

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 Andrew Treharne MBE

Dr Joshua Hodgson

Neil Richards

Katherine Lister

Rebecca Peel

Norma Broadbridge MBE

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



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.

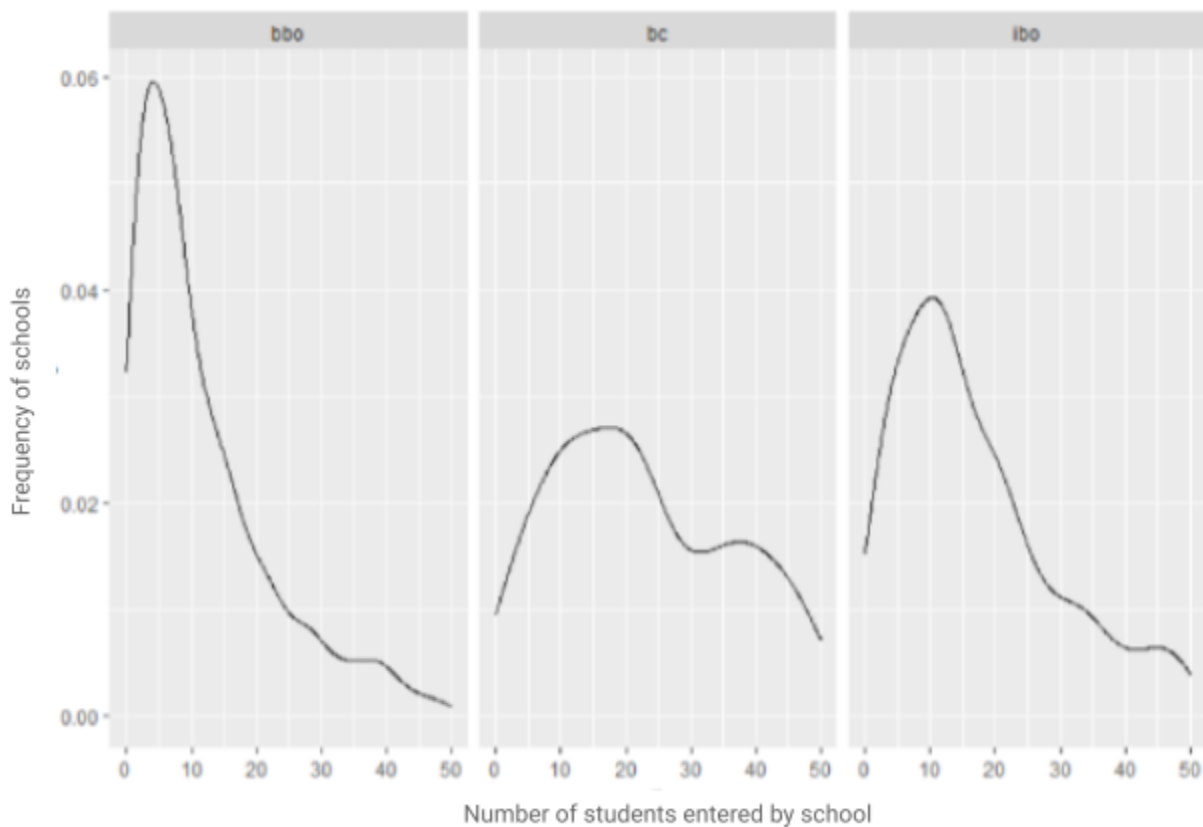
	Year (number of students participating)				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
BC	NA	48449	47336	<u>23695</u>	<u>26793</u>
iBO	5667	6580	8282	<u>8757</u>	<u>8873</u>
BBO	7500	7818	9465	9520	<u>8462</u>
Total	NA	62847	65083	41972	44128

	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

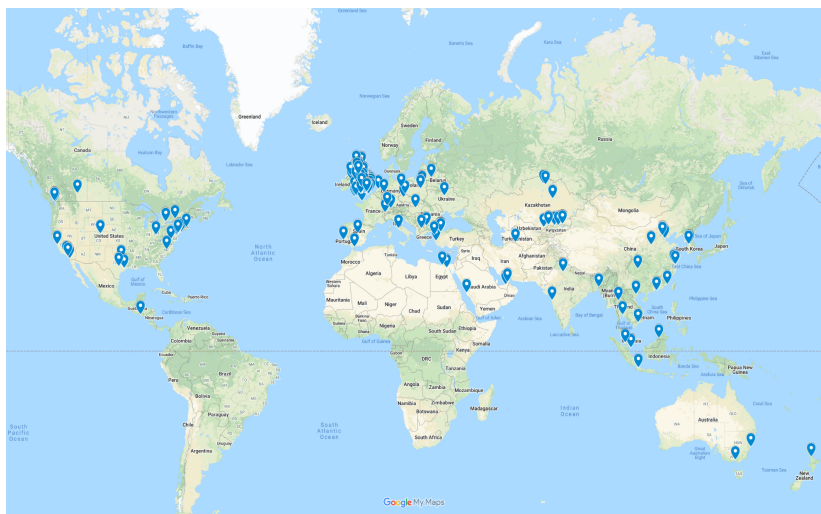
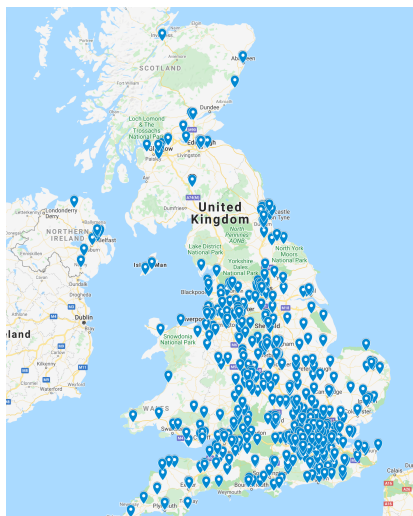
Participation was hampered by the ongoing pandemic which placed schools under severe stress. The dates of 2021 competitions were changed to better accommodate this, and the BBO



