



# Barista Skills

## Intermediate

### Practical Examination

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Exam Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Learner Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PLEASE NOTE:**

Please answer all questions.

This is a closed-book exam. No conferring is allowed.

The maximum allowable time for this examination is 45 minutes.  
If the exam is given in a language that is not your first language,  
an extra 15 minutes is available upon request of the examiner.

**Results:**

Total points earned: \_\_\_\_ / maximum 125 points

Points needed to pass = 112 (89.6%)

Pass ☐

Fail ☐

Before the test the examiner must ensure that all equipment is in appropriate working order and that it is cleaned in preparation for each candidate. The examiner should check that they are familiar with this particular model of espresso machine and grinder. They can advise of the operation of this particular model prior to the start of the test. This includes instructions on the operation of this model not coaching on standard procedures that will be tested.

The exam should **take approximately 15 minutes to prepare** (make sure stations are clean and grinder appropriately adjusted etc.) and about **45 minutes to execute**.

The examiner should point out the following to the candidate:

- *Please be aware that each section includes specific instructions, which I will share with you at the beginning of each section. Failure to follow instructions will result in disqualification.*
- *At any point in the exam, if you want to know how much time is left, please ask. Otherwise, I will only give you a 1 minute and 30 second warning. You are responsible for indicating you have finished (calling time) when you feel you have completed the required tasks and I will stop the timer. **If you go over the allotted time in each task by 1 minute (or part of), you will lose 2 points. If you go over the allotted time by two minutes (or part of), you will lose a further 2 points (4 points in total). You will not be allowed any more time to complete the test after this.***
- *During the test, I will not be able to answer any questions for you or give you any assistance*
- *If you believe the equipment is not functioning correctly please inform the examiner, who may stop the time, or possibly re-start the test as appropriate*

## **1. Grinder Calibration**

*Please calibrate the grinder, using 16 grams of coffee (+/- 0.5g) to produce a double shot of espresso weighing 40 g (+/- 4g), with a shot time of 22 -26 seconds. You have a maximum of 10 minutes. After this time, you will be allowed up to a maximum of two extra minutes but will incur penalty points for each minute (or part of) taken.*

***You have 10 minutes to complete the task. If you go over the allotted time in each task by 1 minute (or part of), you will lose 2 points. If you go over the allotted time by two minutes (or part of), you will lose a further 2 points (4 points in total).***

*When you have produced your espresso to the required standard please taste it with your examiner and indicate if you think it is under extracted/balanced/over extracted, and choose appropriate descriptions for its aroma, flavor, and body. This part of the test is not included within the timed element.*

1. Grinder Calibration Score sheet					
Grinder calibration	1.1 Produce an espresso to the following brew formula within 10 minutes: Grams in (dry coffee in portafilter +/- 0.5g): 16g Grams out (weight of double espresso +/- 4g): 40g Shot time: 22-26 sec		6 pts.		
	Time Taken:		Time penalty points – over 10 minutes (if applicable):		
	1.2 Ask the candidate to taste their espresso and assess if they think it is over extracted, under extracted, or balanced. The examiner should also taste it and mark YES if they agree with the candidate's assessment and NO if not (the examiner may choose to work out the extraction percentage to support their assessment; balanced at 18-22%)		Description: (circle one)	YES	2 pts.
			UNDER-EXTRACTED BALANCED OVER-EXTRACTED	NO	0 pts.
	1.3 The candidate tastes the espresso and can use appropriate terms to describe:	Aroma:	1 pt.		
	(SCA Flavor wheel can be referred to by candidates)	Flavor:	1 pt.		
		Body:	1 pt.		
	1.4 Workspace clean at end of task; splashes cleared down, loose coffee grounds cleared etc. Three cloths used appropriately (for steam wand / filter / counter).		1 pt.		
			Total Points:		

## 1.2 Grinder Calibration

*Please calibrate the grinder again, using 18 grams of coffee (+/- 0.5g) to produce a double shot of espresso weighing 36 g (+/- 4g), with a shot time of 24 -28 seconds. You have a maximum of 10 minutes to complete the task. After this time, you will be allowed up to a maximum of two extra minutes but will incur penalty points for each minute (or part of) taken.*

***You have 10 minutes to complete the task. If you go over the allotted time in each task by 1 minute (or part of), you will lose 2 points. If you go over the allotted time by two minutes (or part of), you will lose a further 2 points (4 points in total).***

When you have produced your espresso to the required standard please taste it with your examiner and indicate if you think it is under extracted/balanced/over extracted, and choose appropriate descriptions for its aroma, flavor, and body. This part of the test is not included within the timed element.

