Personal Certified Chef™ & Personal Certified Executive Chef™
CANDIDATE HANDBOOK
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Certification Overview and General Policies

Why become ACF Certified?
With thousands of chefs competing in the job market, it is essential to prove culinary competency. Certification through the American Culinary Federation demonstrates skill, knowledge and professionalism to the foodservice industry. Certification encourages elevation of culinary career path and/or position.

Certification shows employers that an ACF Certified Chef has reached a benchmark of skills and culinary experience with high standards for food preparation. It shows working knowledge of culinary nutrition, food safety and sanitation and supervisory management has been demonstrated. The certificant is in control of their professional development and career, and this increased quality, knowledge and motivation is passed on to other staff. Certification reassures consumers that the food they eat is prepared to the highest standard.

Mission Statement
The Personal Certified Chef™ (PCC™) and Personal Certified Executive Chef™ (PCEC™) certification are designed to identify those chefs and inform the public of individuals who have demonstrated a standard level of culinary competence and expertise through education, experience, knowledge and skills.

PCC™ and PCEC™ Purpose
ACF awards the title of Personal Certified Chef™ and Personal Certified Executive Chef™ (PCEC) and their acronyms (PCC™) and (PCEC™) to individuals meeting the educational, experience and testing requirements for the certification. Only those chefs who have met all of the certification requirements are entitled to use the PCC™ and PCEC™ credential.

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 1-888-817-5344.

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 Certification 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 certification code of ethics. Any action that violates the purpose and principles outlined by the certification code of ethics shall be considered unethical.

Ethics enforcement procedures are intended to permit a fair review of alleged violations of the ACF Certification 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 Certification 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

Step 1: Determine Eligibility
Eligibility is based on a chef's work experience and educational background.

- **Work Experience Requirements**
  - **PCC™** - A candidate should show a minimum of 3 years as an entry level culinarian, in addition to one full time year as a personal chef. Candidate experience must be current and limited to the previous ten years.
  - **PCEC™** - A candidate should show a minimum of 3 years as a fulltime Personal Chef engaged in all aspects of food preparation and management. Candidate experience must be within the past ten years.

- **Education Requirements**
  - **PCC™** - One of the following:
    - High School Diploma/GED plus 50 Continuing Education Hours (CEH)
    - 150 Continuing Education Hours (CEH)
    - Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts
    - ACFEF Apprenticeship Program
  - **PCEC™** - One of the following:
    - High School Diploma/GED plus 150 Continuing Education Hours (CEH)
    - 250 Continuing Education Hours (CEH)
    - Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts
    - ACFEF Apprenticeship Program

- **Completion of Mandatory Education Courses**
  Candidates should provide documentation of one 30-hour course in each of the following: Nutrition, Food Safety and Sanitation and Business 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 Pre-Approval Application
Complete and submit pre-approval 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 the candidate's 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
180 Center Place Way
St. Augustine, FL 32095
Fax: 904-940-0742
Email: certify@acfchefs.net
Estimated Cost of Certification

Pre-Approval Application Fee
Candidates interested in obtaining certification will pay a $50 non-refundable initial application fee for ACF members or a $100 non-refundable initial application fee for non-members.

Exam Fees
Once the candidate’s application is approved, they may register for the written and practical exam.

- The written exam fee is $75 and should be paid directly to PSI.
- The practical exam fee is $50 for ACF Members and $100 for Non-Members.
  - 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.

Final Application Fee
PCC™ certification candidates will pay a $70 final application fee for ACF members or a $170 final application fee for non-members. PCEC™ certification candidates will pay a $160 final application fee for ACF members or a $260 final application fee for non-members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Application Fee</th>
<th>Written Exam Fee</th>
<th>Practical Exam Fee</th>
<th>Final Fee</th>
<th>Estimated Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PCC™</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Member Estimated Costs</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PCEC™</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Member Estimated Costs</strong></td>
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<td>$75</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$160</td>
<td>$335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Member Estimated Costs</strong></td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$260</td>
<td>$535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 pre-approval 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.

Step 4: Certification Exams
There are two exams required for both the PCC™ and PCEC™ Certifications: the written exam evaluates culinary knowledge and the practical exam assesses skill proficiency.

