

# The uniformed public services and why discipline plays a part

[Education](#), [Discipline](#)



## **Need for Discipline Evaluation**

Discipline can play a key role within the Uniformed Public Services in the United Kingdom. Discipline is incorporated into several areas in relation to control, education and punishment. But what is the impact of discipline on the Public Services and is it having a positive or a negative effect on the Public Services as a whole.

One positive impact Discipline has on the Public Services is how it can be used effectively to punish those who have broken any rules and regulations whilst performing their role as a member of a Public Service. During the war in Afghanistan, an Officer whilst on patrol accidentally discharged his rifle. This is a clear violation of the term “ trigger discipline” which is when a soldier carrying their firearm has their finger close or on the trigger which causes the rifle to fire. The Officer in question was charged with “ negligently firing a weapon” and was punished accordingly because of this lack of discipline.

Evans. Rob, Norton- Taylor. Richard, Graham-Harrison. Emma (2012)

Punishment in relation to discipline can be used effectively in a Public Service, like the British Army, as a way of enforcing the high standard of safety and professionalism which is expected from a soldier. Reinforcing discipline can be used to create the model soldier who will be able to perform his role and duty according to the rules and regulations set out by not only the British Army, but also the British Government. The use of discipline in this situation was effective and showed to have a positive impact on the British Army.

Another positive impact of discipline within the Public Services could be how discipline is used within military training to turn new recruits into soldiers. As part of a reality television show in 2005, “ bad lads” (those who had been in trouble with the law) were put through four weeks of 1950’s style National Service training. One example of how education, in relation to discipline, has a positive impact could be how one individual’s attitude towards authority and self-discipline was greatly improved after the four weeks. This individual passed out after the four weeks at the rank of an Officer Cadet and even went on to serve in the Regular Army. Bad Lads Army (2012)

Punishment in relation to education can be used as an effective method of training and moulding an individual into a model soldier. The disciplined training teaches the new recruits how to be obedient, respectful of others and most importantly teaches them a high standard of self-discipline. Using disciplined training methods can have a positive impact when turning new recruits into model soldiers because of the impact it can have on an individual’s attitude and self-discipline. This was clearly shown by the improvement made by the individual mentioned in the example.

But one negative impact of using discipline, in relation to punishment, is that those who are handing out the punishments may inappropriately chastise and bully other individuals because of unprofessional reasons. One article from the Guardian explained how a review in 2015 found that “ cases of racism and sexism” had been uncovered within the Police Service and this was because of those with power are inappropriately punishing Junior

Officers “ who are often too scared” to confront Senior Officers over misconduct. Williams. Martin (2015)

The article shows how the use of punishment, in relation to discipline, is being abused by those who deem that they have the right to bully those who do not fit within the same characteristics as themselves. Another quote which explains this is “ The Force is defined by a macho, arrogant, bullying culture and it tends to recruit a particular kind of candidate in that mould”. This shows that discipline is being abused within the Police Service through the use of inappropriate punishments and bullying. Perhaps this form of discipline could be having a negative impact on the Public Services as it is being abused and used for bullying and discrimination.

Another negative impact discipline may have is that some Police Officers have been found to abuse their power and used said power to sexually assault witnesses and victims of crime. From 2008 to 2012 there were “ 56 cases” of Police Officers who were found to have abused their position to “ rape, sexually assault or harass women or young people” who themselves were involved in similar crimes. One Police Constable in the Northumbria Police Service was jailed for life in 2011 for carrying out sexually attacks on vulnerable women including “ prostitutes and heroin addicts” whilst he was on duty. Laville. Sandra (2012)

The example shows how discipline can lead to power being abused within a Public Service which could lead to criminal activities being committed by Public Service Officers. This abuse of power could lead to a negative light

being shone on the Public Services as the public generally look to the Police Service for help and believe that they can trust them when they are in need. The damage caused by these crimes is far deeper because the victims “ trusted the Police and believed they were supposed to protect them from harm and catch and punish those who committed the original crime”. Clearly this shows how discipline actually can have a negative impact because it can lead to an abuse in power and also lead to a poor public opinion. Laville. Sandra (2012)

In conclusion I believe that discipline is a useful feature within the Public Services for many reasons. One could be how a high use of discipline within Military Training can actually take raw undisciplined recruits and turn them into highly disciplined and effective soldiers. Also another reason would be how discipline can be used to prevent and even punish those who break the rules and regulations of the Public Service they serve which can then lead to the individual receiving the appropriate punishment. But this doesn't mean that discipline cannot be abused in anyway. The fact that situations occur where discipline has been lost could be used to help to understand why discipline was lost and how they can prevent it from happening again.