

Knowingly enters the United Kingdom without leave

Knowingly arrives in the United Kingdom without valid entry clearance

**Immigration Act 1971 section 24(B1)
Immigration Act 1971 section 24(D1)**

Triable either way

Maximum: Four years' imprisonment

Offence range: High Level Community Order – 3 years' custody

STEP ONE**Determining the offence category**

CULPABILITY	
A - High Culpability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant role played (more than simply a passenger) [OR Exercised some control over means of entry (e.g. control of a vessel or vehicle).] • Sophisticated nature of offence/ significant planning by the offender • Has made previous attempts to unlawfully enter/ arrive in the UK including by use of a false document
B - Medium culpability	<p>Other cases that fall between categories A and C because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors are present in A and C which balance each other out and/or • The offender's culpability falls between the factors as described in A and C
C - Lower culpability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genuinely intends to apply for asylum on grounds which are arguable • Involved due to coercion or pressure

HARM	
Category 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means or route of entry/ arrival involved a high risk of serious injury or death • Seeking to enter/ arrive in order to engage in criminal activity • Exploited/ put pressure on others • Involved children or vulnerable adults in the offence
Category 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means or route of entry/ arrival involved some risk of serious injury or death
Category 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other cases

STEP TWO**Starting point and category range**

Having determined the category at step one, the court should use the corresponding starting point to reach a sentence within the category range below. The starting point applies to all offenders irrespective of plea or previous convictions.

Harm	Culpability		
	A	B	C
Category 1	Starting Point 2 years' custody Category Range 18 months - 3 years' custody	Starting Point 18 months custody Category Range 1-2 years custody	Starting Point 1 years' custody Category Range 8 -18 months' custody
Category 2	Starting Point 18 months custody Category Range 1-2 years custody	Starting Point 1 years' custody Category Range 8 -18 months' custody	Starting Point 8 months' custody Category Range 6 months' – 1 years' custody
Category 3	Starting Point 1 years' custody Category Range 8 -18 months' custody	Starting Point 8 months' custody Category Range 6 months' – 1 years' custody	Starting Point 6 months' custody Category Range High level Community Order – 8 months' custody

Where another offence or offences arise out of the same incident or facts concurrent sentences **reflecting the overall criminality** of offending will ordinarily be appropriate: please refer to the *Totality* guideline and step five of this guideline.

Below is a **non-exhaustive** list of additional elements providing the context of the offence and factors relating to the offender. Identify whether a combination of these or other relevant factors should result in any upward or downward adjustment from the sentence arrived at so far.

Care should be taken to avoid double counting factors already taken into account in assessing culpability

Factors increasing seriousness

Statutory aggravating factors:

- Previous convictions, having regard to a) the **nature** of the offence to which the conviction relates and its **relevance** to the current offence; and b) the **time** that has elapsed since the conviction
- Offence committed whilst on bail

Other aggravating factors:

- Previous history of failed applications for leave to enter/ remain in the UK or for asylum

Factors reducing seriousness or reflecting personal mitigation

- No recent or relevant convictions
- Good character and/or exemplary conduct
- Remorse
- Sole or primary carer for dependent relatives
- Age/lack of maturity
- Mental disorder or learning disability (where not taken into account at step 1)
- Physical disability or serious medical condition requiring urgent, intensive or long-term treatment
- Offender co-operated with investigation, made early admissions and/or voluntarily reported offending

STEP THREE**Consider any factors which indicate a reduction for assistance to the prosecution**

The court should take into account section 74 of the Sentencing Code (reduction in sentence for assistance to prosecution) and any other rule of law by virtue of which an offender may receive a discounted sentence in consequence of assistance given (or offered) to the prosecutor or investigator.

STEP FOUR**Reduction for guilty pleas**

The court should take account of any potential reduction for a guilty plea in accordance with section 73 of the Sentencing Code and the *Reduction in Sentence for a Guilty Plea* guideline.

STEP FIVE**Totality principle**

If sentencing an offender for more than one offence, or where the offender is already serving a sentence, consider whether the total sentence is just and proportionate to the overall offending behaviour in accordance with the Totality guideline.

