Stonewall

WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX 2024

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK REPORT:

NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

At Stonewall, we stand for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people everywhere. We imagine a world where all LGBTQ+ people are free to be ourselves and can live our lives to the full. We support workplaces to create environments where LGBTQ+ people feel safe, welcomed and free to be themselves.

There are many benefits to developing an inclusive workplace. When people are able to be themselves, they can spend more of their energy on their work and thrive in their roles. Diverse and inclusive teams can also lead to better innovation, collaboration and decision making. Your proven commitment to inclusion can also help make your organisation attractive to the top LGBTQ+ talent and allies, improving the success of your recruitment and staff retention. And, simply, LGBTQ+ inclusion is the right thing to do.

The Workplace Equality Index is designed to help you understand the progress of your inclusion work on a deeper level. It shows you where you have good practice in place, and where you may need to direct more focus to support your LGBTQ+ employees.

In this report, we explain your Workplace Equality Index results and show how you compare to other organisations. In each section we also share feedback to help you decide what next steps to take.

While of course we are more just than our jobs, many of us find great meaning in our work. It is in the workplace where we can find purpose, community and friendship. However, for LGBTQ+ people, work can sometimes seem like another way in which their face doesn't fit. Whether it be verbal bullying, exclusion or simply having to hide the fact you have a same-sex partner, a poor workplace culture can take a toll on LGBTQ+ employees.

By entering the Workplace Equality Index, you have joined hundreds of other committed employees in breaking this cycle. Whether it be developing inclusive policies, organising Pride events or updating your training, each small change helps to foster a kinder, more understanding working environment - a workplace that works for everyone.

Vicky Hayden [she/her], Head of Workplace Relationships – UK & Global

RESULTS AND SCORE SUMMARY

Northern Ireland Civil Service ranked 107 out of 246, with a score of 67.5 out of 196.5.

Northern Ireland Civil Service has achieved a Silver Award.

Section	Marks awarded	Marks claimed	Marks available	Percentage of marks awarded
1) Policies and benefits	8.5	11.5	16	53%
2) The employee lifecycle	8	17	22	36%
3) LGBT employee network group	17	23.5	23.5	72%
4) Empowering individuals	5	8.5	20	25%
5) Leadership	9	11.5	18	50%
6) Monitoring	1.5	5	20	8%
7) Supply chains	2	2	17	12%
8) External engagement	9	18	40	23%
Staff Feedback Questionnaire	7.5	20	20	42%

[*] When marking, sometimes our markers spot evidence that counts towards questions you didn't claim. In those cases, we award the points anyway.

SECTORAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Stonewall has more than 20 years of experience helping to build inclusive workplaces. In that time, we've supported thousands of organisations to create environments that can attract, retain and nurture the best LGBTQ+ talent. We offer guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion, which workplaces adapt to work for them.

Many different types of organisations enter the Workplace Equality Index and achieve top results. Entrants come from the public, private and third sectors and represent many different industries. Participants operate and are headquartered in all parts of the UK, including Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England. And the size of participants varies too – from organisations with a few hundred staff to organisations to organisations with tens of thousands of staff.

We know these different contexts mean that organisations face different opportunities and challenges, whether that's to do with their budget, regulatory frameworks, or the nature of the work they do.

Though the index is designed suit this full range of workplaces, we aim to share insights into your performance compared to similar organisations and tailor our feedback to fit your context.

Sector	You ranked 44 out of 74 in the Public sector.
Industry	You ranked 11 out of 20 in the Government & Regulators sector.
Size	You ranked 39 out of 62 amongst organisations with 5000+ employees.
Headquarters	You ranked 2 out of 3 amongst employers headquartered in Northern Ireland.

MARGINALISED AND UNDER-REPRESENTED LGBTQ+ GROUPS

This section focuses on those within our community whose stories and experiences are often less represented in LGBTQ+ inclusion work.

