



# MELBOURNE CAMERA CLUB

## MCC Ethical Principles for Photographic Images

Unethical conduct with respect to photography risks jeopardizing the integrity and reputation of the Melbourne Camera Club (MCC). By taking an ethical approach to photography we can focus our photographic impact in a meaningful way. Ethical photography can provide a service to humanity and the planet by promoting empathy and initiating change through sensitive portrayal of the world around us.

The following ethical principles underscore the acceptance of images submitted by members and guests of the MCC for inclusion in MCC events, including, but not limited to: competitions, exhibitions, presentations, audio visual productions, posters and social media.

1. Members and guests will respect the Copyright Act of Australia (1968) (last version available here: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2018A00157>) which governs the legally enforceable rights to creative and artistic works under the laws of Australia.
2. Members and guests will not plagiarise other people's work. Plagiarism means stealing the idea or work of someone else to create your own work, without giving any credit to the original source. We expect members to adhere to the Australian Institute of Professional Photographers (AIPP) definition of plagiarism "*Entries that have been plagiarised, either knowingly or subconsciously, risk being disqualified by the presiding judge or a panel from the competition committee. 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. Members and guests will never incorporate another person's work into their work without the written permission of the other person or organisation, nor share another person's intellectual property via social media, or any other electronic or print media, without written permission and without ensuring that full ownership credit is given to that person or organisation.
4. Members and guests will not engage in malicious or deliberate inaccurate criticism of the reputation or work of another photographer.
5. Pornographic images will not be accepted.
  - a. pornography is defined as visual material containing the explicit description or display of sexual organs or activity, intended to stimulate sexual excitement.
6. Members have a responsibility to maintain the humanity of the people they photograph. Exploitative images will not be accepted. An exploitative image is defined as taking unfair or unethical advantage of a vulnerable
  - a. person (e.g. children, older adults, homeless, disabled, injured, person suffering mental illness, physical illness, or trauma),
  - b. group (e.g. religious, ethnic, age, minority, social, attitudinal),
  - c. situation (e.g. poverty, adversity, illness, trauma, violence).

Can the image be justified by balancing the difference an image may make against the possibility of exploitation or harm to the subject in the eyes of a reasonable person?

7. Images of dressed, partly dressed or undressed persons **under the age of 18 years** must not be exploitative, or be sexually suggestive. Images of persons under 18 years will not be posted on the MCC website without explicit parental permission.
  - a. Sexual suggestiveness is visual, verbal, written or behavioural material or action with sexual undertones, implying sexual intent in order to provoke sexual arousal.
  - b. The perception of sexual suggestiveness may vary with respect to age, culture, religion and context.
  - c. Sexual suggestiveness may involve nudity, or the exposure of breasts, nipples, genitals, buttocks or other areas of the body. It may also involve sexually orientated behaviour or poses.
8. Images of nude or partly clothed adults (people 18 years and older) are permitted but will not be accepted if the image is excessively

sexually suggestive, or exploitative given the person's age, culture, religion or the context of the image.

9. Every place, plant, and animal, on land, in the air or below water, is unique, and cumulative impacts occur over time. Therefore, members must always exercise good individual judgment when photographing nature.
  - a. Learn patterns of animal behaviour so you do not interfere with animal life cycles. If minimum distances exist for approaching wildlife, follow them, if not, use good judgment.
  - b. Treat wildlife, plants and places with respect and do not distress wildlife or their habitat. Use appropriate lenses to photograph wild animals e.g., if an animal shows stress, move back and use a longer lens.
  - c. Stay on paths to lessen impact so you don't damage fragile ecosystems.
  - d. Do not participate in or endorse the use of a live mammal as bait for photographic purposes. Use of a live mammal as bait is unethical and can cause harm to predatory birds and animals.
  - e. Research your subject beforehand and avoid risking harm to yourself or wildlife to capture an image. For example, habituating or feeding animals for the purpose of photography can be harmful and should be avoided.
10. All members and guests must respect the privacy and property rights of their photographic subjects (e.g., human, other animal, plants, inanimate objects), and must never use deceit in obtaining model or property releases. No image should demean a person.
11. Members and guests submitting images for inclusion in a MCC or MCC associated competition or exhibition will comply with the ethical principles and also respect the specific rules for that competition or exhibition and for the genre of photography, for example, Nature, Photojournalism, AV production, etc.
12. External parties wanting to use MCC gallery space must observe MCC Ethical Principles.

Images which do not observe the above criteria will be withdrawn from MCC events. If the maker of an image is unsure whether their image complies with the above ethical guidelines, the image and an explanation should be emailed to the Competition Committee at the MCC. Images will be viewed by a minimum of three people (including at

least one female and one male member) and the photographer provided with a decision about the image.

Approved by the MCC Board: November 2020  
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