



Process for Evaluating Coffees in the Q Coffee System

1. Identify the In-Country Partner (ICP) in your region for evaluating a coffee sample. ICPs are organizations authorized to conduct Q grading services on behalf of CQI. ICPs oversee the entire coffee sample evaluation process including review of registration forms submitted, sample payment, label and code samples to assure a credible and impartial process, assign Q Graders to evaluate coffee samples, and review final sample evaluations submitted by Q graders. The evaluation results in a Q Coffee Certificate or Q Technical report.

A current listing of our In- Country Partners may be found on the CQI Database under the Q Coffee System tab or directly <http://database.coffeeinstitute.org/users/icps>

2. After choosing an ICP, the next step is to submit the coffee sample form through the CQI database.

- First a user profile must be created. If you do not already have one, you can create one here <https://database.coffeeinstitute.org/register>
- After logging in, select the COFFEES tab, and then “Submit Coffee Sample”.
- Please include the selected ICP when filling out the coffee sample form making certain all the information provided on the form is accurate.
- Once the grading process has started, this information cannot be changed.

3. Payment is made directly to the selected ICP not CQI. If you have any questions about payment, please contact the selected ICP. Samples will not be processed by ICP until sample payment is received.

4. A 1kg sample of green coffee is submitted directly to the selected ICP.

5. Once the ICP receives the green coffee sample the ICP will assign three certified Q graders to evaluate the sample, according to coffee standards set by the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) for Arabica and Coffee Quality Institute’s standards and protocols for Fine Robusta

[SCA Standards for Arabica](#)

[SCA Protocols for Arabica](#)

[CQI Fine Robusta Standards and Protocols](#)

To maintain the objectivity of an evaluation, the assigned Q Graders:

- Must have no known ownership or interest in the coffees to be graded and will evaluate the coffee sample objectively.
- Must have the sample assigned to them on the CQI Database prior to grading the sample.
- Must be regularly rotated to provide equal opportunities and ensure the transparency of the Q Coffee System



6. Three certified Q Graders evaluate the coffee based on a 100-point system, and the scores of the three cuppers are averaged to produce a Q score. To be truly considered a specialty, or Q, a minimum of 80 points must be earned. 80 and above coffees are among the highest quality coffees in the world. If the coffee receives a score below 80, it does not receive a Q Certificate and receives a Technical Report. Sample results and report may be located on owner's CQI profile Dashboard and if coffee is elected to display publicly it can also be located under the Coffees tab on the CQI database.

7. Buyers and other interested parties can view the coffee profile and connect to sellers around the world.

For a step-by-step guide please click here to review a PDF that will provide you with detailed information on creating and submitting a coffee sample for evaluation: [How to Submit a Sample for Q Evaluation](#)

Thank you for your interest in having your coffee professionally evaluated!