Purpose of Exams
The purpose of the PCC™ and PCEC™ certification exams are to objectively measure the knowledge and skills of a candidate to determine if they meet the standards required for a competent PCC™ or PCEC™.

Written Exam Parameters
Candidates have 60-minutes to complete the 100 question multiple-choice exam, which may be taken at any PSI approved test site. No support materials other than pens, pencils and calculators are permitted.

Written Exam Registration: To schedule the written exam call PSI at 1-800-211-2754 or register at the PSI Online Registration Site. Advance registration is required and non-refundable. The written exam is $75 paid directly to PSI.
Written Exam Scoring:
- Score of 70 is required to pass.
- Score is valid for two years.

Written Exam Retake Policy: There is a 14-day waiting period required before scheduling any additional exam attempts. Testing fees are assessed for each attempt.

Practical Exam Parameters:
The practical exam may be taken at any ACF approved test site. The PCC™ practical exam is 3 hours plus a 15-minute window and the PCEC™ is 4 hours plus a 15-minute window.

Practical Exam Registration: To schedule the practical exam, contact an ACF approved test site and confirm availability. Contact ACF National Office to register. The test fee due to the ACF is $50 for ACf-members and $100 for non-members. Payment must be made prior to the exam date.

Candidates will receive a registration confirmation after payment is processed.
- Test sites may charge an additional fee that is payable to the organization holding the exam.
- Payment for applicable host site fees is separate from the amount due to ACF and is 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 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.

Practical Exam Cancellation Policy: If you need to cancel an exam after you have registered, you must contact both the ACF office and the test site administrator within two weeks of the test date. The ACF registration fee may be transferred to a new test date within six months or will be forfeited.

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 exam 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 exams 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 the confidentiality policy, only a certificant's current status as a PCC™ or PCEC™ 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) and remaining certification fee. Include all back-up documentation, no originals (copies only).

Mandatory education courses (i.e., nutrition, food safety and sanitation and business management) must be current at time of final application; if not, a refresher course may be required before 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). Candidates will be notified by email that the application is received. Once certification is approved, a certification letter and certificate will be mailed. **PCC™ and PCEC™ certifications are valid for five years.**

ACF would like to share certification accomplishments in ACF communications. If the candidate would like to share their accomplishment, they should utilize the Brand You! Toolkit available on the ACF website. If the applicant prefers that his information not be shared publicly, please be sure to check box on final application to opt out.

For more information, call us at 1-888-817-5344 or e-mail us at certinfo@acfchefs.net.

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 conducts business. A complete Designation Usage Policy can be found on the ACF website or requested from the ACF National Office.

The Recertification Process

The purpose of recertification is to enhance the continued competence of certificants and to reaffirm certificant knowledge in food safety and sanitation, nutrition and business 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.

As an ACF Certified 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 Refresher Courses

Food Safety and Sanitation must be current (completed no more than five years ago) for every recertification.

Nutrition and Business Management refreshers (8-hour minimum) are only submitted one time for recertification once original 30 hour courses are more than five years old. The remaining CEH required are self-directed toward a chef's specific professional development plan.

Step 2: Determine Remainder of CEH Needed

If a candidate holds multiple certifications, their CEH requirement is 80 CEH for the first or primary certification, 40 CEH for the second certification and 20 CEH for each subsequent certification designation. (Example: Chef Jones currently holds a PCC™, CCE®, CEC®. When she is ready for recertification, she will need to complete 80 for her first designation, PCC™, then 40 for her second designation, CCE®, and 20 CEH for her third, CEC®, which will total 140 CEH.)

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. Submit the application, payment and CEH documentation. You will be notified by email when the application is received. Please allow 2-3 weeks for processing.
Step 4: Recertification Notification
The ACF Certification Department will review the recertification application and CEH documentation. Once the recertification is approved, you will be notified by email. Certified members can print recertification certificates through the member profile page. If you would like your certificate printed and mailed, please check the box on the recertification application. Certifications are valid for five years.

ACF would like to share your certification accomplishment in ACF communications and industry publications. If you prefer this information not be shared, please be sure to check the 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 can be found 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.

Approved CEH must enhance the competence of a PCC™ or PCEC™ in one of the domains as outline in the Job Analysis. This links enhanced competence to the core knowledge and skills required to earn the credential.

