



## Commitment to Examination Integrity

*The Court of Master Sommeliers sets the global standard of excellence for beverage service within the hospitality industry with integrity, exemplary knowledge, and humility.*

The wine community, hospitality industry, and our guests, who trust in any of the Court of Master Sommeliers certifications expect that every credential holder is a trustworthy and competent professional who maintains and adheres to the highest standards. In order to uphold this, absolute integrity is required of every candidate and Master Sommelier. All candidates, Master Sommeliers, and members of the community are expected to act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any failure to uphold these values puts the integrity of the credential at risk and compromises the sommelier profession, our industry, and one's own accomplishments throughout their career. Examination integrity requires taking thoughtful measures before, during, and after the examinations, ensuring all candidates complete the examination on their own merit without any improper assistance or resources.

### Our Commitment to Examination Integrity

#### Equitable Examination

- Examinations will be graded anonymously whenever possible.
- Candidates experience a level playing field in every step: from admittance, to administration, to grading and delivery of results and feedback.
- Examination points are awarded and deducted based on pre-determined objective criteria that can be observed and measured. These objective criteria have been developed and maintained by various subject matter experts and are reviewed frequently.
- Systems of grading ensure that no one Master Sommelier can unduly affect the outcome of any examination for any size group of candidates; a consortium of objective and experienced MS oversees the entire process and finalizes all results.
- [Candidate's Bill of Rights](#): Any candidate can request recusal from any examiner for any reason. No examiner can adjudicate a candidate with whom they have a prior or existing relationship.

#### Accuracy, Transparency, and Clarity of Results

- Multiple examiners are involved to ensure the accuracy of a candidate's score. CMS-A may decide that examinations may be reviewed and audited by a new panel of examiners should it be deemed appropriate.
- Any examiner present at the exam is permitted to witness and audit the determination of final results.
- Results & feedback are shared with all candidates on strengths and areas for improvement. Specific scores are shared at the Introductory, Advanced, and MS examinations. \*

\*Systems are in development to enable sharing of scores for the Certified examination.

## Enhanced Security Measures

- Ensuring that the content of the examination is presented without prior knowledge and administered in such a manner that ensures individual effort only – to candidates at all levels of CMS-A certification - is paramount.
- At in-person portions of upper-level exams:
  - Candidates are sequestered from the time they begin the examination until all candidates have completed the examination.
  - No personal interaction is allowed between examiners and candidates from 24 hours before the examination and through the completion of the examination.
  - Examiners have no knowledge of who they are examining until the candidate walks in the room.
  - No candidates or examiners are alone for any portion of their day once they arrive for the examination.
- Multiple versions of lower-level exams are created with randomized questions and answer choices. Upper-level examinations are created to be unique for every test date.
- Posting or disclosing any recollection of questions presented during the examination in any form is prohibited of adjudicating Master Sommeliers and candidates.
- Online examinations are live proctored by Procter U and subject to strict [security protocol](#).
- No electronic devices are permitted to be carried by candidates or examiners\* on the day of the examination.

\*Examiners may elect to use their cell phone during breaks with real-time activity monitoring and recording via [InterGuard](#)

## Reporting Line

- Students and examiners discovering any apparent or perceived violation are required to report the matter immediately to the onsite Examination Director or any Board member.
- Safe-haven third party hotline and response procedure is available 24/7 for examiners and candidates at any level who observe or experience irregular, inappropriate or otherwise troubling behaviors or occurrences. Report to [www.lighthouse-services.com/mastersommeliers](http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mastersommeliers)

## Disciplinary Action

- Failure to uphold any of the standards of examination integrity is subject to disciplinary action.

## Supplemental Policies

- [Candidates' Bill of Rights](#)
- [Non-Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Anti-Racism Pledge](#)