Bi erasure and biphobia are real problems. They create a culture of stigmatisation, and many bi people are still wary about being open about their bi identity in the workplace.

Transphobic discrimination, including against non-binary people, is an area of concern for many workplaces, with staff feeling scared and unable to be their authentic selves around colleagues.

We all have multiple facets of our identities, and many of us experience different forms of marginalisation and discrimination, such as racism and ableism. These experiences also affect many LGBTQ+ people at work. Tackling one form of marginalisation requires tackling them all: ending misogyny and making work welcoming for people of faith, for example, are important for making sure all LGBTQ+ people feel welcome.

By breaking down this data, we aim to show you how you are progressing with work that specifically addresses the needs of these groups.

Questions specific to:	Score
Marginalised or underrepresented LGBTQ+ identities	12 out of 88
Bi inclusion	2 out of 13
Trans inclusion	5 out of 43.5
Non-binary inclusion	0.5 out of 20.5
LGBTQ+ people who experience multiple forms of marginalisation	4.5 out of 11

SECTION ONE: POLICIES AND BENEFITS

This section is about your workplace policies and benefits. We ask about a range of your policies, including those on anti-discrimination, family leave and trans inclusion. We also ask about your workplace facilities and health-related support you may provide.

To ensure your polices provide clarity and support to all LGBTQ+ staff, we review the language and content included within them.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	11.5	8.5	
Average: Public Sector	13.5	8.5	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	13	7.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	13.5	9.5	16
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	14	8	
Average: Top 100	20.5	10.5	
Average: Top 50	15.5	12	

Feedback Notes

Strong policies and benefits are the foundation of an inclusive workplace. Having explicitly LGBTQ-inclusive policies helps ensure there are no obstacles for LGBTQ+ staff accessing the benefits and support they're entitled to. It's brilliant to see that you have strong and intentional policies in place that remove these barriers.

It's great that you have a detailed policy feedback process in place, and that you have used this process to ensure that your policies are LGBTQ+ inclusive.

Having a policy in place on discrimination, bullying, and harassment is a great way to ensure that all your employees feel protected in the workplace. Your policy demonstrates your commitment to ensuring that your employees feel safe at work. To develop further, we would recommend providing specific examples of biphobia, homophobia and transphobia to support staff to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. You might also consider reviewing some of the language used to ensure it's inclusive for all employees, including non-binary employees.

It's commendable that your policies provide clear information on how to report incidents and resolve complaints of discrimination, bullying, and harassment. This is essential for ensuring a supportive work environment.

You've clearly done some work towards ensuring that your family and leave policies are explicitly inclusive of LGBTQ+ colleagues. We noted some

inconsistency in relation to the some of the language used in your policies, which we can discuss at benchmarking. We congratulate you for your inclusive opening statement in your shared parental leave policy and it would be great to see this replicated across your other family leave policies. This will ensure that all LGBTQ+ colleagues know your policies apply to them, and what support is available for them in your workplace.

It's great that you have a transitioning at work policy in place. Having this policy in place can help reassure employees who are considering transitioning at work that they will be respected and supported. It can also help managers feel confident about providing appropriate support to their teams. We would recommend including more information about how this policy applies to non-binary people. This is an important way to signal your commitment to supporting all trans people and meet the specific needs of non-binary staff. We also recommend that time off work relating to transition is treated and recorded separately to sick leave. This makes it clear that being trans is not a form of illness and helps reassure staff that taking the time they need will not affect their sick leave entitlements and pay.

You may also wish to consider introducing guidance for colleagues as well as a trans inclusion policy for trans and non-binary staff. Introducing a trans inclusion policy is a great way of ensuring that your workplace is inclusive of trans and non-binary colleagues. We can talk about this more at benchmarking and support you with introducing this policy if helpful.

Finally, it's great that you have taken steps to highlight LGBTQ+ mental health. We noted your LGBTQ+ Mental Health Empowerment Workshop and the LGBTQ+ Mental Health Awareness Seminar. As a next step we would encourage you to explore LGBTQ+ inclusive service delivery in relation to your Employee Assistance Programme.

