

SENTENCING ACADEMY

Rape

Average custodial sentence length for adults sentenced for rape



Source: Ministry of Justice (2021) *Criminal Justice System Statistics publication: Outcomes by Offence 2010 to 2020: Pivot Table Analytical Tool for England and Wales*

Offence Definition:

A person commits this offence if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with their penis, and the other person does not consent to the penetration, and the offender does not reasonably believe that the other consents.

Sentencing Guidelines Range:

The sentencing range for this offence is 4 – 19 years' custody, with a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Graph Explained:

The average custodial sentence length for adults sentenced for rape has seen a general increase during the period 2010-2020, from roughly 8 to 10 years. The Sentencing Council introduced an updated guideline for this offence in April 2014. It is possible that the increase from an average custodial sentence length of between 8 and 9 years between 2010-2013 to 9 and 10 years between 2014 and 2020 could be because of the updated guideline. However, no specific research on this point has been carried out to date.