



**WSET**  
WINE & SPIRIT  
EDUCATION TRUST

# WSET® Level 4 Diploma in Wines

# *Specification*





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EDUCATION TRUST

# *Specification*

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**WSET®** Level 4 Diploma  
in Wines

*A world of knowledge*

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Design by Peter Dolton

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction to the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>D1   Wine Production</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>D2   Wine Business</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>D3   Wines of the World</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>D4   Sparkling Wines</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>D5   Fortified Wines</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>D6   Independent Research Assignment</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Recommended Tasting Samples</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Examination Guidance</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Examination Regulations</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>WSET Qualifications</b>	<b>32</b>



# Introduction

This Specification contains necessary information for both candidates and Approved Programme Providers (APPs) about the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines. The main part of the document is a detailed statement of the learning outcomes of the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines. These outcomes should be used by APPs to prepare programmes of learning, and by candidates to plan their studies, because the examinations are specifically set to test these outcomes. The Specification also provides a list of recommended tasting samples, guidance concerning the examinations and the examination regulations. At the end of this document you will also find information on the other WSET qualifications.

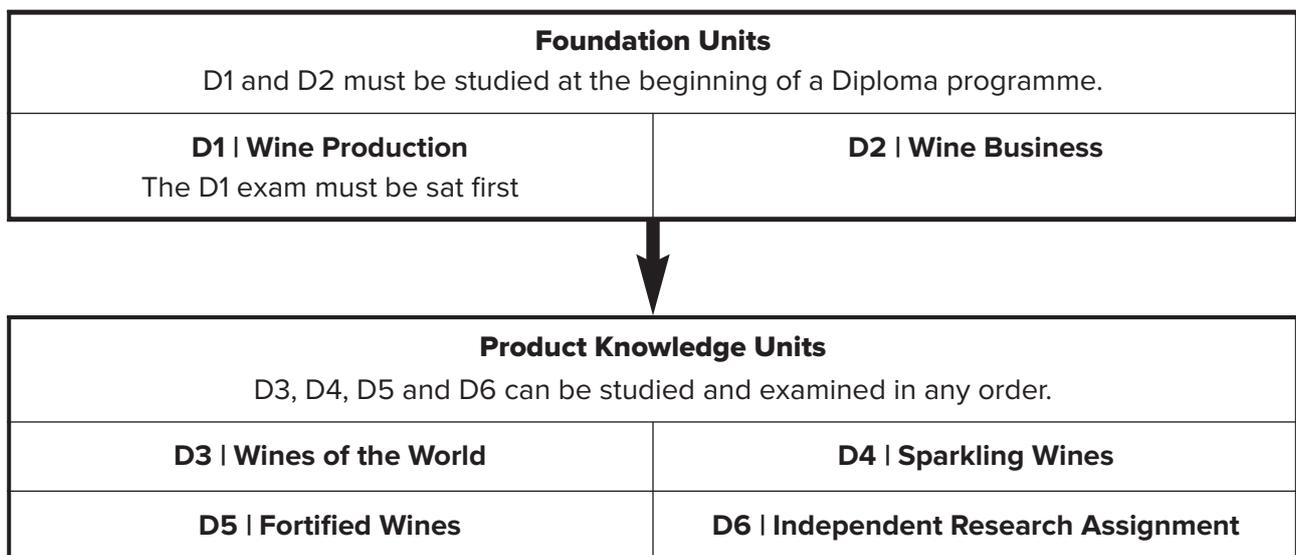
# Introduction to the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines

## Qualification Aims

The WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines aims to give students specialist knowledge and understanding of the core principles of production and business of wine. Diploma graduates will have the product knowledge and the analytical tasting skills to explain and evaluate wines.

## Qualification Structure

The Diploma is divided into six mandatory Units. The two foundation Units must be studied and, for D1, examined at the beginning of the Diploma programme because they will provide the knowledge and understanding required for success in subsequent Units.



### D1 | Wine Production

**Weighting: 20%**

**Learning Outcome 1.1** Understand what the vine requires to produce and ripen grapes for wine production and how the growing environment influences the vine's ability to produce and ripen grapes.

**Learning Outcome 1.2** Understand grape growing options.

**Learning Outcome 1.3** Understand winemaking options and how they influence the style, quality and price of wines.

### D2 | Wine Business

**Weighting: 10%**

**Learning Outcome 2.1** Understand the factors that contribute to the price of wine.

**Learning Outcome 2.2** Understand the types of businesses engaged in the production of wine and options for getting wine to the point of sale.

**Learning Outcome 2.3** Understand key considerations in wine marketing.

### D3 | Wines of the World

**Weighting: 50%**

**Learning Outcome 3.1** Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, wine law and regulation, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal wines of the world.

**Learning Outcome 3.2** Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate wines from the principal wine regions accurately.

**D4 | Sparkling Wines****Weighting: 5%**

**Learning Outcome 4.1** Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, industry associations and labelling terms, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal sparkling wines of the world.

**Learning Outcome 4.2** Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate sparkling wines accurately.

**D5 | Fortified Wines****Weighting: 5%**

**Learning Outcome 5.1** Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, industry associations and labelling terms, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal fortified wines of the world.

**Learning Outcome 5.2** Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate fortified wines accurately.

**D6 | Independent Research Assignment****Weighting: 10%**

**Learning Outcome 6.1** Research a specified wine-related subject.

**Enrolment**

Prospective students for the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines must hold either the WSET Level 3 Award in Wines or the WSET Level 3 Award in Wines and Spirits.

Please refer to 'Examination Regulations Entry Requirements' for additional eligibility information.

**Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Guided Learning Hours (GLH)**

TQT is an estimate of the total amount of time, measured in hours, that a learner would reasonably need to be able to show the level of achievement necessary for the award of a qualification. It is made up of the GLH and private study time. GLH include all tutor-supervised learning and supervised assessments.

The TQT for the Level 4 Diploma in Wines is 500 hours. This is made up of 128 GLH (of which 11 hours and 50 minutes are for the examination) and 372 hours private study.

**Recommended Progression Routes**

The Institute of Masters of Wine accepts the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines as a qualification for entry to the MW study programme.

# D1 | Wine Production

## Learning Outcome

**1.1 Understand what the vine requires to produce and ripen grapes for wine production and how the growing environment influences the vine's ability to produce and ripen grapes.**

## Assessment Criteria

- 1.1.1 Describe the **anatomy of the vine**.
- 1.1.2 Explain how the **components of the grape** develop through the ripening process.
- 1.1.3 Explain the **vine's needs** throughout the **growth cycle** to **produce and ripen grapes** suitable for wine production.
- 1.1.4 Explain how the **growing environment** influences the vine's ability to **produce and ripen grapes** suitable for wine production.

## Ranges

<b>The vine</b>	<b>Anatomy of the vine</b> Main shoots, one-year-old wood, permanent wood, roots	
	<b>Components of the grape</b> Water, sugar, acids, colour, tannin, aroma compounds, aroma precursors	
	<b>Vine's needs</b> Warmth, sunlight, water, nutrients, carbon dioxide	
	<b>Growth cycle</b> Dormancy, budburst, shoot and leaf growth, flowering, fruit set, grape berry formation, <i>véraison</i> , ripening, extra-ripening	
<b>The growing environment</b>	<b>Factors affecting temperature and sunlight</b> Latitude, altitude, slopes and aspect, proximity to water, winds, characteristics of the soil, clouds, mist and fog, diurnal range	
	<b>Factors affecting water availability</b> Rainfall, characteristics of the soil and land, evapotranspiration rate	
	<b>Factors affecting nutrient availability</b> Factors that affect water availability, soil pH, soil health, characteristics of the soil and land	
	<b>Climate classifications</b> Cool, moderate, warm, hot Continental, maritime, Mediterranean Other climate classification systems	
	<b>Weather influences</b> Rainfall, sunlight, warmth, wind, vintage variation	
	<b>Climate change</b> Threats and opportunities	
	<b>Hazards</b> Drought, excess of water, untimely rainfall, freeze, frosts, hail, sunburn, fire, smoke taint	
	<b>Pests and diseases</b> Phylloxera, nematodes, grape moths, spider mites, birds, mammals, fungal diseases, viruses and bacteria	
	<b>The vine's ability to produce and ripen grapes</b>	Yield per vine, health of vine and grapes, levels and balance of grape components, ripeness of aromas and flavours, grapes for sweet wines

## Learning Outcome

### 1.2 Understand grape growing options.

#### Assessment Criteria

- 1.2.1 Describe the different **approaches to grape growing**.
- 1.2.2 Identify and describe **considerations in vineyard establishment**.
- 1.2.3 Describe **vineyard management options**.
- 1.2.4 Explain how **vineyard management options** relate to the growing environment.
- 1.2.5 Explain how **vineyard management options** influence the production and ripening of grapes.
- 1.2.6 Evaluate the **vineyard management options** that can influence the vine's ability to produce grapes for wines of different styles, quality levels and prices.

