



# ACFEF QUALITY PROGRAMS

## RULES AND GUIDELINES



American Culinary Federation  
Education Foundation

REVIEWED: OCTOBER 2015



## OVERVIEW

The American Culinary Federation is the largest professional organization of chefs and cooks in the United States and is the culinary leader in offering educational resources, training, apprenticeship and programmatic accreditation.

ACF's Education Foundation (ACFEF) Quality Program status recognizes culinary- and hospitality-related programs that meet or exceed industry standards for education and training.

Quality programs are defined and designed for educational schools, organizations or institutions offering courses or programs in areas including, but not limited to: culinary arts, baking and pastry arts, hospitality management, foodservice management, food photography and food styling.

ACFEF does not recommend any one program or course of study over another. ACFEF may promote education programs but does not endorse them as the sole recommended resource provider.

## BENEFITS

Quality Program recognition from ACFEF provides tremendous marketability and public trust of the program for the educational provider. As the culinary industry continues to thrive and educational offerings become more competitive, consumers are choosing institutions that have had a third party validation review.

The benefits of earning this recognition include:

- Validate program by verifying that:
  - o Program instructors are qualified to teach assigned subjects and have demonstrated proficiency through work experience and/or post-secondary education.
  - o Learning objectives are clearly defined through marketing materials, lesson plans and/or syllabi.
  - o Proper sanitation rules are followed in all classroom and learning environments.
  - o Adequate facilities to meet the outlined objectives of the program.
- Enhance brand value by using the ACFEF Quality Program logo in various marketing outlets.
- Improve exposure by being listed on the ACFEF Quality Program section of the ACF website.
- Increased visibility with complimentary text advertisement to be placed in ACF's e-newsletter *The Culinary Insider* upon initial and renewal recognitions.
- Expand audience by becoming an approved continuing education center and give credit toward ACF certification

## CRITERIA

- Ensure that program does not meet qualification requirements for ACFEF accreditation, apprenticeship or culinary fundamentals program.
- Program must be culinary-related, including, but not limited to: culinary arts, baking and pastry arts, hospitality management, foodservice management, food photography and food styling.
- Program must be in existence with registered participants at least six months before applying for ACFEF Quality Program status.

- Program instructors are qualified to teach assigned subjects and demonstrate proficiency through a series of job experiences and/or post-secondary education. Minimum qualifications:
  - o Associate's degree in culinary arts or ACF-certified or certifiable at Chef de Cuisine® (CCC) level (with at least 3 years of experience at the sous chef level, and has supervised a station in a foodservice operation).
- Learning objectives are clearly defined through marketing materials, lessons plans and/or syllabi.
- Proper sanitation rules are followed in all classroom and learning environments.
- Adequate facilities and space to meet the outlined objectives for the program.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

1. The program will submit an application and verification documentation, along with the initial application fee, to the ACFEF education team by email [educate@acfchefs.org](mailto:educate@acfchefs.org) or mail to American Culinary Federation Education Foundation, 180 Center Place Way, St. Augustine, FL 32095
2. The ACFEF education team will process application fee and confirm receipt to the program contact. Complete application packets will be reviewed within 10 business days of receipt. This does not include time needed to request missing information.
3. If the program does not meet eligibility requirements, the ACFEF education team will contact the program and send them a letter of denial. The application fee will be reimbursed, excluding the non-refundable processing fee.
4. If the program meets eligibility requirements, the new program will be granted temporary status until a site visit is completed for final recognition. A site visit will be scheduled within 90 days to validate content provided in application packet.
  - a. The program is responsible for evaluator travel expense. Evaluators will follow ACF Travel Policy Guidelines.
5. The evaluator(s) will conduct the site visit and complete the site visit report. The site visit report must be submitted to the ACFEF education team within 5 business days of the site visit.
  - a. If there are areas of discrepancy between the information provided in the application and the site visit, quality program status will be denied.
6. If there are no areas of discrepancy between the information provided in the application and the site visit, quality program status will be granted. Initial recognition is granted for three years. Recognized programs will:
  - Receive an ACFEF Quality Program logo to be used per the provided logo usage guidelines.
  - Be listed on the ACF website as a quality program
  - Receive a complimentary text advertisement to be placed in ACF's e-newsletter *The Culinary Insider* at the ACF Communication Department's discretion. Programs must provide the content.
7. Annual reports and fees must be submitted for the program's ACFEF Quality Program status to remain active. Programs are re-evaluated for renewal recognition by a site visit every five years.

### PROGRAM RECOGNITION / STATUS

#### TEMPORARY STATUS

A new program will be granted temporary status upon completion and acceptance by the ACFEF education team of all required application documents. Temporary status will be considered valid for a period of 90 days or completion of the initial site visit, response period, and review & ruling by the ACFEF education team, whichever happens first.

## RECOGNITION STATUS

Recognition status shall be granted to those programs whose eligibility requirements submitted in their application has been verified with no areas of discrepancy by a site visit evaluation. Initial recognition is granted for three years. Renewal recognition is granted for five years.

If significant changes to the learning objectives or facilities are identified during the annual reports, the ACFEF education team reserves the right to request a site visit evaluation prior to the renewal date.

## RECOGNITION SUSPENDED

Failure to meet any reporting deadlines or financial obligations or refusal of a program to respond to or cooperate with the ACFEF education team's request for a special visit or report may be grounds for suspension of recognition. Suspension will be for a specific period of time and recognition can be reinstated depending on the actions of the program and the decision of the ACFEF education team. No recognition action is considered to be final until after the institution has availed itself of all due process of the Appeals Procedure.