SECTION TWO: THE EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE

This section is about the journey of employees within your organisation. We look at each stage of the lifecycle, including recruitment, onboarding and training, ongoing communications and support, and exit processes.

For each stage, we review your work to support LGBTQ+ employees and allies to build an inclusive culture.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	17	8	
Average: Public Sector	18.5	9.5	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	17	7.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	18	8.5	22
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	19	8.5	
Average: Top 100	20.5	11.5	
Average: Top 50	15.5	13	

Feedback Notes

From their first interactions with your organisation until their last day, it's important that LGBTQ+ staff feel welcome and all staff understand what's expected of them. It's clear to see that you recognise this and are taking positive steps to make this happen. If you would like to go further in your work in this area, please see our guidance on the DC Hub for further support and resources.

You've taken some great steps towards attracting LGBTQ+ talent to your organisation by using diversity job boards and including LGBTQ+ equality statements and information on staff networks in your job packs and pages.

It's great to see that you have offered LGBTQ+ specific guidance to staff with recruitment responsibilities, to support them to reduce bias in the recruitment process and ensure that LGBTQ+ candidates feel welcome.

It's important to let employees know about your commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion right from the start of their time working for you. Northern Ireland Civil Service do this by signposting to your LGBTQ+ staff network, highlighting your membership of the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme and the Workplace Equality Index, as well as your involvement in Pride events. To develop further, you might wish to consider having an explicit statement of LGBTQ+ equality during your induction process that is explicitly inclusive of bi, non-binary and trans inclusion. We also recommend signposting to your LGBTQ+ inclusive policies such as your family leave and bullying and harrassment policies.

We strongly recommend considering ways that you recognise the identities of your non-binary colleagues on workplace systems. This might include having inclusive titles such as Mx., or removing the requirement for titles and gender markers altogether.

Providing in-depth training on discrimination, bullying and harassment, covering both legislation and your organisational policy, is a key way to ensure that your LGBTQ+ colleagues feel protected at work and that all staff know how to spot, challenge and report these behaviours. It's great that you have included an example of transphobia in your training, however we recommend you also include specific examples of homophobia and biphobia, as well as examples of discrimination on the basis of multiple marginalised identities. This supports your colleagues to understand how each of these behaviours might manifest in your workplace.

It's great to see that your internal communications cover several aspects of LGBTQ+ equality. To enhance your work further, aim to consistently address all areas, ensuring a range of identities and experiences are communicated to all employees, filling in any gaps where certain topics may currently be underrepresented. For example, you published a good article on Bi Visability Day. As a next step you could explore bi workplace experinces. Your Role Models Guide article about the launch was also good, however we were unable to view the guide itself to assess the content. Your Trans Day of Visibility and Trans Pride NI articles were also good and went some way in helping people understand trans lived experience – well done. Your article on your Special Leave Policy changes didn't mention LGBTQ+, which was unfortunate however your article on pronoun use was very good.

We would recommend exploring ways that staff can have their contributions towards LGBTQ+ inclusion work within your organisation recognised during your performance review or appraisal process. Good practice would be for this to be for any contribution, not just a formalised role such as network chair. This is a great way to signal that you value LGBTQ+ inclusion work as an organisation.

Fianally, you may wish to consider implementing a question for all staff that specifically probes around any experiences of discrimination during your exit interview process. This ensures that all staff are asked and that the onus does not fall on the employee to raise these issues proactively, which they may not feel comfortable doing.

SECTION THREE: LGBT EMPLOYEE NETWORK GROUP

This section is about your workplace LGBTQ+ Employee Network Group. This could be a formalised, stand-alone group or a specific LGBTQ+ strand of a wider Diversity and Inclusion group.