STEP SIX**Ancillary orders**

In all cases, the court must consider whether to make a compensation order and/or other ancillary orders.

STEP SEVEN**Reasons**

Section 52 of the Sentencing Code imposes a duty to give reasons for, and explain the effect of, the sentence.

STEP EIGHT**Consideration for time spent on bail**

The court must consider whether to give credit for time spent on bail in accordance with section 240A of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 and section 325 of the Sentencing Code.

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Case Details	Sentence	Guideline Category
<p>Mariglen Celaj</p> <p>Attempted to enter UK in small overcrowded boat crossing the Channel. Second time in UK without permission, and previously made an unsuccessful application for asylum so unlikely to have a legitimate claim.</p>	<p>Final sentence 12 months GP Reduction 1/3</p> <p>Sentence before reduction 18mths</p>	A1
<p>Ogert Cera</p> <p>Attempted to cross Channel on a RIB. Previously entered UK unlawfully in the back of a lorry. Previously worked in UK in a cannabis factory Currently subject to a deportation order. Previous unlawful entry</p>	<p>Final sentence 14 months GP Reduction 1/3</p> <p>Sentence before reduction 21mths</p>	A1
<p>Mohammed Nassar</p> <p>Not very clear but seems likely to be a small boat case. Offender was also in breach of a deportation order though that was not separately charged. Previous unlawful presence in UK and false asylum claim in a false name that was withdrawn</p>	<p>Final sentence 16 months GP Reduction 1/3</p> <p>Sentence before reduction 24mths</p>	A1/2
<p>Shkav Abdulla</p> <p>Attempted to enter UK in small overcrowded boat crossing the Channel. No previous attempts to enter UK, has made a claim for asylum that is yet to be adjudicated on. Was originally charged with facilitating but this was dropped- though there may be some evidence that he was more than a mere passenger?</p>	<p>Final sentence 8 months GP Reduction 1/3</p> <p>Sentence before reduction 12mths</p>	B1 (If there was any evidence that he was more than a mere passenger) or C1 if not
<p>Alfred Alla</p> <p>Unlawful Channel crossing in small boat. Previously in UK unlawfully and committed drug production offence and</p>	<p>Final sentence 18 months GP Reduction 1/4</p> <p>Sentence before reduction 24mths</p>	A1

deported. Likely coming back for further offending.		
Mustafa Mustafa Unlawful channel crossing in small boat. Was seen piloting the vessel.	Final sentence 32 weeks GP Reduction 1/4 Sentence before reduction 10mths	A1 Though in this instance the judge acknowledges that the offender piloting the vessel but says he wont treat it as an aggravating feature as he could have been charged under s25 so Judge was placing him either as B1 or C1
Omer Abdulla Attempt to unlawfully enter UK in small overcrowded boat. You have no criminal, or known criminal, past, and of course you claim to have been fleeing persecution in your own country. You have made an asylum claim which is yet to be adjudicated upon.	Final sentence 8 months GP Reduction 1/3 Sentence before reduction 12mths	B1
Fejzi Kalemi Attempt to unlawfully enter UK in small overcrowded boat. Offender pilotted the boat for about 90 minutes (he said everyone took turns). You found yourself in debt from unregulated lenders, and that you did so because of the need to fund medical treatment for family members, and that you came to this country to seek a better life, to pay off that debt and to provide for your family.	Final sentence 8 months GP Reduction 1/4 Sentence before reduction 12mths [Reduces from 12month to 9 months for GP then takes off a further month for the personal mitigation.]	A1 Unclear if the Judge did or did not take into account that the offender piloted the boat.
Abedullah Khamis Unlawful crossing of the Channel in a small boat. No previous unlawful attempts to enter. I am told of some of your personal circumstances, you left Egypt in May, travelling through Libya, paying some €1400 to make the crossing from France, to which you had travelled, as a result of your	Final sentence 6 months GP Reduction 1/3 Sentence before reduction 9mths	C1 or C2