## RECOGNITION REVOKED

Recognition can be revoked if the program closes, no longer wishes to renew or does not respond to the conditions set forth in a suspension within a given time period. No recognition action is considered to be final until after the chapter/program has availed itself of all due process of the Appeals Procedures.

## ADVERTISING OF RECOGNITION

Only after recognition is granted by the ACFEF education team may a program so denote its status in official publications or in advertising. It may be listed as "Recognized by the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation as a Quality Program." The ACFEF quality program logo may be used by a program on its publications or in advertising.

ACFEF does not recommend any one program or course of study over another. ACFEF may promote education programs but does not endorse them as the sole recommended resource provider.

## APPEALS PROCEDURES

A program may petition for review of a decision by the ACFEF education team to suspend or revoke recognition on the grounds that: (1) the ACFEF education team and / or the evaluation team failed to follow stated procedures; (2) the ACFEF education team failed to consider all the evidence and documentation presented in favor of a program's application; (3) the ACFEF education team acted erroneously by disregarding the policies and procedures for recognition; or (4) there was bias demonstrated by an ACEF education team or evaluation team member.

The program must notify the ACEF Director of Education, in writing, of its intention to petition for review of the decision no later than thirty (30) days from the date the program was notified of an adverse decision by the ACFEF education team. The petition must relate to one of the grounds cited above and justification must be provided for the request. All documentation supporting such a petition must be submitted to the ACEF director of education no later than sixty (60) days from the date the program was notified to the adverse decision.

A program has the opportunity to present its case, including new evidence, for review by an Appeals Board. The case will be reviewed by an Appeals Board chaired by the Chair of the ACFEF Education Taskforce and the ACFEF Director of Education. The Appeals Board will be activated once the ACFEF Director of Education has received written notice of a program's intention to petition for review. The Chair of the Appeals Board will appoint two past taskforce members, known to have knowledge of and experience with the recognition of quality programs to serve on the Appeals Board. The Chair of the Appeals Board will call a meeting within ninety (90) days of receipt of the documentation for the filing program. The Appeals Board, subsequent to its hearing, will make a recommendation to the ACFEF education team.

The expenses related to a review by the Appeals Board shall be borne by the petitioning program if the final outcome is an unchanged decision by the ACFEF education team. If the outcome is changed, fifty (50) percent of the costs shall be borne by the ACFEF education team and fifty (50) percent by the petitioning program. The expenses will include travel and subsistence of the Appeals Board members participating in the review and other related costs. An appeals deposit of \$5,000 will be required prior to the hearing.

An appeal pursuant to this section shall be the sole and exclusive remedy of a program for challenging a decision of the ACFEF education team to suspend or revoke recognition. The action following the recommendation of the appeals board shall be final, conclusive and binding on all parties.

### ANNUAL REPORTS AND FEES

All programs recognized with ACFEF Quality Program status must file an annual report. Program contacts will receive notification, annual fee invoices and report documents prior to the due date. The purpose of this annual report is to keep the ACFEF education team apprised of any substantial changes which have occurred in the program. These include changes in primary contact information, learning objectives and instructors.

Failure to submit the annual report within the deadline set will result in suspension of recognition. A penalty fee of \$250 will be assessed to a program submitting this report later than 30 days after the due date.

Non-profit institutions are eligible for a 50 percent reduction in annual fees with proper verification. All other fees are stated.

### SITE VISITS

The ACFEF education team will conduct, or appoint a team to conduct, required site visits. After the initial site visit, subsequent visits will be conducted within each program's recognition period. Certain conditions may necessitate additional evaluators and additional evaluation days. The requirements of each program will be assessed individually.

The evaluators will prepare a team report based on the site visit findings. The purpose of the site visit is to verify information provided during the application process, assess faculty qualifications, program facilities, instructional delivery and overall sanitary practices through observation, as well as interviews with the program contact, faculty and program participants. For online programs, full access must be provided to the evaluator for a virtual site visit.

## **SITE VISIT FEES**

Required fees must be paid by the program and include initial/renewal application fees PLUS all transportation, lodging and meal expenses for evaluators. Evaluators will follow the ACF Travel Policy guidelines, and every effort will be made to keep these expenses to a minimum. An invoice will be sent to the program or corporate accounting office for payment within 30 days of the visit.

## **SPECIAL SITE VISITS**

The ACFEF education team reserves the right to require at any time special visits to or specific reports from a program. These shall be under cited conditions and within a time frame to be decided by the ACFEF education team. Refusal of a program to respond to or cooperate with such requests shall be grounds for suspension or revocation of its recognition. The program of which a special visit is required will be responsible for any expenses incurred by the visiting team. An invoice will be sent to the program or corporate accounting office for payment within 30 days of the visit.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION HOURS**

Programs wishing to award continuing education hours to their participants must indicate this request on the initial application.

In an effort to consistently approve programs for continuing education hours (CEH), the following guidelines must be followed by programs seeking to offer ACF-approved CEHs to participants:

- 4-6 week program – 6 CEHs
- 3-month program – 10 CEHs
- 6-month program – 16 CEHs
- 12-month program – 25 CEHs
- Other – to be evaluated by the ACFEF education team

Upon completion of the program, students/participants should receive a certificate, letter or other documentation stating the program title, date, participant name and number of CEHs earned.

## **FEES**

Contact the ACFEF education team for current fee schedule.



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