We review the support your group receives from the organisation, activities and support they offer LGBTQ+ staff and allies, and work they've done to ensure they're inclusive of all LGBTQ+ staff.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	23.5	17	23.5
Average: Public Sector	19.5	13	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	19	11.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	22	16.5	
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	21.5	14	
Average: Top 100	21	15.5	
Average: Top 50	22	17.5	

Feedback Notes

LGBTQ+ employee network groups help to ensure that engagement around LGBTQ+ inclusion is consistent throughout the year, that LGBTQ+ employees have a safe space to come to and talk about the barriers they face at work, and that the voices of LGBTQ+ employees are raised to help drive change. It's great to see that you have taken steps to provide these spaces for your LGBTQ+ employees and their allies. You have scored very well in this section and your staff network should be comended for their Network Group of the Year award – well done.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service have provided a good range of support to your network by providing a network budget, a formal senior champion, and skills training to support network members to carry out their roles. Your network group's participation in external LGBTQ-specific seminars or conferences enhances both the personal growth of members and the overall effectiveness of your network. As a next step we recommend that you are clear with staff on your support for members to be afforded time to attend network group activity and you explore leadership or professional development programmes for group members such as mentoring, peer support, conflict resolution or handling challenging conversations.

Your network group has done an excellent job ensuring that bi and trans colleagues are engaged with through a formal, structured mechanism. We also liked that you have a queer parents rep, a mental health rep and an intersectionality rep. Having a formal strategy in place to support marginalised groups to feel included within your network is a brilliant way to ensure that all

LGBTQ+ people can access the space. You may wish to explore this further as well as how you communicate your network as being inclusive of underrepresented and marginalised groups. We also recommend investigating whether you could implement identity-specific safe spaces within your network – for example, a closed Teams group for bi members.

It's great that your staff network is undertaking a range of support mechanisms, such as providing confidential support on LGBTQ+ issues and consulting with the organisation on policies and processes. It's great that your network has a strategic plan however we could not see any evidence of systematic support given to and advertised to all employees on how to report biphobic, homophobic and transphobic bullying and harassment. This may be something to consider as a next step.

Your network group's collaboration on social events, awareness campaigns, and your reverse mentorship programme is exemplary. These activities help create a supportive community and raise awareness across your organisation and it's positive to see some aspects of your network's activities being recognised. To build on this, consider where improvements can be made in the areas not awarded to ensure consistent support and visibility across all LGBTQ+ identity strands. For example, it would be great to hear about any collaborations between different NICS staff networks as well as more of a focus on non-binary awareness.

Your initiatives or events that engage with the intersection of LGBTQ+ and other marginalised identities effectively highlight and address the specific experiences of multiple marginalised groups within the community. We particularly liked your work on LGBTQ+ mental health, neurodiversity: Neuroqueer and Proud and older LGBTQ+ people: LGBTQ+ Perspective: Changing Attitudes across NICS.

Your measures to ensure that LGBTQ+ employee network group activities reach all employees across various locations demonstrate a strong commitment to inclusivity and engagement.

SECTION FOUR: EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS

This section is about how you support LGBTQ+ staff and allies to stand up for inclusion and create change in your organisation.

We review how you support LGBTQ+ staff to become changemakers and share their experiences with others. We also look at the initiatives and resources you have in place to support all staff to step up as LGBTQ+ allies.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	8.5	5	
Average: Public Sector	13.5	7	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	12.5	5.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	13	7	20
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	15	8	
Average: Top 100	16	10	
Average: Top 50	16.5	11.5	

Feedback Notes

Empowering individuals is essential for driving change in LGBTQ+ inclusion. It's encouraging to see your initiatives enabling both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ staff to become active role models and allies. Your initiatives have provided comprehensive training and resources that empower LGBTQ+ staff to become effective role models. This supports positive change and inspires others across your organisation.

It's great that you've begun sharing LGBTQ+ workplace stories. This helps colleagues understand the barriers that LGBTQ+ people can face at work. Of particular note was your LGBTQ+ Perspective: Changing Attitudes across NICS article. To develop this work further, you could consider sharing more stories covering a wider range of identities and their workplace experiences. We can discuss this together at benchamarking.