#### Ranges

<b>Approaches to grape growing</b>	Conventional, sustainable, organic, biodynamic, precision viticulture
<b>Vineyard establishment considerations</b>	Site selection, soil preparation, planting materials (choice of grape variety, clone and rootstocks), vineyard management options that may need consideration at time of vineyard establishment
<b>Vineyard management options</b>	<p><b>Planting materials and vine propagation</b> Cutting, layering, clonal selection, mass selection, new grape varieties (crossings and hybrids), choice of grape variety, clone and rootstocks, head grafting, vine age</p> <p><b>Managing nutrients and water</b> Managing soil health, nutrient management, water management</p> <p><b>Canopy management</b> Aims of canopy management, canopy management techniques</p> <p><b>Harvest</b> Choosing the date of harvest, harvesting options, harvesting practices for sweet wines (drying grapes on the vine, drying grapes off the vine, noble rot, freezing grapes on the vine)</p> <p><b>Managing hazards</b> Options for drought, excess of water, untimely rainfall, freeze, frosts, hail, sunburn, fire, smoke taint</p> <p><b>Managing pests and diseases</b> Options for phylloxera, nematodes, grape moths, spider mites, birds, mammals, fungal diseases, viruses and bacteria</p>
<b>Production and ripening of grapes</b>	Yield per vine, yield per unit area, health of vine and grapes, levels and balance of grape components, ripeness of aromas and flavours
<b>Style, quality and price</b>	<p><b>Styles</b> Styles of red, white, rosé wines, wines with residual sugar</p> <p><b>Quality level</b> Poor, acceptable, good, very good, outstanding</p> <p><b>Price</b> Inexpensive, mid-priced, premium, super-premium</p>

## Learning Outcome

### 1.3 Understand winemaking options and how they influence the style, quality and price of wines.

#### Assessment Criteria

- 1.3.1 Explain how **wine components** contribute to wine style.
- 1.3.2 Describe **winemaking options** for red, white and rosé wines, and wines with residual sugar.
- 1.3.3 Explain and evaluate **winemaking options** that can influence the style, quality and price of wines.
- 1.3.4 Describe and explain **wine faults** and **quality control procedures**.

#### Ranges

<b>Wine components</b>	Water, alcohols, acids, wine aromatics, residual sugars, glycerol, phenolics
<b>Winemaking options</b>	<b>Approaches to winemaking</b> Conventional, organic, biodynamic, natural
	<b>Transportation of grapes</b>
	<b>Grape reception</b> Sorting, destemming, chilling, crushing
	<b>Grape processing</b> Extraction (skin contact, cold soaking, flash détente, thermovinification, short maceration for rosé wine), hyperoxidation, cryoextraction, pressing, oxygen, sulfur dioxide
	<b>Pre-fermentation clarification</b> Sedimentation, clarifying agents, flotation, centrifugation
	<b>Must adjustments</b> Must enrichment, acidification, deacidification
	<b>Alcoholic fermentation</b> Temperature, vessel, yeast, crushed fruit fermentation (extraction, cap management, addition of whole bunches), must concentration, co-fermentation, whole berry/bunch fermentation (carbonic maceration, semi-carbonic maceration), stopping the fermentation to leave residual sugar
	<b>Malolactic conversion (MLF)</b> Techniques for encouraging or avoiding MLF
	<b>Post-fermentation maceration and pressing</b>
	<b>Adjustments</b> Colour, acid, alcohol
	<b>Maturation and storage</b> Oak vessels, neutral vessels, lees management, oak alternatives, micro-oxygenation, post-bottling maturation
	<b>Blending</b> Reasons (balance, consistency, style, quality, price), addition of sweetening component
	<b>Post-fermentation clarification</b> Sedimentation, fining, filtration, centrifugation
	<b>Stabilisation</b> Tartrate, protein, microbiological
	<b>Other finishing options</b> Sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide, oxygen
	<b>Packaging and closures</b> Oxygen management, packaging (glass bottle, plastic bottle, bag-in-box, 'bricks', pouches, cans), closures (natural cork, technical cork, synthetic closures, screwcap, glass stoppers)
<b>Transportation of wine</b> Bulk transportation or packaged	
<b>Faults and quality control procedures</b>	<b>Faults</b> Cloudiness and hazes, tartrates, refermentation in bottle, cork taint, oxidation, volatile acidity, reduction, <i>brettanomyces</i>
	<b>Quality control procedures</b> Hygiene in the winery, HACCP, ISO, traceability

**Assessment**

**Duration:** 1½ hours

**Question type:** Open-response

**Note**

- On-demand examination, capped at 15 examination dates per APP per academic year.
- Two set resit dates per year in October and March.

# D2 | Wine Business

## Learning Outcome

### 2.1 Understand the factors that contribute to the price of wine.

#### Assessment Criteria

- 2.1.1 Explain how **supply and demand** influence the price of wine.
- 2.1.2 Explain how **costs** associated with **grape growing, winemaking, transportation, importation**, and **sales and marketing** contribute to the price of wine.
- 2.1.3 Describe how **legislation** and fluctuations in **currency exchange** influence costs and how the impact of these can be limited.

#### Ranges

<b>Supply and demand</b>	<b>Supply</b> Production (areas under vine, the growing environment, grape growing and winemaking), legislation
	<b>Demand</b> Social factors, economic factors, legislative and political factors
<b>Costs</b>	<b>Grape growing costs</b> Vineyard establishment, vineyard management
	<b>Winemaking costs</b> Winery establishment, general winemaking, maturation, packaging costs
	<b>Transportation costs</b> Types of transportation, bulk transportation, insurance
	<b>Importation costs</b> Taxes and duties, distributors' margin
	<b>Sales costs</b> Property costs, labour, equipment and materials, storage costs, delivery costs, margin at the point of sale
	<b>Marketing costs</b> Labour (in-house vs third party), design and production of bottles and labels, marketing campaign
<b>Legislation</b>	Tax, duty, trade barriers, subsidies, minimum pricing, labelling laws
<b>Currency exchange</b>	Influence of fluctuations on costs, methods to limit impact (fixing the price, fixing the exchange rate, options, buying foreign currency, trading in US\$/€, other bank accounts)

## Learning Outcome

### 2.2 Understand the types of businesses engaged in the production of wine and options for getting wine to the point of sale.

