



Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

The rule of law: what it is and why it's important for us all



You may have heard people talk about the rule of law, but do you know what it means and why it's important for you?

The rule of law is the set of principles we are all bound by and is the foundation of our society. It means that everyone is subject to the same set of laws, from the police to the government; no one gets special treatment. It also means that we are all protected and have equal rights.



So why does the rule of law matter?

Well, it protects your rights and helps to ensure you're treated fairly in all aspects of your life. But the rule of law doesn't just protect individuals – it underpins our whole society. It means you should not be arrested without a good, legal reason. It even means decisions made by the state can be challenged by individuals or organisations, if they were made unlawfully. These challenges would then be decided by an independent and impartial judiciary (judges and magistrates).

The judiciary are independent and would withstand pressure from the government, other judges, or anyone else to make a decision in a case. To maintain a fair justice system, judges operate in an independent manner.

It is vitally important in a democracy that individual judges and the judiciary are impartial and independent of all external pressures. This helps ensure that only relevant facts and law form the basis of a judge's decision in all cases. Particularly with the growth in governmental functions over the last century, the need for an independent judiciary is more important than ever.



Independence is one of three values that underpin the judiciary in this country. The three Is are:

- Independence
- Integrity
- Impartiality

Strict observance of these values means our judges can hold everyone to account and continue to uphold the rule of law.

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