

Q.1

My perpetrator was the director of the company I worked at. I told the other directors who listened and believed me. They enlisted a lawyer to talk to me, but nothing really came of that. I also spoke to the police, firstly, as a witness for my co-worker who had also been assaulted by our director, and then again when the police said that they would like to charge my perpetrator for what he did to me as well.

All the directors of the company I worked at had a huge falling out and the company split up [REDACTED]. I felt very anxious and guilty for causing such a huge roll-on effect. I didn't have any idea what my legal options were. The police I spoke to were nice, but I've not always had positive experiences with police in the past, so I felt difficult to be vulnerable with them. Throughout the several months prior to the case going to trial I felt like I was a small piece of a puzzle the police were rushing to complete. I wasn't aware of my other legal options and I didn't know where to access further information. I felt slightly pushed into making a statement and was very alienated.

I understand that the police want convictions and try to push cases through the system, but reporting is a very dehumanising experience. I wish someone could have sat down with me, not in a police station, and gone through all my options, before I provided a statement. I wish someone would have explained how horrible the experience was going to be so I wouldn't have to be another failed statistic. It wasn't about providing the best solution for me, it was about trying to get a conviction.

Q. 7

The police were kind, as I mentioned previously, but I felt like I was completely in the dark about what to expect throughout the experience, and how unlikely a conviction would be. The police really pushed the sentiment that a conviction would happen, and with hindsight, I think that was unrealistic. I think they should have been more forthright about the fact that it would be unlikely that there would be a conviction.

Q. 8

I think speaking to someone independent of the police first, or in place of, would be beneficial. Someone who provides support and information in a confidential setting to help make an informed decision. There were elements of my experience that I didn't want to have to provide to police for fear of judgement and this further contributed to feeling like a piece of evidence as opposed to a real person.

Q. 22

Being cross-examined was incredibly traumatising, in a completely different way to my assault. I felt invalidated and humiliated by the line of questioning and way I was spoken at. I was called a liar and that my story was not credible. This was also the first time I had seen my perpetrator since the assault occurred, and experiencing the two concurrently was very anxiety-inducing. I don't recall any interventions from the prosecution or judge, but I was incredibly anxious and stressed so it's hard to remember clearly. I often have nightmares about the barrister who cross-examined me.

Q. 24

The idea that victims should be expected to come forward as soon as the experience happens is ridiculous. It sets victims up for failure from the very beginning. I spent several weeks processing what had happened prior to telling my work because I was in shock that something like that could happen to me. I didn't know how to react and felt paralysed by the weight of the decision to actually speak to police and press charges.