#### Assessment Criteria

2.2.1 Evaluate the different **types of businesses engaged in the production of wine**.

2.2.2 Evaluate different **options for getting wine to the point of sale**.

#### Ranges

<b>Types of businesses engaged in the production of wine</b>	Estate, grower, grower-producer, merchant, co-operative, custom crush facility, virtual winery, conglomerate
<b>Options for getting wine to the point of sale</b>	<b>Importing and distributing options</b> Distributor, joint venture, use a broker, direct to seller
	<b>Retail options</b> Supermarket, deep discounter, convenience, specialist wine retailers, hybrid, online retailer, global travel retailer, wine investment, monopoly retailer
	<b>HoReCa options</b> Bars (specialist, general), restaurants (non-destination, casual, fine dining)
	<b>Direct to consumer</b> Cellar door, events, wine club, online
	<b>Types of market</b> Free market, monopoly, three-tier system

## Learning Outcome

### 2.3 Understand key considerations in wine marketing.

#### Assessment Criterion

2.3.1 Explain key **considerations in wine marketing**.

#### Ranges

<b>Considerations in wine marketing</b>	<b>Marketing concepts</b> Identifying the product/brand to be marketed, analysing the current market, identifying the target consumer, setting the objectives of the marketing strategy, devising the marketing strategy (the marketing mix: 5Ps and marketing options)
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#### Assessment

Duration: 1 hour

Question type: Open-response

#### Note

- Four set dates per academic year in October, January, March and June.

# D3 | Wines of the World

## Learning Outcome

**3.1 Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, wine law and regulation, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal wines of the world.**

## Assessment Criteria

- 3.1.1 Describe the wines from the **principal wine regions** in terms of style, quality and price.
- 3.1.2 Describe the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** involved in the production of the wines from the **principal wine regions**.
- 3.1.3 Explain how the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** influence the style, quality and price of the wines from the **principal wine regions**.
- 3.1.4 Evaluate the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** that can influence the style, quality and price of the wines from the **principal wine regions**.
- 3.1.5 Compare the style, quality and price of the wines from the **principal wine regions** in terms of the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options**.
- 3.1.6 Explain how **wine law and regulation** and **wine business** influence the style, quality and price of the wines from the **principal wine regions**.
- 3.1.7 Evaluate the different **options for getting wine from the principal wine regions to the point of sale**.

## Ranges

<b>Principal wine regions</b>	<p>France <i>Bordeaux, Burgundy, Beaujolais, Alsace, the Loire Valley, the Rhône Valley, South of France, South West France, Jura</i></p> <hr/> <p>Germany <i>Ahr, Mosel, Nahe, Rheingau, Rheinhessen, Pfalz, Baden, Franken, Württemberg</i></p> <hr/> <p>Austria <i>Niederösterreich, Burgenland, Steiermark</i></p> <hr/> <p>Hungary <i>Tokaj</i></p> <hr/> <p>Greece <i>Macedonia, Peloponnese, the Islands</i></p> <hr/> <p>Italy <i>Trentino-Alto Adige, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Veneto, Piemonte, Tuscany, Marche, Umbria, Lazio, Abruzzo, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Sicily, Sardinia</i></p> <hr/> <p>Spain <i>Catalunya, Valencia, Murcia, Aragón, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León, La Rioja, Navarra, Galicia</i></p> <hr/> <p>Portugal <i>Vinho Verde, Douro, Dão, Bairrada, Alentejo, Lisboa, Península de Setúbal, Tejo</i></p> <hr/> <p>USA <i>California, Oregon, Washington, New York</i></p> <hr/> <p>Canada <i>Ontario, British Columbia</i></p> <hr/> <p>Chile <i>Coquimbo, Aconcagua, Central Valley, Southern Region</i></p> <hr/> <p>Argentina <i>Salta, San Juan, Mendoza, Patagonia</i></p> <hr/> <p>South Africa <i>Western Cape: Coastal Region, Breede River Valley, Cape South Coast, Olifants River</i></p> <hr/> <p>Australia <i>South Eastern Australia: South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania; Western Australia</i></p> <hr/> <p>New Zealand <i>North Island, South Island</i></p> <hr/> <p>China</p>
<b>The growing environment</b>	Factors affecting temperature, sunlight, water availability and nutrient availability; weather; hazards; pests and diseases
<b>Grape growing options</b>	Considerations in vineyard establishment, planting materials, managing nutrients and water, canopy management, harvest, managing hazards, managing pests and diseases

<b>Winemaking options</b>	Approaches to winemaking, transportation of grapes, grape reception, grape processing, pre-fermentation clarification, must adjustments, alcoholic fermentation, malolactic conversion (MLF), extraction and pressing, adjustments, maturation, blending, post-fermentation clarification, stabilisation, finishing options, packaging and closures, transportation of wine
<b>Wine law and regulation</b>	International, national and local legislation, industry associations, GI, PDO, PGI, wines without geographical indicator, labelling terms
<b>Wine business</b>	<p><b>Factors that contribute to the price of wines</b> Supply, demand, costs, legislation, currency exchange</p> <hr/> <p><b>Types of businesses engaged in the production of wine</b> Grower, estate, broker, merchant, winery, virtual winery, custom crush facility, co-operative, conglomerate</p> <hr/> <p><b>Options for getting wine from the principal wine regions to the point of sale</b> Importing options, retail options, HoReCa options, direct to consumer, types of market</p> <hr/> <p><b>Marketing considerations</b> Types of wine brand, marketing concepts, marketing options, 5Ps</p>

## Learning Outcome

**3.2 Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate wines from the principal wine regions accurately.**

### Assessment Criterion

3.2.1 Describe and evaluate the wines from the **principal wine regions** using the **WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine**.

### Range

WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine

### Assessment

#### Examination Day 1

##### Exam 1

Duration: 2 hours  
Question types: Open-response

##### Exam 2

Duration: 1-hour 20 minutes  
Question types: Open-response

#### Examination Day 2

##### Exam 1

Duration: 1½ hours  
Question type: Blind tasting of 6 wines

##### Exam 2

Duration: 1½ hours  
Question type: Blind tasting of 6 wines

### Note

- Two set dates per academic year in October and May.

# D4 | Sparkling Wines

## Learning Outcome

**4.1 Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, industry associations and labelling terms, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal sparkling wines of the world.**

## Assessment Criteria

- 4.1.1 Describe the **principal sparkling wines** in terms of style, quality and price.
- 4.1.2 Describe the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** involved in the production of the **principal sparkling wines**.
- 4.1.3 Explain how the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** influence the style, quality and price of the **principal sparkling wines**.
- 4.1.4 Compare the style, quality and price of the **principal sparkling wines** in terms of the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options**.
- 4.1.5 Explain how **industry associations and labelling terms** and **wine business** influence the style, quality and price of the **principal sparkling wines**.

## Ranges

Principal sparkling wines	Australia	<i>South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, South Eastern Australia</i>
	France	<i>Champagne, Crémant (Alsace, Bourgogne, Loire), Saumur, Vouvray</i>
	Germany	<i>Sekt, Riesling Sekt</i>
	Italy	<i>Asti, Franciacorta, Lambrusco, Prosecco, Trentodoc</i>
	New Zealand	
	South Africa	
	South America	<i>Chile, Argentina</i>
	Spain	<i>Cava</i>
	UK	<i>England and Wales</i>
	USA	<i>California, Oregon, Washington State</i>
The growing environment	Factors affecting temperature, sunlight, water availability and nutrient availability; weather; hazards; pests and diseases	
Grape growing options	Considerations in vineyard establishment, planting materials, managing nutrients and water, canopy management, harvest, managing hazards, managing pests and diseases	
Winemaking options	<b>Methods</b>	Traditional, transfer, tank, Asti, carbonation, <i>pétillant naturel</i>
	<b>Pressing</b>	Whole bunch pressing, free run, press juice
	<b>Pre-fermentation extraction</b>	Skin contact
	<b>Type of fermentation vessel</b>	Neutral, oak (size and age)
	<b>Primary fermentation</b>	Fermentation temperature, yeast, stopping
	<b>Malolactic conversion (MLF)</b>	
	<b>Blending</b>	Reasons for blending, reserve wines
	<b>Secondary fermentation</b>	Fermentation temperature, yeast, stopping fermentation, type of vessel, time on lees, disgorgement

	<p><b>Post-fermentation clarification</b> Fining, filtering</p> <hr/> <p><b>Finishing options</b> Dosage, packaging, closures</p>
<b>Industry associations and labelling terms</b>	<p><b>Industry associations</b> Comité Champagne, Consejo Regulador del Cava, Cap Classique Association</p> <hr/> <p><b>Labelling terms</b> European sweetness terms, PDOs, GIs Labelling terms used for sparkling wines in France, Germany, Spain, Italy, UK, USA, Chile, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand</p>
<b>Wine business</b>	<p><b>Factors that contribute to the price of the principal sparkling wines</b> Supply, demand, costs</p> <hr/> <p><b>Types of businesses engaged in the production of the principal sparkling wines</b> Grower, estate, merchant, co-operative, conglomerate</p> <hr/> <p><b>Marketing considerations</b> Types of wine brand, marketing concepts, price, product, people, placement, promotion</p>

## Learning Outcome

### 4.2 Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate sparkling wines accurately.

#### Assessment Criterion

4.2.1 Describe and evaluate the principal sparkling wines using the **WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine**.