<p>difficult family circumstances, and in order to obtain a better life. I'm told that you have applied for asylum.</p>		
<p>Adel Kadir You decided to return to the UK from Doha (having served a 29 months sentence for identity fraud and then being deported) because your father was involved in the repressive regime of Saddam Hussein and that had implications for you. On arrival, or by the time you arrived, you had lost whatever identity document you may have had in Doha to get on the plane. I say lost; I mean deliberately did not have it on your person. You approached border guards and gave false details, a false account, and claimed political asylum. You did not mention your deportation, no doubt for good reason, because you knew, in my judgement, you should not be in the UK. That is why you gave a false identity. Previous unlawful attempts to enter country</p>	<p>Final sentence 10 months GP Reduction 1/5 Sentence before reduction 12.5mths</p>	<p>A3</p>

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Ancillary orders - Annex A

1. Examples of guidelines with minimal reference to ancillary orders:

Bladed articles and offensive weapons - having in a public place

Step 7 – Ancillary orders

In all cases the court should consider whether to make ancillary orders.

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)
- [Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium](#)

Domestic burglary

Step 8 – Compensation and ancillary orders

In all cases the court should consider whether to make compensation and/or other ancillary orders. Where the offence has resulted in personal injury, loss or damage the court must give reasons if it decides not to order compensation ([Sentencing Code, s.55](#)).

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)
- [Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium](#)

2. Examples of guidelines with brief reference to specific ancillary orders:

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Step 7 – Compensation and ancillary orders

In all cases the court should consider whether to make compensation and/or other ancillary orders. Where the offence has resulted in personal injury, loss or damage the court must give reasons if it decides not to order compensation ([Sentencing Code, s.55](#)).

In particular, where the offender is convicted of a relevant offence within Schedule 1 of the Football Spectators Act 1989, the court must consider whether a Football Banning Order should be made pursuant to s14A Football Spectators Act 1989, and if not give reasons why.

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)
- [Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium](#)

Football related offences

Step 6 – Compensation and ancillary orders

In all cases, the court should consider whether to make [compensation](#) and/or other [ancillary orders](#), including a [football banning order](#).

Where the offence has resulted in personal injury, loss or damage the court must give reasons if it decides not to order compensation ([Sentencing Code, s.55](#)).

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)

3. Examples of guidelines with more detailed information

Individuals: Breach of food safety and food hygiene regulations

Step 6 – Compensation and ancillary orders

Ancillary orders In all cases the court must consider whether to make ancillary orders. These may include:

Hygiene Prohibition Order These orders are available under both the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006. If the court is satisfied that the health risk condition in Regulation 7(2) is fulfilled it **shall** impose the appropriate prohibition order in Regulation 7(3). Where a food business operator is convicted of an offence under the Regulations and the court thinks it proper to do so in all the circumstances of the case, the court **may** impose a prohibition on the operator pursuant to Regulation 7(4). An order under Regulation 7(4) is not limited to cases where there is an immediate risk to public health; the court might conclude that there is such a risk of some future breach of the regulations or the facts of any particular offence or combination of offences may alone justify the imposition of a Hygiene Prohibition Order. In deciding whether to impose an order the court will want to consider the history of convictions or a failure to heed warnings or advice in deciding whether an order is proportionate to the facts of the case. Deterrence may also be an important consideration.

Disqualification of director An offender may be disqualified from being a director of a company in accordance with section 2 of the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986. The maximum period of disqualification is 15 years (Crown Court) or 5 years (magistrates' court).

Compensation

Where the offence results in personal injury, loss or damage the court must consider whether to make a compensation order and must give reasons if it decides not to order compensation ([Sentencing Code, s.55](#)).

If compensation is awarded, priority should be given to the payment of compensation over payment of any other financial penalty where the means of the offender are limited. Where the offender does not have sufficient means to pay the total financial penalty considered appropriate by the court, compensation and fine take priority over prosecution costs.

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)
- [Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium](#)

Encouragement of terrorism

Step 8 – Ancillary orders

In all cases the court should consider whether to make ancillary orders.