We were happy to hear that you have developed a Guide for Allies as part of National Inclusion Week. Unfortunately a copy of the guide wasn't uploaded with your submission so we were unable to assess the content.

At Stonewall, we recommend implementing a formal programme to encourage non-LGBTQ+ staff to become allies. This could involve training or resources, helping staff understand practical steps they can take to support LGBTQ+ equality in your workplace. This could also include information on being a better ally to bi and to trans people, as well as other LGBTQ+ marginalised communities.

Finally, your consistent approach of providing both in person and online workshops ensures empowerment programmes reach all staff regardless of their location or working practice, ensuring everyone is included.

SECTION FIVE: LEADERSHIP

This section is about the work of leaders in your workplace to support LGBTQ+ inclusion.

We review how you support senior leaders to learn about LGBTQ+ inclusion, as well as visibility and support they give to your LGBTQ+ and activities. We also look at how expectations of inclusive leadership are built into recruitment and appraisal processes for all leaders.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	11.5	9	18
Average: Public Sector	12	6.5	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	11.5	5.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	13	8.5	
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	13.5	7.5	
Average: Top 100	14	9	
Average: Top 50	15	10	

Feedback Notes

Effective leadership plays a key role in driving progress on LGBTQ+ inclusion. It's encouraging to see your senior management taking decisive steps to understand the issues faced by LGBTQ+ staff and acting as champions for change. If you would like to go further in your work in this area, please see our guidance on the DC Hub for further support and resources.

It's excellent that you've implemented reverse mentoring opportunities, allowing senior leaders to gain personal insights into the issues affecting LGBTQ+ employees. To further this work we recommend considering establishing mentoring or coaching opportunities among senior leaders to share best practices and insights on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Offering your senior leaders opportunities to attend LGBTQ+ specific conferences and seminars is an excellent way of ensuring they stay informed on best practice and the unique challenges these groups can face in the workplace. We were pleased to see that you had representatives from your senior leadership team at various LGBT+ events including your LGBTQ+ mental health seminar and Stonewall Empowerment workshops on allyship and creating a bi inclusive organisation.

It's impactful that your senior managers have communicated strong messages supporting LGBTQ+ equality, reinforcing a culture of inclusiveness right from the top. Ensuring that your leaders issue specific messages on bi and trans equality will help develop this work further.

Reviewing and approving LGBTQ+ inclusion strategies shows proactive governance and commitment to measurable inclusion goals. This is great to see. Senior leaders should review top-line LGBTQ+ monitoring reports to better understand workforce diversity and direct inclusion efforts effectively. Regular meetings with the LGBTQ+ network group illustrate your leaders' dedication to direct dialogue and responsiveness to staff needs.

Speaking at internal events showcases leadership's visible commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion, boosting staff morale and engagement. Your leaders' participation in external LGBTQ+ events demonstrates a strong external commitment to LGBTQ+ advocacy. Attendance at significant events like Pride by your leaders highlights their support and solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community.

Your consistent approach ensures senior leader activity reaches all staff across various locations, helping reinforce the importance of their messages on LGBTQ+ equality.

To further progress this work we recommend requiring an inclusion-based competency for all senior leaders and managers, ensuring a consistent commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion in your hiring process. In addition to this, introducing individual objectives which relate to diversity and inclusion for all leaders and line managers could also be a great next step. This can help ensure that your organisational values are embedded at all levels of your organisation.

SECTION SIX: MONITORING

This section is about how you use equalities data to understand the experiences of your LGBTQ+ staff and the progress of your inclusion work.

