



# Beer Judge Certification Program

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St. Louis Park, MN 55416

[www.bjcp.org](http://www.bjcp.org)

## *Mead Judging Examination Procedures*

### *Planning for the Exam*

Planning for giving a BJCP Mead Exam requires attention to a number of important details.

### *Requirements*

In general, a minimum of six participants are required to schedule a **BJCP Mead Judging Examination**, and the date and administrator must be approved by the BJCP Exam Director ([exam\\_director@bjcp.org](mailto:exam_director@bjcp.org)). **If a scheduled exam does not meet the requirement of having a minimum of six eligible participants, then our preference is that it be rescheduled for a date when there is sufficient demand. Exams cannot be rescheduled without the Exam Director's permission. In cases where the exam is given to fewer than six participants without the prior written approval of the Exam Director, then**

- 1) The Exam Administrator BJCP experience points may be reduced
  - a) For 1 or 2 examinees; no credit
  - b) For 3 to 5 examinees; half credit
  - c) For 6 or more; full credit
- 2) The start of grading of the exam is deferred for three to six months until it can be merged with another set of exams.

Plan on scheduling the exam at least six months in advance, since there are limits on how many exam sites are allowed in any given month. It is also, strongly recommended that the sponsor collect a non-refundable deposit to ensure that there are enough participants committed to take the exam. An exam can only be scheduled by submitting an Exam Data Approval Form (EDAF). The maximum number of participants for the BJCP Mead Judging Examination is twelve, with limited exceptions made by the BJCP Exam Directors. For example, the maximum number may be increased to twenty if the local exam administrator recruits BJCP exam graders from the region to fill four exam grading slots. The motivation is that the graders help sustain the exam program while contributing to the growth of the BJCP in their region. These four grading assignments could be a different twenty exam set, or two standard twelve exam sets. If the graders do not complete their assignments, the maximum number of participants reverts to the default value of twelve.

All participants taking the **BJCP Mead Judging Examination** must have either passed the web-based **BJCP Mead Judge Entrance Examination** or scored higher than 60% on the written portion of the **BJCP Legacy Mead Examination** (given prior to November 1, 2015). These participants should bring their BJCP-ID, BJCP certificate, or e-mail confirmations of passing so that the exam administrator can verify their status. Any exam submitted to the BJCP for grading that was written by a participant that was not eligible to take the exam on the date it was written will not be graded and the exam fee will not be refunded.

It is also the Exam Administrator's responsibility to make sure everyone taking the exam is of legal drinking age under the laws in effect in the location where the exam is given.

### ***Exam Proctors***

Administering the **BJCP Mead Examination** requires an exam administrator as well as a minimum of two proctors. The proctors' role is to score the exam meads with no additional information beyond that made available to the examinees other than allowing the proctors to use the **BJCP Style Guidelines**. The proctors are to provide scoresheets not biased by information unavailable to the examinees. Avoiding this bias is why the exam administrator does not also function as a proctor. The exam administrator selects/prepares the exam meads and generally knows too much about the meads.

Grading tasting examinations requires high quality proctor scoresheets. To ensure this, the proctors must come from a pre-approved proctor list drawn from the pool of "active" National and Master judges found on the BJCP web site in the pages at <http://www.bjcp.org/apps/reports/meadproctors.php>. This page is dynamically generated when the BJCP database of judge scores and experience is updated. If the administrator for an exam administration site is not able to obtain proctors from this list, they **MUST** contact the Exam Director at least two weeks prior to the exam to get advance approval to use alternative proctors.

The BJCP Exam Director ([exam\\_director@bjcp.org](mailto:exam_director@bjcp.org)) can grant waivers from the proctor rules but such exceptions are expected to be rare. The use of a proctor with less than National-level rank, including the use of judges with minimum tasting score of 80 and more than 10 judging experience points requires pre-approval by the Exam Director. We further desire that at least one proctor be a Master-level judge (or higher) or a judge with a minimum tasting score of 90 and with at least 20 judging experience points. If one or more of the proctors is Master-level, then a third proctor can be used that only has a Certified-level rank.

