# UK Civil Service Diversity Guidance Update Omits Rainbow Lanyard Ban



**Updated Civil Service Diversity Guidance Excludes Rainbow Lanyard Ban**

The newly released guidance on diversity and inclusion for the UK's Civil Service does not include a ban on rainbow lanyards, despite earlier suggestions by Cabinet Office minister Esther McVey. McVey, known as the “common sense minister,” had called for a crackdown on "inappropriate backdoor politicisation" in Whitehall, emphasizing that civil servants should wear “standard design” lanyards and leave political views outside the workplace.

The updated guidance, published Tuesday night, stresses that civil servants must adhere to the core values of objectivity and impartiality from the Civil Service code. It does not make direct references to lanyards or other specific symbols. It highlights the importance of tackling discrimination and prejudice without enforcing “homogeneity or conformity of belief or views.”

In a written statement, McVey reiterated that civil servants must not let personal political views influence their actions or advice. Downing Street indicated that McVey’s speech aimed to illustrate broader issues rather than introduce specific new measures.

Defence Secretary Grant Shapps distanced himself from McVey's remarks, stating that lanyard choices did not concern him, but emphasizing the need for civil servants to focus on their primary duties.

**Key Details:**  
- **What:** Newly published Civil Service diversity guidance omits a ban on rainbow lanyards.  
- **Where:** United Kingdom.  
- **When:** Guidance released on the night of October 3, 2023.  
- **Who:** Statement and earlier remarks by Esther McVey; comments from Grant Shapps; overall response by Downing Street.