

INFORMATION RELEASED UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information released title	Investors in People accredited companies
Original request	<p>1. Total number of organisations currently Recognised, filtered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) England Regions only b) Professional and business services only (industry sector) <p>2. For the above total can I please have the corresponding data list in Microsoft Excel which underpins your figures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Organisation names b) Date they last became a recognised Investors in People c) Geographical region (London, South East, North West etc ...) d) Employer size (small, medium, large - unsure if you have this?) e) Total employees (as a number if you have it?)
Date of release	23/05/2014
Requester type	Individual

Information released:

1. Total number of organisations currently recognised

Please see page 2 of this response, which contains the information requested.

Bronze **1071**

CENTRAL	222
EAST MIDLANDS	44
EAST OF ENGLAND	70
LONDON	105
NORTH EAST	44
NORTH WEST	158
SOUTH EAST	186
SOUTH WEST	87
WEST MIDLANDS	58
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	97

Gold **1036**

CENTRAL	99
EAST MIDLANDS	52
EAST OF ENGLAND	64
LONDON	112
NORTH EAST	57
NORTH WEST	276
SOUTH EAST	146
SOUTH WEST	73
WEST MIDLANDS	91
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	66

Silver **876**

CENTRAL	139
EAST MIDLANDS	49
EAST OF ENGLAND	69
LONDON	103
NORTH EAST	20
NORTH WEST	188
SOUTH EAST	120
SOUTH WEST	73
WEST MIDLANDS	57
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	58

The Standard **10410**

CENTRAL	1351
EAST MIDLANDS	803
EAST OF ENGLAND	834
LONDON	924
NORTH EAST	439
NORTH WEST	2031
SOUTH EAST	1451
SOUTH WEST	875
WEST MIDLANDS	786
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	916

Grand Total **13393****Bronze** **195**

Professional and business services

Gold **203**

Professional and business services

Silver **179**

Professional and business services

The Standard **2065**

Professional and business services

Grand Total **2642**

2. Corresponding underpinning data

I can confirm that the UK Commission holds this information. However, we are withholding the information since we consider that the exemptions under sections 21, 41 and 43(2) apply to it. In deciding whether these exemptions are engaged we considered all the circumstances in question. The concluding reasons that these exemptions are engaged are outlined below.

Section 21 - Information accessible to the applicant by other means

Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information

Some information falling within the scope of your request is available on the Investors in People website, in the form of the 'Who's Accredited' section. This section, which details latest accredited, IIP Champions and case studies, is available [here](#).

Section 41 – Information provided in confidence

Information is exempt information if it was obtained by the public authority from any other person (including another public authority and, the disclosure of the information to the public (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person.

As you may be aware, Investors in People assessments are carried out by private organisations, who have obtained a licence from the UK Commission to enable them to operate as an Investors in People Centre. Our standard licence between the UK Commission and the Centres stipulates that both parties have an obligation to not disclose customer information that is of a confidential nature. Moreover, beyond these standard established parameters, each individual Centre will have their own agreements with their customers pertaining to confidentiality. Although the UK Commission and its partners encourage customers to celebrate their Investors in People award - for example, and as referred to above, by featuring in [case studies](#) and by using social media to take pride in the achievement – the UK Commission cannot otherwise assume that accredited organisations have waived their expectation of confidentiality.

Neither the UK Commission nor the Centres have explicit permission from the customers of the latter to disclose their Investors in People status - and with around 14,800 organisations currently in possession of Investors in People accreditation across the UK, it is not feasible to contact them all to gain their permission.

Thus, whilst the UK Commission does hold a database of customers who have been recognised as meeting the Investors in People framework of standards, disclosing this information would amount to an actionable breach of confidence. It would amount to a breach of both the standard terms and conditions of the agreement held between the UK Commission and the Investors in People Centres and those specific terms and conditions of the agreement held between Investors in People Centres and individual Investors in People-accredited organisations.

Section 43(2) – Commercial interests

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). NB – A person may be an individual, a company, or any other legal entity.

The reason that Section 43(2) is engaged relates both to the commercial interests of Investors in People accredited organisations and to those of the UK Commission itself.

With regards to the accredited organisations, the Investors in People status of an organisation is specifically relevant to that organisation. It is our view that organisations may not wish this to be revealed to third parties, for their own commercial reasons.

Furthermore, whilst disclosing the information may prejudice the commercial interests of Investors in People customers, it is also likely to prejudice those of the UK Commission itself. Guidance from the Ministry of Justice defines ‘commercial’ as follows:

An activity in the way of a business, trade or profession [...] [T]he exemption is expressly capable of applying not only to the commercial interests of outside organisations, but also to a public authority's own commercial interests. When it comes to considering a public authority's own interests, a range of circumstances may be relevant, including the authority's position in the market place both as a purchaser and as a supplier.

As a supplier of a people management standard, we believe that disclosure of a list of customers may undermine the UK Commission's position in a competitive environment. Its commercial position is likely to be weakened by publishing information of potential usefulness to business competitors.

We have weighed the prejudice caused by possible disclosure against the likely benefit to the wider public. We recognise that there is a public interest in ensuring that the UK Commission is accountable and transparent in its role as guardian of the Investors in People Standard and framework and in its duty to ensure continued high standards through the licensing of regional and national delivery centres across the UK. However, we also recognise that there is a strong public interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the arrangements between the accredited organisations acting in a competitive commercial environment and their customers. We have concluded, therefore, that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.