Potential proctors must be identified when scheduling a **BJCP Mead Examination**. The Exam Director can grant waivers to the proctor requirements, but these waivers are expected to be limited to examinations outside of North America and to areas with very few existing BJCP judges. Such waivers must be coordinated with the Exam Director before scheduling the examination.

### ***Exam Expenses***

Each exam proctor earns one judging experience point and five Grand Master Service Requirement (GMSR) credits for his or her efforts, and this is generally sufficient to entice proctors to cover their own expenses associated with traveling to the exam. The exam administrator is allocated 30% of the exam fees for expenses associated with the exam, and a portion of this can be used to subsidize the proctors' travel expenses. However, in special cases, such as when the exam is in a remote location or there are a large number of examinees, the BJCP Board of Directors may grant stipends to cover higher than normal administrative and travel expenses. Requests for these stipends must be made to the Exam Director at least three months prior to the exam date, and the requests are limited to reasonable and actual expenses, such as one night in a hotel, gasoline, or translation fees. Scanned copies of receipts

should be submitted to the exam director after the exam, and reimbursement will be made by the BJCP treasurer (preferably through PayPal).

### ***Exam Translations***

As the BJCP is a global organization, an increasing number of exams are being offered in other languages such as Spanish, Portuguese and French. The Exam Directors are actively recruiting and training graders who are fluent in these languages, and several additional volunteers have offered assistance in translating style guidelines, exam questions and other documents.

Exam translators will be offered compensation of US \$20 per exam, contingent on the exam translations being completed in less than 30 days for an exam set (or part of a large exam set) with twelve or fewer participants. After the exams have been received and scanned at the Brewers Association, the Exam Director will send a Dropbox link to a folder containing the scanned exams along with a cover letter with more detailed instructions about the assignment. The translation fees will be processed by the BJCP treasurer upon notification by the Exam Director that the assignment was satisfactorily completed.

### ***Exam Fees***

The fee for the BJCP Mead Judging Exam is US \$15 for people with an existing BJCP ID and US \$40 for all others.

Thirty percent of the fee for each exam is designated for expenses related to holding the exam, and may be split between the sponsor and administrator. **If there are to be additional expenses such as room rentals or transportation, please get approval from the exam director prior to the exam, and send receipts to the exam director for reimbursement.**

The sponsor or administrator, at their discretion, may reduce individual exam fees by waiving a portion of their allotment. This is acceptable as long as the BJCP receives \$35 (70% of \$50) for non-BJCP members or \$21 (70% of \$30) for existing BJCP judges.

Examinees should pay the Exam Administrator (if using checks, make them out directly to the Exam Administrator). The Exam Administrator then submits the payment using PayPal **directly to the BJCP** for 70% of total fees. No cash or checks, please. The payment system is at [http://www.bjcp.org/apps/exam\\_pay/exam\\_find.php](http://www.bjcp.org/apps/exam_pay/exam_find.php). The PayPal system is for Exam Administrators only; do not advertise this link to examinees.

## ***Before the Exam***

### ***Examinee Data Capture Form***

Approximately one to two weeks before the exam, you will receive an email from the Exam Director assigned to your exam. If you do not receive this email at least three days prior to the exam, please send an inquiry to [exam\\_director@bjcp.org](mailto:exam_director@bjcp.org). The email from Exam Director will include a cover letter and an Excel spreadsheet called the Examinee Data Capture Form (EDC). This spreadsheet replaces the handwritten Participant Information Forms. You will need to enter the names, addresses, email addresses and other information for all participants taking the BJCP exam into the EDC. The first column in the EDC is the Exam ID, which has the format DDDDLLLL where D is a digit and L is a letter. The second column of the EDC is a two-digit identification number (typically from 1 to 12) that will be combined with the Exam ID to create a unique Participant ID for each examinee.

