

INFORMATION RELEASED UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information released title	Investors in People accredited organisations: building societies
Original request	<p>1. The Total number of building societies currently recognized and the level of standard they have been accredited with:</p> <p>2. May I please have the corresponding data which underpins your figures</p> <p>a) Name of Building Society</p> <p>b) Geographical region (London, South East, North West etc ...)</p> <p>c) Total employees (as a number if you have it?)</p>
Date of release	19.06.2015
Requester type	Individual

Information released:

Your response has been generated by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). In April 2010, ownership of the Investors in People (IIP) framework and brand moved from Investors in People UK to UKCES. We are now responsible for developing and maintaining the integrity of the Investors in People framework.

1. Total number of organisations currently recognised

Please see the table below, which sets out the total number of organisations in the bank and building society sector, recognised as having achieved the Investors in People (IIP) award, as of December 2014.

Accreditation Level	Number of Accreditations
Standard	16
Bronze	0
Silver	6
Gold	3
Total	25

Please note that UKCES does not hold IIP accreditation information pertaining only to building societies. The precise sectoral coverage of the data disclosed is set out below. You may also wish to visit <http://www.siccodesupport.co.uk/sic-division.php?division=64>, referring to the section entitled, '64.19 Other monetary intermediation'.

64.19 Other monetary intermediation

This class includes the receiving of deposits and/or close substitutes for deposits and extending of credit or lending funds. The granting of credit can take a variety of forms, such as loans, mortgages, credit cards etc. These activities are generally carried out by monetary institutions other than central banks, such as:

- banks
- building societies
- savings banks
- credit unions

This class also includes:

- postal giro and postal savings bank activities
- credit granting for house purchase by specialised deposit taking institutions
- money order activities

This class excludes:

- credit granting for house purchase by specialised non-depository institutions, see 64.92
- credit card transaction processing and settlement activities, see 66.19

2. Corresponding underpinning data

- a) I can confirm that UKCES 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 organisations, IIP Champions and case studies, is available [here](#). From this page you can [search](#) for organisations that have achieved the IIP award, filtering by sector.

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 that 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 UKCES to enable them to operate as an Investors in People Centre. Our standard licence between UKCES 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 UKCES 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 – UKCES cannot otherwise assume that accredited organisations have waived their expectation of confidentiality.

Thus, whilst UKCES does hold a database of customers in the bank and building society sector 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 UKCES 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 banks and building societies and to those of UKCES 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 UKCES 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 UKCES' 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 UKCES 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.

- b) Please see the table below, which underpins the accreditation data, filtered by geographic region, as of December 2014.

Standard	16
CENTRAL	1
NORTH WEST	9
WEST MIDLANDS	2
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	4

Bronze	0
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Silver	6
CENTRAL	2
EAST MIDLANDS	1
EAST OF ENGLAND	1
NORTH EAST	1

WEST MIDLANDS	1
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Gold	3
EAST MIDLANDS	1
NORTH WEST	1
WEST MIDLANDS	1

Total	25
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- c) Please see the table below, which underpins the accreditation data, filtered by organisation size band, as of December 2014. UKCES does not hold information on precise number of employees at IIP accredited organisations.

Size Band	The Standard	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Grand Total
0-49	3	0	0	0	3
50-249	8	0	2	1	11
250-999	2	0	4	1	7
1000-9999	3	0	0	1	4
Grand Total	16	0	6	3	25