

Tech Corner

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The Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) was founded in 1985 in order to promote beer literacy and the appreciation of real beer, and to recognize beer tasting and evaluation skills. The BJCP certifies and ranks beer judges through a comprehensive examination and monitoring process.

The BJCP exam is a three-hour closed book exam with 10 essay questions worth 70% of the total score and 30% of the score from the tasting portion.

The essay questions involve beer styles, beer ingredients, troubleshooting off flavors and aromas, and the brewing process. For the tasting portion, the candidate has to judge four beers using BJCP score sheets. We should mention that the BJCP exam committee may change the exam format in the future, where some of the essay questions would be replaced with short-answer, true/false, or multiple choice questions.

Judges are ranked by the BJCP according to exam score and the number of experience points earned by participating at an AHA/BJCP sanctioned competition. Experience points can be earned by judging at a sanctioned event or by helping at the event as a staff member.

BJCP judges earn .5 experience points per judging session, with a maximum of 1.5 points per day. Judges receive a minimum of 1 point for judging at a sanctioned competition.

Here are the BJCP judge levels with their corresponding requirements:

- Apprentice – Sit for the exam, but score less than 60% on the exam
- Recognized – Score at least 60% on the exam
- Certified – Score at least 70% on the exam and earn at least 5 experience points, with 2.5 experience points from judging
- National – Score at least 80% on the exam and earn at least 20 experience points, with 10 experience points from judging
- Master – Score at least 90% on the exam and earn at least 40 experience points, with 20 experience points from judging
- Grand Master FIRST DEGREE – Score at least 90% on the exam and earn at least 100 experience points, with 50 experience points from judging. There is also a BJCP service requirement.

Additional DEGREES are awarded by completing 100 experience point increments and additional service requirements.

- Honorary Master – Temporary honor awarded to judges who serve as operatives of the BJCP
- Honorary Grand Master – Awarded to individuals for extraordinarily long and meritorious service with the BJCP

If you would like to read more about the BJCP here is the link to their website: BJCP.org