You are encouraged to distribute the spreadsheet to the examinees before the exam so they can enter their own information and then email it back to you. The information can then be cut-and-pasted into a

master spreadsheet. Be sure to check the information for accuracy and formatting, and that the final spreadsheet has data for only those examinees who actually took the exam. It is vital that you enter the Exam ID correctly, as this is the only way an individual exam is associated with the examinee. For privacy reasons, please do not distribute the information in the EDC to anyone other than the Exam Director.

### ***Exam Papers***

The email from the Exam Director will also include PDF copies of the proctor and examinee scoresheets. You will need to make six copies of these for each examinee and proctor, but we recommend making some extra copies in case there is a mead spillage accident. **The exams will be copied or scanned before they are sent to the graders, so please instruct the participants to write on only one side, to write legibly with sufficient contrast for scanning the exams and to NOT write comments in the margins.** If the examinee needs more space for comments than is available on the examinee scoresheet, please provide a blank sheet of lined paper with a header that includes the Participant ID and mead number. Note that the scoresheets and other documents needed for the administration of the BJCP Mead Judging Exam can be found on the BJCP website, under “Exam Administrator Resources.”

### ***Exam Meads***

You will need six meads for the exam, with sufficient volume of each for all examinees and proctors. A good rule of thumb is 2-3 ounces per sample. It is preferable that these meads be homebrews. The exam meads should include at least one mead from each major BJCP mead style category; e.g., a) M1 Traditional Mead, b) M2 Fruit Mead and c) M3 Spiced Mead. The only Specialty Mead that is approved for use during the exam is a M4A Braggot. Do not use Historical Meads or Experimental Meads (i.e., BJCP categories M4B or M4C). At least one of the exam meads should include a varietal honey declaration (wildflower is not a varietal). It is desired that at least one be a melomel; i.e., M2C Berry Mead, M2D Stone Fruit Mead, or M2E Melomel.

The six exam meads must be unique; multiple versions of the same style can be used in an exam but they must have different characteristics, e.g., you can present two different examples of a Pymment but they need to use different grape varieties. Meads differing in only carbonation level, strength, or sweetness level are not considered unique when selecting meads for an exam.

Up to two classic-style commercial meads may be used if sufficient suitable examples of homebrewed mead are not available, but these selections should be communicated to the exam director ([exam\\_director@bjcp.org](mailto:exam_director@bjcp.org)) in advance of the exam. When using classic-style commercial examples, insure that the brands chosen actually do reasonably represent the style named on the label.

At least one of the exam meads should be flawed and at least one should be a very good example. We would prefer that one of the meads be an excellent (38-44) or outstanding (45-50) example of its style. One of the meads must have one of the following distinctly noticeable faults or characteristics (avoid threshold flavor faults/characteristics including mildly stale examples):

- oxidized/cardboard;
- lactic or acetic acid sourness;
- fruitiness/esters;
- solvent-like/higher alcohols;
- puckering/astringent;
- grossly incorrect body, alcohol content, color or other style characteristics.

Naturally flawed meads or blends of different homebrewed meads are strongly preferred. Doctoring meads to obtain these characteristics is discouraged due to variable results, but if there is no alternative, the doctoring procedures outlined in Section II.E of the BJCP Beer Study Guide should be used.

Strive to serve both low and high gravity examples. One example of a suite of exam meads is as follows:

- 1) Dry, standard, petillant M1A Traditional Dry Mead, Tupelo Blossom Honey declared – No flaws, outstanding example
- 2) Semi-sweet still, hydromel M3B Spice, Herb or Vegetable Mead with ginger
- 3) Semi-Sweet, sack, sparkling M4A Sack Braggot, based on a California Common – very good example, but lacks balance found in best examples
- 4) Semi-sweet, sack, still M2B Chardonnay Pymment, aged with light oak
- 5) Semi-Sweet, sack, petillant M2C Berry Mead with black currants
- 6) Sweet, sack, still M2E Melomel with raspberries and cherries – flaw such as incorrect or undetectable fruit, or overly acidic or cloying

While only one hypothetical suite of meads, these cover a range of styles, colors, strengths and quality. The appropriate range in scores likely spans the low teens to the mid-40s. It is encouraged to discuss your ideas for exam meads with the Exam Director prior to the exam.