#### Range

WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine

#### Assessment

Duration: 1½ hours

Question types: Open-response / blind tasting of 3 wines

#### Note

- Three set dates per academic year in October, January and June.

# D5 | Fortified Wines

## Learning Outcome

**5.1 Understand how the growing environment, grape growing options, winemaking options, industry associations and labelling terms, and wine business influence the style, quality and price of the principal fortified wines of the world.**

## Assessment Criteria

- 5.1.1 Describe the **principal fortified wines** in terms of style, quality and price.
- 5.1.2 Describe the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** involved in the production of the **principal fortified wines**.
- 5.1.3 Explain how the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options** influence the style, quality and price of the **principal fortified wines**.
- 5.1.4 Compare the style, quality and price of the **principal fortified wines** in terms of the **growing environment, grape growing options** and **winemaking options**.
- 5.1.5 Explain how **industry associations and labelling terms** and **wine business** influence the style, quality and price of the **principal fortified wines**.

## Ranges

Principal fortified wines	Australia	<i>Rutherglen Muscat</i>
	France	<i>Vins Doux Naturels (fortified Grenache, fortified Muscat)</i>
	Portugal	<i>Madeira, Port</i>
	Spain	<i>Sherry</i>
The growing environment	Factors affecting temperature, sunlight, water availability and nutrient availability; weather; hazards; pests and diseases	
Grape growing options	Considerations in vineyard establishment, planting materials, managing nutrients and water, canopy management, harvest, managing hazards, managing pests and diseases	
Winemaking options	<b>Crushing</b>	
	<b>Pressing</b>	Free run, press juice
	<b>Pre-fermentation extraction</b>	Methods of extraction
	<b>Must adjustments</b>	Type of adjustments and reasons for adjustments
	<b>Type of fermentation vessel</b>	Neutral, oak (size and age)
	<b>Fermentation</b>	Fermentation temperatures, residual sugar levels
	<b>Fortification</b>	Timing and type of spirit
	<b>Extraction during fermentation</b>	Methods of extraction
	<b>Classifications</b>	Style and quality
	<b>Type of vessel for storage and maturation</b>	Neutral, oak (size and age), bottle
	<b>Maturation method</b>	Static, fractional ( <i>solera</i> ), bottle-aged

	<p><b>Maturation conditions</b> Oxidative, biological, application of heat (maderisation), post-bottling maturation</p> <p><b>Blending</b> Reasons for blending, addition of sweetening component</p> <p><b>Post-fermentation clarification</b> Fining, filtering</p>
<b>Industry associations and labelling terms</b>	<p><b>Industry associations</b> Consejo Regulador de Jerez, IVDP, IVBAM, The Muscat of Rutherglen Network</p> <p><b>Labelling terms</b> PDOs Labelling terms used in Sherry, Port, Madeira, Vins Doux Naturels, Rutherglen Muscat</p>
<b>Wine business</b>	<p><b>Factors that contribute to the price of the principal fortified wines</b> Supply, demand, costs</p> <p><b>Types of businesses engaged in the production of the principal fortified wines</b> Grower, estate, merchant, co-operative, conglomerate</p> <p><b>Marketing considerations</b> Types of wine brand, marketing concepts, price, product, people, placement, promotion</p>

## Learning Outcome

### 5.2 Demonstrate the ability to taste and evaluate fortified wines accurately.

#### Assessment Criterion

5.2.1 Describe and evaluate the principal fortified wines using the **WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine**.

#### Range

WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine

#### Assessment

Duration: 1½ hours

Question types: Open-response / blind tasting of 3 wines

#### Note

- Three set dates per academic year in October, January and June.

# D6 | Independent Research Assignment

## Learning Outcome

**6.1 Research a specified wine-related subject.**

## Assessment Criteria

- 6.1.1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified subject, using relevant source material.
- 6.1.2 Evaluate relevant source material to develop ideas and arguments and to reach informed conclusions.
- 6.1.3 Produce a Research Assignment in accordance with required standards of written presentation as set out in the assignment brief.

## Assessment

**Question type:** One research assignment of 3,000 words. Research Assignment topics may be outside the Specification for the other Units and students will be expected to research outside the Diploma eBooks.

## Note

- Two titles released on 1 August of each academic year.
- Submission dates
  - Title 1:** 31 January within the same academic year.
  - Title 2:** 31 July within the same academic year.

# WSET Level 4 Systematic Approach to Tasting Wine

APPEARANCE	
Intensity	pale – medium – deep
Colour	white lemon – gold – amber – brown rosé pink – pink-orange – orange red purple – ruby – garnet – tawny
NOSE	
Intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. primary, secondary, tertiary
PALATE	
Sweetness	dry – off-dry – medium-dry – medium-sweet – sweet
Acidity	low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high
Tannin	level low – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – high nature e.g. ripe, soft, smooth, unripe, green, coarse, stalky, chalky, fine-grained
Alcohol	low – medium – high
Body	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – full
Flavour intensity	light – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – pronounced
Flavour characteristics	e.g. primary, secondary, tertiary
Other observations	e.g. texture (e.g. oily, creamy – austere, luscious), pétillance (still wines only)
Finish	short – medium(-) – medium – medium(+) – long
CONCLUSIONS	
Quality assessment	poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding (an explanation supporting the assessment of a wine's quality will be required)
Bottle ageing	suitable for bottle ageing – not suitable for bottle ageing (an explanation supporting the assessment of a wine's suitability for bottle ageing will be required)

## Notes to students:

**For lines where the entries are separated by a hyphen** – You must select one and only one of these options.

**For lines starting with 'e.g.' where the entries are separated with commas** – These are entries that you should consider when writing your tasting note. You may not need to comment on each entry for every wine.

# Recommended Tasting Samples

This is a list of the recommended tasting samples students should use when studying for the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines. The wines in the examination are not restricted to this list and can be selected from any producing area identified in the relevant section of the Specification.

