

Bureaucracy

Political Science

The permanent administration, and its relationship with elected politicians.

Functions and tensions.

Functions

Implementing legislation and policy

Providing continuity across governments

Technical expertise and advice

Impartial administration of services

Tensions

Discretion in implementation is real power

Information asymmetry with ministers

Institutional interests of the department

Politicisation of appointments

Educational reference. Street-level officials exercise significant discretion, and their decisions often are the policy in practice.