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 Expiry Policy. The policy has provisions in place to allow chefs to recertify if their certifications expired 12 months in the past or less.

If the certification expiration date is longer than 12 months ago, 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 testing requirements (written and practical examinations).

Written Exam At-A-Glance
Description of Exam
Candidates have 60 minutes to complete the 100 question multiple choice exam. Candidates will receive scratch paper and a pencil at the test site. The use of a basic, 4-function calculator is allowed.

Exam Administration
Written exams are administered by PSI. Candidates can register for the exam by calling 1-800-211-2754, Monday through Friday, 7:30 am – 10 pm Eastern Time, Saturday and Sunday 9 am- 5:30 pm Eastern Time or register online at the PSI Online Registration Site.

• The written exam fee is $75 and is paid directly to PSI.
• PSI has a 24-hour cancellation policy.
• An ACF number is required at the time of registration. To request an ACF identification number, contact certinfo@acfcgchefs.net prior to registration.
• Written exam scores are valid for two years.

Written 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:

General
• Test Center must conform to local building, sanitation & health codes, as well as meet ADA requirements
• Building and grounds must be clean and in good condition
• Exits must be clearly marked and unobstructed
• Fire extinguishers required and in working order, location well marked and easily accessible
• Emergency exits must be clearly identified and clear of obstructions
• First-Aid kits must be stocked and easily accessible
Personal Certified Chef™ & Personal Certified Executive Chef™ CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

- Restrooms must be located in the same building as the testing center
- Restrooms must be clean, supplied with necessary items, and in working order
- Adequate parking must be available near the testing center location

Test Room Physical Space
- Test room must be large enough to comfortably place testing stations and chairs
- Testing terminals must be arranged so that an applicant cannot view a computer monitor at one of the other work stations. Partitions are required between each workstation.
- Test station table surface must be large enough to accommodate the monitor, keyboard, mouse pad and applicable testing materials. A recommended size would be 42” x 36”.
- Testing area must be located so candidate will not be disturbed by foot traffic, loud conversation or outside noise.
- Testing room shall be free from any other activity during testing sessions; during non-testing time, the testing room may be available for other uses.

Test Room Environment
- Temperature must be consistent and comfortable
- Test room must be well-ventilated, with continuous air circulation
- Test room must be lit so that each candidate can read all diagrams, charts, etc. and read the computer screen with no glare.

Security and Surveillance
- Testing must take place in a separate room with a closable door
- Proctor station and printer must be located outside of the testing room
- Video surveillance system must provide 100% surveillance during testing session and include a DVR w/ 30-day retention
- Testing room door must be lockable, restricting any unauthorized access
- All testing material must be secured when not in use
- The testing room may be used for other purposes when not being used for testing

Equipment and Supplies
- Copy machine or scanner to provide copies of candidate IDs and test eligibility documents
- A locking file cabinet to secure test materials and candidate documents
- Ream of clean paper to be issued to candidate, if applicable, and pencils

Test Administration
PSI conducts training of all written exam proctors. Each test site and proctor has been issued a proctor ID code and a Proctor Manual.

What to Expect
Upon arrival at the PSI written exam test center, the written exam proctor will:
- Ask for the candidates to provide photo identification.
- Have the candidate sign-in on a daily log sheet.
- Issue scratch paper and pencil.

Candidate should bring:
- Acceptable form of photo ID with signature. Acceptable forms are: Driver’s license, Government ID card, Passport or Alien residency card.
  - Candidates that do not produce a valid ID at the scheduled appointment will not be allowed to take the test.
Taking the Written Exam

The proctor can explain the use of computer hardware and run Demo Test if requested. The proctor will review the candidate’s personal information on the screen with candidate. All items must be correct, if not, make the necessary changes. The proctor will select candidate’s test. If the candidate has two or more exams, select the exam the candidate has scheduled to take first.

Candidate will be asked to:

• Verify the type of exam.
• Complete a survey with comment section at the end of the exam.
• Stay in exam room. The proctor will monitor the test and candidate at all times.
• Take a break, if necessary; however, time given for the exam continues uninterrupted.