- [Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court](#)
- [Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium](#)

Additional guidance [drop down]

Ancillary order	Statutory reference
<p>Confiscation A confiscation order may be made by the Crown Court in circumstances in which the offender has obtained a financial benefit as a result of, or in connection with, his criminal conduct.</p>	<p>Section 6 and Schedule 2 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002</p>
<p>Forfeiture When sentencing for a funding offence (sections 15 – 18 Terrorism Act 2000), the court may order the forfeiture of money or property which the offender had possession or control of at the time of the offence</p>	<p>Section 23 to 23B Terrorism Act 2000</p>
<p>Automatic orders on conviction The following requirements or provisions are not part of the sentence imposed by the court but apply automatically by operation of law. The role of the court is to inform the offender of the applicable requirements and/or prohibition.</p>	
Ancillary order	Statutory reference
<p>Notification requirements A relevant offender automatically becomes subject to notification requirements, obliging him to notify the police of specified information for a specified period. The court should inform the offender accordingly. The operation of the notification requirement is not a relevant consideration in determining the sentence for the offence.</p>	<p>Sections 41 – 53 Counter-Terrorism Act 2008</p>

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Step 1 – Determining the offence category

In order to determine the category the court should assess culpability and harm. The court should determine the offence category with reference only to the factors listed in the table below.

Culpability	
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cases not falling within Culpability B
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very brief incident and voluntary desistance Mental disorder or learning disability, where linked to the commission of the offence Excessive self defence

Harm	
All cases of strangulation involve a very high degree of inherent harm. The court should assess the level of harm caused with reference to the impact on the victim.	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offence results in a severe physical injury or psychological condition which has a substantial and long-term effect on the victim's ability to carry out their normal day to day activities or on their ability to work.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other cases

Step 2 – Starting point and category range

Having determined the category, the court should use the corresponding starting points to reach a sentence within the category range below. The starting point applies to all offenders irrespective of plea or previous convictions.

HARM	CULPABILITY	
	A	B
Harm 1	<p>Starting point 4 years' custody</p> <p>Category Range 3 – 4 years 6 months' custody</p>	<p>Starting point 2 years 6 months' custody</p> <p>Category Range 1 – 3 years 6 months' custody</p>
Harm 2	<p>Starting point 2 years 6 months' custody</p> <p>Category Range 1 – 3 years 6 months' custody</p>	<p>Starting point 1 year 6 months' custody</p> <p>Category Range High Level Community Order – 2 years 6 months' custody</p>

Factors increasing seriousness

Statutory aggravating factors:

- Previous convictions, having regard to a) the nature of the offence to which the conviction relates and its relevance to the current offence; and b) the time that has elapsed since the conviction
- Offence committed whilst on bail
- Offence motivated by, or demonstrating hostility based on any of the following characteristics or presumed characteristics of the victim: disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity

Other aggravating factors:

- Offence was committed against person providing a public service, performing a public duty or providing services to the public
- Offence committed in domestic context

- Victim isolated and unable to seek assistance
- History of violence or abuse towards victim by offender
- Presence of children
- Gratuitous degradation of victim
- Abuse of trust or power
- Use of ligature or other item
- Any steps taken to prevent the victim reporting an incident, obtaining assistance and/or from assisting or supporting the prosecution
- Commission of offence whilst under the influence of alcohol/drugs
- Offence committed whilst on licence or post sentence supervision
- Failure to comply with current court orders

Factors reducing seriousness or reflecting personal mitigation

- No previous convictions or no relevant/recent convictions
- Remorse
- Good character and/or exemplary conduct
- Age and/or lack of maturity
- Mental disorder or learning disability, where not linked to the commission of the offence
- Sole or primary carer for dependent relative(s)
- Determination and/or demonstration of steps taken to address addiction or offending behaviour
- Serious medical conditions requiring urgent, intensive or long-term treatment

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November Council - Wildlife Offences - Annex A

Data has not been provided for offences where no offenders were sentenced.

Data could not be provided for some sections in legislation due to way offence codes are grouped in the published data.

