



Brisbane Camera Group

BCG Ethical Principles for Photographic Images

Brisbane Camera Group (BCG) members and guests are required to adhere to the following principles for photographic images captured, edited and displayed as part of BCG. These principles also guide acceptance of photographic images for inclusion in BCG events, including, but not limited to:

- competitions,
- exhibitions,
- presentations,
- audio visual productions,
- posters, and
- social media.

External parties wanting to use BCG premises and/or equipment must observe these principles.

The principles have been put in place to set a standard for BCG photographic images, member behaviour and to avoid jeopardising the integrity and reputation of the BCG.

1. Copyright

Members and guests will respect the Copyright Act of Australia (1968) which governs the legally enforceable rights to creative and artistic works under the laws of Australia. The latest version is available here: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C1968A00063/latest/text> and its amendment to cover online use of material is at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018A00157>.

2. Plagiarism

Members and guests will not plagiarise other people's work. Herein, plagiarism¹ means stealing the idea or work of someone else to create an image which you claim as your own. The former Australian Institute of Professional Photographers definition of plagiarism included the following: *"Plagiarism is considered to be where another photograph, painting or image is copied, and all – or a significant number – of the key elements (e.g. subject, location, pose, crop, post-production) are the same. Copying, or being inspired by a style, pose or subject from which you create your own entry is not considered plagiarism."*

3. Image Content and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For all BCG photography competitions and events, a photographic image and all elements within it must have been captured by the photographer with a film or digital camera or digital scanner. Images developed from written prompts in image-creation programs (e.g., MidJourney, DALL-E, Adobe Photoshop Firefly, etc.) are not acceptable. Images edited using Generative AI or similar tools in programs such as Photoshop, Topaz Photo AI, etc, where pixels are added using written prompts, are not acceptable. BCG reserves the

right to disqualify an image if the photographic integrity of a submitted entry cannot be adequately verified.

Any post-production and editing of images must be the work of the BCG member or guest.

4. Nudity

Images of nude or partly clothed adults (over 18 years) are permitted but will not be accepted if the image is sexually suggestive or pornographic. Pornography is defined as visual material containing the explicit display of sexual organs or activity, intended to stimulate sexual excitement. Images of dressed, partly dressed or undressed persons under the age of 18 years must not be sexually suggestive or pornographic.

5. Ethical Responsibility²

Members are expected to always treat others with dignity and respect. What might be unethical and exploitative content for one photographer might be insightful and appropriate for another, depending on the photographer's experiences and values. Also, members are expected to apply situational awareness and cultural sensitivity when taking photographs and consider the potential impact of the photos if they are to be shared.

6. Animal Photography and Ecosystem Impact

When photographing animals, either domesticated or in the wild, photographers should avoid creating stress in the subject(s). Also, photographers should not participate in use of live animals as bait for photographic purposes.

When outdoors, care should be taken to minimise impact on fragile ecosystems.

7. Member Behaviour

Members and guests may provide constructive criticism of other photographers' work if invited to do so by, or with the permission of, the other photographer. Members and guests will not engage in malicious or deliberate inaccurate criticism of the reputation or work of another photographer.

8. Power to Reject Images

Images which do not comply with these principles in the opinion of the President or Committee will be withdrawn from BCG competitions and/or events. If the maker of an image, or other BCG member, is unsure whether an image complies with these principles, the image and an explanation should be emailed to the BCG President or Secretary. Images will be viewed by a minimum of three people (including at least one female and one male member) and the photographer or other member provided with a decision about the image.

Approved by the BCG Committee: February 2024

For Review: November 2026

¹ Christine Widdall in the UK provided a useful discussion of the topic for use by camera clubs: "Plagiarism in Photography" (<https://christinewiddall.co.uk/plagiarism-photography/>).

² For further discussion of this topic see the Photography Ethics Centre (www.photoethics.org).