

Certified Pastry Culinarian®

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK



American Culinary Federation
The Standard of Excellence for Chefs

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**Updated 9/1/2021 with new pricing structure, written exam process, practical exam requirements and renewal requirements*

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Certification Overview and General Policies

Why Become ACF Certified?

ACF is the premier certifying body for cooks and chefs in America. ACF certification validates knowledge and skills, making the culinarian a more valuable candidate for hiring and promotion, which can help increase his or her salary. Culinarians achieve certification based on education, experience and successful completion of written and practical exams.

ACF's certification program is the only culinary program with stackable credentials and is recognized by the Department of Labor and throughout the industry as the standard for excellence in professional skills and knowledge.

CPC[®] Purpose

Earners of this designation have demonstrated they have reached a benchmark of knowledge, skills and culinary experience of an advanced level in food preparation. They are proficient in food safety and sanitation, culinary nutrition, supervisory management, beverage management and cost control management and prepare food of the highest quality.

After initial certification, ACF provides recertification to those individuals who document enhanced professional development in compliance with continuing education hour (CEH) requirements.

Certification Body

The ACF Certification Commission is working hard to add value and credibility to ACF certifications. The Commission was formed to guide and strengthen the certification program through an accreditation process.

Certification Commission Mission Statement

The American Culinary Federation Certification Commission, being an autonomous entity within the ACF, is committed to developing, implementing and monitoring a validated process of globally recognized certifications based on skills, knowledge, integrity and equality through an achievable process for all culinary professionals.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Certification Commission does not discriminate among applicants or certificants on any basis that would violate any applicable laws, including race, color, religion, creed, age, gender, national origin, or ancestry.

For any questions or concerns about certification, please contact the Certification Department at the ACF National at certify@acfchefs.org.

ADA Compliance

The ACF Certification Commission provides reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) for individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodation. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ACF does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in providing access to its examination program. The complete ADA policy can be found in the Certification Commission Policies and Procedures document on the ACF Website or can be requested from the ACF National Office.

All requests for accommodations must be submitted by the applicant by completing the Request for Special Accommodation Form. All requests for accommodations should be directed to the ACF National Office, attention to the Certification Department.

Code of Ethics

The ACF Code of Ethics provides guidance to professional cooks and chefs in their professional practice and conduct. The actions, behaviors and attitudes of our members and certificants are consistent with the ACF commitment to hospitality, foodservice and public service. Every individual who is a full member and/or certified by the American Culinary Federation shall abide by this code of ethics. Any action that violates the purpose and principles outlined by the code of ethics shall be considered unethical.

Ethics enforcement procedures are intended to permit a fair review of alleged violations of the ACF Code of Professional Ethics or other egregious conduct in a manner that protects the rights of the individuals while promoting understanding and ethical behavior. A complete Code of Ethics can be found on the ACF website or can be requested from the ACF National Office, attention to the Certification Department.

The Certification Process

For current applications and forms, please visit www.acfchefs.org/certify.

Step 1: Determine Eligibility

Eligibility is based on a chef's work experience and educational background.

▪ Documentation of Work History

A candidate should show a minimum of two years of work experience as an entry level culinarian. Candidates with a Culinary Arts certificate or diploma should show a minimum of one year of experience as an entry level culinarian. Candidates with an Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts or who have completed an ACFEF Apprenticeship program are exempt from the work experience requirement. Work experience is limited to the past 10 years.

▪ Documentation of Education and Continuing Education Hours (CEH)

A candidate can take a variety of educational paths to meet the education requirement. A candidate may apply with a High School Diploma or GED. If a candidate does not have a High School diploma or GED, they are required to show at least 100 hours of continuing education. A candidate with a Certificate, Diploma or Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts does not need any additional CEH to meet the educational requirement. Graduates of an ACFEF Apprenticeship program also do not need any additional CEH to meet eligibility requirements. Hours earned for mandatory courses and/or refreshers can be counted toward hours required for continuing education.

▪ Completion of Mandatory Education Courses

Candidates should provide documentation of three 30 hour courses in each of the following: Nutrition, Food Safety and Sanitation and Supervisory Management. If these courses were taken more than five years ago, an 8-hour refresher course is required in each topic. These courses are available (online) through ACF approved providers and/or any academic institution.

Step 2: Complete the Initial Application

Complete and submit the initial application, including all required documentation.

- Educational documents may be copies of diplomas, transcripts, certificates of completion (including date and hours), etc.
- Mandatory education course certificates should be included with the application. Certificates should include course title, completion date and number of hours earned.
- Experience documentation may be employment documentation forms or letters from past or present employers on company letterhead. If not available, copies of tax records or W-2 stating time frame of work are acceptable in conjunction with validated letters from former culinary peers attesting to your employment, job title, duties and number of employees managed.
 - As a business owner, employment documentation may be an official letter on company letterhead from a certified accountant or a copy of either your Schedule C, K-1 or Form 1120-S tax documentation for each year.

Submit application and documentation of completed requirements to ACF for pre-approval.

Submit Application to: **American Culinary Federation**
6816 Southpoint Pkwy, Ste 400
Jacksonville, FL 32216
Fax: 904-940-0741
Email: certify@acfcchefs.org

Estimated Cost of Certification

The cost of certification is:

- Members: \$250
- Nonmembers: \$490
- For school and concierge pricing, please contact certify@acfcchefs.org.
- Includes a nonrefundable processing fee of \$50 (members)/\$100 (nonmembers) if your application is not approved.
- Additional attempts for the written and practical exams are \$50 (members)/\$100 (nonmembers) each.
- There may be additional practical exam host site fees.
- Food costs vary and are not included in exam fee. Candidates are responsible for purchasing their own food.

Step 3: Notification of Eligibility

The ACF Certification Department will review applications and documentation (i.e., dates of completion, work history and mandatory course work). Once you have been notified that your initial application is approved, you are welcome to schedule the written and practical exams. Testing documentation will be needed for final certification approval. Certification must be completed within three years of approval. If certification is not complete within three years, reapplication will be required. If your application is not approved, you will receive a refund for the certification application fee minus a nonrefundable processing fee.

