

***R v Arumugam* [2018] QSC 312 (14 December 2018) – Queensland Supreme Court**

‘Arranged marriage’ – ‘Domestic violence’ – ‘People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds’ – ‘Physical violence and harm’

Charges: Murder x 1

Facts: The offender met the victim, a Singaporean national living in Australia, through an arranged marriage website. The victim had reservations and formed another relationship. The offender threatened to kill himself if she did not marry him. The offender travelled to Australia from South Africa with the intention of killing the victim if she did not proceed with the arranged marriage. This was evidenced by a statement he made in South Africa to that effect. The offender stabbed the victim 32 times in a hotel room, and claimed that she asked him to kill her. The offender pleaded guilty to the charges. By doing so, he cooperated with the administration of justice because he saved the deceased’s family the trauma of a trial, as well as substantial court time and resources.

Issues: Sentencing

Decision and Reasoning: The offender was convicted of one count of murder, being a domestic violence offence, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. His Honour found that his conduct was planned and persistent ([20]), and involved a high degree of brutality and ferocity. Following his arrest, medical examinations found that, during his incarceration, he experienced periods of active psychosis, auditory hallucinations and paranoid and grandiose beliefs. Although the offender was diagnosed with schizotypal personality disorder, narcissistic personality disorder and borderline personality disorder, his Honour held that he was neither deprived nor impaired of full capacity at the relevant time.