

PRESS RELEASE

3rd October 2008

WSET announces launch of new business course for UK industry

The Wine & Spirit Education Trust is delighted to announce a new initiative, aimed at increasing the business acumen of the UK wine industry.

This initiative was conceived following a meeting between WSET and the Board of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) in 2007, where it was identified that there is a skills gap for people working in the wine industry and a need to increase the general level of business-related skills in the sector.

Ian Harris, Chief Executive of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust, stated: "Although the revamp of the WSET Diploma in 2003 resulted in the creation of a Global Business unit, there are large numbers of industry personnel who have not completed the WSET Diploma. The feedback from industry is that there are some people working in the sector have a strong FMCG background, but little understanding of the peculiarities of the wine business, and others have strong wine knowledge (with or without WSET qualifications), but relatively undeveloped business skills".

Earlier in 2008, a Steering Group was set up to establish and identify the parameters of what was required.

This Steering Group was initially made up of: Neil Barker (FGL), Dan Jago (Tesco), Laura Jewell MW (HwCg), Angela Mount and Michael Paul – since September, Lulie Halstead of Wine Intelligence has joined the group.

The result has been the development of the BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL KNOWLEDGE (BACK) residential course – the first of which will take place from 21st to 23rd April 2009 in Cookham, near Maidenhead.

The course will impart the insight & knowledge to enable attendees to influence their businesses - to make their companies, and the students themselves, more successful in the UK wine industry.

The Steering Group have identified the ideal candidates for the BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL KNOWLEDGE course, and it is likely that they will EITHER have extensive product knowledge, OR experience from other FMCG sectors

The following industry experts have committed to forming part of the teaching faculty:

Neil Barker, Commercial Director UK, FGL
Troy Christensen, CEO, Constellation Europe Ltd
Simon Lawson, Managing Director, Percy Fox
Matthew Dickinson, Commercial Director, Thierry's
Lulie Halstead, Chief Executive, Wine Intelligence
Justin Howard-Sneyd MW, Manager, Wine Buying, Waitrose Ltd
Dan Jago, Category Director, BWS, Tesco Ltd
Laura Jewell MW, Agency Director, HwCg Ltd
Robert Joseph, wine-business-international.com
Patrick McGrath MW, Managing Director, Hatch Mansfield
Angela Mount, Industry Consultant
Michael Paul, Industry Consultant
Simon Thorpe, VP Wine Director, Constellation Europe Ltd
Gary Wyatt, Finance Director, Liberty Wines

Ian Harris, who will be the Course Co-ordinator, added "I am delighted at the support we have already received for this new course, and I look forward to working with the Steering Group, and the members of the teaching faculty to produce an experience from which the students, and their businesses, will derive great benefit".

For further details, including the learning outcomes from this course and how to apply please visit

http://www.wsetglobal.com/london_school_courses/wset_qualification_courses/434.asp

or contact Ian Harris – iharris@wset.co.uk or Chris Kelly ckelly@wset.co.uk

WSET has been creating the trade professional for 39 years - is approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and is the largest global provider of education and qualifications in the field of wines & spirits in the world. In the last academic year, over 24,000 candidates in 43 countries sat a WSET examination.

Find out more about WSET at www.wsetglobal.com