




Northern  
Ireland  
Office

Northern Ireland Office  
Freedom of Information Team  
Stormont House  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SH

  
[foi@nio.gov.uk](mailto:foi@nio.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/nio](http://www.gov.uk/nio)  
[@niopressooffice](https://twitter.com/niopressooffice)

Date: 14 July 2021

  
  
Dear ,

REFERENCE: FOI 21/120

Thank you for your request received by the Northern Ireland Office on the 29 June 2021. For reference your original request was as follows:

*The Social Security Scotland already have in place Adobe Reader and Acrobat Redaction tools, The questions we need help with is how do organisation like yours implement Redaction to be GDPR compliant in the Government Organisation and how it is done?*

Also,

*1. What tools they use for Redaction and what are the positives / shortcomings of these tools?*

*2. How does Redaction work as a process in these organisations?*

*3. Is Redaction entirely manual or is it automated in anyway?*

*4. Do some organisation Redact more than others and Why?*

*5. When Redaction is done, do they keep originals?*

*6. How will a scenario of a mistaken Redaction be corrected (Is it rolled back)?*

*7. How will large volumes of document be Redacted?*

*8. Are there Redaction teams that go through documents or are documents done on a case to case basis?*

*9. Is Redaction done by the person who identify the text to be Redacted, is it done by a 3rd person or a case manager?*

Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000). I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request. If I may I shall address each of your points in turn:

**1. What tools they use for Redaction and what are the positives / shortcomings of these tools?**

Materials that are selected for redaction go through a process depending on their format (either physical or digital records) and the relevant redaction method is applied:

Digital Records - E-Redact

Physical Records - Redaction Tape

It should be noted that the Department is unable to comment on the merits of these methods.

**2. How does Redaction work as a process in these organisations?**

Redaction is a manual process within the Department.

**3. Is Redaction entirely manual or is it automated in anyway?**

The Department's redaction process is entirely manual.

**4. Do some organisation Redact more than others and Why?**

The Department redacts information when required; how this compares with other organisation is not known as we do not hold this information.

**5. When Redaction is done, do they keep originals?**

When redacting originals are kept.

**6. How will a scenario of a mistaken Redaction be corrected (Is it rolled back)?**

Files are manually audited and double checked. The Department does not use rollback. In the event a mistake is noted then the original is used to re-apply redactions in the correct way.

**7. How will large volumes of document be Redacted?**

Large volumes of redaction are undertaken manually.

**8. Are there Redaction teams that go through documents or are documents done on a case to case basis?**

Redactions are applied on a case by case basis.

**9. Is Redaction done by the person who identify the text to be Redacted, is it done by a 3rd person or a case manager?**

Redaction done by a third person.

I trust that this information is of at least some use to you and I wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of information Team**

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Find out more on [GOV.UK/nio](https://gov.uk/nio)

Follow us on Twitter [@NIOgov](https://twitter.com/NIOgov) and Instagram [@northernirelandoffice](https://www.instagram.com/northernirelandoffice)



**Northern Ireland Office**

Passionate about Northern Ireland: flexible, empowering, inclusive

**Complaints**

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons to the following:

Northern Ireland Office  
Freedom of Information Team  
Stormont House  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SH  
[FOI@NIO.gov.uk](mailto:FOI@NIO.gov.uk)

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the

NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.