



UK Visas & Immigration

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FOI Reference: 2694/31820

13 June 2014

Dear Mr Skillen

Thank you for your enquiry of 28 May in which you requested information on Tier 4 sponsors. This has been dealt with as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

*On the 28-May-2014 the number of Sponsors Licensed under Tier4 is 1,677.
This figure is broken down in the following groups; A rating -165 Highly Trusted
Sponsor -1344 Highly Trusted Sponsor (Premium) -154 Legacy -11 Legacy A -2
Blank - 1*

- 1. Of the above how many are Higher Education institutions, how many are private providers and how many are schools in each group please?*

We are not able to provide details of the sponsors licensed under Tier 4 on 28 May 2014 as we are unable to report on the sponsor register retrospectively. Attached is a breakdown of the 1,657 sponsors on the Tier 4 Register of Sponsors on 9 June 2014, by establishment type.

- 2. Of the above how many have received compliance visit over the period of having their Tier 4 license, again split into the above categories of Higher Education institutions, how many are private providers and how many are schools in each group please?*
- 3. Of those that have received a compliance visit, with the compliance rating from 1-3 (1 =good 3= poor), how many are 1, 2 or 3 and again split into the above*

categories of Higher Education institutions, how many are private providers and how many are schools in each group please?

- 4. Of those that have received a compliance visit, with the Priority scale is 1-3 (1= ASAP 3= non urgent) for the visit being undertaken how many are 1, 2 or 3 and again split into the above categories of Higher Education institutions, how many are private providers and how many are schools in each group please?*
- 5. Of those that have received a compliance visit, with the category being green, red and Amber (green is no risk – Red is high risk), how many are green, red and Amber and again split into the above categories of Higher Education institutions, how many are private providers and how many are schools in each group please?*

All sponsors on the Tier 4 register are visited at least twice during the period they hold a Tier 4 sponsor licence: once by the educational oversight body and once by a Home Office compliance officer.

Regarding questions 3, 4 and 5, under section 12 (1) of the Act, the Home Office is not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit. We do hold this information but have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. We are therefore unable to comply with it.

The information you have requested is not available without undertaking a manual trawl of all 1,657 sponsors on the Tier 4 Register. We would need to look at the associated actions on each licence to identify when a visit took place, its rating, priority and tasking. The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information and preparing the response can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

If you refine your request, so that it is more likely to fall under the cost limit, we will consider it again. You should however be aware that if you break your request down into a series of smaller requests, we might, depending on the circumstances of the case, decline to answer if the aggregated cost of complying exceeds £600, as permitted by the Fees Regulations.

Even if a new request were to fall below the £600 cost limit, the information you request might be withheld under the terms of a number of substantive exemptions contained in part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. These exemptions could also make it necessary for us to extend the period for responding beyond the usual 20 working day target if they involve having to consider the public interest balancing test.

The figures quoted are not provided under National Statistics protocols and have been derived from local management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change.

I hope this is of help to you. If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference 31820. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Access Team
Home Office
Ground Floor,
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

e-mail: FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Birkinshaw

We value your feedback, please use the link below to access a brief anonymous survey to help us improve our service to you:

<http://www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/s/108105TAZNG>