Table 1: Number of adult offenders sentenced for specified hunting/poaching offences, 2012 to 2022

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Night Poaching Act 1828 (section 1)	33	26	34	55	54	28	36	14	17	4	8	16	10
Game Act 1831 (section 30 and 31)	129	195	187	167	145	72	72	76	78	32	51	72	31
Deer Act 1991 (sections 1-5, 10)	3	4	7	8	0	10	18	5	3	0	6	0	4
Hunting Act 2004	33	52	45	55	34	41	31	21	20	14	17	41	19

Table 2: Number of adult offenders sentenced for specified wildlife cruelty offences, 2012 to 2022

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Protection of Badgers Act 1992	23	23	29	25	11	14	13	6	8	14	9	5	12
Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	0

Table 3: Number of adult offenders sentenced for specified conservation offences, 2012 to 2022

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 sections 1-8 (birds)	17	23	27	17	12	19	12	14	19	16	14	9	13
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 section 9 (wild animals)	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	0	0	3	3	2	3	3	6	4	5	1	2	2
The Control of Trade in Endangered Species Regulations 2018 (Schedule 1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	1	0

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We have published several research reports and evaluations with relevant information:

[Attitudes to Guilty Plea Sentence Reductions \(sentencingcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk)

This was a report of findings from research Ipsos MORI carried out for the Sentencing Council in 2011 to examine attitudes towards guilty plea sentence reductions. Some relevant points:

- the public were generally unaware of the nuances of the guilty plea reductions principle and initially tended to be generally unsupportive of reductions in sentencing for those entering a guilty plea
- the public assume that the key motivation for the guilty plea sentence reduction is to reduce resources (time and money), but they prefer the idea of it as something which helps prevent victims having to give evidence and experiencing emotional trauma whilst doing this. There is a strong sense that the drive for cost savings should not impact on a system effectively delivering justice
- there is more support for sentence reductions if the guilty plea is entered at an early point. The benefits – both economic and emotional – are more tangible at this point, and both the public and victims and witnesses are less likely to feel that the offender can ‘play the system’. On the other hand offenders say they are less likely to enter an early plea, but prefer to weigh up the evidence against them first
- for the general public, there was weak support for higher levels of reductions beyond the current guideline range of up to 33% and a fifth (20%) felt that there should be no reduction at all. Supporting this, when survey respondents were asked whether the reduction should be increased from a third if an offender pleads guilty at the earliest opportunity, 58% disagreed and only 22% agreed. A small number of victims of more serious offences were, however, more supportive if it spared them having to testify in court
- the language and discourse of the reductions did not sit well with people. They were very resistant to the idea of an offender being ‘rewarded’ for admitting they were guilty of an offence; rather they spontaneously suggested that defendants should be further penalised for not admitting guilt if they are subsequently found guilty
- offenders in this study were often unsure what their sentence was likely to be when weighing up how to plead, and felt that decisions on sentence lengths were inconsistent. This made it difficult for them to calculate exactly what the impact of a set reduction to their sentence would be. Offenders also questioned the extent to which reductions for early guilty pleas were actually being applied, with a number feeling that it was very difficult to understand exactly how their final sentence had been determined. However, when probed on the level of reductions, offenders in this study were broadly content with the current discount of a third for an early guilty plea, and felt that without the reduction there was little incentive to admit guilt
- The main factor determining whether or not offenders plead guilty was the likelihood of being found guilty at trial. The key ‘tipping point’ here was when offenders realised that the chances of them being found guilty were greater than being found not guilty. Weight of evidence and advice from solicitors/barristers were pivotal in offenders’ assessments of whether they were likely to be found guilty and therefore crucial in determining when a guilty plea was entered. There was little evidence from the research that increasing the reduction further would encourage more offenders to plead guilty at an earlier stage, given the reduction only becomes a driver of entering a guilty plea at such a point that an offender considers a conviction to be the likely outcome

It should be noted that the sample size of offenders in this study was very small – fifteen.

