

Causing serious injury by careless or inconsiderate driving

Road Traffic Act 1988 (section 2C)

Triable either way

Maximum: 2 years' custody

Offence range: Community order – 2 years' custody

Obligatory disqualification: minimum 12 months

(Minimum 2 years disqualification if the offender has been disqualified two or more times for a period of at least 56 days in the three years preceding the commission of the offence)

STEP ONE**Determining the offence category****CULPABILITY**

The court should determine culpability by reference only to the factors below, which comprise the principal factual elements of the offence. Where an offence does not fall squarely into a category, individual factors may require a degree of weighting before making an overall assessment and determining the appropriate offence category. A combination of factors in any category may justify upwards adjustment from the starting point before consideration of aggravating/mitigating factors.

A – High culpability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard of driving was just below threshold for dangerous driving and/or includes extreme example of a medium culpability factor
B – Medium culpability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsafe manoeuvre or positioning Engaging in a brief but avoidable distraction Driving at a speed that is inappropriate for the prevailing road or weather conditions Driving whilst ability to drive is impaired as a result of consumption of alcohol or drugs Driving vehicle which is unsafe or where driver's visibility or controls are obstructed Driving in disregard of advice relating to the effects of medical condition or medication Driving whilst ability to drive impaired as a result of a known medical condition Driving when deprived of adequate sleep or rest The offender's culpability falls between the factors as described in high and lesser culpability
C – Lesser culpability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard of driving was just over threshold for careless driving Momentary lapse of concentration

HARM

Category 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Particularly grave and/or life-threatening injury caused Injury results in physical or psychological harm resulting in lifelong dependency on third party care or medical treatment Offence results in a permanent, irreversible injury or condition which has a substantial and long term effect on the victim's ability to carry out normal day to day activities or on their ability to work
Category 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other cases

STEP TWO

Starting point and category range

	Culpability		
	A	B	C
Harm 1	Starting Point: 1 year 6 months Category range: 1 - 2 years	Starting Point: 1 year Category range: 26 weeks – 1 year 6 months	Starting Point: 26 weeks Category range: High level community order – 1 year
Harm 2	Starting Point: 1 year Category range: 26 weeks – 1 year 6 months	Starting Point: 26 weeks Category range: High level community order – 1 year	Starting Point: High level community order Category range: Low level community order – 26 weeks

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 *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.

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:

- Victim was a vulnerable road user, including pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders
- Disregarding warnings of others
- Driving for commercial purposes
- Driving LGV, HGV, PSV
- Other driving offences committed at the same time as the careless driving
- Blame wrongly placed on others
- Failed to stop and/or assist or seek assistance at the scene
- Passengers, including children
- Vehicle poorly maintained
- Offence committed on licence or while subject to court order(s)

- **Factors reducing seriousness or reflecting personal mitigation**
- No previous convictions or no relevant/recent convictions
- Impeccable driving record
- Actions of the victim or a third party contributed significantly to collision or death
- Offence due to inexperience rather than irresponsibility (where offender qualified to drive)
- Genuine emergency
- Efforts made to assist or seek assistance for victim(s)
- Remorse
- The victim was a close friend or relative
- Serious medical condition requiring urgent, intensive or long-term treatment
- Age and/or lack of maturity
- Mental disorder or learning disability
- Sole or primary carer for dependent relatives

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

Compensation and ancillary orders

In all cases the court should consider whether to make compensation and/or other ancillary orders.

- Ancillary orders – Magistrates' Court
- Ancillary orders – Crown Court Compendium

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 (tagged curfew)

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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