



Beer Judge Certification Program

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St. Louis Park, MN 55416

www.bjcp.org

Cider Judging Examination Procedures

Planning for the Exam

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

Requirements

In general, a minimum of six participants are required to schedule a **BJCP Cider Judging Exam**, and the date and administrator must be approved by the BJCP Exam Director (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 Cider Judging Exam 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 Cider Judging Exam** must have passed the web-based **BJCP Cider Entrance Exam**. 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 Cider Judging Exam** requires an exam administrator as well as a minimum of two proctors. The proctors' role is to score the exam ciders 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 cider / perry and generally knows too much about them.

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/proctors.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) 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 Cider Judging Exam**. 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.

Travel 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 Cider 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. 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. 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 DDDDLLL 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 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 cider number. Note that the scoresheets and other documents needed for the administration of the BJCP Cider Judging Exam can be found on the BJCP website, under “Exam Administrator Resources.”

Exam Cider

You will need six ciders 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 ciders be home made and represent a reasonable cross section of mainstream classic cider styles. Leftover cider/perry from homebrew competitions are excellent sources of cider/perry for a BJCP exam, and ciders from similar styles can often be blended to make a unique sample. The six exam ciders must be unique styles; multiple versions of the same style shall not be used in an exam, e.g., you cannot present two different examples of a French Cider. Up to three classic-style commercial ciders may be used if sufficient suitable examples of homemade cider are not available, but these selections should be communicated to the exam director (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. Two of the ciders should have distinctly noticeable faults or characteristics (avoid threshold flavor faults/characteristics including mildly stale examples), such as the examples in this list:

- diacetyl/buttery;
- spicy/smoky;
- oxidized/sherry;
- acidic acid sourness;
- green apple/acetaldehyde;
- fruitiness/esters;
- solvent-like/higher alcohols;
- puckering/astringent;
- acetified/vinegar;
- grossly incorrect body, alcohol content, color or other style characteristics.

Naturally flawed ciders or blends of different homemade ciders are strongly preferred. Doctoring ciders to obtain these characteristics is discouraged due to variable results, but if there is no alternative, the doctoring procedures outlines in Section II.E of the BJCP Study Guide could be used as a reference. One of the ciders should be an excellent (38-44) or outstanding (45-50) example of its style. In order to ensure that the proctors and examinees are judging the same cider, the ciders should be blended and decanted from a pitcher. Each cider should be served to the participants under optimum temperature conditions. Avoid delays between decanting ciders and serving. Announce each cider style and sub-style as it is served. Also provide the sweetness and the carbonation parameters. Provide apple variety, if

appropriate, and also provide fruit, spice, or other flavoring information for Fruit and Specialty sub-styles. Other than this, provide no additional information.

Strive to serve both ciders and perries with varying levels of sweetness and carbonation.

1. New World Cider
2. New World or Traditional Perry
3. English or French Cider
4. Herb / Spiced Cider or Perry
5. Fruit Cider or Perry
6. New England Cider, Applewine, or Ice Cider

While only one hypothetical suite of ciders, 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 ciders 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 cider/perry with only the same information as provided to the test takers. It is highly recommended that the Exam Administrator refrain from preparing scoresheets if he or she also prepares and serves the test ciders. This may introduce bias into the scoring since the exam administrator knows more about the source of the cider/perry than the participants. If you are unable to obtain two suitable proctors that have no knowledge of the cider/perry please contact the Exam Director for help in producing exam ciders 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 cider but are **not to alter** their original scoresheets.

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

1. Style of cider/perry as made, entered in competition or marketed.
2. Identify as homemade, or brand of cider/perry if commercial example
3. Carbonation and sweetness
4. Draft or bottled
5. If bottled, conditioned or counter pressure filled
6. Approximate age (freshness) of the cider/perry (if known)
7. Distinctive fault(s) or characteristic(s), e.g., acidity, contaminated, oxidation, mousy, body, alcohol, etc.
8. Apple varietal(s), if specified to examinees, as well as fruit/spice information for flavored ciders or perries.
9. Comments on blending, doctoring, adjusting, whatever that might impact the perception of the cider/perry.
10. Any other notes that might be useful for the graders, such as expected scoring range or why the cider was chosen for the exam.

PRESENTATION ORDER

The cider / perry 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 ciders / perry followed by semi-sweet followed by sweet. Within a sweetness level order by increasing strength and if necessary by intensity of additional ingredients.

Each cider / perry should be served to the participants under optimum temperature conditions. Avoid delays between decanting and serving. Announce each cider / perry style and sub-style as it is served, and provide the sweetness and carbonation parameters. Provide apple / pear variety, if appropriate, and also provide fruit, spice, or other flavoring information for New England Cider, Cider with Other Fruit, Cider with Herbs / Spices, and Specialty Cider / Perry styles. Other than this, provide no additional information.

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

During the Exam

Format

The **BJCP Cider Judging Exam** has a 90-minute time limit. Each cider/perry in the judging exam should be served at 15 minute intervals. A typical schedule is:

- 8:55: Paperwork is distributed to examinees and proctors.
- 9:00: Judging exam begins, first cider/perry served
- 9:15: second cider/perry is served
- 9:30: third cider/perry is served
- 9:45: fourth cider/perry is served
- 10:00: fifth cider/perry is served
- 10:15: sixth cider/perry is served
- 10:30: Judging exam concludes, with 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 cider/perry, 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 Cider Judging 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 provide 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 ciders/perries 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.

At the End of the Exam:

- You may reveal the origins or commercial brands of the exam beers to the examinees and discuss the reasons for selection. This can be done during the proctors' consensus discussion if they will not overhear prior to reaching consensus.
- You may share the proctors' consensus scores, but not the proctor scoresheets, but remind the examinee that the consensus scores are only one input used to establish baseline scores to compute scoring accuracy. Other factors include the background information on the exam beer and how the mean score of all tasters compares to the consensus scores.

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.
- 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 cider/perry 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.):

Postal service	Private shipping service
Brewers Association	Brewers Association
PO Box 1679	1327 Spruce Street
Boulder, CO 80306	Boulder, CO 80306
Content: BJCP Exams	Content: BJCP Exams

For exams outside of North America, scans of the exams are also an option as long as the scans have sufficient contrast to be easily readable. If you take this approach, the scans must be grouped as follows:

1. One page with the Proctor consensus scores
2. One set of 6 scoresheets for each of the proctors
3. One set of 6 scoresheets for each examinee

Each set of 6 scoresheets is typically around 2-3 Mb in size if they have sufficient resolution. You can make them available to the Exam Director via Dropbox (preferred) or Google Docs.

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 cider / perry. They are to evaluate the cider / perry 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.