
SCAA Teaching Lab | Protocol for Non-Compliance

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Purpose

The Teaching Laboratory Certification program of the Specialty Coffee Association of America (“SCAA”) exists to promote SCAA’s mission to recognize, promote, and develop specialty coffee. This document sets forth SCAA’s protocol for instances when a Certified SCAA Teaching Laboratory (“Lab”) may have failed to satisfy one or more of its continuing certification requirements. The Labs must provide consistency in cupping and testing of Q-graders and objective evaluation of coffee throughout the world. For this reason it is a firm condition of maintaining their certifications that they are in continual compliance with SCAA certification requirements.

The Nature of Non-Compliance

Each Lab is expected to satisfy all of the Lab certification requirements listed on the SCAA web site at all times during the four-year tenure of its certification. These requirements are subject to periodic review and revision in the sole discretion of SCAA. SCAA depends on the involvement of its members and all other users of the Labs as de facto monitors of these facilities. Any Lab’s failure at any time to follow these requirements, whether small or large, accidental or deliberate, is important to SCAA.

Reports of Non-compliance

Anyone, including instructors, students, and other informed visitors, who notices an issue of non-compliance in a Lab, should report it to the SCAA Coffee Science Manager as soon as possible. This may be done by email, regular mail, or phone, and the reporter will remain anonymous to the Lab in question. All reports should be made no later than three months after the infraction(s) were noticed by the reporter.

A report of non-compliance should include:

- 1) The Lab name, city, and country
- 2) Date and time of infraction(s)
- 3) Why the reporter was visiting the Lab
- 4) What the nature of the discrepancy was and if/how it altered the value of the experience there
- 5) What, if any, actions were taken to rectify the issue on-site

Non-Compliance Notice

When SCAA receives a non-compliance report as described above, it will:

- 1) Contact the source of the report for any necessary additional information
- 2) Send the reported Lab a notice ("Non-compliance Notice") advising the Lab that (i) a non-compliance report has been made to SCAA and (ii) the Lab must respond with satisfactory evidence that the non-compliance either did not occur or that it has been corrected

When a Lab receives a Non-compliance Notice, it must immediately contact the SCAA Science Manager to confirm receipt. SCAA will make reasonable efforts to contact the Lab's manager or other Lab representatives after sending the Non-compliance Notice. If there is no reply within two weeks after the date of the Non-compliance Notice, SCAA will suspend the Certification of that Lab. During this suspension, the Lab will be removed from SCAA's list of certified labs and not be allowed to hold any SCAA or Q system teaching or lab activities.

Lab Response and Resolution Procedures

The Lab will have two weeks from the date of the Non-compliance Notice to provide evidence to the SCAA Science Manager that the non-compliance issues reported either did not occur or were resolved. This evidence may include, as applicable, photos, copies of receipts (if appropriate) of the item(s) in question to the Coffee Science Manager. If the lab representative engages the Coffee Science Manager in an open dialog about problems with their compliance, the SCAA and the lab may work out a modified timeline for remedying and other documents and written statements from knowledgeable staff members. If the Lab is forthcoming and cooperative in the investigation, SCAA may permit additional time to resolve the issues of non-compliance. However, in no instance shall the Lab hold any Q System or SCAA class while an investigation is pending. SCAA's Coffee Science Manager will notify the Lab when and if it has provided satisfactory evidence of compliance and when the Lab will be permitted to resume SCAA Certified Laboratory activities.

Revocation of Certification

If the Lab does not provide satisfactory evidence of its compliance within three months of the date of the Non-compliance Notice (or any extended period allowed by SCAA), SCAA will revoke the Lab's Teaching Lab Certification. In this case, if the Lab wishes to become certified again, it must repeat the application process with a new lab inspection, for which it will be responsible for the fees and associated costs listed on the SCAA web site.