

From: [Fay Highet](#)
To: [sentencingcouncil](#)
Subject: The review of section 21A(5A)
Date: Monday, 8 July 2024 9:18:35 PM

To anyone this may concern,

I personally know individuals close to me who have been abused from their childhood years, to their adult years, from people they have trusted and who had a “good character”. I have witnessed first hand the struggle that comes with the trauma and the abuse , and the fear of not being believed due to the perception people hold of the abusers character. Grooming requires a good character persona in order to gain access and trust of children, vulnerable people, and the trust of others. Without manipulation or society for this access to groom, there is only the offender who actively chooses to abuse the most innocent in our society children. Good character is their main tool in these crimes.

The review of section 21A(5A) of the Crimes (sentence Procedure) Act 1999 (NSW) and any where else this may apply, is a set back in the justice system. This needs urgent review and victims safety and wellbeing need to be prioritised. Do not let these offenders groom the justice system too with their “Good Character references”, and let there be a just outcome for all.

I wholeheartedly support the 'Your Reference Ain't Relevant' Campaign's call to remove the last 21 words of the current provision.

Thank you for considering my submission,
Fay Highet.