



## Breeds with Exaggerated Features in Speaker Presentations at AVA Events Policy

Created By	Head of Education and Events
Reviewed By	AVA ELT
Approved By	AVA ELT
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AVA does not authorise speakers to include breeds with exaggerated features, or images of these breeds in presentations at AVA events except where the presentation draws attention to health issues associated with a particular breed (e.g. use of a Pug in a presentation about Brachycephalic Obstructive Airways Syndrome (BOAS) correction).

Certain dog and cat breeds have serious health and welfare problems because they've been bred with exaggerated features, to achieve a particular look. These exaggerated features include brachycephaly (shortened heads), dwarfism (shortened limbs), and excessive skin folds. This policy aims to remove the use of these animals from:

- a. Any images in event presentations of these breeds unless they are being used to raise awareness of the health and welfare issues associated with their exaggerated features.

In recent years there has been a rise in the popularity of certain breeds with exaggerated features. The syndromes of concern include:

- **Brachycephaly** – examples in dogs are the Pug, French Bulldog, British Bulldog and Boston Terrier breeds; and in cats, the Persian, Himalayan, Exotic Shorthair, Scottish Fold and Burmese breeds.
- **Dwarfism** – examples in dogs are Corgis, Dachshunds, and Scottish Terriers; and in cats, Munchkin (Napoleon and Minuet breeds).
- **Excessive skin folds** (the best example being the Shar-pei dog breed).

With this rise in popularity, we've seen a parallel increase in the use of these breeds in advertising and speaker presentations. Unfortunately, these exaggerated features lead to serious health and welfare problems, which the veterinary community are faced with managing, to try to give these animals a more comfortable life. It is important that advertisers move away from using these breeds, as this drives their popularity without addressing the animal welfare and health implications.

In 2016, the AVA partnered with RSPCA Australia to develop the Love is Blind campaign which aims to raise awareness of the animal welfare issues associated with exaggerated features and encourage breeders to change their breed standards to select for more normal, healthy features.

In keeping with this campaign, the AVA will no longer use certain breeds in marketing associated with the AVA brand.

The only exception to this rule will be advertising which draws attention to health issues associated with a particular breed (e.g. use of a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel in an advertisement for medication to treat Mitral Valve Disease). These are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of breeds with exaggerated features are available in Appendix 1

The AVA will provide this policy to speakers when they are engaged to speak at an AVA Event.

The AVA will not accept artwork (still or video) that displays images or outlines of animals with exaggerated breed characteristics in its presentations.

The use of breeds with exaggerated features in presentations in contravention of this policy may result in the forfeiture of the speaker payment.

If a speaker is unsure about the appropriate use of images of breeds with exaggerated features in their presentations, they should email [education@ava.com.au](mailto:education@ava.com.au)

The following veterinary staff members will review the images and provide feedback on their use:

- Dr Alice Marshall – Head of Public Affairs and Advocacy
- Dr Meredith Flash – Head of Education and Events
- Dr Melanie Latter – National Manager – Policy and Veterinary Science

If approved, the artwork can proceed with development or will be sent back to the submitter for revision.

## 5. Appendix 1

### Dogs

- Affenpinscher
- Basset hound
- Bloodhound
- Boston Terriers
- Boxer
- Brussels Griffon
- Bulldog
- Bullmastiff
- Cane Corso
- Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
- Chow Chow
- Corgies
- Dachshunds
- Dogue de Bordeaux
- English Toy Spaniel
- French Bulldog
- Japanese Chin
- Lhasa Apso
- Neapolitan Mastiff
- Pekingese
- Pug
- Shar-Pei
- Shih Tzu

### Cats:

- Persian
- Himalayan
- Burmese
- Bombay
- Burmilla
- Napoleon Munchkin
- Minuet Munchkin
- Exotic Short Hair
- Scottish Fold
- Chinchilla (Silver Persian)
- British Shorthair
- Selkirk Rex

On the next page we have provided example images of the most common breeds listed above.

## 6. Examples

### Examples – Most Common Breeds

Pug



French Bulldog



Pekinese



Corgi



Dachshund



Persian Scottish Fold



Munchkin

