

Character Reference Guide – Magistrates Court



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If someone you know is being charged before the Magistrates Court jurisdiction in Queensland, you may have been asked to help write a character reference for them.

A character reference attempts to speak to the character of the person charged so that the Court may see them in a favourable light.

It is important to establish your history and relationship with the defendant, as this will be taken into account when the Court is considering your reference.

Gatenby Criminal Lawyers has compiled a quick guide for things to include in your reference, and our recommended format.

A Character Reference should include:

- Your full name and occupation.
- A brief paragraph setting out your background;
- Details of how long you have known the Defendant and how you came to know the Defendant.
- That you are aware the Defendant is to attend Court in relation to an offence/s charged.
- Any comments about the Defendant's character, in as much detail as needed or giving an example of a situation in which the Defendant's personality is shown positively.
- Details of any positive attributes you feel the Defendant has including any community contributions.

The Reference should:

- Be addressed to "The Presiding Magistrate."
- Not extend beyond one page.
- Formulated in the referee's own words.
- Be signed and dated by the referee.

If you have any further questions. Please feel free to contact us at any time. Our office number is **55800 120**.

Please note: this publication is designed to provide a simple overview and should not be relied upon instead of legal advice.