Step 4: Certification Examinations

There are two exams required for the CPC[®] Certification: the written exam evaluates culinary knowledge and the practical exam assesses skill proficiency.

Purpose of Exams

The purpose of the CPC[®] certification examinations is to objectively measure the knowledge and skills of a candidate to determine if they meet the standards required for an entry level or minimally competent CPC[®].

Written Exam Parameters

Candidates have 90 minutes to complete the 100 question multiple-choice exam, which is taken through the ACF Online Learning Center. Candidates may use a pen, scratch paper and a basic calculator.

- **Written Exam Registration:** Once the candidate has been approved for ACF certification, they will receive an email and will need to identify a proctor.

The ACF certification team will send the proctor additional forms to complete. Once verified, the proctor will receive the PIN to release the exam and the applicant can schedule a time and location with the proctor to take the exam.

Contact the ACF Certification Department at certify@acfchefs.org for help finding a proctor. Examples of proctors include: school administrator, HR manager, ACF chapter officer, local librarian.

- **Written Exam Scoring:**
 - Score of 73 is required to pass
 - Score is valid for two years.
- **Written Exam Retake Policy:** There is a 14 day waiting period required before scheduling an additional exam attempts. Testing fees are assessed for each attempt.

Practical Exam Parameters

The CPC[®] practical exam is 3 hours and may be taken at any ACF approved test site.

- **Practical Exam Registration:** To schedule the practical exam, contact an ACF approved test site and confirm availability. Contact ACF National Office to register.

Candidates will receive a registration confirmation.

- Test sites may charge an additional fee that is payable to the organization holding the exam.
- Payment for applicable host site fees are separate from the certification application fee due to ACF and are coordinated by the test site administrator.

To facilitate the certification process, the American Culinary Federation (ACF) has exam sites throughout the country. You must contact the test administrator to confirm test time, host site fee and specific details about the testing facility. For most exams, online registration is available, or you can contact the ACF National Office to schedule your practical exam.

- **Practical Exam Scoring:**
 - Score of 75% or higher is required to pass
 - Score is valid for one year.
- **Practical Exam Retake Policy:** There is no waiting period required for the CEPC[®] practical exam. Practical exam retakes are unlimited. Testing fees are assessed for each attempt and paid to both the ACF National Office and the test site.

Appeal Procedure

Candidates and certificants are entitled to appeal determinations made by the Certification Commission regarding:

1. the Commission's interpretation of standards, including candidate eligibility determinations and certificate recertification determinations;
2. content of the exam and/or keyed responses to items;
3. alleged inappropriate exam administration procedures; and
4. alleged testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process.

Appeals procedures are detailed in the Policies and Procedures document, which is available on the ACF website or can be requested from the ACF National Office.

Confidentiality

The nature, format, content and results of examinations administered by the Certification Commission and all application materials are considered confidential information and shall be treated as such, in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Certification Commission, unless appropriate permission is obtained, where otherwise mandated by valid and lawful court or government order, or by an authorized administrative body. The full confidentiality policy can be found on the ACF website or requested from the ACF National Office. Due to confidentiality policy, only a certificant's current status as a CPC[®] can be verified. This can be done by the certification verification tool available on the ACF website under Resources or by calling the ACF National Office.

Step 5: Final Application

Upon successful completion of the written and practical exams, submit final application, along with appropriate documentation (written and practical exam passing forms). Include all back-up documentation, no originals (copies only).

Mandatory education courses (i.e., nutrition, food safety and sanitation and supervisory management) must be current at time of final application; if not, a refresher course may be required before CPC[®] certification is finalized and approved.

Step 6: Official Announcement of Certification

The ACF Certification Department will review final application and exam documentation, before notifying candidates of approval (please allow 2-3 weeks for processing). You will be notified by email that the application is received. Once certification is approved, your certificate letter and certificate will be mailed and you will receive an email to accept your digital badge. **CPC[®] certifications are valid for five (5) years.**

ACF would like to share your certification accomplishments in ACF communications. If you would like to share your accomplishment, please feel free to utilize the **Brand You—Certification Toolkit** available on the ACF website. If you prefer this information not be shared, please be sure to check box on final application to opt out.

For more information, call us at 800-624-9458, or mail us at certify@acfchefs.org.

Designation Usage Policy

ACF has a Designation Usage policy that certificants must follow. Each certificant accepts and assumes all and the sole, responsibility for understanding and satisfying legal requirements of the ACF Designation Usage Policy and any Procedural requirements of ACF Designation usage, including those requirements applying to the use, display and/or advertising of any ACF Designation. It is the responsibility of such certificants to ensure that the use of any ACF Designation on professional and business related materials (e.g., stationary, signs, business cards, flyers, chef coats, yellow pages, or other advertisements and marketing materials) is NOT in conflict with this Policy and Procedure, or with the laws of the nation, state, or territory in which that individual or entity conduct business. A complete Designation Usage Policy can be found on the ACF website or requested from the ACF National Office.

Digital Badges

ACF partnered with Credly to provide a digital version of ACF credentials. Digital badges can be used in email signatures or digital resumes and on social media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. This digital image contains verified metadata that describes the qualifications and the process required to earn them. For more information, visit www.acfchefs.org/badges.

Graduates from ACFEF Accredited Programs

Students who have graduated from an ACFEF Accredited Program qualify for ACF Certification. Graduates from ACFEF Accredited Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree programs must submit the application and documentation within one year of graduation from the program to be exempt from the written and practical exams. If an applicant's graduation date is more than one year old, the applicant must complete certification through the traditional certification pathway, including fees and exams.

Documentation includes:

- ACFEF Accredited Program Graduate Certification Application
- Final transcript verifying applicant's name, school, graduation date and program of study (i.e. Associate's in Culinary Arts)
- Documentation that applicant was an ACF member at the time of graduation, current ACF membership or \$85 non-member fee.

