

**From:** [erin\\_cardell](#)  
**To:** [sentencingcouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Your reference ain't relevant  
**Date:** Monday, 3 February 2025 9:54:45 PM

---

As a survivor, I am writing to support the #YourReferenceAintRelevant campaign and call for the removal of good character references in sentencing for crimes like child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and rape.

Hearing my offender's "good character" referenced during the legal process was deeply retraumatizing. It sent the message that their reputation mattered more than the harm they caused me. These references diminish the severity of the crime and fail to acknowledge how offenders often use their perceived trustworthiness to commit these acts.

Good character references should have no place in cases like mine. By allowing them, the justice system risks retraumatizing survivors and undermining the accountability offenders should face.

I urge the Sentencing Council to recommend the removal of good character references from sentencing in all of these cases. It's time for the legal system to prioritise survivors and reflect the reality of these crimes in its processes.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Erin