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.



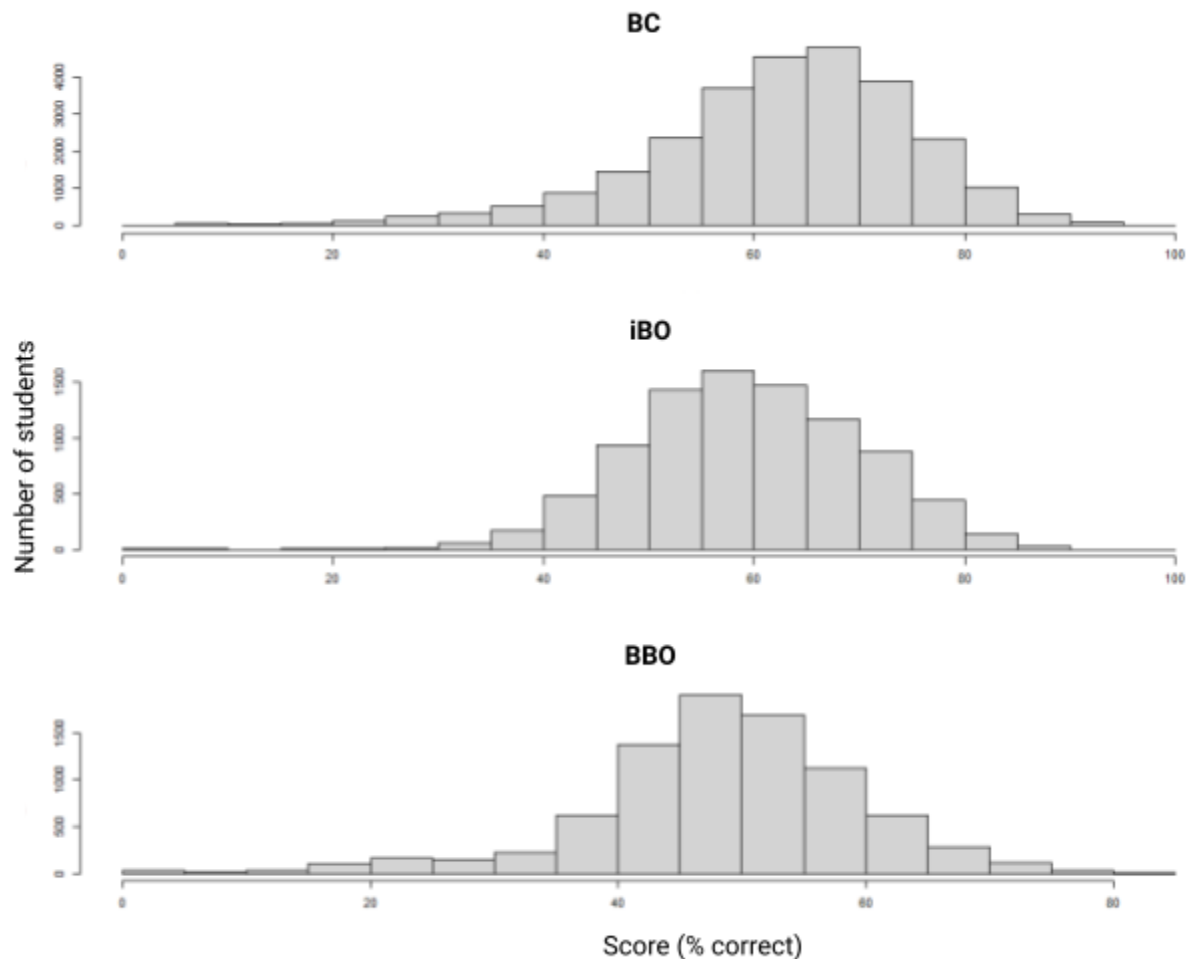
Schools were predominantly based in the UK, although schools from across the world took part in all competitions, as shown in the maps below.



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.



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 incooperation 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





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

31/08/2021

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 1LN