Graduates from ACFEF Certificate/Diploma programs must submit the application and documentation within two years of graduation from the program to be exempt from the written and practical exams. If an applicant's graduation date is more than one year old, the applicant must complete certification through the traditional certification pathway, including fees and exams.

Documentation includes:

- ACFEF Accredited Program Graduate Certification Application
- Final transcript verifying the applicant's name, school, graduation date and program of study (i.e. Diploma in Culinary Arts)
- Documentation that applicant was an ACF member at the time of graduation, current ACF membership or \$85 non-member fee.
- Documentation of one year of entry-level culinary work experience. Experience documentation may be employment documentation forms or letters from past or present employers on company letterhead. If not available, copies of tax records or W-2 stating time-frame of work are acceptable in conjunction with validated letters from former culinary peers attesting to your employment, job title, duties and number of employees managed.
 - As a business owner, employment documentation may be an official letter on company letterhead from a certified accountant or a copy of either your Schedule C, K-1 or Form 1120-S tax documentation for each year.

The Recertification Process

The purpose of the CPC[®] recertification program is to enhance the continued competence of certificants and to reaffirm certificant knowledge in food safety and sanitation, nutrition and supervisory management. ACF recertification is required every five years. To maintain your ACF certification, you are required to earn a minimum of 80 continuing education hours (CEH) during the five-year certification period. The requirement of 80 CEH over a five-year period was determined so that, on average, a chef would complete 16 CEH per year, keeping them current and up-to-date on culinary trends and practices.

CEH are experiences that assist in the development or enhancement of the knowledge and skills directly related to the individual's professional occupation. We recommend you maintain a folder or copies of your official certificates and letters, conference registrations, transcripts, etc. in order to keep track of your progress.

If you are an ACF member, you may also take advantage of the CEH Tracking program. Fill out the CEH Submittal form for each and submit your official certificates, letters, conference registrations, etc. Once recorded, you will be able to view them online through your member profile list. When it is time for your recertification, simply print out the member profile CEH list and submit it with your application.

Step 1: Complete Required CEH and Refresher Courses

On the first recertification cycle, the three mandatory refreshers in sanitation, nutrition and supervisory management are required as part of your 80 CEH requirement.

On subsequent recertification cycles, candidates are only required to complete the sanitation refresher.

Step 2: Determine CEH for Additional Certification Levels

If a candidate has additional certification levels, the CEH recertification requirements will be as follows:

- Two certification levels: 120
- Three certification levels: 140
- Four certification levels: 160

Step 3: Complete Recertification Application

Provide the necessary documentation of your Continuing Education Hours (CEH). Documentation must include the number of hours taken, completion date and educational topic. Please do not send original certificates. Complete the application, secure all paperwork together and include payment, either by credit card information on the application or with a check or money order made payable to the American Culinary Federation.

There is no additional fee for ACF members that have maintained their membership for five (5) consecutive years. For this benefit to apply, membership must be maintained without any lapse for five (5) years.

Step 4: Recertification Notification

The ACF Certification Department will review the recertification application and CEH documentation. Applicants will be notified by email when the application is received and approved. Recertification certificates can be printed through the member profile page. If you would like your certificate printed and mailed, please check the box on the recertification application. **CPC[®] Certifications are valid for five years.**

ACF would like to share your certification accomplishment in ACF communications and industry publications. If the candidate prefers that his information not be shared, please be sure to check box on recertification application.

How to Earn Continuing Education Hours (CEH)

CEH can be earned through a variety of professional development activities. General categories of approved professional development activities are listed on the ACF website. In addition, the ACF website provides a service to certificants, which lists approved CEH providers and courses. ACF does not require any specific course or vendor to be used for CEH. CEH activities and courses offered by ACF approved CEH providers are varied in nature to allow professional development based on professional and culinary needs.

Certification Expiration

If a certificant allows their certification to expire, they are granted a 90-day grace period to finalize and submit their payment. If a candidate's expiration surpasses the grace period, they must adhere to the Recertification after Expiration Policy. The policy has provisions in place to allow chefs to recertify if their certifications have expired 12 months in the past or less. If certification expiration date is past 12 months, candidates must certify based on all current eligibility requirements, including education, mandatory courses/refreshers and relevant work history (within the previous ten years), as well as the current testing requirements (written and practical examinations).

Upgrade Certification Level

Candidates have the opportunity to upgrade to the next certification level as they progress in the industry, upon meeting the minimum requirements of work and educational experience.

CPC[®] Written Exam At-A-Glance

Description of Exam

The written exam was developed based on domains, tasks and knowledge areas determined during a job analysis with a group of ACF Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Candidates have 90 minutes to complete the 100 question multiple choice exam. Candidates may use a pen, scratch paper and a basic calculator.

Certification	Description	Duration of Exam	Number of Questions	Passing Score
Certified Pastry Culinarian [®]	Multiple Choice	60 minutes	100	70

Exam Administration

Once the applicant has been pre-approved for ACF certification, they will need to identify a proctor and [submit the proctor form here](#).

Please contact the ACF certification team at certify@acfcchefs.org if you need help finding a proctor. Examples of proctors include: school administrator, HR manager, ACF chapter officer, local librarian.

The ACF certification team will send the proctor additional forms to complete. Once verified, the proctor will receive the PIN to release the exam and the applicant can schedule a time and location with the proctor to take the exam.

The applicant can re-test after 14 days should he or she not pass the first time.

Proctor Requirements

The proctor must be a "disinterested third party" with no direct family relationship to the applicant.

Duties

Confirm the applicant's identity by using a photo identification such as a driver's license.

Ensure the applicant does not receive any outside assistance while taking the exam. This includes course materials, help from other persons, prepared notes and access to other websites. Cell phones must be checked and turned completely off. The student may use a non-programmable calculator.

Remain in the presence of the applicant from the time the applicant starts the exam to the time he or she finishes, or until the end of the maximum time allowed for the test, whichever comes first.

