

**From:** [Nea Pilgrim](#)  
**To:** [sentencingcouncil](#)  
**Subject:** Review of section 21A(5A)  
**Date:** Tuesday, 9 July 2024 12:48:23 PM

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Dear Mr McClellan and the NSW Sentencing Council,

I am writing to provide my input on the review of section 21A(5A) of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 (NSW) and other relevant sections of the concerning the use of “good character” in sentencing - particularly for child sexual abuse cases.

I believe it is crucial to ensure that our sentencing framework reflects the seriousness of child sexual assault offences and holds perpetrators fully accountable for their actions. The use of good character references in these cases often undermines the gravity of crimes and the harm caused to victims.

I believe that good character references should not be considered in cases of child sexual assault – or any other sexual assault case – as they can diminish the severity of the offences and hinder justice for victims. It is absolutely essential to prioritise the protection and well-being of victims and ensure perpetrators are held fully accountable for their actions.

I fully support the ‘Your Reference Ain’t Relevant Campaign’ and urge you to remove the last 21 words of the current provision.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,  
Nea Pilgrim