## D1 | Wine Production

<b>The growing environment</b>	<p>Use two wines from the same grape variety and of the same quality level from two contrasting regions demonstrating how climate influences the style of wine produced.</p> <p><i>examples:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pinot Noir from Burgundy of very good quality <i>e.g.</i> Nuits-Saint-Georges <i>Premier Cru</i></li> <li>2. Pinot Noir from any other contrasting region of very good quality <i>e.g.</i> Walker Bay Pinot Noir</li> </ol>
<b>White winemaking</b>	<p>Use three wines to demonstrate how white winemaking options impact on the style, quality and price of the wine produced.</p> <p><i>examples:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wine with noticeable skin contact <i>e.g.</i> orange wine</li> <li>2. Wine that clearly shows a number of winemaking techniques (<i>e.g.</i> obvious oak and MLF)</li> <li>3. Botrytised sweet wine</li> </ol>
<b>Red and rosé winemaking</b>	<p>Use two red and two rosé wines to demonstrate how red and rosé winemaking options impact on the style, quality and price of the wine produced.</p> <p><i>examples:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any red wine that has whole bunch/berry fermentation in its production process of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>2. Any red wine that has a high level of extraction in its production process of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Any dry rosé of good or very good quality</li> <li>4. Any rosé with contrasting production techniques to Wine 3 <i>e.g.</i> residual sugar, blend of white and black varieties etc., of good quality</li> </ol>

## D3 | Wines of the World

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>Alsace</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscat or Pinot Blanc of good or very good quality</li> <li>Riesling of good quality</li> <li>Riesling <i>Grand Cru</i> of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Pinot Gris (<i>Grand Cru</i> optional) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Gewurztraminer (<i>Grand Cru</i> optional) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li><i>Vendanges Tardives</i> (any permitted variety) of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p>Pinot Noir of good or very good quality. Sylvaner of good or very good quality. <i>Sélection de Grain Nobles</i> of very good or outstanding quality.</p>
<b>Bordeaux</b>	<p><b>White</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sauvignon Blanc Bordeaux AOC of good quality</li> <li>Graves or Pessac-Léognan of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Sauternes or Barsac of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol> <p><b>Red</b></p> <p><i>Group 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bordeaux AOC of acceptable quality</li> <li>Bordeaux AOC or Commune wine of good quality</li> <li>Any Commune not listed in Group 2 of very good quality</li> </ol> <p><i>Group 2</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St-Émilion of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Pomerol of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Haut-Médoc commune/Pessac-Léognan of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p>Examples from Group 2 showing contrasting vintages. Examples from Group 2 showing a minimum of five years additional age. Cabernet Franc dominated blend of very good or outstanding quality.</p>
<b>Beaujolais</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beaujolais with obvious whole bunch fermentation character</li> <li>Beaujolais <i>Cru</i> with little or no whole bunch fermentation character</li> </ol>	<p>Beaujolais <i>Nouveau</i> of acceptable or good quality.</p>
<b>Burgundy</b>	<p><b>White</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chablis or Petit Chablis of good quality</li> <li>Chablis <i>Premier Cru</i> or <i>Grand Cru</i> very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Mâcon-Villages of good quality</li> <li>Saint-Véran or Pouilly-Fuissé of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Any <i>Premier Cru</i> or <i>Grand Cru</i> Côte d'Or white of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol> <p><b>Red</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bourgogne Rouge of acceptable quality</li> <li>Marsannay, or similar lighter style of Pinot Noir of very good quality</li> <li>Pommard or similar contrasting fuller style of Pinot Noir of very good quality</li> <li><i>Premier Cru</i> or <i>Grand Cru</i> showing distinct tertiary characteristics of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p>Bourgogne Blanc of acceptable or good quality. Côte Chalonnaise village or <i>Premier Cru</i> of very good quality. Bourgogne Aligoté of acceptable or good quality. Hautes-Côtes de Nuits, Hautes-Côtes de Beaune or Côte d'Or Pinot Noir of good quality.</p>
<b>Loire</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscadet or Muscadet <i>Sur Lie</i> of good quality</li> <li>Touraine Sauvignon Blanc of good quality</li> <li>Sancerre or Pouilly-Fumé of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Savennières or similar dry Chenin Blanc with tertiary characteristics of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Vouvray or similar demi-sec or sweet Chenin Blanc of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Cabernet Franc (any appellation) of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	<p>Rosé from any appellation of good quality. Chenin Blanc from any appellation of acceptable or good quality. Coteaux du Layon or similar appellation, wine of very good or outstanding quality.</p>
<b>Northern Rhône</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condrieu of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Crozes-Hermitage or Saint-Joseph of good or very good quality</li> <li>Youthful Côte Rôtie, Hermitage or Cornas of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>Côte Rôtie, Hermitage or Cornas with noticeable tertiary character</li> </ol>	<p>Marsanne, Roussanne or white blend of very good quality.</p>
<b>Southern Rhône</b>	<p><b>Rosé</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any appellation, wine of good or very good quality</li> </ol> <p><b>Red</b></p> <p><i>Group 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Côtes du Rhône of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>Côtes du Rhône Villages of good quality</li> <li><i>Cru</i> – Grenache-dominated blend of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol> <p><i>Group 2</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Cru</i> – with noticeable Syrah and/or Mourvèdre characteristics of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li><i>Cru</i> – wine with noticeable tertiary development of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	

### D3 | Wines of the World *continued*

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>South of France</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Picpoul de Pinet of good quality</li> <li>2. Provence Rosé of good to very good quality</li> <li>3. Bandol of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Red Pays d'Oc or AOC wine of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>5. AOC wine from Languedoc of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Red Pays d'Oc of very good quality.
<b>South West France and Jura</b>		Bergerac, red or white, of good or very good quality. Jurançon dry or sweet style of very good quality. Cahors of very good or outstanding quality. Madiran of very good or outstanding quality. Jura of any style of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>Germany</b>	<p><i>Group 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Branded wine of acceptable or good quality made from any grape variety or varieties</li> <li>2. Dry wine of very good or outstanding quality either from contrasting region to Wine 3 or from a different white grape variety</li> <li>3. Dry Riesling of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Spätburgunder of very good quality</li> </ol> <p><i>Group 2</i></p> <p><i>Prädikatsweine</i> from same region, producer and grape variety</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Kabinett</i> or <i>Spätlese</i></li> <li>2. <i>Auslese</i></li> <li>3. <i>Beerenauslese</i> or <i>Trockenbeerenauslese</i></li> </ol>	Dornfelder of good quality. <i>Eiswein</i> of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>Austria</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grüner Veltliner of good quality</li> <li>2. Grüner Veltliner of very good/outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Zweigelt, Blaufränkisch or St Laurent of good or very good quality. Welshriesling or Riesling of good or very good quality.
<b>Hungary</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tokaji (dry/medium) of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Tokaji <i>Aszú</i> of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	
<b>Greece</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any white wine e.g. Santorini, of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Any red wine of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	
<b>Italy North West</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gavi of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Barbera wine e.g. Barbera d'Asti of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Dolcetto wine e.g. Dolcetto d'Alba or good or very good quality</li> <li>4. Nebbiolo d'Alba or Langhe Nebbiolo of good or very good quality</li> <li>5. Barolo or Barbaresco of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Ghemme, Gattinara or Valtellina of very good quality. Arneis of good or very good quality.
<b>Italy North East</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Soave or Soave <i>Classico</i> of very good quality</li> <li>2. Pinot Grigio of very good quality from Alto Adige, Trentino or Friuli-Venezia Giulia</li> <li>3. White wine of very good quality from Alto Adige, Trentino or Friuli-Venezia Giulia (not Pinot Grigio)</li> <li>4. Valpolicella or Valpolicella <i>Classico</i> of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>5. Amarone della Valpolicella of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>6. Valpolicella <i>Ripasso</i> of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	Natural or orange wine of very good quality. Bardolino of acceptable or good quality. Alto Adige Pinot Nero of very good quality. Red wine (from Alto Adige, Trentino or Friuli-Venezia Giulia) of very good quality from an indigenous grape variety.
<b>Tuscany</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Any Tuscan white of very good quality</li> <li>2. Chianti or Chianti <i>Classico</i> of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>3. Chianti <i>Classico Riserva</i> or <i>Gran Selezione</i> of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Brunello di Montalcino or Vino Nobile di Montepulciano of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>5. Any Tuscan red (DOC or IGT) made from international varieties or blend of local and international varieties of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Red or white IGT of acceptable or good quality.
<b>Central and South Italy</b>	<p><b>White</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Fiano di Avellino of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Greco di Tufo or Falanghina of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	Vermentino of very good quality. Nerello Mascalase of very good quality. Frascati of acceptable or good quality.