The proctors' scoresheets will be the basis of comparison for the graders' evaluation of the examinees. Proctors must be served each mead with only the same information as provided to the test takers. Do not share any information about the exam meads until the meads are served during the exam, judges of the type the BJCP desires as proctors should have no problem completing scoresheets during the exam setting. It is highly recommended that the Exam Administrator refrain from preparing scoresheets if he or she also prepares and serves the test meads. This may introduce bias into the scoring since the exam administrator knows more about the source of the meads than the participants. If you are unable to obtain two suitable proctors that have no knowledge of the meads please contact the Exam Director for help in producing exam meads that you will be unfamiliar with so you can score them. Note that we are now using expanded scoresheets for the proctors and are asking them to refrain from discussion until after they finish their scoring and comments on the scoresheet – at that time they are to complete the consensus sheet for the meads but are **not to alter** their original scoresheets.

Provide information to the Exam Director about each mead served using the following template:

- 1) Style of mead as brewed, entered in competition or marketed
- 2) Identify as homebrewed, or brand of mead if commercial example
- 3) Draft or bottled
- 4) If bottled, conditioned or counter pressure filled
- 5) Approximate age (freshness) of mead (if known)
- 6) Distinctive fault(s) or characteristic(s), e.g., contaminated, esters, oxidation, balance, alcohol, etc.
- 7) Honey varietal, if specified to examinees, as well as fruit/spice information for flavored meads

## PRESENTATION ORDER

The meads should be presented to the examinees and proctors in the same order as in a competition setting; in order of increasing sweetness. That means the dry meads followed by semi-sweet followed by sweet. Within a sweetness level order by increasing strength and if necessary by intensity of additional ingredients.

Each mead should be served to the participants under optimum temperature conditions. Avoid delays between decanting meads and serving. Announce each mead style and sub-style as it is served, and

provide the sweetness, strength, and carbonation parameters. Provide honey variety, if appropriate, and also provide fruit, spice, or other flavoring information for Fruit Mead, Spiced Mead and Specialty styles. Other than this, provide no additional information.

It is critical that the proctors and the examinees are judging the exact same sample of mead. Therefore, if there are multiple bottles of the mead sample, all bottles should be blended in to single vessel or pitcher before they are served.

## *During the Exam*

### *Format*

The **BJCP Mead Judging Examination** has a 90 minute time limit.

The meads in the judging exam must be served at 15 minute intervals. It is often best to have an assistant help in distributing the mead samples. A typical schedule is:

- 10:25 - Paperwork is distributed to examinees and proctors.
- 10:30 – First mead is served.
- 10:45 – second mead is served.
- 11:00 – third mead is served.
- 11:15 – fourth mead is served.
- 11:30 – fifth mead is served.
- 11:45 – sixth mead is served.
- 12:00 – exam concludes, scoresheets collected.

### **12:00 – Judging exam concludes, scoresheets collected.***Exam Checklist*

1. Copies of the exam instruction sheet.
2. Copies of the examinee scoresheets.
3. Copies of the proctor instruction
4. A copy of the proctors' consensus sheet.
5. Copies of the proctor's scoresheet.
6. Exam meads, bottle opener, pitcher and cups.
7. Water and bread to cleanse the palate.
8. Mechanical pencils.
9. Sufficient supply of standard size (8.5. by 11), ruled paper – preferably not three-hole punched loose-leaf paper, since it tends to jam in scanner and copy machines. If this is not available, the Exam Director can provide a lined template that can be used to generate answer sheets.

### **At the Start of the Exam, Please Explain that:**

- The Mead Exam is closed book, so the BJCP Style Guidelines and other references cannot be used.
- The exam requires advance payment. Offer a refund to anyone who is not prepared, but only before the exam has been distributed.
- Examinees need to ensure that they have provided the exam administrator with accurate postal and email addresses on the EDC since that contact information will be ported into the BJCP judge database
- Examinees must place their examinee codes on all exam papers, **write on only one side of the scoresheets** and not write comments too close to the margins.