We review how you collect and use information about employees' sexual orientation, gender and trans status to understand experiences across staff recruitment, pay, and satisfaction. We also look at the initiatives you have in place to encourage LGBTQ+ staff to share this data with you.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	5	1.5	20
Average: Public Sector	11.5	4.5	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	11	3	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	6.5	2.5	
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	11	4.5	
Average: Top 100	13.5	7	
Average: Top 50	14	8.5	

Feedback Notes

Collecting and analysing equalities monitoring data is a key way to gather insight into the representation and experiences of LGBTQ+ staff. It's great to see that you are being proactive in this area. If you would like to go further in your work in this area, please see our guidance on the DC Hub for further support and resources.

We can see from your submission that you have started to collect data on employees' sexual orientation. This can help to enhance your understanding of workplace diversity and better tailor your inclusion strategies. We would recommend updating your wording here so that it is more inclusive and reflects good practice. We can discuss this more at benchmarking.

We also suggest that you have diversity monitoring in place on the gender identity of your colleagues, and ensure that you specifically include non-binary identities. This will help you to generate insights and target improvement initiatives effectively. Finaly, it is also important that you explore collecting data on trans status to better support your trans employees and begin to understand their specific needs and barriers in your workplace.

Your analysis of application to appointment rates based on sexual orientation uses some outdated terms and it wasn't clear from your evidence what actions have been agreed or taken as a result of the analysis.

We would encourage you to think about collecting application to appointment rates based on gender identity which is inclusive on non-binary identities and

application to appointment rates based on trans status. This will help to identify any potential biases or barriers in your recruitment for these groups.

We suggest you analyse pay grades across sexual orientations to ensure pay equity and address any discrepancies. It is crucial to analyse pay data by gender identity, which is inclusive of non-binary identities, to ensure that all employees are remunerated fairly regardless of their gender. We also recommend that you start analysing pay structures by trans status to identify and correct any inequalities in compensation.

We suggest you begin breaking down staff satisfaction data by sexual orientation to better address the specific needs of different groups. It's important to analyse staff satisfaction by gender identity, inclusive of non-binary identities, to ensure that your workplace practices support all gender identities effectively. We recommend you start analysing staff satisfaction for trans employees to better understand their experiences and improve their support mechanisms.

Well done - your communication about the importance of LGBTQ+ monitoring plays a vital role in boosting participation and trust in your monitoring processes. Providing clear information about confidentiality and data security reassures employees and supports higher declaration rates in diversity monitoring. This is really great to see. We also recognise and congratulate you for the messaging around recognition that the options available on your monitoring forms are in need of improvement and details how this improvement will be made and when. We look forward to hearing how this progresses!

We recommend revising your definition of 'bi' to explicitly include pan and queer identities, ensuring that your monitoring approach is fully inclusive and allows you to collect robust data sets. We advise including a comprehensive definition of 'trans' in your monitoring efforts, explicitly covering non-binary identities to enhance inclusivity.

Demonstrating how previous monitoring exercises have led to tangible improvements can boost employee confidence in the value of these efforts. It is clear that you have considered this and how this improves your employees' experience.

SECTION SEVEN: SUPPLY CHAINS

This section is about how LGBTQ+ inclusion is built into your supply chain or procurement processes.

We review how you encourage other organisations to advance their LGBTQ+ inclusion practices at all stages of the process, from tendering to engaging with existing suppliers.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	2	2	
Average: Public Sector	7.5	4	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	8.5	3.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	3	2.5	17
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	10	5	
Average: Top 100	11	6	
Average: Top 50	12.5	8	

Feedback Notes

Ensuring that your supply chain processes are LGBTQ-inclusive helps advance equality beyond your four walls. It also helps prevent your staff and service users from experiencing discrimination in their interactions with your suppliers. It is great to see that you have been taking proactive steps in this area. If you would like to go further in your work, please see our guidance on the DC Hub for further support and resources.

Collaborating on LGBTQ+ diversity and inclusion training with suppliers extends the impact of your diversity and inclusion efforts through your supply chain. It was great to read about the work you have done to support one of your key suppliers in their LGBTQ+ inclusive service delivery. As a next step, you may wish to consider inviting suppliers' employees to your LGBTQ+ network group events to enhance their understanding of inclusion. Sharing your organisational knowledge with others who may be earlier in their learning journey is a great way to establish your role as a leader in promoting equality.

