



Q GRADING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR Q GRADERS

The goal of the Q Grader Program is to create a skilled and credible body of coffee graders to consistently and accurately assess samples submitted for evaluation.

Q Graders (Arabica and Robusta) have undergone training and examination by credentialed Q Instructors in keeping with the rules and standards set by CQI.

*** Please note, in order to participate in Q Grader Courses and be a Licensed Q Grader – ALL students must be 16 years of age before the course start date.*

A Q Grader's status can be independently verified by referencing the CQI database and website under the Grader's home country.

After 36 months of Q Grader certification (tracked from the initial course) the Grader must renew Q Grader status through a Q Calibration Test. The Q Calibration consists of three cupping sessions, with other Q Graders. Students exceeding 36 months, and therefore with lapsed Q licenses, must request a written extension from CQI before they can enroll in a calibration.

Q Graders are cuppers who are skilled to identify quality coffee and produce detailed reports for Q Certified lots and CQI Technical Reports (lots that do not meet the Q Standards).

Q Grader Program Rules

1. Licensed Q Graders hold a professional certification in coffee grading and evaluation that qualifies them to perform these functions for fees mutually agreed to by the license holder and the ICP.
2. Those individuals who have successfully passed the CQI-administered exams to become certified as a Licensed Q Grader may use the logo and the nomenclature "Licensed Q Grader" as a professional credential under the guidelines established by CQI.
3. In the performance of the functions of coffee grading and evaluation, the licensed Q Grader is authorized by CQI to produce reports leading to the issuance of the following types of quality certificates:
 - a. Q Certificate, in conjunction with an authorized In-Country-Partner (ICP)
 - b. Technical Report, in conjunction with an authorized ICP
 - c. Preliminary Appraisal on own initiative
4. In preparing a grading and evaluation report on behalf of CQI, the Licensed Q Graders agree to strictly follow the grading and cupping protocols established by CQI.
5. In preparing a grading and evaluation report on behalf of CQI, the Licensed Q Graders agree to immediately report to CQI and/or its designated agent in country, any breach of protocol that would suggest or imply the evaluation and grading of the coffees submitted to evaluation was incorrectly or improperly made; these breaches would include but not limited to the following:
 - a. Q Grader's personal knowledge of or contact by the owner of the sample.
 - b. Q Grader's knowledge of incorrect or incomplete use of CQI grading protocols.
 - c. Q Grader's knowledge of a submission of a false report.



6. In preparing a grading and evaluation report on own initiative, the Licensed Q Graders agree to work independently so that their reports represent their own personal ideas, opinions and conclusions regarding the grading and evaluation of the coffees submitted to them.

A Q evaluation on behalf of CQI requires 3 licensed Q Graders to:

- Roast sample to the sample roast standards at least 12 hours before cupping.
- Evaluate the cup, use SCA form and protocols to perform the cupping. One grader to evaluate the green sample for defects; evaluate the roasted sample for quakers and report moisture content,
- Complete sensory evaluation and report within 3 days of the sample's arrival.
- Enter results into CQI database within 4 days of the sample's arrival.

Codes to follow during grading and Q Graders ethics:

- BE HONEST in the evaluation
- Follow the rule of Silent Work
- Be precise and accurate in your evaluation
- Must maintain confidentiality and anonymity before, during, and after the grading assignment. The connection of the grader to the lot evaluated must not be exposed, and shall only be the knowledge of the ICP.

Q Coffee Program Standards

The Q Coffee Program of the Coffee Quality Institute (CQI) is dedicated to promoting the highest principles of honesty, integrity, fair dealing, and professionalism in the grading and evaluation of specialty coffees. A Licensed Q Grader agrees:

- To provide an impartial, professional evaluation of any coffees submitted for Q Grading.
- To meet or exceed the professional expectations placed on them by coffee producers, government agencies, non-government organizations, customers, or clients.
- To accurately and honestly represent their credentials, training, experience, and abilities.
- To maintain and advance their knowledge and skills in the technologies and procedures utilized in coffee quality evaluation.

Denial of the Q Grader Certification

Licensed Q Graders who violate their pledge to follow and uphold the Q Grader Rules and Regulations may face disciplinary action. A special investigation committee may be appointed by the Director of Q to investigate allegations.

The CQI, in its sole and absolute discretion, may deny – temporarily or indefinitely - a Q Grader License to anyone who:

- Does not meet any of the applicable qualifications for certification, or does not follow the procedures for application set forth in these Rules.
- Fails to provide, in the application and supporting documents, evidence of sufficient knowledge, training or experience.
- Is found cheating, copying answers from another student, or submitting work other than his/her own during any Q Grader examination.
- Has made any false statement in or in connection with any application filed with the CQI
- Fails to meet such other qualifications as the Board may from time to time determine are in the best interests of the Q Coffee Program.