Location Requirements

There are no location requirements, however, the applicant will need to have access to:

- High-speed internet connection
- Internet browser, Chrome recommended
- Desktop, laptop or tablet PC recommended, available on mobile device

Taking the Exam

The applicant can access the ACF Online Learning Center at www.acfchefs.org/OLC.

ACF members must log in to their ACF account to access the Online Learning Center. Nonmembers will need to create an ACF online account first. This online account does not include benefits associated with ACF membership.

The exam will be accessible from the home screen or in the Learning Center.

When the candidate is ready to take the exam, they should select the option to start the course. The proctor will be asked to enter the PIN. Then the candidate can start the exam.

Exam Results

Candidates will be notified immediately of their scores. Passing scores will receive a certificate. Candidates will have access to the certificate through the ACF Online Learning Center and should include a copy with their final application.

Retesting Policy

There is a 14 day waiting period required before scheduling any additional exam attempts. Testing fees are assessed for each attempt.

Passing Score Determination

The methodology to determine the cut score or passing point used in this examination is a criterion referenced approach called a modified Angoff Technique. The testing profession considers this technique to be one of the most defensible criterion-referenced methods available for setting passing points. It relies on the pooled judgments of content experts. For example, in this approach, a group of experts is asked to judge each item on the test. The criterion used to judge each item is formed into a question: "What is the probability that a 'minimally acceptable' candidate will answer the question correctly?" This question prompts the judges to consider a group of minimally acceptable candidates and what proportion of that group will answer each item correctly. The average of the proportions, or probabilities, is multiplied by the total number of items on the test. The result then represents the "minimally acceptable" score. The final passing score for this examination is based on this pooled judgment and includes a statistical adjustment for testing error.

Optional Practice Exams

Optional practice exams are available for purchase. Purchase or completion of the practice exams is not required for certification. The practice exam resembles the actual exams in style and composition, but they are not the actual exams. **Passing the practice exam does not guarantee success in passing the actual ACF certification exams, but should give you a good indication of your readiness to take those exams.**

CPC[®] Written Exam Specifications

The written exam was developed based on domains, tasks and knowledge areas determined during a job analysis with a group of ACF subject matter experts.

As there are 100 multiple choice questions on the exam, the percentages also reflect the number of questions there are in each area.

1. Baking Basics

27

- yeast products
- quick bread products
- pies
- cookies
- cake batters
- formulas and conversion factors
- measurement tools

2. Pastry Fundamentals

26

Pastry Doughs and Batters

- laminated pastry doughs
- tart and pastry doughs
- pâte à choux
- foam or specialty cakes

Assess formulations and recipes for pastry products

Select ingredients for desired pastry products

Select equipment for desired pastry products

Creams, Custards, Mousses, Sauces and Frozen Desserts

Follow production guidelines for

creams, custards, mousses and sauces

frozen desserts

Assess formulations and recipes for creams, custards, mousses and sauces.

Select ingredients for desired creams, custards, mousses and sauces.

Select equipment for desired creams, custards, mousses and sauces.

Meringues, Buttercreams, Icings and Glazes

3: Specialty Pastry, Desserts and Advanced Baking Techniques

15

Gateaux, Tortes, Entremets, Petits Fours Glacé and Traditional Cakes

Special Occasion Cakes

Chocolates, Confections and Sugar Work

Plated Desserts

Dessert Presentation

Bread, Viennoiserie and Other Yeast Products

4. Production Guideline Development

10

5. Safety and Sanitation	17
6. Business Management	5
Supervision	
Ethics, Legal and Professionalism	
Total	100

Recommended Reference Materials

How Baking Works (3rd Edition)

Author: Figoni, P.
John Wiley & Sons.
Pub. Date: 2010

On Baking

Author: Labensky, Martel, Van Damme
Publisher: Pearson
Pub. Date: 2015

Professional Baking (7th Edition)

Author: Gisslen, W.
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons.
Pub. Date: 2017

NRAEF ManageFirst: Controlling Foodservice Cost (2nd Edition)

Author: National Restaurant Association Education Foundation
Publisher: Pearson
Pub. Date: 2013

NRAEF ManageFirst: Human Resources Hospitality Human Resources Management and Supervision (2nd Edition)

Author: National Restaurant Association Education Foundation
Publisher: Pearson
Pub. Date: 2013

Elements of Dessert

Author: Migoya, F.
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons
Pub. Date: 2012

ServSafe Coursebook (7th Edition)

Author: National Restaurant Association
Publisher: Pearson
Pub. Date: 2018

The Art of the Confectioner Sugarwork and Pastillage

Author: Notter, E.
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons.
Pub. Date: 2012

Successful Restaurant Management: From Vision to Execution

Author: Wade, D.
Publisher: Cengage Learning
Pub. Date: 2006

CPC[®] Practical Exam At-A-Glance

Description of Exam

The test site selects the date and schedules the test. Candidates are responsible for registering with ACF and contacting the host site regarding additional fees (if applicable). The Test Administrator is responsible for selecting three Certification Evaluators from a current list of evaluators posted on the website. Three Certification Evaluators are required per every six candidates; of the three evaluators, two must be unaffiliated with the exam candidate.

ACF defines affiliation as a relationship that consists of a vested interest, an employment direct report, monetary benefit, or any relationship which could personally benefit the evaluator as a result of a candidate passing the exam.

Exam Registration and Fees

Practical exam registration is required for both test site and ACF National Office. The test site administrator may collect appropriate host site fees from candidates to cover direct expenses related to the exam. The host site fee is established at the discretion of the approved exam site. Candidates are required to register with the ACF. The host site may also require a cancellation fee at their discretion.

Candidates will receive a registration confirmation from the ACF National Office by mail or email. This will confirm registration to the Test Administrator.

Prior to the exam date, the test site administrator will contact candidates about testing time and other exam details.

Practical Exam Facility Requirements

To ensure consistency throughout the certification testing program, all testing facilities will offer candidates a high-level testing venue, which includes appropriate equipment and space configurations as specified in the guidelines below.

