

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

March 5, 2019 (v1)



CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Handcrafted Soap & Cosmetic Guild's Certification Program was undertaken to encourage and promote the highest professional standards among HSCG members. The Program provides criteria to measure soapmaking knowledge and skill. Members achieving these certifications demonstrate dedication to professional standards and build credibility with customers.

The Certification Program establishes an industry-wide standard of excellence in soap and cosmetic making and creates a centralized repository for industry-standard information and resources.

MEMBER CERTIFICATIONS

Soap & Cosmetic Certification is offered only to HSCG Members.

- ▶ PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM IS ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY.

All Novice, Professional and Retired Handcrafter members may become certified.

The person designated as the Owner of a Tier 3 Vendor Member company may be certified.

Tier 1 and 2 Vendor Members may designate up to 2 company staff to be certified under the membership.

CERTIFICATION TRACKS & LEVELS

The Certification program has been divided in the Tracks (or Paths) and Levels.

TRACKS

There are three certification tracks:

- ◆ Cold/Hot Process Soap
- ◆ Melt & Pour Soap
- ◆ Cosmetics

LEVELS

There are four certification levels within each track.

BASIC LEVEL

- ◆ Twenty (20) question exam.
- ◆ Product samples (Cosmetic track only)

ADVANCED LEVEL

- ◆ Twenty (20) question exam.
- ◆ Product samples

EXPERT LEVEL

- ◆ Twenty (20) essay question exam
- ◆ Topical report
- ◆ Product samples

MASTER LEVEL

- ◆ Ten (10) essay question exam
- ◆ Product samples
- ◆ Topical report
- ◆ Research project

Each level covers the following subjects, requiring greater proficiency and depth of understanding as the levels increase:

- ◆ Techniques for developing soap or cosmetic formulas
- ◆ Sample product quality (except Basic Soapmaking levels)
- ◆ Terminology and chemistry
- ◆ Labeling requirements
- ◆ Safety and Good manufacturing practices
- ◆ Environmental concerns

EXAMINATION CONTENT

Content of the Certification examinations, product sample requirements, and product sample grading criteria were developed by a Certification Committee established by the Board of Directors for that purpose. Every few years a special committee should be appointed to Board of Directors to review the Certification program content and criteria, and to propose any needed updates or revisions.

Any change to the Certification exam questions, product sample requirements or product sample grading criteria requires approval from the Board of Directors.

TEST GENERATION

All approved examination questions are maintained in a database on the HSCG website. Both practice tests in the Member Area and printed tests for final examinations are generated from the database.

The Certification module of the HSCG website has been programed to create a different version each time a test is generated. Three levels of randomization are used:

- 1) Each question on the test is randomly selected from multiple options. In other words, there may be six different question options for "Question #1" on the test. Each time a test is generated, one of those six questions is randomly selected to become Question #1 on that version of the text.
- 2) The questions are presented in random order. After the questions are selected, they are shuffled. What was question #1 on one test might be Question #20 on a different test.
- 3) For every question used on the test, the multiple choice options are randomly ordered. That means that one time the correct answer may be in position "A" and the next time it may be in position "C".

EXAMINATION LOCATIONS

It is the HSCG's intention to make all the examinations available to all members.

AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Certification at all levels is available at the HSCG Annual Conferences. Examinations are administered at least once—usually twice—during the conference. Members wishing to get Certified at the Annual Conference should register in advance and watch for notices concerning schedules and deadlines.

EXAMINATIONS

Members may take more than one test per period (i.e. Basic CPHP and Basic MP). Members may take the test for one level during the first testing period and, if passed, may take the test for the next level in that track during the second testing period.

Anyone wishing to take the Expert or Master examination at the Conference must inform the Certification Director at least 30 days in advance to ensure that personnel and space are allocated for the longer exam period allowed for these tests.

SOAP AND COSMETIC SAMPLES

It takes time to grade the soap and cosmetic samples which are required for all levels except Basic CP/HP and MP Soapmaker Certification. Therefore to complete certification at the annual conference, the following timetables apply to the submission of soap and cosmetic samples:

- ◆ Basic and advanced cosmetic samples and advance soap samples may be submitted at the HSCG Conference. If the samples and testing are passed, the certificate will be awarded at the Conference.
- ◆ Expert or Master soap or cosmetic samples must be submitted to the HSCG office at least 30 days prior to the conference to allow time for review and grading.

Basic and advanced cosmetic samples and advance soap samples may alternatively be submitted to the HSCG office up to 30 days after Conference. If testing is passed at the conference and the samples pass, then the certification will be awarded when the sample grading is completed.

REPORTS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

For those wishing to complete Expert or Master level certification at the Annual Conference, the required reports or research projects must be submitted to the HSCG office at least 30 days prior to the conference to allow time for review and grading.

