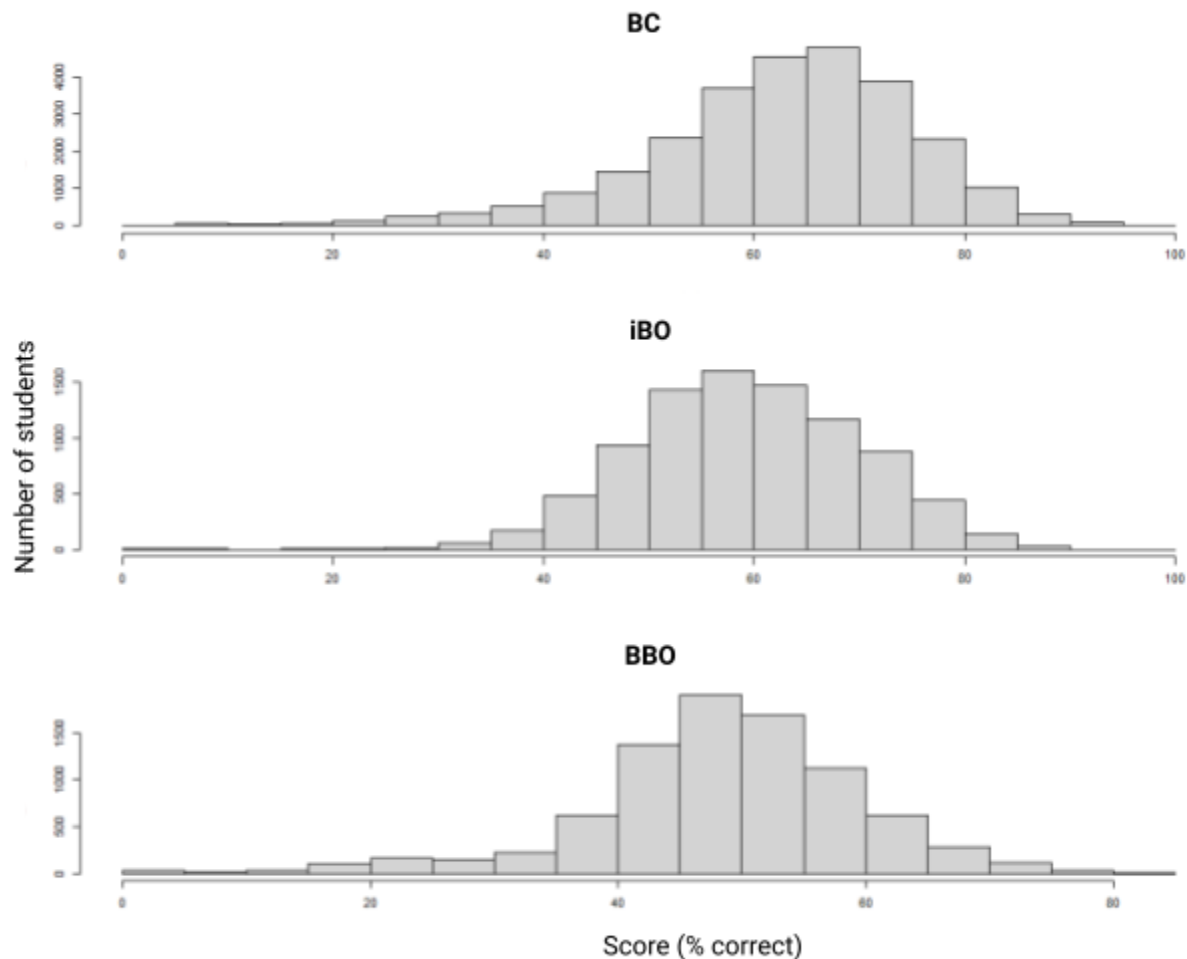
Schools were predominantly based in the UK, although schools from across the world took part in all competitions, as shown in the maps below.



Overall, 213/880 schools were overseas. Grade boundaries were set based on UK schools alone, to protect the competitions from distortions created by growing numbers of overseas schools. Trustees will examine ways to grow overseas participation and examine fair participation fees for them.

Academic rigour

Grade distributions for each competition were excellent, with appropriate difficulty for each age-group, as shown in the figures below. Trustees will continue to work to include questions of a variety of difficulties to stretch the distributions further, while maintaining to engage students at all levels.



The UK team won three silver medals and a bronze at the Lisbon IBO challenge 2021. The new online assessments run by the University of Warwick for the winners of the BBO were outstanding. The selected students underwent a day of intensive training before being examined on the material the following day. The winners of the iBO will attend a residential trip run by the Field Studies Council.

New website

UKBC made a significant investment in a new online examination system. The new system made it easier for teachers to sign-up, increased the variety of ways we can examine students, increased security and data protection, streamlined communication with teachers, reduced

administration workload, is more stable, and will improve future participation by allowing better leverage of school data. Feedback on the new system was unanimously positive.

ASDAN China

UKBC provided the BC and iBO competitions to ASDAN China for the first time, in addition to the BBO. Participation rates in both were modest, but expected to grow in future years.

Volunteers

UKBC refreshed its volunteer pool by running a social event, and will appoint new trustees to replace those ending their current term. New volunteers were past participants in the IBO, and have relevant expertise for running the senior programs. UKBC will attempt to recruit more current or retired school teachers.

Financial review

Summary accounts are provided in a separate document.