The proctor is available to answer any candidate questions pertaining to the software. The proctor must not express opinions regarding test questions or answers prior to, during, or after a test session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Duration of Exam</th>
<th>Number of Questions</th>
<th>Passing Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Certified Chef™ (PCC™)/Personal Certified Executive Chef™ (PCEC™)</td>
<td>Multiple Choice</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>70</td>
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Exam Results

The proctor will print out the candidate’s exam results at the conclusion of the exam, as well as collect the scratch paper and pencils. The candidate will be asked to sign out on daily log sheet.

The printed results will serve as your official score report. A copy of the candidate’s passing exam results will be submitted with the Final Application. The passing score is 70.

In addition to providing the overall score, the score report also provides a breakdown of how the candidate performed in each of the exam content areas to assist them in refreshing in the event they choose to retest. The candidate who received a failing score will be allowed to retest per the retesting policy.

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

Candidate scores are determined by a scale of 100 possible points. To pass the written exam, a minimum score of 70 points is required.

Optional Practice Exams

Optional practice exams are available for purchase. Purchase or completion of 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.
Personal Certified Chef™ (PCC™)

Written Exam Question Make-up:
35% Basic Cooking
15% Advanced Cooking
15% Sanitation
15% Nutrition
10% Personal Chef Management
10% Basic Baking

Topics Include:
1. Culinary Principles & Processing Terminology
2. Kitchen Equipment
3. Chefs Utensils & Tools
4. Seasoning, Flavoring, Spices and Herbs
5. Stocks and Thickening Agents
6. Soups & Sauces
7. Beef: Cuts & Classification
8. Veal, Pork and Lamb: Classification and Cuts
9. Meat Cooking
10. Poultry and Game: Classification and Cooking
11. Fish and Shellfish: Classification and Cooking
12. Garde Manger: Hors d’oeuvres, Salads and Dressings
13. Garde Manger: The Cold Kitchen
14. Vegetables: Cooking & Classification
15. Potatoes, Pasta & Rice
16. Pastry and Baking
17. Food Costing
18. Nutrition
19. Food Safety & Sanitation
20. Personal Chef Management
21. Marketing
22. Problem Solving, Time Management, and Decision Making
Personal Certified Executive Chef™ (PCEC™)

Written Exam Question Make-up:
25% Advanced Cooking
15% Sanitation
15% Nutrition
15% Personal Chef Management
15% Basic Cooking
10% Basic Baking
5% Advanced Baking

Topics Include:
1. Culinary Principles & Processing Terminology
2. Kitchen Equipment
3. Chefs Utensils and Tools
4. Seasoning, Flavoring, Spices and Herbs
5. Stocks and Thickening Agents
6. Soups & Sauces
7. Beef: Classification and Cuts
8. Veal, Pork and Lamb: Classification and Cuts
9. Meat Cooking
10. Poultry and Game: Classification and Cooking
11. Fish and Shellfish: Classification and Cooking
12. Garde Manger: Hors d’oeuvres, Salads & Dressings
13. Garde Manger: The Cold Kitchen
14. Vegetables, Cooking & Classification
15. Pasta, Potatoes and Rice
16. Baking and Pastry
17. Desserts
18. Food Costing
19. Personal Chef Management
20. Problem Solving, Time Management, and Decision Making
21. Marketing
22. Nutrition
23. Food Safety & Sanitation
Recommended Reference Materials

Additional study materials including training courses and textbooks are available through www.personalchef.com

*Nutrition for Foodservice and Culinary Professionals, 6th Edition*
Author: Drummond, B.
Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Pub. Date 2004

*Food Safety Fundamentals: Essentials of Food Safety & Sanitation*
Author: McSwane, R.; Linton, W.
Publisher: Pearson-Prentice Hall
Pub. Date: 2002

*Culinary Fundamentals*
Author: American Culinary Federation
Publisher: Pearson-Prentice Hall
Pub. Date 2006

*The Professional Personal Chef: The Business of Doing Business as a Personal Chef*
Author: Wallace, F.
Publisher: Wiley
Pub. Date: 2007

*Escoffier: The Complete Guide to the Art of Modern Cookery*
Author: Escoffier, A.
Publisher: Wiley
Pub. Date 1997
Practical Exam At-A-Glance

Practical Exam Guidelines

- Candidates are responsible for bringing all ingredients for the exam.
- Sanitation skills will be monitored at all times for compliance with standard rules.
- Sanitation infractions could lead to a failing grade.
- Professional Uniform: 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 their own plates unless the test site has agreed to provide them.