PROCTORED EXAMS

A member who cannot travel to an HSCG Annual Conference or who wishes to become certified between conferences may arrange for a proctored exam in his or her area.

Proctor: a person who has been appointed to keep watch over students at examinations.

The proctor must be approved by the HSCG. The proctor agrees to receive the exam, administer it according to the HSCG rules, and return all the paperwork to the Certifications Director. The exams are

graded by the Certifications Director. Sample products are sent directly to the Certifications Director. Once the certification requirements are met, a certificate is issued by the HSCG office.

Full details on the administration of proctored exams and the forms necessary are maintained in the Member Area of the HSCG website.

GROUP EXAM

Group examinations make it possible for a group of several HSCG members to take their certification exams at one time with one proctor. Local or regional groups or gatherings can arrange for group exams for HSCG members. Vendors or Suppliers can set up HSCG certification exams for their customers who are HSCG members.

For group exams, one person is designated as the Certification Advocate (CA). The CA must be a current member of the HSCG. The CA acts as proctor or arranges for someone to serve as proctor, gets approval from the HSCG, sets the time and date, receives the testing materials, verifies all examinees are HSCG members and have registered and paid for their certification, makes sure testing is properly conducted, and sends the completed tests back to the HSCG.

Full details on the administration of group exams and the forms necessary are maintained in the Member Area of the HSCG website.

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Registration and payment for HSCG Certification is done through the HSCG Shopping Cart on the HSCG website. Payment and registration may be made by phone or mail, but is not recommended.

Once the purchase is completed and payment received, the Certification Director initiates the Certification process. If the member is going to take a Proctored exam, he/she is responsible for submitting the required forms in a timely manner.

The examination portion of a certification and submission of any required soap samples must be completed within 90 days of payment. If more than 90 days elapses, the registration expires and must be resubmitted before the certification process may proceed. No refunds are granted when a certification registration expires.

Certification fees are set by the Board of Directors and may be changed from time to time.

CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION

Basic Level certification for Handcrafter members and Vendor Member company owners is valid indefinitely, regardless of whether membership in the HSCG is maintained.

Basic Level certification for individuals other than the company owner who are certified under a Tier 1 or Tier 2 membership are valid only so long as:

- a) The company maintains a membership in the HSCG, and
- b) The individual continues as a designated representative of the company.

Advanced, Expert and Master Certification are not indefinite. They are valid only with current membership in the HSCG. If the membership expires, there is a 90 day grace period during which the certification may be reinstated by paying a fee of 50% of the current fee for the level. Once the

membership has been expired for more than 90 days, the person must re-qualify under the current requirements for the level.

All levels of certification are indefinite for individuals who have been awarded Lifetime Honorary Membership status.

BENEFITS TO CERTIFIED MEMBERS

HSCG Certified Members are afforded certain benefits.

USE OF THE CERTIFIED MEMBER BADGE

HSCG Certified Members may use the HSCG Certified Badge for their level of certification.

Examples of the Certified Badge:



The Certified Badge is available in the Certification section of the Member Area of the HSCG website. Use of the HSCG Certified Badge is subject to the terms and conditions specified on the HSCG website.

NOTE: Use of the Certified Badge is limited to current HSCG members. Expired members who retain indefinite Basic Level Certification are not qualified to use the Certified Badge.

LISTING OF CERTIFIED MEMBERS

A listing of all HSCG Certified Soap & Cosmetic Makers is included in the Consumer section of the HSCG Website. (<https://www.soapguild.org/consumers/certified.php>)

Inclusion in the list of Certified Members is automatic, provided the member has set up a listing in the Soap and Cosmetic Directory.

ICON IN SOAP & COSMETIC DIRECTORY

Certified members' listings in the Soap and Cosmetic Directory include an icon indicating that the Soap/Cosmetic Maker is certified.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Certification Program is administered by the Certifications Director. The Executive Director is responsible for assigning the duties of Certifications Director to a staff member within the HSCG.

The duties and responsibilities of the Certifications Director include:

- ◆ Receiving Certification registrations, approving proctors and sending out examination materials;
- ◆ Receiving and grading all examinations;

- ◆ Receiving and grading all product samples in accordance with the criteria established;
- ◆ Maintaining the database of Certified individuals and entering all information accordingly;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining administrative procedures for the Certification Program;
- ◆ Developing and maintaining all forms and paperwork required for the program;
- ◆ Reviewing the program and proposing updates to the Board of Directors when needed.

Paper copies of completed examinations and product sample evaluations should be maintained at the HSCG office for not less than 2 years.

Approved by the
Board of Directors

History

March 5, 2019 (v1) Original publication date.