### D3 | Wines of the World *continued*

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>Central and South Italy</b>	<b>Red</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Montepulciano d'Abruzzo of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Aglianico del Vulture or Taurasi of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Primitivo or Negroamaro of good or very good quality</li> <li>4. Nero d'Avola of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	
<b>Spain</b>	<b>White</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rías Baixas Albariño of very good quality</li> <li>2. Rueda of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. <i>Reserva</i> or modern style oaked white Rioja of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol> <b>Red</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mencía (any DO) of very good quality</li> <li>2. Toro or Ribera del Duero of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Traditional Rioja <i>Reserva</i> or <i>Gran Reserva</i> of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Modern style Rioja (blend or single varietal) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>5. Priorat Garnacha/Cariñena dominated blend of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>6. Monastrell (any DO) of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	Godello (any DO) of good or very good quality. Unoaked white Rioja of good or very good quality.  <i>Vinos de Pago</i> or <i>Vino de la Tierra</i> of very good or outstanding quality. Bobal (any DO) of good quality. Old Vine Garnacha (any DO) of good or very good quality. Rosé (any DO) of acceptable or good quality.
<b>Portugal</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vinho Verde of good quality</li> <li>2. White wine using local and/or international varieties of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Douro red of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Alentejo red blend of local and/or international varieties of good or very good quality.</li> </ol>	Bairrada of very good or outstanding quality. Dão of very good or outstanding quality. Rosé wine of acceptable or good quality.
<b>California</b>	<b>White</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. California high-volume Chardonnay of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>2. Chardonnay (any AVA) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Sauvignon Blanc (any AVA) of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol> <b>Rosé</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. White Zinfandel or White Grenache of acceptable or good quality</li> </ol> <b>Red</b> <p><i>Group 1</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. California high-volume red wine of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>2. Pinot Noir of very good or outstanding quality (any AVA)</li> <li>3. Merlot of good or very good quality (any AVA)</li> <li>4. Zinfandel of very good or outstanding quality (any AVA)</li> </ol> <p><i>Group 2</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.&amp; 2. Two Cabernet Sauvignons contrasting in either quality or region</li> </ol>	White aromatic varietal or blend of good or very good quality. White Rhône varietal or blend of very good quality. Dry rosé (any variety) of acceptable or good quality. Red Rhône varietal or blended wine (any AVA) of very good or outstanding quality. Red Italian varietal wine (any AVA) of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>Oregon, Washington, New York and Canada</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Oregon Pinot Noir of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>2. Washington State red or white varietal or blended wine of very good quality</li> <li>3. Canadian Ice Wine from a white variety of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	New York State red or white varietal or blend of very good quality. Canadian red wine of very good quality. Oregon Pinot Gris or Chardonnay of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>Chile</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sauvignon Blanc (any region) of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. High-volume Chardonnay of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>3. Chardonnay (any region) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Carmenère (any region) of very good quality</li> <li>5. Cabernet Sauvignon or Bordeaux blend of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Pinot Noir (any region) of good or very good quality. Aromatic white varietal wine (any region) of good or very good quality.
<b>Argentina</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Torrontés (any region) of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. Bonarda (any region) of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Mendoza Malbec of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>4. Mendoza Malbec of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>5. Cabernet Sauvignon or Cabernet Sauvignon dominated blend (any region) of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc (any region) of very good quality. Malbec (Salta or Patagonia) of very good or outstanding quality. Cabernet Franc (any region) of very good or outstanding quality. Pinot Noir (any region) of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>White</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Western Cape Chenin Blanc of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>2. Chenin Blanc (any region) of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Sauvignon Blanc of very good quality</li> <li>4. Chardonnay of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	White blend of very good or outstanding quality. Syrah of very good or outstanding quality.

### D3 | Wines of the World *continued*

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>Red</b> 1. Western Cape Pinotage of acceptable or good quality 2. Pinotage (any region) of very good or outstanding quality 3. Cabernet Sauvignon or blend (any region) of very good or outstanding quality	
<b>Australia</b>	<b>White</b> 1. South Eastern Australian Chardonnay of acceptable or good quality 2. Chardonnay (any region) of very good or outstanding quality 3. Riesling (Clare or Eden Valley) of very good or outstanding quality 4. Hunter Valley Semillon of very good or outstanding quality <b>Red</b> <i>Group 1</i> 1. South Eastern Australian Shiraz of acceptable or good quality 2. Barossa Valley Shiraz of very good or outstanding quality 3. Shiraz (contrasting region to Wine 2.) of very good or outstanding quality 4. Grenache or GSM blend of very good or outstanding quality <i>Group 2</i> 1. Pinot Noir (any region) of very good or outstanding quality 2. Cabernet Sauvignon (any region) of very good or outstanding quality	Sauvignon Blanc or white Bordeaux blend of very good quality. Chardonnay (contrasting region to wine 2) of very good or outstanding quality. White Rhône varietal or blend (any region) of good or very good quality. Syrah/Viognier blend (any region) of very good quality. Cabernet Sauvignon or blend (contrasting region to Group 2, Wine 2) of very good or outstanding quality. Red or white wine from an Italian variety of good or very good quality.
<b>New Zealand</b>	1. Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc of acceptable or good quality 2. Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc (or blend) of very good quality 3. Pinot Gris or other aromatic varietal (any region) of very good quality 4. Chardonnay (any region) of very good or outstanding quality 5. Pinot Noir (any region) of very good or outstanding quality 6. Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot (any region) single varietal or blend of very good or outstanding quality	Pinot Noir (any region) of good quality. Syrah (any region) of very good or outstanding quality.
<b>China</b>		Any Chinese red or white wine made from international varieties of very good quality.

## D4 | Sparkling Wines

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>Traditional or transfer method sparkling wines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Non-Vintage Champagne of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>2. Non-Vintage Champagne of very good quality</li> <li>3. Vintage Champagne of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>4. Rosé Champagne of good or very good quality</li> <li>5. Cava of good or very good quality</li> <li>6. Franciacorta or Trentodoc of very good quality</li> <li>7. New World traditional or transfer method sparkling wine of good quality</li> <li>8. New World traditional method sparkling wine of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p>Blanc de Blancs Champagne of very good quality.</p> <p>Blanc de Noirs Champagne of very good quality.</p> <p>Demi-sec Champagne of good or very good quality.</p> <p><i>Prestige Cuvée</i> Champagne from the same producer as wine 2., of outstanding quality.</p> <p>Crémant (any AC), Vouvray or Saumur of any quality level.</p> <p>Cava of acceptable or good quality.</p> <p>Traditional method Riesling Sekt of any quality level.</p> <p>English traditional method sparkling wine of any quality level.</p> <p>New World traditional or transfer method sparkling wine of acceptable quality.</p>
<b>Non-traditional method sparkling wines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prosecco of acceptable quality</li> <li>2. Prosecco of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Asti or Moscato d'Asti of good or very good quality</li> <li>4. New World non-traditional method sparkling wine of good quality</li> <li>5. Lambrusco or Australian Sparkling Shiraz of good or very good quality</li> </ol>	<p>Any carbonated sparkling wine of acceptable or good quality.</p> <p>German Sekt of acceptable or good quality.</p> <p>Non-traditional method rosé sparkling wine of acceptable or good quality (any region).</p> <p>Pet Nat of good or very good quality.</p> <p>Lambrusco or Australian Sparkling Shiraz of good or very good quality (additional to the Essential sample to show comparison between Lambrusco and Sparkling Shiraz).</p>