[Reduction in sentence for a guilty plea research report \(sentencingcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk)

This report summarises four stages of research (the first being that summarised above) carried out during the development of the Sentencing Council guideline for reduction in sentence for a guilty plea, between 2011 and 2016

A small qualitative exercise with defence representatives found that:

- there was a sense that the guideline was placing undue pressure to plead at a very early stage in proceedings, which may be unfair in certain cases
- there were elements of the guideline that were welcomed: in particular, the clear statement that the appropriate reduction should be given irrespective of the weight of evidence against a defendant was generally seen as a positive change, which would result in earlier pleas in appropriate cases

[Assessing the impact and implementation of the Sentencing Council's Reduction in Sentence for a Guilty Plea Definitive Guideline](#)

This report (published in 2019) explored the impact of the 2017 guideline. Findings include:

- Analysis of trend data suggests that the guideline did not have an impact on the proportion of defendants who pleaded guilty, which was as expected. The guideline also did not have an impact on the stage at which offenders pleaded guilty or on sentence lengths for adult offenders.
- Content analysis of a small sample of Crown Court judges' sentencing remarks found that the guilty plea reductions applied to sentences seemed to be in line with the guideline in most cases. This is supported by an analysis of judgments from the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) which were found to interpret the guideline as intended by the Council. Analysis of data collected in a sample of magistrates' courts also found that in most cases, sentencers applied the reductions as we would expect.

As part of this assessment small-scale qualitative research was undertaken with defendants: in June 2018, 26 defendants were interviewed face-to-face in two courts in the Midlands region (7 at one Crown Court and 19 at one magistrates' court). The purpose of this research was to understand defendants' knowledge of the guilty plea scheme and the sentence reductions they may be entitled to, as well as to understand their reasons for pleading guilty.

- Of the 7 defendants interviewed at the Crown Court all were aware of the guilty plea scheme. All had pleaded guilty, saying that this was either because they accepted responsibility for the offending, or because their defence representative advised them to plead guilty. Where the defendants specified the stage of plea, all said they had pleaded guilty at the magistrates' court (i.e. at the first stage of proceedings). This research suggests that the guideline did not seem to have any noticeable impact on defendants' pleading behaviour, as the reasons for pleading guilty suggest they would have pleaded guilty at the same stage anyway.
- Of the 19 defendants interviewed at magistrates' courts the majority were aware of the guilty plea scheme. Where defendants pleaded guilty, they said this was because they accepted responsibility for the offending, or thought they would be found guilty at trial, or that they pleaded guilty to reduce costs or reduce the length of their sentence. This research again suggests that the guideline did not seem to have any noticeable impact on their pleading behaviour, as the reasons for pleading guilty suggest they would have pleaded guilty at the same stage anyway.

In addition to the research outlined above, the Council consulted on the draft guilty plea guideline in 2016 and published a response to that consultation in 2017. Of particular relevant to the current proposals is this extract from the [consultation response document](#) (at page 7):

The draft guideline proposed that the reduction for a guilty plea should be capped at one-third. This was widely accepted by respondents as fair both from the perspective of victims and the wider public who would perceive anything higher as undermining the punishment of offenders and from the perspective of those who are keen to ensure that defendants are not pressured into pleading against their interests by the prospect of a larger reduction.

The US system has particular features which tend to increase the coercive effect of the guilty plea regime, where incentives to plead guilty are particularly intense due to high and inconsistently applied sentencing discounts and prosecutors operate without regulation or transparency. To its credit, the Guideline protects against this kind of coercion by limiting the sentence discount to 1/3 and applying it equally and transparently to nearly all cases regardless of the strength of the evidence. – **Fair Trials**

It is important to cap the maximum reduction to ensure consistency and to avoid wide differences in the reductions being applied. There are also mitigating factors that can be taken into account. So capping the maximum reduction to a third would ensure the sentence is not too lenient. – **Victim's Commissioner**

In summary, we have no evidence that the amount of the guilty plea reduction is a strong influence on the decision to plead guilty. Factors such as the strength of the evidence, legal advice and an acceptance of guilt all appear to be influential. We have evidence that reductions for pleading guilty are not widely popular with the public (in that they are seen as leniency) and that those representing the interests of defendants have concerns over the fairness of regimes with very high reductions.

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