PCC™ Exam Time: 3 hours plus 15-minute service window (for a total of 3 hours and 15 minutes)
PCEC™ Exam Time: 4 hours plus 15-minute service window (for a total of 4 hours and 15 minutes)

During the time allotted for the exam, candidates must prepare and exhibit the following skills, finish each according to industry standards and present final products to the evaluators.

PCC™

The candidate shall exhibit the following:
Utilizing all the ingredients in this Market Basket, prepare a three-course menu, including a fish, salad and main course, all with appropriate accompaniments. Four portions of each course will be prepared and plated. Submit a typed menu to the examiner prior to the start of the exam. Each ingredient must be used at least once. The amounts given are only suggested as a guideline. You may not need to use all the amounts that are listed:

Market Basket:
- 1 each 10-ounce Salmon filet
- 2 each 1.25 pound live Maine lobster
- 2 each whole chickens (2.5-3.5 pounds each) - Fabricate to your menu’s specifications during exam.
- 2 ounces smoked bacon
- 1-pound fresh spinach
- 2 heads Boston lettuce
- 1 piece Belgian endive
- 1 pound carrots
- 3 each Russet or Yukon potatoes
- 2 each Globe artichokes
- 2 each Bartlett pears or Granny Smith apples
- 1 pint grape tomatoes

The three courses shall include:
- Fish course (including both seafood items) presented as appetizer portion
- Salad course (tossed, with extra dressing served on the side) as part of a three-course meal
- Main course (with two or more accompanying vegetables and starch) utilizing approximately 6-7 ounces of protein

The meal must include at least:
- 4 classical vegetable cuts (i.e. Julienne, Tournee, Brunoise, Alumette, small dice, Paysanne and Batonette)
- 4 different cooking methods must be shown (i.e., fry, broil, sauté, roast, boil, poach, steam or grill)
- Appropriate vegetable and starch accompaniment for the main course (may bring in additional ingredients and prepare them for plate accompaniments) prepared and presented during the exam.
• An emulsified vinaigrette made by hand (ingredients must be brought into exam kitchen)
• 2 different sauces using different methods (i.e., roux based, reduction or butter)

PCEC™

The candidate shall exhibit the following:
Utilizing all the ingredients in this Market Basket, prepare 2 different three-course menus, including a fish, salad and main course, all with appropriate accompaniments. All ingredients need not be used in both menus; however, they may be and any additional groceries are permitted. Two portions of each course will be prepared and plated. Each ingredient must be used at least once. The amounts given are only suggested as a guideline. You may not need to use all the amounts that are listed.

Market Basket
• 1 each 10-ounce Salmon filet
• 2 each 1.25 pound live Maine lobster
• 2 each whole chickens (2.5-3.5 pounds each) - Fabricate to your menu’s specifications during exam.
• 2 ounces smoked bacon
• 1-pound fresh spinach
• 2 heads Boston lettuce
• 1 piece Belgian endive
• 1 pound carrots
• 3 each Russet or Yukon potatoes
• 2 each Globe artichokes
• 2 each Bartlett pears or Granny Smith apples
• 1 pint grape tomatoes

Each of the three courses shall include:
• Fish course (including both seafood items) presented as appetizer portion
• Salad course (tossed, with extra dressing served on the side) as part of a three-course meal
• Main course (with two or more accompanying vegetables and starch) utilizing approximately 6-7 ounces of protein

The meal must include at least:
• 4 classical vegetable cuts (i.e. Julienne, Tournee, Bruinoise, Alumette, small dice, Paysanne and Batonette)
• 4 different cooking methods must be shown (i.e., fry, broil, sauté, roast, boî, poach, steam or grill)
• Appropriate vegetable and starch accompaniment for the main course (may bring in additional ingredients and prepare them for plate accompaniments) prepared and presented during the exam.
• An emulsified vinaigrette made by hand (ingredients must be brought into exam kitchen)
• 2 different sauces using different methods (i.e., roux based, reduction or butter)