## D5 | Fortified Wines

WINE REGION	ESSENTIAL SAMPLES	OPTIONAL SAMPLES
<b>Port</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. White Port of any quality level</li> <li>2. Ruby Port or Reserve Ruby Port of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>3. Late Bottled Vintage Port of good or very good quality</li> <li>4. Vintage Port of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>5. Tawny Port or Reserve Tawny Port of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>6. 20-year-old Tawny Port of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p>Rosé Port of any quality level.</p> <p>Crusted Port of good or very good quality.</p> <p>Single Quinta Vintage Port of very good or outstanding quality.</p> <p>10-year-old Tawny Port of very good quality.</p> <p><i>Colheita</i> of outstanding quality.</p>
<b>Madeira</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inexpensive Madeira (no age statement) of acceptable quality</li> <li>2. Sercial or Verdelho of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>3. Boal/Bual or Malvasia (Malmsey) of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	<p><i>Colheita</i> of outstanding quality.</p>
<b>Sherry</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Fino</i> or <i>Manzanilla</i> of good or very good quality</li> <li>2. <i>Amontillado</i> of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. <i>Oloroso</i> of good or very good quality</li> <li>4. Medium or Cream Sherry of acceptable or good quality</li> <li>5. PX Sherry of very good or outstanding quality</li> <li>6. Age-indicated Sherry (12, 15, VOS or VORS) of very good or outstanding quality. This need not be a separate sample. For example, Wine 3. could be a VORS <i>Oloroso</i>.</li> </ol>	<p><i>En Rama Manzanilla</i> or <i>Fino</i> of very good quality.</p> <p><i>Palo Cortado</i> of very good or outstanding quality.</p> <p>Pale Cream Sherry of acceptable to good quality.</p>
<b>Fortified Grenache and Muscat wines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Muscat Vin Doux Naturel (any AOC) of good quality</li> <li>2. Banyuls or Maury (either oxidative or non-oxidative styles) of good or very good quality</li> <li>3. Rutherglen Muscat of very good or outstanding quality</li> </ol>	

# Examination Guidance

## Examination Administration

Examinations are conducted by WSET Approved Programme Providers (APPs). APPs must comply with WSET policies and procedures as set out in the APP Handbook and the APP Diploma Guidelines.

## Assessment Method

The WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines is divided into six mandatory Units. A Unit is defined as the smallest part of a qualification that can be individually assessed and accredited. The unitised format of the Diploma qualification allows for flexibility in the timing of assessments at the discretion of the APP; each Unit assessment will be scheduled at least once in any academic year. Candidates should contact their APP for details of their assessment schedule.

All examinations are set by WSET and the questions are based on the published learning outcomes for each Unit.

For the tasting papers the examiners can select wines from any producing area identified in the relevant section of the Specification. They are not restricted to the recommended tasting samples.

## Unit Assessment Format (Units D1 – D6 are mandatory)

UNIT TITLE	UNIT ASSESSMENT
<b>D1   Wine Production</b> <i>20% Weighting</i>	Assessed by an open-response paper that is to be completed in 90 minutes. Arranged at the discretion of the APP. Resit examinations will be held on two set dates per academic year in October and March. Candidates <b>must</b> sit the D1 examination before progressing to other units.
<b>D2   Wine Business</b> <i>10% Weighting</i>	Assessed by an open-response paper that is to be completed in 60 minutes. The examination will be held on four set dates per academic year in October, January, March and June.
<b>D3   Wines of the World</b> <i>50% Weighting</i>	Assessed by a theory and tasting examination to be held over two consecutive days. The examination will consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Day one</b> – A two-part theory exam formed of open-response questions to be completed in 3 hours 20 minutes (one 2-hour paper and one 80-minute paper).</li> <li>• <b>Day two</b> – A two-part tasting exam of 12 wines to be completed in 3 hours (two 1-hour-30-minute papers).</li> </ul> The examination will be held on two set dates per academic year in October and May. D3 must be sat in its entirety (theory and tasting papers) on the two consecutive days. Resit candidates who previously sat D3 must sit all failed assessments in their entirety on two consecutive days, however any previously passed assessment (theory or tasting) will be carried forward and such candidates need only resit the failed assessment.
<b>D4   Sparkling Wines</b> <i>5% Weighting</i>	Assessed by an open-response paper and a tasting of three wines that is to be completed in 90-minutes. The examination will be held on three set dates per academic year in October, January and June.
<b>D5   Fortified Wines</b> <i>5% Weighting</i>	Assessed by an open-response paper and a tasting of three wines that is to be completed in 90-minutes. The examination will be held on three set dates per academic year in October, January and June.
<b>D6   Independent Research Assignment</b> <i>10% Weighting</i>	Assessed by one research assignment of 3,000 words. Two titles will be released on 1 August each academic year with two set submission dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Title 1</b> – 31 January within the same academic year.</li> <li>• <b>Title 2</b> – 31 July within the same academic year.</li> </ul> The Independent Research Assignments will be designed to assess the candidate's ability to research beyond the WSET learning materials provided and evaluate current trends in wine. The subject matter could be outside the Specifications of the other Units.

# Examination Regulations

## 1. Entry Requirements

### 1.1. Eligibility

**1.1.1** Candidates applying to sit the Diploma examinations must be over the legal minimum age for the retail purchase of alcoholic beverages in the country where the examination is being held, or be preparing for the examination as part of a recognised full-time programme of study, or have obtained consent from their parents or legal guardians.

**1.1.2** Candidates who are under the legal minimum age for the retail purchase of alcoholic beverages in the country where the examination is being held, or those who choose not to taste alcohol for health or religious reasons, will not be allowed/required to sample any alcoholic beverage as part of their course. These candidates will not be eligible to complete the examination for D3, D4 & D5 of the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines. In such instances, candidates will receive a record of achievement on successful completion of D1, D2, D6 and the theory paper of D3, but will not be awarded the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines.

**1.1.3** Candidates must enrol with an APP as a Diploma student before registering for any examination. Registration will be valid for a period of three years.

### 1.2. Recommended prior learning

**1.2.1** For entry onto the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines, candidates **must** hold either the WSET Level 3 Award in Wines or the WSET Level 3 Award in Wines and Spirits.

**1.2.2** Candidates sitting where English is not their first language are strongly recommended to have IELTS at 6.5 or above or be able to demonstrate an equivalent ability level.

**1.2.3** It is strongly recommended that candidates read the documents in the Resources section of the online area; this provides key guidance on how to approach the theory and tasting examinations.

## 2. Registration for Examinations

**2.1** Candidates can obtain registration dates for D1, D2, D3, D4 and D5 examinations and the D6 Independent Research Assignment from their APP.

**2.2** No deferral of examinations/Independent Research Assignments is permitted once registration has been completed. In the case of extenuating circumstances please contact your APP.

**Please note that examination fees are non-refundable following registration as an examination candidate.**

## 3. Reasonable Adjustments

**3.1** Examination candidates who have special examination requirements that are supported by an independent written assessment are requested to notify the examinations officer at their APP of any such requirement at the time of enrolment for each Unit. Further guidance for examination officers and candidates is available from WSET as required.

**3.2** It is the policy of WSET that such candidates should not be placed at a disadvantage in the examinations.

**3.3** Candidates are responsible for informing their APP of any such requirement at the time of registration for the examination.

#### 4. Submission of the Independent Research Assignment

**4.1** Independent Research Assignments not submitted by the relevant submission date will be automatically classed as Fail. Candidates will forfeit their examination fee and must re-register for an alternative submission date.

**4.2** Candidates classified Fail for any Independent Research Assignment must apply to resubmit a new assignment title.

**4.3** Candidates have two opportunities to submit the Independent Research Assignment each academic year. There will be two different titles released at the start of the academic year, one for each submission date. A candidate cannot complete the title for the January submission and submit in July.

**4.4** Independent Research Assignments must only contain the candidate number; no submission should include the candidate's name.

#### 5. Results

**5.1** For each Unit WSET will issue an electronic all-candidate grade list to the APP so that they can communicate results to their candidates.