1. Grinder Calibration Score sheet					
Grinder calibration	1.1 Produce an espresso to the following brew formula within 10 minutes: Grams in (dry coffee in portafilter +/- 0.5g): 18g Grams out (weight of double espresso +/- 4g): 36g Shot time: 24-28 sec		6 pts.		
	Time Taken:		<b>Time penalty points – over 10 minutes (if applicable):</b>		
	1.2 Ask the candidate to taste their espresso and assess if they think it is over extracted, under extracted, or balanced. The examiner should also taste it and mark YES if they agree with the candidate's assessment and NO if not (the examiner may choose to work out the extraction percentage to support their assessment; balanced at 18-22%)		Description: (circle one)	YES	2 pts.
			UNDER-EXTRACTED BALANCED OVER-EXTRACTED	NO	0 pts.
	1.3 The candidate tastes the espresso and can use appropriate terms to describe:	Aroma:		1 pt.	
	(SCA Flavor wheel can be referred to by candidates)	Flavor:		1 pt.	
		Body:	1 pt.		
	1.4 Workspace clean at end of task; splashes cleared down, loose coffee grounds cleared etc. Three cloths used appropriately (for steam wand / filter / counter).		1 pt.		
			<b>Total Points:</b>		

## 1/1.2: Grinder Calibration Notes

1.1 / This test is to ensure that candidates can make a minor adjustment to the grind texture, in order to produce the requested espresso brew formula/recipe. The examiner should ensure that the grinder is un-calibrated before the session to a maximum of 5 seconds faster or slower than the target shot time.

Candidates should use the free flow button to complete this task and judge the correct water quantity used to make their espresso using weight (scales)

A maximum time limit of 10 minutes is imposed as it is considered that a candidate **confident** in the correct procedures should complete the task in this time or less. After this time they will be allowed up to a maximum of two extra minutes but will incur penalty points for each minute (or part of) taken. If you go over the allotted time in each task by 1 minute (or part of), you will lose 2 points. If you go over the allotted time by two minutes (or part of), you will lose a further 2 points (4 points in total).

If the 10 minutes elapses, and the additional 2 penalty minutes (12 minutes in total), then the very next shot must be assessed without any further calibration. If this is within 20-30 seconds then it scores the 6 points, with the -4 points time penalty taken off.

Candidates should be made familiar of the specific workings of the grinder model used for the test before their time, if that model is unfamiliar to them. If the grinder is familiar to them, the candidate may have remembered the position of the correct setting. The examiner should take steps to avoid this happening e.g. use a different coffee etc.  
(No mid points allowed)

1.2/ Outside of the timed element of the assessment, the candidate should be asked to taste their espresso and indicate if they think it is under extracted, balance, or over extracted. The examiner should taste the espresso and award the points if they are in agreement. If there is a disagreement then the extraction percentage of the espresso can be measured to provide an objective reference, with 18 – 22% being viewed as balanced.

1.3/ The candidate should be encouraged to continue their understanding of sensory assessment. To gain the point the description should first be appropriate to the category (the aroma answer should be an aromatic description, the body answer should be an acceptable description of texture etc.). The description only needs to be broadly correct and the candidate can refer to the SCA flavor wheel to aid their answer.

1.4/ To receive points, counter and grinder tray should be free of all coffee grinds. Counter should be free of all water or coffee splashes/spills. Steam wands should be clean. Clean cloths should have only been used for the appropriate task for the (portafilter/counter/steam wand).

## 2. Espresso Sensory

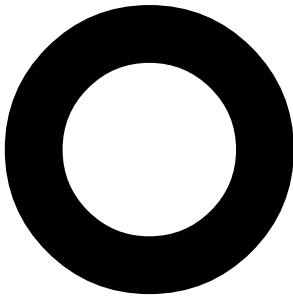
*An espresso is produced split into 3 x 10ml portions. The candidate must assess these cups (using taste and visual clues), and state the correct order of production. They have 2 minutes to make their assessment. At this time no more changes can be made and the three glasses will be marked where they are placed.*

Espresso Sensory Score sheet								
1 <sup>st</sup> 10ml identified:	Yes	No	2 <sup>nd</sup> 10ml identified: (More balanced with	Yes	No	3 <sup>rd</sup> 10ml identified:	Yes	No
(Heightened acidity, heavy body)			some sweetness, medium body)			(Heightened bitterness, lighter body)		

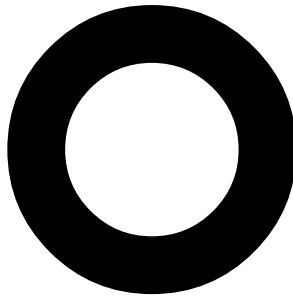
6 points if all identified correctly  
2 point if only one is identified correctly  
0 points if all are incorrect

*An espresso has been split into three glasses as it pours. They are then rearranged into a random order*

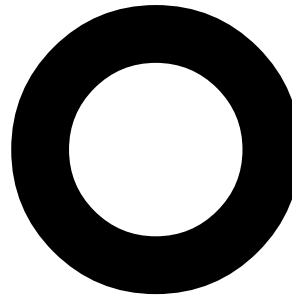
*Please place the glasses presented to you in the appropriate position below:*



**1<sup>st</sup> 10ml**



**2<sup>nd</sup> 10ml**



**3<sup>rd</sup> 10ml**

## 2. Espresso Sensory Notes

The examiner should make an espresso, out of sight of the candidate, splitting the shot into three separate 10ml parts (into shot glasses or similar)

These three glasses are presented to the candidate out of order and they are asked to place them back in order; 1<sup>st</sup> 10ml, 2<sup>nd</sup> 10ml, 3<sup>rd</sup> 10ml.

They can use the visual clues (color and body), but must also taste the parts when making their assessment.

When the candidate has re-arranged the parts to their satisfaction the examiner should ask if that is their final decision. They cannot change their mind after they have indicated that it is.

A maximum of 3 minutes should be given for the task. If the candidate has not indicated that they are happy with their selection beforehand, at the end of 3 minutes the examiner should ask for their final answer without any further time for deliberation.

## 3: Latte Art

*The candidate must produce two cappuccinos/caffe lattes demonstrating two free pour patterns produced to a reasonable standard within 5 minutes (as per guidelines set out in the SCA latte art standards).*

Latte Art Score sheet		
1 point is received for each section successfully completed for each pattern. A total of 10 points is available.	Pattern 1:	Pattern 2:
	<i>e.g. Heart</i>	<i>e.g. Rosetta</i>
3.1 Reasonable contrast	0/1pt	0/1pt
3.2 Reasonable harmony, size and position in cup	0/1pt	0/1pt
3.3 Reasonable symmetry of pattern	0/1pt	0/1pt
3.4 Foam quality at level 3 or above (on SCA foam chart)	0/1pt	0/1pt
3.5 Reasonably identifiable pattern	0/1pt	0/1pt

TOTAL POINT

\_\_\_\_\_(Max 5)

\_\_\_\_\_(Max 5)

## 3. Latte Art Notes

Refer to the SCA Latte Art Standards for descriptions of how each section should be represented.

The drinks should be completed within 5 minutes to be assessed. Only drinks made within that time can be put forward for assessment. Drinks may be rejected by the candidate during that time, but the candidate should choose the final drinks to be assessed, not the examiner.

#### 4: Drinks Order – quality and time test

Please produce the following order of drinks within 6 minutes or less. Correct procedure should be carried out throughout and drinks should be presented to SCA exam standards: 1 x Single espresso, 2 x Cappuccinos (single shot into 5-8oz cup), 1 x Soy/Soya Latte (single shot into 5-8oz cup/glass) **If you go over the allotted time in each task by 1 minute (or part of), you will lose 2 points. If you go over the allotted time by two minutes (or part of), you will lose a further 2 points (4 points in total).**

4. Drinks Order Score sheet						
Notes:	Steps: FOR EASE OF SCORING PUT A MARK AGAINST THE SECTIONS <b>THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED</b> (AND NOTE REASON), AND DEDUCT THOSE POINTS FROM THE TOTAL AVAILABLE	Points deducted	Points missed			
			Espresso	Cappuccino	Cappuccino	Soya Latte
	4.1. Remove portafilter from group head and flush group	1 pt per drink				
	4.2. Wipe basket clean and dry	1 pt per drink				
	4.3. Dose and distribute desired grams of coffee	1 pt per drink				
	4.4. Tamp consistently, level & ergonomically	1 pt per drink				
	4.5. Clean loose grounds from portafilter surfaces	1 pt per drink				
	4.6. Insert portafilter into the group head and start the pump immediately, as one continuous motion	1 pt per drink				
	4.7. Observe the flow and stop pump appropriately	1 pt per drink				
	4.8. Serve or use to make espresso-based drink	1 pt per drink				
	4.9. Remove portafilter and knockout spent grounds	1 pt per drink				
	4.10. Wipe basket clean and flush group (rinse optional)	1 pt per drink				
	4.11. Return portafilter to group head to keep preheated	1 pt per drink				
Comment:						



Milk	4.12. Fills jug/pitcher with cold milk to the correct level. (Milk waste a maximum than 85ml per drink)	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.13. Purges steam wand just prior to use.	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.14. Wipes steam wand immediately after use using wet hygienic cloth	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.15. Purges steam wand immediately after wiping.	1pt per relevant drink				
Appearance /Build	4.16. Espresso shot time is within 3 seconds of each other.	1 pt per drink				
	4.17. Espresso measurement is correct (15-25 grams or 25-35 ml)	1 pt per drink				
	4.18. Foam depth of 5-15 mm for cappuccinos, and differentially lower foam level for the latte, with full foam cover	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.19. Foam quality is level 1, 2 or 3 (using the SCA Foam Standards)	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.20. Foam surface reaches to (= $\leq$ 5mm) from rim of the cup.	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.21. Temperature of drink is within 50-65°c. (122 - 150°f.)	1pt per relevant drink				
	4.22. The workspace was kept appropriately clean and tidy during the process. Spills and excessive grinds were cleared. Filter handle spouts were cleaned as required.	4 pt.				
	4.23 All drinks completed within 6 minutes. <b>TIME ACHIEVED:</b> _____; <b>POINTS DEDUCTED</b> _____	5 pts				
	<b>A maximum score of 85 points are available. Deduct any missed points from this total.</b>	<b>Total points achieved</b>				

#### **4: Drinks Order Notes**

4.1 / The group head should be flushed at any time from the portafilter being removed to being reinserted

4.2 / The filter basket should be wiped with an appropriate cloth removing all spend grounds

4.3 / Appropriate methods should be used to ensure that the grams of coffee used are accurate. Clear steps should be made to ensure that the coffee is evenly distributed over the filter to avoid channeling.

4.4 / Clear steps should be observed to tamp the coffee flat and level. The technique used should minimize the risk of repetitive strain injury. The handle should not be knocked after tamping that may cause channeling.

4.5 / The top of the filter should be wiped before insertion

4.6 / When the portafilter is inserted the next motion to be made should be to engage the pump. The coffee should not be left dry sat against the hot shower surface.

4.7 / If using the free flow button then appropriate methods (scales/volume measures) should be used to ensure the espresso is the correct size. A pre-set button can be used but it is the candidate's responsibility to check that it is set at an appropriate level. If a button is used that gives an incorrect volume then it is the candidate's responsibility and they would lose the points.

4.8 / The espresso should be served with a saucer (if the cup used requires this), with a spoon.

4.9 / The old coffee should be disposed of from the group handle.

4.10 / The filter basket should be wiped with an appropriate cloth removing all spend grounds

4.11 / Handle returned securely

4.12 / Jug/pitcher should not be pre-filled. Enough cold milk should be used to produce the drink without excessive waste. Waste over 90ml per drink should lose this point. Candidates can choose to make each drink in turn or share milk steamed in one jug/pitcher over more than one drink./ The steam wand should be purged into the drip tray before insertion into the milk

4.13 / All milk residues should be wiped from the steam wand using a cloth dedicated for this purpose only

4.14 / The steam wand should be purged after it has been wiped to sterilize it

4.15 / All shot times should be within 3 seconds of each other, from the press of the button to stopping

Only 2 points or 0 is scored (no mid points allowed) [1 point is given to each drink that lies with that 3 second cluster.]

4.16 / Espresso length correct (volume or gram) Only 2 points or 0 is scored (no mid points allowed)

4.17 / Foam depth should measure between 5 – 15ml only  
Only 2 points or 0 is scored (no mid points allowed)

4.18 / Foam quality should reach level 1, 2 or 3 on the SCA Foam Standards  
Only 5 points or 0 is scored (no mid points allowed)

4.19 / Foam should be level with the rim of the cup with a tolerance of a maximum of 5mm below

4.20 / Temperature of the drink (in cup immediately as served) should be between 50-65°c. (122 - 150°f.)

The wide temperature range included here represents wide cultural differences across the world. During training you could advise candidates of the temperature range that is most suitable for your culture.

Only 2 points or 0 is scored (no mid points allowed)

4.21 / Workspace should be left clean and tidy. Work surfaces wiped down. No excessive grinds around the grinder

**Final Score Calibration:**  
**POINTS REQUIRED TO PASS = 112**

Section:	Total points available:	Score:
1. Grinder Calibration	12 points	
1.2 Grinder Calibration	12 points	
2. Espresso Sensory	6 points	
3: Latte Art	10 points	
4: Drinks Order – quality and time test	85 points	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>125 points</b>	