The test site must be able to provide ample space to include refrigeration, work area, sinks, ranges and oven space for each candidate. Sufficient access to fryers and grills must be provided, although candidates may share this equipment. A large clock must be visible in the examination area for accurate time keeping. There should be a candidate staging area for ingredient check-in by the evaluators. First aid equipment and materials should be available if needed.

At a minimum, each test site shall provide the following:

- 4-burner stove with standard oven per candidate (portable burners are not acceptable)
- 45 sq. ft. usable table/counter working space per candidate
- 4 cubic ft. of refrigeration space per candidate at a close proximity to the station
- adequate cubed ice supply
- one hot and cold hand sink per three candidates
- one hot and cold ware washing sink per four candidates
- 2 power outlets per candidate, located at their work station
- ample garbage receptacles placed at every station and a community receptacle within the testing facility
- portion/measuring scales to be available for candidates, balance scale for pastry, measuring in ounces and pounds
- marble slab and microwave oven required for pastry candidates
- one five-quart mixer per pastry candidate
- cutting boards
- evaluator's table should include: silverware, napkins, water glasses, clipboards, pads, pencils, calculator, stapler, digital camera and a copy of Le Guide de Cuisine
- ample supply of appropriate cleaning equipment including brooms, mops and paper towels
- plastic wrap, foil, detergent, sanitizers and buckets

Each station must be provided with a basic set of pots, pans and hand tools (see list). Additional kitchen equipment is to be supplied in a common area. In the event that a test site is unable to supply all stations with a full set of station equipment, the candidate may be asked to bring along some of the items needed to complete the set. **The Test Site Administrator shall notify the candidate of this requirement upon registration.**

Individual Equipment:

- (2) 3 quart mixing bowls
- (2) small sauce pans
- (1) medium sauce pan
- (1) large sauté pan
- (1) medium sauté pan
- (2) small sauté pans
- (2) small bain marie inserts
- (1) rubber spatula
- (1) solid spoon
- (1) 2 oz. ladle
- (1) 6 oz. ladle
- (1) small whisk
- (1) wooden spoon

The Community Kitchen:

The community kitchen should include small appliances which can be shared by all candidates. Safety and sanitation supplies must be furnished by the test site. Candidates are expected to bring their own plastic gloves, if needed, for production or service. At a minimum, each test site shall provide the following in the community kitchen:

- Chinoise
- Food processors
- Microwave
- Food mixers
- Grill
- Portion scales
- Proof box
- Balance beam scales
- Fryer
- Measuring containers
- Food blenders

Ingredients

Exam candidates are required to bring all of their own ingredients; however, a test site may choose to provide common staples and optional items to the candidates. This list of common staple and optional items is to be made available to all registered candidates at the time of registration.

What to Expect

On the Day of Your Exam

Anyone taking the exam will have up to 30 minutes to set up before the designated start time or before the pre-exam meeting time, if scheduled to begin first.

Pre-Exam Orientation Meeting

The 15-minute pre-exam meeting will be held before the morning exams. The meeting will include:

- Filling out paperwork
- Making final payment (paying necessary fees: host site and ACF)
- Presenting menus to evaluators
- Evaluators will be available to answer last minute questions

The Exam

The CPC[®] practical exam is 3 hours, which may be taken at any ACF approved test site. A score of 75% or higher is required to pass. Practical exam scores are valid for one year.

- Wait in the designated area until your assigned set-up/start time in which you may begin cooking.
- Expect to see evaluators and apprentice evaluators walking around with clipboards and taking notes. Also expect them to be talking to each other, asking you questions, looking at your food and looking deep in thought. This is not meant to be a distraction or an intimidation tactic, but what is involved in the evaluation process.
- Remember, no applicant will be alone in the kitchen while preparing food for the exam. Expect up to three other participants with you in the same kitchen preparing their food, as well as working in close proximity while you are preparing your food.

- A kitchen's helper's role is to assist in keeping the kitchen clean, clearing dishes, etc. They report directly to the Test Administrator. They may, at times, be able to get something for candidates. Only authorized helpers will be allowed in the kitchen during the exam. The test site may assign 1 pot washer and 1 runner per 4 test candidates or per kitchen, but is not required to offer this assistance.
 - Candidate's assistant can only assist with **load** and **breakdown**, they may not be in communication with the candidate during the exam and are not allowed in kitchen until all candidates have completed testing.
- **Do not forget food safety!** Remember, no bare-hand contact with ready to eat foods. This means using the proper utensils for the right job at every opportunity. Remember, the preventative measures for time/temperature abuse and cross contamination.
- You will present your food to the evaluators at your designated time. Be courteous, calm and collected.

When You Are Finished in the Kitchen

Expect to wash your own equipment, utensils and china when you are finished with the exam. Examinees must clean up and be out of the cooking area within 30 minutes of completion. There may be another participant waiting to set-up for his or her exam.

Evaluation and Critique

At the completion of the exam, candidates will be given a verbal explanation of their performance, which is used to document the results of the exam. The Test Administrator will give any candidate who **passed** the exam an ACF Practical Exam Passing Form for their records. The original individual Score Sheets, Summary Score Sheet and Candidate Questionnaires are to be sent to the Certification Department at the ACF National Office.

Any candidate who fails the exam is welcome to take it again. There is no waiting period, but he/she must submit a new registration form and payment.

Evaluator Training

An approved Certification Evaluator has been placed in a position to fairly evaluate candidates taking the practical exam through certification level, experience, approved application and completion of required training and apprenticeships. ACF confirms that this individual has attained the highest level of trust, professionalism, respect and ethical confidence from their peers.