- The six test meads should be evaluated as if the prospective judges were participating in a BJCP competition. They will be graded on completeness, descriptive ability, perception, feedback and scoring accuracy.

### ***Use of Electronic Devices***

Use of the following electronic devices is **not allowed** during the BJCP examinations:

- Calculators, except for basic “four-function” models. By “four-function” we mean basic calculators that do not have the ability to store programs or data for redisplay. A smartphone cannot be used as a calculator during the exam.
- Pagers
- PDAs
- Laptop or desktop computers.
- Cell phones. In the case of an emergency, phones may be left with the Administrator with instructions for answering.
- Walkman/iPod or other listening devices.
- Headphones of any type.

Examinees with any special needs are required to contact the Exam Director to work out specific procedures a minimum of six weeks in advance of the exam date.

**The Examinee Data Capture Form** should be emailed to the Exam Director promptly and should include accurate contact information for the participants. The Exam Director will not need this information for the proctors since their names and BJCP IDs are written on their score sheets. It would also be helpful if you provide your BJCP ID in an email to the Exam Director, as well as the BJCP ID of anyone else requesting administrative credits for the exam.

**Results:** When the grading has been completed, the official results and a report to the participant will be mailed to the examinees as soon as the exam information has been entered into the BJCP database. The judging record will list the competitions in which the each participant has judged. There are often omissions, but instructions will be provided on how to bring the judging records up-to-date. In keeping with the BJCP Privacy Policy, the exam scores are not released to the Exam Administrator.

## *After the Exam*

**Copy the exams:** The exam administrator is responsible for making a complete copy of the exams, proctor sheets, and exam meads notes - every page must be copied. The exam administrator should retain the copies until the BJCP Exam Director confirms that the originals have been received. If this confirmation is not received within two weeks, contact the Exam Director to confirm – exams have been lost in the mail before. The administrator should then provide a copy of their individual exam to each of the examinees. This copy is the only copy that will be made available to the examinees. Under no circumstances will the BJCP be returning the originals or copies of the exams. The cost of making this copy is expected to be covered by the 30% of the exam fee allotted for the administration of the exam. Examinees should not be given copies of the proctors' scoresheets.

**Examinee Data Capture Form:** The exam administrator needs to tabulate the contact information and exam number for each examinee into an Excel template that is provided by the Exam Director. That spreadsheet is ported directly into the BJCP database, so please ensure that the information is accurate.

**Shipping the exams:** The original exams should be mailed to Brewers Association as soon as possible after the exam date, but no later than one week after the test. The shipping address differs between the postal service and private shipping companies that cannot ship to a post office box (UPS, FedEx, DHL, etc.):

<b>Postal service</b>	<b>Private shipping service</b>
Brewers Association	Brewers Association
PO Box 1679	1327 Spruce Street
Boulder, CO 80306	Boulder, CO 80306
Attn: John Moorhead	Attn: John Moorhead

**Scoring and Turnaround Time:** It is anticipated that the exam results will be returned within twelve weeks of the exam date. Most of this time is used by volunteer National and higher ranked judges to do the comprehensive scoring of the exams. Their scoring and feedback is then reviewed by both an Associate Exam Director and the Exam Director before being sent to the Assistant Exam Director for processing and recording of the results.

**Experience Points:** You as the exam administrator will receive 10 GMSR points and two non-judging experience points. (see <http://www.bjcp.org/gmsr.php> for the details) You are permitted to distribute some or all of these experience points to those who assist with the exam, but at present no additional points will be given for these supporting roles. As noted above, additional judging experience points are available to proctors who serve as independent tasters of the exam meads. They are to evaluate the meads with only the same information as that given the examinees – namely the style in question. The proctors should be informed that their scoresheets will be evaluated by the graders and exam director for quality, and points may not be awarded if the proctors' work is substandard. Similarly, some or all of the administrator's points may not be awarded if it is apparent that these instructions were not followed, or the exams are not received within ten days of the exam date.