**5.2** Marks for individual Units will be given to the nearest percentage point and results will be graded as follows:

Percentage Mark	Grade
75% and above	Pass with distinction
65% to 74%	Pass with merit
55% to 64%	Pass
45% to 54%	Fail
Below 45%	Fail unclassified

For Units D1, D2 and D6 the grade issued will be based on the percentage mark achieved in the assessment.

For Units D4 and D5 the grade issued will be based on the overall percentage mark achieved in the assessment as an aggregate of the open-response and tasting components. A minimum of 45% must be achieved in **both** the open-response and tasting components, with a minimum aggregate percentage of 55%, to qualify for a Pass grade and above.

For Unit D3 the grade issued will be based on the overall percentage mark achieved in the assessment as an aggregate of the open-response and tasting components. A minimum of 55% must be achieved in **both** the open-response and tasting components to qualify for a Pass grade and above.

#### 6. Resits

**6.1** Candidates may apply to retake failed Units. There is no limit on the number of attempts that may be made.

**6.2** Candidates who have passed Units are not permitted to retake these to improve their grade.

## 7. Unit weighting

Weighting is applied to each Unit as follows:

Unit Title	Weighting
D1 Wine Production	20%
D2 Wine Business	10%
D3 Wines of the World	50%
D4 Sparkling Wines	5%
D5 Fortified Wines	5%
D6 Independent Research Assignment	10%

## 8. Validity of Passes

Unit passes remain valid for the three-year registration period. At the end of the registration period candidates may re-register and the continuing validity of any passes they have gained will be reviewed against the current Specification.

## 9. Requirements for a Pass, Pass with Merit and Pass with Distinction

**9.1** To gain the WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines, a minimum of a pass is required in each of the six Units.

**9.2** A Pass will be awarded to candidates who achieve a minimum of a pass in each Unit and an aggregate weighted percentage of between 55% and 64%.

**9.3** A Pass with Merit will be awarded to candidates who achieve a minimum of a pass in each Unit and an aggregate weighted percentage of between 65% and 74%.

**9.4** A Pass with Distinction will be awarded to candidates who achieve a minimum of a pass in each Unit and an aggregate weighted percentage of 75% or above.

## 10. Diploma Graduates

**10.1** Upon successfully passing the WSET Diploma, candidates are entitled to use the post-nominals **DipWSET** after their name. Graduates are also able to join WSET's Alumni Body, which offers access to specialised content and networking events designed to support continued learning.

## 11. Examination Conditions and Conduct

**11.1** Upon registration for an examination, candidates are deemed to acknowledge and agree to the following specific conditions:

- at the start of the examination all candidates must supply the invigilator with proof of identity in the form of photographic ID;
- the examination is to be completed in the time specified for each paper;
- no reference is to be made to any material, in whatever form, other than the examination question paper and answer sheet;
- once the invigilator has declared that examination conditions are in place, no communication of any kind between candidates is permitted until they have left the examination room or the invigilator has announced the end of the examination;
- during the examination candidates are only permitted to have the following items with them: tasting glasses, spittoon, pens, pencils, erasers, stapler and drinking water;
- it is prohibited for candidates to take any photographs of the examination room or examination materials;

- for tasting examinations candidates should not wear perfume, aftershave lotion or any other strong scent;
- the use of electronic devices of any kind is prohibited;
- mobile phones must not be on the examination desk, they must be switched off and placed out of sight;
- the use of dictionaries of any kind is prohibited;
- the use of audible 'alarms' on any clock or watch is prohibited;
- candidates may not leave the room until the first 15 minutes of the examination time have elapsed;
- candidates who arrive late may be allowed to enter the room at the discretion of the invigilator and only if other candidates are not compromised. Under normal circumstances we would not expect any candidate to be allowed to start the examination if they arrive more than 30 minutes after the published start time;
- candidates who arrive after the published start time will NOT be allowed to sit the examination if any other candidate has already left the examination;
- candidates may not leave, and then return to, the examination room once the examination has started unless they can be accompanied by an invigilator at all times while they are out of the examination room;
- candidates who complete the examination/assessment early may leave the examination room up until the last 10 minutes, providing they do not disturb other candidates; no re-admission is permitted;
- invigilators have no authority to comment upon, interpret, or express an opinion on any examination question;
- any candidate who is suspected of misconduct will be advised to leave the examination hall immediately and their examination paper will be submitted to the Examination Panel to determine its validity;
- no examination question papers are to be removed from the examination room; candidates who fail to submit the question paper with their answer sheet will be deemed guilty of misconduct;
- it is prohibited for candidates to reveal the content of examination papers to others, or reproduce it in any way.

**11.2** Candidates agree to abide by the invigilator's instructions. Failure to do so may render a candidate's results invalid.

**11.3** WSET reserves the right to permanently exclude candidates found guilty of misconduct from WSET qualifications.

**11.4** Examination papers submitted for marking become the property of WSET and will not be returned to candidates.

## **12. Examination Feedback, Enquiries and Appeals**

**12.1** Candidates requiring an enquiry (re-mark) or an enquiry and feedback on their examination paper should contact their APP and request a Diploma Enquiry and Feedback Form. An enquiry with feedback can only be requested for fail grades. The form must be completed and submitted to WSET along with the appropriate fee within 15 working days of the issue of results by WSET to the APP. Any request received outside this time-frame will not be reviewed.

**12.2** Any candidate dissatisfied with the result of an enquiry of an examination paper should contact the APP and request an Appeal against Enquiry Application Form, which must be completed and returned to WSET, together with the appropriate fee, no more than 10 working days following notification of the enquiry decision. Appeals received outside this time-frame will not be reviewed.

**13. Candidate Satisfaction**

**13.1** Should any candidate have concerns that their APP is not providing the service that they expect, or is behaving in a way that is inconsistent with the standards required in terms of administration, tuition or examinations they should first make a complaint with their APP. If this does not lead to a satisfactory resolution, candidates are asked to contact our Quality Assurance Team by emailing [qa@wsetglobal.com](mailto:qa@wsetglobal.com). Please note that all complaints will be dealt with confidentially, but WSET cannot act on anonymous complaints.

**14. Examination Regulations**

**14.1** WSET reserves the right to add to or alter any part of the Specification as it thinks fit.

# WSET Qualifications

WSET has a range of qualifications that cover sake and spirits as well as wine. In full, the qualifications are:

WSET® Level 1 Award in Wines (600/1504/4)  
 WSET® Level 2 Award in Wines (603/4432/5)  
 WSET® Level 3 Award in Wines (601/6352/5)  
 WSET® Level 4 Diploma in Wines

WSET® Level 1 Award in Spirits (600/1501/9)  
 WSET® Level 2 Award in Spirits (600/1507/X)  
 WSET® Level 3 Award in Spirits

WSET® Level 1 Award in Sake (603/2051/5)  
 WSET® Level 3 Award in Sake (603/2066/7)

More information about all of these qualifications can be found on the WSET website [wsetglobal.com](http://wsetglobal.com).

## Regulation

WSET is recognised as an awarding organisation by Ofqual, the English regulator for qualifications and examinations. Where applicable, the Ofqual accreditation numbers are listed next to the Qualification title above.

WSET operates a Quality Management System that complies with the requirements of **BS EN ISO 9001** for the management of awards for qualifications and examinations in the product knowledge and tasting competence of alcoholic beverages.



## Diversity and Equality Policy

WSET fully supports the principle of diversity and equality and is responsible for ensuring that all candidates for its qualifications are treated fairly and on an equal basis. A copy of our diversity and equality policy can be obtained from the Quality Assurance Team by emailing [qa@wsetglobal.com](mailto:qa@wsetglobal.com).

## WSET Prizes

Candidates who have achieved outstanding marks in their examinations may be eligible for a prize and will be contacted by WSET should this apply. For more details on the prizes available, please go to: <https://www.wsetglobal.com/about-us/awards-bursaries/>.





**WSET**  
WINE & SPIRIT  
EDUCATION TRUST

*A world of knowledge*

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