Practical Exam General Guidelines:

1. Candidates must provide all ingredients for use during their certification practical exam as outlined in the exam components for each level. Exception would be allowed for test sites that choose to provide ingredients (Check with Test Administrator.)
2. No advance preparation or cooking is allowed unless otherwise stated.
3. Candidates are allowed to bring in only the whole and raw materials. No finished sauces are allowed. No commercially produced bases are permitted; however, phyllo dough is permitted.
4. Candidates shall bring his/her personal tools, including knives, small wares and china (plates, platters, bowls, etc.) to display the finished dishes. Exception would be made for test sites that choose to provide china. (Check with Test Administrator.)
5. Dry and wet garbage receptacles, as well as trim receptacles, must be maintained and presented to evaluators upon completion of the exam.

Pastry Guidelines

- Candidate's choice of decorating medium to be prepared during the test are as follows: Buttercream, frosting, whipped cream, icing and Ganache, unless otherwise stated.
- For items involving cake, prepare cakes and tiers that are level on top with straight sides, logical height and proportional.
- For each item, cover cakes with a decorating medium that is smooth and flawless, with no air bubbles, water spots, knife marks, sanding, patches, or crumbs.
- Prepare colored decorating medium that are of consistent shading, using color that is balance, harmonized and appropriate to the theme or decorative motif.
- Apply borders, writing, central decorations and trims that are uniform, smooth, precise and neat; free of air bubbles or small drying cracks.
- Apply flowers and leaves that have definite shaped petals with proper form, correct number of petals, coloring and details as close to nature as possible.
- For each item, create a decorative design that is balanced, proportioned, appropriate to techniques or theme, no over-decorated and structurally stable.

- Decorations for cakes cannot be brought in and should be created from the raw materials available.
- Ingredients for recipes can be pre-scaled and measured; however, no pre-mixing is allowed.
- No finished sauces are allowed.
- Piping technique may be writing.
- Plated portions must be proportional to the dish itself and the number of persons specified.
- A typed menu describing each dish to be prepared must be provided to the evaluators.
- All items presented will be evaluated based on cooking methodology, taste, presentation, degree of doneness and measured to the acceptable industry standards.
- Execution of cooking fundamentals and kitchen management will generate the primary factors for evaluation; see the score sheets for a clear understanding of what will be evaluated.

Study Tips and Helpful Hints

- Read this CPC[®] Practical Exam At-A-Glance section carefully.
- Develop a plan and timeline and then follow it closely.
- Study applicable written material for:
 - Processes mandated
 - Processes you decide to do
- Practice numerous times.
- See guidelines for items that you can and cannot bring
- Remember, you are in control of selecting your ingredients, so make sure they meet your needs and the needs of the exam.
- The basic equipment will be provided as described in the ACF Practical Exam Administration Guide; however, if you have been practicing with your own pots and pans, small wares, etc., then bring those with you and use them. This way you know the nuances already and do not have to deal with any last minute surprises.
- Bring your own china. (*Check with Test Administrator.*)
- Sanitation skills will be monitored at all times for compliance with standard rules and that sanitation infractions could lead to a failing exam.
- All candidates must wear white chef coat, white toque, black or black and white checkered pants, leather shoes, or clogs and have a clean apron and side towels.
- Ask questions prior to the exam, be prepared! When in doubt, ask. Contact ACF National Office Certification Department at **888-817-5344** or check out www.acfchefs.org and contact a Certification Evaluator or Certification Evaluator Trainer in your region.

Assessment Criteria

The assessment for certification practical testing is divided into four general areas: Safety and Sanitation Skills; Organization; Craftsmanship Skills; and Finished Product Skills.

The candidate's skills are evaluated during the examination period through frequent monitoring by the evaluators. Notes are made during the examination as references to the evaluation. The practical examination is scored overall as pass or fail. Points are calculated in various areas and a total numerical score is calculated. A total average score of 75% (75 points) or better is considered passing.

Domain 1: Safety and Sanitation Skills (Pass/Fail) will be measured using required industry standards. The candidate is evaluated on their ability to work within established guidelines for safety and sanitation at all times.

Scoring: Safety and sanitation skills are assessed as acceptable or unacceptable. An unacceptable score in this area by two or more evaluators is considered an overall failure, regardless of the total points achieved by candidate. Evaluators are allowed to disqualify any candidate for infractions of these guidelines. Cleanliness of the equipment, both during and after the test, will be the responsibility of the candidate.

Here is a general guideline on safety and sanitation skills the candidate needs to follow:

- a. **Safety and Sanitation Skills:** The prevention of time/temperature abuse and cross contamination are the two most important areas in which the candidate needs to demonstrate a thorough working knowledge. During the exam, if an examiner has seen a possible infraction of either of these two areas, the candidate may be questioned as to their knowledge of these concepts. Infraction(s) of either time/temperature abuse or cross contamination could cause the candidate to fail the exam.

The cutting boards must be scrupulously sanitary. Knives must be sharp. The toolbox/knife bag must be clean and sanitary inside. Sanitizing solution must be correctly titrated and used properly to sanitize hands and equipment in-between uses. Candidates must be using towels correctly and not wiping debris off a table and then wiping a knife or a plate with the same towel. Candidates must not be using their aprons as hand wipes. Products must be stored at the correct temperature. Gloves must be used when the last contact with food is occurring, for example, plating up. Scores and cuts must be properly treated and covered. Areas must be kept sanitized, particularly during fish to meat to vegetable or dairy transitions. Frequent hand washing and sanitizing must take place.

Domain 2: Organization Skills (20%) will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Organization and work flow
- Assessing formulations
- Selecting of ingredients and equipment
- Management of ingredients and product inventories

Scoring: Organizational skills are assessed based on mise en place, recipe formation, utilization of ingredients/equipment and use of allotted time, for a possible total of 20 points.

