This chapter discusses the executive, the administrative branch of government which creates and executes policy, and implements laws. It specifically focuses on the organisation of central government in the UK. Central government in the UK carries out day-to-day administration in relation to England and the whole of the UK on non-devolved matters. Its functions include the conduct of foreign affairs, defence, national security, and oversight of the Civil Service and government agencies. Central government essentially consists of the government and Civil Service but modern government is extensive, multi-layered, and complex.

The chapter then studies the sources of ministerial power. Ministers' legal authority to act can derive from statute, common law, or royal prerogative. The royal prerogative is a source of power which is ‘only available for a case not covered by statute’.

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