Notes:
1. The candidate may add any supporting or “common kitchen” ingredients to the groceries that are needed.
2. Appropriate organization, safety and sanitation skills contribute greatly to each candidates’ success.
3. Candidates may not present their food outside of the service window, unless specifically instructed by the proctor or test administrator.
4. Candidates are encouraged to pre-marinate any proteins and serve those proteins at the exam, as long as the butchering and pre-marinating process is demonstrated during the exam. For example, the day before the exam, butcher a chicken and marinate it for the following day. During the exam, demonstrate the process on another whole chicken and then properly store the product for “future use.”
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 candidates 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.

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 and pay a practical exam fee of $50 if you are a member and $100 if you are a non-member. 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, after payment is processed. This will confirm your 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 exam 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 Culinari

• 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 the Exam**

You will have up to 30 minutes to set up before your designated start time or before the pre-exam meeting time if you are starting 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

- 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, you will not be alone in the kitchen while you are preparing your 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 helper 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 you. Only authorized helpers will be allowed in the kitchen during the exam. If in doubt, ask. 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.
  - A 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 Finished in the Kitchen

Expect to wash your own equipment, utensils and china when you are finish with your exam. You must clean up and be out of your cooking area within ½ hour 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 successfully completes 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 the candidate must submit a new registration form and payment.

Evaluator Training

Certification Evaluators are 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 the 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. Immersion circulators will be allowed during the exam, however they do not count as a cooking method and are considered personal equipment.

3. No advance preparation or cooking is allowed with the exception of the following: vegetables can be peeled; salads may be cleaned and washed, but not cut or shaped in any form; and beans may be pre-soaked.

4. Items that require long marinating times may be brought in pre-marinated; however, the candidate must demonstrate the entire marinating and/or fabrication process during the exam.

5. Candidates are allowed to bring in only the whole and raw materials. No finished sauces are allowed; however, basic stocks (beef, veal, chicken, vegetable or fish) may be brought in as necessary for the assignment. No commercially produced stocks or bases are permitted. No clarified consommés are allowed.

6. 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.)

7. Dry and wet garbage receptacles, as well as trim receptacles, must be maintained and presented to evaluators upon completion of the exam.

8. Basic nutritional balance in recipe development means the candidate should use the following guidelines in formulating a balanced, nutritionally-sound recipe.
Savory Guidelines

- Ingredients and garnishes should harmonize with the main part of the dish and conform to contemporary standards of nutritional values.
- Unnecessary ingredients should be avoided and practical, acceptable, cooking methods should be applied.
- Dressing the rims of the plate results in an unacceptable appearance.
- Meat and vegetable juices should not make a dish look unappetizing.
- In general, portion weight should be in keeping with the norms of accepted practice and nutritional balance.
- 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 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 the Practical Exam At-A-Glance section carefully.
- Develop a plan and timeline, 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 you will want to 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 the 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.
- If you have questions, contact ACF Certification Department at 1-888-817-5344 or visit 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 exam period through frequent monitoring by the evaluators. Notes are made during the exam as references to the evaluation. The practical exam 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 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:

**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 sees 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** will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Organization and work flow
- Proper utilization of all ingredients
- Timing of service and follow-up

**Scoring:** Organizational skills are assessed based on mise en place, recipe development, utilization of ingredients 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:

a. **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.

b. **Work Flow:** The candidate practices smooth transitions from one job to another. The candidate has a logical progression of jobs; for example, chops herbs or minces garlic at the same time. The candidate maintains proper timing of the menu items.

c. **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.

d. **Timing of service and follow-up** is evaluated on the requisite time given to the candidate for the level of exam attempting. The candidate will be notified of the presentation time “window” upon the start of their 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** will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Creativity, skills and craftsmanship are evaluated based on the candidate's ability to properly execute classical knife cuts and proper cooking techniques, while utilizing the correct method of preparation for any given item. In addition, the variety of techniques properly executed shall be factored into this score.