Here are general guidelines for organization and work flow the candidate needs to follow:

- Organization:** Table is kept clear of nonessentials, such as equipment not needed for the task at hand. Candidate is working systematically on one job at a time, using correct cutting motions and the correct knife for the job, organizing products properly in a refrigerator, rack, cart, knife or other equipment storage. Candidate understands how the usable waste is stored properly. Floor spills are quickly handled. The candidate is not using the dish area as a storage dump. The candidate has an organized withdrawal from the kitchen, leaving it as clean as it was found.
- Work Flow:** The candidate practices smooth transitions from one job to another. The candidate has a logical progression of jobs. The candidate maintains proper timing of the menu items.
- Proper Utilization of all Ingredients** is evaluated on the candidate's efficient use of products. All food and non-food refuse will be kept at the station with the candidate until the completion of the test. Two separate containers are to be maintained: one for food refuse and the other for non-food refuse. The candidate may request to empty the non-food refuse during the test, only after the contents of the container have been reviewed by the evaluator. Upon the completion of the exam, the evaluator shall review the food refuse container to determine efficiency of the candidate's work. Points may be deducted from the candidate's score if serious infractions concerning product usage are witnessed. In the case of cooked byproduct, such as roasted chicken, only an appropriate portion should be presented. The cooked by-product should be properly handled and stored as if it were to be intended for another use.
- Timing of service and follow-up** is evaluated on the requisite time given to the candidate for the level of examination attempting. The candidate will be notified of his/her presentation time "window" upon the start of his/her preparation. If the candidate is not able to present the entire menu during the time frame allotted, points may be deducted.

Exceeding a reasonable allotted time can result in loss of points and may or may not result in a failing grade.

Domain 3: Craftsmanship Skills (40%) will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Use of production guidelines
 - Execution of mixing, baking and cooking methods
 - Handling and storage of ingredients
 - Production of baked products, pastry products and desserts
 - Production of decorative elements and other garnishes
- Creativity, skills and craftsmanship are evaluated based on a candidate's ability to properly execute classical knife cuts and proper cooking techniques while utilizing the correct method of preparation for any given item.
 - The candidate should use the proper technique as stated in the test criteria. The candidate uses correct method of preparation for any given item.

Scoring: Craftsmanship skills are assessed by execution of proper techniques, skills and fundamentals through creativity, skills and craftsmanship, for a possible total of 40 points.

Domain 4: Finished Product Skills (40%) will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Overall Presentation, including design
- Assembly and decoration of cakes and desserts

- Selection of service ware, finishing and garnishing elements
- Flavor, Texture, Color and Doneness

Scoring: Finished product skills are assessed by flavor, texture, presentation, ingredient compatibility and decorating methods, for possible total of 40 points.

Here are some general guidelines on finished product skills the candidate needs to follow:

Serving Methods and Presentation: Presentation is evaluated on correct temperatures of the items served, including the dishware, visible garnishes, arrangement of items and overall esthetic appeal of the presented items. The use of white china is strongly suggested.

Flavor, Taste, Texture and Doneness: Flavor and texture is evaluated on the proper use of flavors in every menu item and/or component. The flavors are typically associated with the specific food ingredients in the menu and recipes are thoughtful; and the techniques have been applied correctly.

Practical Exam Guidelines

- Candidates are responsible for bringing all ingredients for the exam. Ingredients should be pre-scaled or measured, but not combined in any manner.
- No pre-mixing is allowed. Pre-baked cake may be brought in already cooked; however, fillings, icing and decoration and/or decorating mediums such as butter cream, frosting, icing whipped cream, Ganache, etc. must be made during the allotted time.
- Do not bring in finished sauces. All sauces must be completely prepared on site.
- Immersion calculators are allowed during the exam, however they do not count as a cooking method and are considered personal equipment.
- Sanitation skills will be monitored at all times for compliance with standard rules.
- Sanitation infractions could lead to a failing grade.
- **Professional Uniforms:** All candidates must wear white chef coat, white toque, black or black and white checkered pants, leather shoes or clogs and have clean apron and side towels.
- Candidates should present a typed menu to the examiners prior to the start of the exam.
- Candidates must bring plates and/or platters unless the test site has agreed to provide them.

Exam Time: 3 hours

During the time allotted for the exam, candidates must prepare the following list of items, finish each item according to industry standards and present final products to the evaluators. All items should be displayed in a buffet setting at the completion of allotted time.

The Candidate should exhibit the following:

- **Genoise** - Prepare and bake one 8" Genoise cake. Do not fill, ice or finish the cake. Score will be based on the quality of the Genoise itself. Present on suitable platter, cut and plate a portion for tasting.
- **Cookies** - Prepare and bake the following:
 - 1 dozen chocolate chip cookies utilizing the drop method.
 - Display on suitable platter for tasting.
 - 1 dozen butter cookies utilizing the piped method
 - Display on suitable platter for tasting.
- **Bavarian Cream** - Prepare four portions of molded Bavarian cream and invert on a suitable platter for evaluation based on texture, flavor and consistency (no garnished or sauces are required).

Exam Results:

At the conclusion of a practical exam, candidates will receive both a verbal and written critique of their performance in each of the exam content areas. The lead evaluator for the exam will facilitate the review and will make written comments on the Practical Exam Candidate Written Critique Form. This will be provided to all candidates, both passing and failing.

This will allow the candidate to review areas for development in the event they choose to retest. Candidates who do not pass the practical exam are allowed to retest per the retesting policy. In addition to the Practical Exam Candidate Written Critique Form, which all candidates receive, those candidates who pass will receive an ACF Practical Exam Passing Form, which they will include with their final application form and written exam passing form to the ACF National Office.