To further progress your work with supply chains, we recommend implementing a policy to scrutinise potential suppliers for explicit anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination policies to set the tone of LGBTQ+ inclusion right from the outset of your supplier journey. We suggest that you start monitoring potential suppliers for their management of anti-LGBTQ+ bullying and harassment to ensure they meet your inclusion standards. We also recommend that you require potential suppliers to have transitioning at work policies, to help ensure they are supporting their trans employees. You may also wish to begin reviewing potential suppliers' diversity and

inclusion strategies to ensure they align with your organisation's commitment to equality.

SECTION EIGHT: EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

This section is about how you embed LGBTQ+ inclusion in your external-facing work.

We review how you ensure you meet the needs of your LGBTQ+ service users or customers, promote LGBTQ+ equality in your sector, and support the wider LGBTQ+ community.

Entrant	Marks claimed	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	18	9	
Average: Public Sector	24	12.5	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	23	12.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	20	2.5	40
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	24	13.5	
Average: Top 100	25.5	17	
Average: Top 50	28	20.5	

Feedback Notes

Strong external engagement with LGBTQ+ equality issues is a great way to signal that the Northern Ireland Civil Service is an inclusive workplace, both within your sector and to the wider community. It's great to see examples of this being put into practice in your submission.

Your support of LGBTQ+ community groups through financial or in-kind contributions is commendable. This is a great way to help strengthen grassroots work in your community. To develop further, you might wish to consider whether you could support bi-specific, trans-specific, or intersectional initiatives.

Your use of social media to promote LGBTQ+ equality is a great way to use your influence to drive LGBTQ+ support in wider society. It's really good to see that you are doing this. You could also consider issuing specific messages on trans, bi, and non-binary equality, to draw attention to the specific barriers these groups can face.

Your active participation in LGBTQ+ equality campaigns beyond social media is a great way of influencing LGBTQ+ inclusion beyond the walls of your organisation and your collaborative efforts with PRISM and a:Gender to promote LGBTQ+ equality within your sector show leadership and commitment to widespread change.

You have done some really fantastic work via your Central Policy Division, in conjunction with your staff network, to conduct an audit into the customer journey of Universal Credit. Your thorough review of service user journeys to identify and remove barriers for LGBTQ+ individuals ensures that your services are

accessible and inclusive. We suggest starting to monitor access rates for LGBTQ+ people to better understand their engagement with your services. We recommend initiating satisfaction assessments for LGBTQ+ service users to ensure that their needs are being met comparably to other groups. Finally, we suggest engaging directly with LGBTQ+ service users in the design and improvement of your services to ensure they meet this community's needs effectively. It would be good to see some of this work carried through the Department and across the wider organisation.

You may also want to explore initiating or enhancing training for your frontline staff on LGBTQ+ specific needs to ensure respectful and informed service delivery. We suggest establishing a clear, public-facing policy that specifically bans all forms of LGBTQ+ discrimination across your organisation and we recommend promoting your services as LGBTQ+ inclusive, to attract LGBTQ+ individuals and demonstrate your commitment to meeting their needs.

STAFF FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

The Staff Feedback Questionnaire is an anonymous survey that we ask Workplace Equality Index participants to share with all their employees. The results form part of your total score, alongside your main submission.

We ask respondents about their identities and experiences relating to inclusion in the workplace.

Entrant	Marks eligible	Marks awarded	Marks Available
Northern Ireland Civil Service	20	7.5	20
Average: Public Sector	20	8	
Average: Government & Regulators Industry	20	8.5	
Average: Headquartered in Northern Ireland: County Antrim	20	10	
Average: 5000+ employee numbers	20	10	
Average: Top 100	20	11	
Average: Top 50	20	12	

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk.