



Research Chefs Association® Certification Commission (RCACC)

CCS® Certification Requirements and Process

The **Certified Culinary Scientist™ (CCS)** is one of the most highly respected industry certifications available. It is open to any food professional who meets the education, food service work experience, and R&D work experience eligibility requirements.

The Certification Process

1. Complete the online application and pay the application fee (\$550 for RCA members and \$1000 for non-members).
2. Applicants are notified of their approval, a request for more information, or the need for additional qualification(s) within 4–6 weeks
3. Schedule and pass the online, proctored exam with a score of 80% or higher. Applicants who do not pass may apply to retake the exam (the cost to retake the exam is \$150).
4. Applicants will be notified of their status within 3–5 business days of completing the exam.
5. Applicants who meet all of these requirements will be awarded the title Certified Culinary Scientist (CCS) and receive a certificate from the Research Chefs Association Certification Commission.

Eligibility

Applicants may qualify to apply for CCS certification through any of the three tracks below.

Track 1:

- Bachelor of Science degree (or higher) in Food Science
- PLUS one or more of:
 - ACF Certified Culinarian certification (or higher)
 - One year full-time[†] food service experience (or equivalent)
 - 120 contact hours[†] in hands-on culinary work
 - A Bachelor of Science in Culinology
- PLUS three years of full-time[†] research and development experience

Track 2:

- Associate of Science degree (or higher) in Food Science
- PLUS one or more of:
 - ACF Certified Culinarian certification (or higher)
 - One year full-time[†] food service experience (or equivalent)
 - 120 contact hours[†] in hands-on culinary work
 - A Bachelor of Science in Culinology
- PLUS five years of full-time[†] work (or equivalent) in food product development or food manufacturing.
Note: Three of these five years must be in research and development.

Track 3:

- 30 or more contact hours in each of the following college-level courses (with a passing grade): microbiology, nutrition, and chemistry
- PLUS one or more of:
 - ACF Certified Culinarian certification (or higher)
 - One year full-time[†] food service experience (or equivalent)
 - 120 contact hours[†] in hands-on culinary work (as defined below)
 - A Bachelor of Science in Culinology
- PLUS eight years of full-time[†] work (or equivalent) in food product development or food manufacturing.
Note: Three of these eight years must be in research and development.

Eligibility Criteria

[†] Definitions

- **Full-time equivalence** is 2000 hours per year. An applicant working part time can fulfil the requirement by achieving an equivalent number of hours (for example, two years working 20 hours per week is equivalent to one year full-time). For people who have not worked a full year at one company, please submit your entire work experience for consideration by the Commission.
- **Contact hours** means in-person, instructor-led training where the majority of the class is hands-on production supplemented by lectures and demos at accredited colleges, universities, or schools in the Culinary Arts.
- **Food manufacturing** can best be described as methods and procedures commonly used in the manufacturing industry, including large commissary operations. The expectation is that products produced are generally mass-produced and packaged for later use by a consumer, another food processor, or a foodservice operation.

Food Science Related Degree

The following degrees may be submitted for review of eligibility. A degree curriculum is required.

- Culinology®
- Food Science / Technology
- Organic Chemistry / Microbiology
- Nutrition
- Biology / Biochemistry
- Sensory Science
- Food Engineering / R&D

Research and Development Experience

Acceptable experience comes from positions where R&D is the primary focus. This experience is typically hands-on bench work in food product development of one of the following:

- Standardized recipes for multiple food service operations and the use of industrial ingredients and/or manufacturing / processing methods
- Standardized formulas for manufacturing and the use of industrial ingredients and/or manufacturing / processing methods
- Standardized recipes for consumers

Documentation of Education and Work Experience

- Education and work experience must be verifiable and must be submitted with your application.
- Documentation of education can be official or unofficial transcripts, diplomas, and/or certificates.
- Work experience and contact hours must be verifiable.
- Self-employed applicants must submit two references who can verify full-time work experience.

Documents will not be returned.

Note: Applicants may petition the RCACC for recognition of their experience or education not covered above.

Exam Information

CCS exams are taken through RCA's remote proctoring service. All exams must be scheduled through RCACC.

The exam tests baseline culinary arts knowledge (90 multiple-choice questions) and food science knowledge (10 multiple-choice questions). A list of recommended study resources can be found [on the RCA web site](#).

Applicants who do not pass the exam will receive an exam report that indicates which content areas are in need of further study.

Service Marks: Research Chefs Association, Culinology, Certified Culinary Scientist, and CCS are registered marks of the Research Chefs Association.