ACF CPC® Practical Exam Evaluator Scoresheet

ACF ID # (Candidate):		Rating Scale
Candidate Name:		Score competencies on a scale of 1-10 (increments of 0.5 only)
ACF ID # (Evaluator):		1 - 2 Unacceptable did not meet minimum quality expectations
Evaluator Name:		3 - 4 Major Deficiencies displayed major mistakes or many minor mistakes with little or no recovery
Location:		5 - 7 Minor Deficiencies displayed few mistakes and/or had a quick recovery
Date:		7.5 - 10 Acceptable displayed minimal/no mistakes with quick recovery

DOMAIN I: Safety and Sanitation

 Acceptable

 Unacceptable

COMMENTS (REQUIRED if Unacceptable)

DOMAIN II: Organizational Skills - 20%

Criteria	WV	Score (1-10)	COMMENTS (Required if 5 and under)	
Mise en place/ Work flow/ Use of Time			:01-4:59 (9 pts) 5:00-9:59 (8 pts) 10:00-14:59 (7 pts) 15:00-19:59 (6 pts)	20:00-24:59 (5 pts) 25:00-29:59 (4 pts) 30:00+ Failure <input type="checkbox"/>
Assessing formulations / Recipes / Weight / Measurement				
Management of ingredients / Storage methods				
Selecting ingredients / Equipment				

DOMAIN III: Craftsmanship Skills - 40%

Criteria	WV	Score (1-10)	COMMENTS (Required if 5 and under)
Handling and use of ingredients / equipment / tools			
Proper execution of mixing, baking and cooking			

Rating Scale	
1 - 2	Unacceptable
3 - 4	Major Deficiencies
5 - 6	Minor Deficiencies
7 - 10	Acceptable

Candidate Name:	
Evaluator Name:	

DOMAIN III: Craftsmanship Skills - 40% (cont.)

Criteria	Score (1-10)	COMMENTS (Required if 5 and under)
Proper techniques / methodologies for production of products		

DOMAIN IV: Finished Product Skill - 40%

Criteria	Score (1-10)	COMMENTS (Required if 5 and below)
Genoise Cake - Achieving balanced flavor, texture and color		
Determining doneness		
Construction of baking/pastry product		
Presenting product esthetically/choosing vessel		
Choc Chip / Butter Cookies - Achieving balanced flavor, texture and color		
Determining doneness		
Construction of baking/pastry product		
Presenting product esthetically/choosing vessel		
Bavarian Cream - Achieving balanced flavor, texture and color		
Determining doneness		
Construction of baking/pastry product		

Rating Scale	
1 - 2	Unacceptable
3 - 4	Major Deficiencies
5 - 6	Minor Deficiencies
7 - 10	Acceptable

Candidate Name:	
Candidate Name:	

DOMAIN IV: Finished Product Skill - 40% (cont.)

Criteria		Score (1-10)	COMMENTS (Required if 5 and under)
Bavarian Cream (cont) Presenting product esthetically/choosing vessel			

Evaluator Signature:



American Culinary Federation

Step 1: Initial Application

American Culinary Federation, Inc. • Attention: Certification • 6816 Southpoint Pkwy, Ste 400 • Jacksonville, FL 32216 • (800) 624-9458 • www.acfchefs.org

Once completed, either email to certify@acfchefs.org, or mail this form and payment to the address above.

Personal Information

First Name: _____ MI: ____ Last Name: _____ ACF #: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Certification Level

Review the requirements on the next page and select the certification level you are applying for:

Note: Once application is approved you are eligible to take the written and practical exam. Certification must be completed within three years of approval. If certification is not complete within three years, reapplication will be required.

Payment Information

Application fee includes: initial and final application fees, written exam fees and practical exam administration fees. It **does not** include the practical exam local host fees. If you are not eligible for a certification level, you will be refunded the application fee minus a \$50 processing fee for members and a \$100 processing fee for nonmembers.

\$250.00 ACF Member Application Fee

\$490.00 Non-Member Application Fee

I have enclosed a check made payable to the American Culinary Federation (ACF).

Please bill my: Visa MasterCard Amex Discover

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp Date: _____ CSC #: _____ Amount: _____

Billing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name on Account: _____ Signature: _____

Certification Agreement

With this application, I verify the information provided is truthful and accurate. I grant the ACF permission to investigate employment and education, and I release from liability all persons and companies supplying such information. I agree to adhere to the ACF Certification Code of Ethics, Designation Usage and policies of the certification program and agree to accept the ACF Certification Commission's determination on all certification decisions. Certification is awarded for five years and recertification is required to maintain certification designation. I acknowledge that false statements or misrepresentation may result in the revocation of this application and/or approved certification. I agree to allow ACF to share my certification accomplishment in ACF communications and with local newspapers and industry publications.

Check this box if you **do not** want your certification accomplishments included in ACF communications or shared with media.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Retention Policy: Certification documents will be retained for seven years after certification expiration.



American Culinary Federation

Step 2: Final Application

American Culinary Federation, Inc. • Attention: Certification • 6816 Southpoint Pkwy, Ste 400 • Jacksonville, FL 32216 • (800) 624-9458 • www.acfchefs.org

Once completed, either email to certify@acfchefs.org, or mail this form and payment to the address above.

Personal Information

First Name: _____ MI: ____ Last Name: _____ ACF #: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Name (as it should appear on certificate): _____

Employer: _____ Job Title: _____

Test Requirements

1. Written Exam (score valid for 2 years)

Location: _____ Date: _____ Pass Sheet Included: _____

2. Practical Exam (score valid for 1 year)

Location: _____ Date: _____ Pass Sheet Included: _____

Certification Level

Select the certification level you are applying for:

Check this box if you do **not** want your certification accomplishments included in ACF communications or shared with media.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Retention Policy: Certification documents will be retained for seven years after certification expiration.



American Culinary Federation

Employment Documentation Form

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The certification program of American Culinary Federation, Inc. (ACF) recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated that they meet the minimum standards set for each level of certification. Those who earn certification are viewed as highly competent, respected professionals who are knowledgeable in their positions.

Please complete the information below on behalf of the individual applying for certification. Acceptance into the ACF certification program is, in part, contingent on documentation and verification of past and present employment.

Please type or print clearly

To: The ACF Certification Commission Date: _____

This letter will verify that _____ was employed by this establishment from _____ to _____.

His/Her official position/title during this period was _____, and he/she supervised a minimum of _____ full-time personnel in the performance of food preparation responsibilities.

Duties and responsibilities

I attest that the above information is true and understand that any misinformation provided may adversely affect the candidacy of stated certification applicant.

Printed Name: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Email: _____ Title: _____

Name of Establishment: _____

Address of Establishment: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Signature: _____

A blank copy of this form should be sent to each employer.