Reserves policy

The trustees set a target reserve level of 1.5 years expenditure (approximately £100,000). This was set due to uncertainty during the pandemic over income and expense (i.e. whether international travel and/or residential training could take place). The reserves shrank to £178,369, from £189,000 at the start of the year. This was due to one-off expenditure on the website and making the BBO free due to pandemic disruption. Excluding one-off factors, UKBC made a small operating loss of approximately £3000, due to the fact that income generating competitions were able to go ahead largely as planned, but expenses were heavily reduced due to pandemic restrictions. The trustees will review the reserves policy and strategies to reduce them to the target level at their next meeting.

Major expenditure

The major part of UKBC expenditure (£42,000 inc. VAT) is the cost of a services agreement with RSB to provide an administrator for the competitions. This price is valid until November 2023, and must be met by UKBC unless a 12-month termination clause is triggered. Trustees have, and will continue to, streamline UKBC operations to reduce administrative workload, and evaluate the performance of the service provider at their meetings.



8

In 2021, UKBC contracted the development of a new examination system and website, with a total cost of £20,000 (inc. VAT). This is a one-off expense, with only routine maintenance required in subsequent years. Trustees collected quotes from various suppliers, evaluated value for money, analysed conflicts of interest, and evaluated performance of the contractor, in line with submissions to the Charity Commission upon registration. Trustees are satisfied that the contract has been discharged, and the new system is excellent.

One-off income

UKBC received a grant from RSB of £189,000 in 2020/2021. This is a one-off grant representing the reserves of UKBC prior to registration as a CIO. The conditions of the grant stipulate the money be spent maintaining a similar frequency and nature of competitions (BC, iBO and BBO), and maintaining membership and attendance of the IBO, until November 2022.

Expenses paid to trustees

The table below details all money transferred from UKBC to its trustees.

Trustee	Sub total	Total	Description
Joshua Hodgson	£1,000.00	£1,019.00	Deposit to open bank account
	£19.00		Personal travel to UKBC events
	£1,292.69	£22,336.19	Website hosting (1)
Matthew Johnston	£20,000.00		Building of new website (2)
	£1,043.50		Refreshments and venues for students and volunteers at International Biology Olympiad
Andrew Trehearne	£268.74	£268.74	International Biology Olympiad annual membership and participation fees
Rebecca Peel	£59.46	£78.49	Personal travel to UKBC events
	£19.03		Refreshments during UKBC meetings
Katherine Lister	£138.50	£138.50	Personal travel to UKBC events
Grand total		£23,840.92	

Foot notes

(1) Includes third party costs for servers etc and a £50 per quarter retainer for continued support, upgrading, bug-fixing.

(2) Trustees collected quotes from various suppliers, evaluated value for money, analysed conflicts of interest, and evaluated performance of Matthew Johnston as a contractor, in line with submissions to the Charity Commission upon registration.

(1) (2) Matthew Johnston did not attend trustee deliberations or votes relating to the awarding of contracts to develop the website. The likelihood of Matthew Johnston receiving these payments was declared to, and discussed with, the Charity Commission.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above at a vote held on the 5th June 2022.



Dr Matthew Johnston

Chair

5th June, 2022



Dr Andrew Treharne, MBE

Secretary

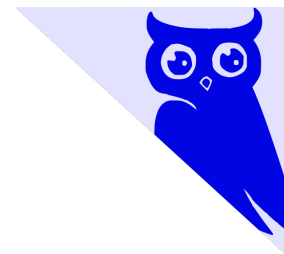
5th June, 2022



Dr Joshua Hodgson

Treasurer

5th June, 2022



Annual accounts

26th August 2020 - 31st August 2021

Receipts

Item	Unrestricted funds	Notes
Initial grant	£189,000	From Royal Society of Biology
Biology Challenge participation fees	£9,720	
Intermediate biology olympiad participation fees	£11,760	
British Biology Olympiad participation fees	£0	Made free in 2021 due to pandemic
Selling papers to other charities	£26,460	To ASDAN China
Selling examination system to other charities	£0	To British Physics Olympiad
Misc. inc. collection of arrears	£656	
Sponsorship	£0	
Total receipts	£237,596	
Total receipts xcl. grant	£48,596	

Payments

Administration	£42,000	To Royal Society of Biology
Participation in the IBO	£1,025	All inclusive
University residential course	£0	To University of Warwick, cancelled due to pandemic
Certificates	£4,489	
Awards ceremony / dinner	£1,434	
Committee/volunteer expenses	£1,097	Including insurance, DBS checks
Legal fees	£1,800	
Website maintenance	£1,293	
Payment processing fees	£218	To Stripe
Account fees	£105	To CAF bank
Sub total	£53,461	

Asset purchases

New online examination system	£20,000	
Total payments	£73,461	

Net

Receipts less payments	£164,135	
Receipts less payments xcl. grant & website build	-£4,865	

Assets at year end

	Unrestricted funds	
Cash at end last year	£0	£189,000 given as grant from savings accumulated before incorporation as CIO
Cash at end this year	£164,135	
Outstanding invoices	£3,270	For Intermediate Biology Olympiad and Biology Challenge
Total assets	£167,405	

Liabilities at year end

Deferred income	£420
Outstanding invoices	£147
Total liabilities	£567

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above on the 5th June 2022.



Dr Matthew Johnston
Chair
5th June 2022



Dr Andrew Treharne MBE
Secretary
5th June 2022



Dr Joshua Hodgson
Treasurer
5th June 2022





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
UNITED KINGDOM BIOLOGY COMPETITIONS

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/08/2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

1191037

Set out on pages

1 & 2 OF THE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2021.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Sam Clarke

Date:

13/06/2022

Name:

SAM CLARKE

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ACA (ICAEW).

Address:

11 HORNBEAM CLOSE
DURHAM
DH1 1EN