- Serving and portion size is evaluated on the main item and complementary components in the correct size and amounts following the required nutritional standards. When the main item is not within prescribed limits, either under or over, then points may be deducted. Likewise, each accompanying item not within acceptable portion size could result in the loss of points.
**Scoring:** Craftsmanship skills are assessed based on execution of proper cooking techniques, skills and fundamentals through creativity, skills and craftsmanship, for a possible total of 40 points.

Here are some general guidelines on cooking skills and techniques the candidate needs to follow:

a. **Cooking Techniques and Skills:** The candidate should pay attention to detail, as described by the fundamental cooking technique specified.

   The candidate should use the proper technique as stated in the test criteria, such as properly deglazing a pan, rather than simply adding wine or a liquid; properly browning the mirepoix, not just heating it; correctly roasting and basting the product as it needs, not just placing the product in the oven; or poaching items, rather than simmering them.

   The candidate should use correct methodology and techniques in preparing forcemeat and demonstrates a variety of different techniques.

b. **Butchery and Boning Skills:** The candidate is efficient and profitable in the removal of muscle from meat or poultry carcasses or fish from a bone. Sinew and/or fat removal and correct tying methods will be evaluated.

**Domain 4: Finished Product Skills** will be measured using industry standards for the following:

- Overall Presentation, including the use of appropriate garnishes
- Overall Nutritional Balance
- Ingredient Compatibility
- Flavor, Taste, Texture and Doneness

**Scoring:** Finished product skills are assessed based on flavor, texture, presentation, ingredient compatibility and nutritional balance for possible total of 40 points.

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

**Serving Methods and Presentation:** *Hot Food Hot and Cold Food Cold! (including plates)* Presentation is evaluated on correct temperatures of the items served, including the dishware, visible seasonings and garnishing, arrangements of items and overall aesthetic appeal of the presented items. Food is fresh and colorful, visibly seasoned, presented with some height, easy to eat and pleasing to the eye. Meat/fish slices are even, straight and evenly shingled. Items are placed closely together to help maintain temperature and to keep the plate from resembling a “smiling face” or “party-on-the-plate décor.” The use of white china is strongly suggested.

**Portion Size and Nutritional Balance:** Components of the meal are balanced so that the main item is complemented in size/amount by the accompanying garnish(es) and/or sauce. The candidate adheres to nutritional standards. The protein weight is within the set limits.

**Ingredient Compatibility:** Ingredient compatibility and nutritional balance are evaluated on the harmonious use of ingredients, cooking methods and ingredient colors, which follow guidelines for nutritional balance. Ingredient colors harmonize. Ingredient amounts are correctly portioned to give a perfect harmonization. Have any of the ingredients been duplicated?

**Flavor, Taste, Texture and Doneness:** Flavor and texture are evaluated on the proper use of flavors and seasonings in every menu item and/or component, with a variety of contrasting food textures as presented for judging. The flavors are typically associated with the specific food ingredients in the menu and recipes are profound. For example, the duck broth tastes like duck. Doneness temperatures are correct. Stated vegetable cuts are correct. Stated cooking techniques have been correctly applied.

The textures correspond to what was implied in the recipe. The flavor of the sauce or vinaigrette reflect what the recipe states and has the correct consistency. The correct degrees of caramelization has been shown.
PCC™ Initial Pre-approval Application
Click here
to www.acfchefs.org/download/documents/certify/certification/app_pre-approval_pcc.pdf

PCEC™ Initial Pre-approval Application
Click here
to www.acfchefs.org/download/documents/certify/certification/app_pre-approval_pcecc.pdf

Employment Documentation Form
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ACF Continuing Education Hour (CEH) Submission Form
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Recertification Application
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Recertification After Expiration Policy

If 1-3 months after certification expiration:
• Certificants will be granted, upon request, a 90 day grace period, without any additional fee or requirements to complete the recertification process.

If the date is 4-12 months after certification expiration:
• Refreshers up to date (all three if first cycle, sanitation only on second and subsequent cycles).
• Depending on certification level: 10, 15 or 80 CEHs earned during recertification cycle (including 90 day grace period).
• In addition, recertification fee will be of $150 if applicable.

If more than 12 months after certification expiration:
• Candidate must certify based on current eligibility and testing requirements. Please contact the Certification Department for additional information.

Once approved:
Identification component of certification, depending on certification level: 1 or 5 years online since the approval certification date.

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