

Melbourne Wine School

WSET Qualification Policies

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Conflicts of Interest	3
Privacy Policy	5
Diversity and Equality	6
Reasonable Adjustments	8
Special Considerations	10
Malpractice and Maladministration	12
Cancellations and Refunds	17
Complaints and Appeals	18
Complaints Procedure	19

Conflicts of Interest

Introduction

Melbourne Wine School is an Approved Programme Provider (APP) by WSET Awards and must take all reasonable steps to mitigate conflicts of interest where they exist.

Scope of this policy

This policy is applicable to all members of Melbourne Wine School staff involved in the delivery, administration and/or marketing of WSET programmes of study leading to WSET qualification, or Melbourne Wine School staff acting in any other capacity on behalf of WSET Awards. This policy may also apply in particular to employees, or family members of employees, of Melbourne Wine School undertaking study of WSET programmes leading to WSET qualification.

This policy should be considered in instances of both actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

Definition of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest exists where an individual has interests or loyalties that could adversely influence their judgement, objectivity, or loyalty to Melbourne Wine School when conducting activities associated with WSET Awards qualifications. These can arise in many different aspects of awarding organisation activity, such as:

- An individual whose personal interests or loyalties conflict with Melbourne Wine School
- An individual who receives remuneration for services that conflict with Melbourne Wine School
- An individual whose acts put Melbourne Wine School in a position of non-compliance with WSET Awards.

Whilst it would be impossible to give a definitive list of scenarios presenting a potential for a conflict of interest, the following have been identified as being of primary significance from WSET Awards' Risk Management review.

Specific examples of a conflict of interest include the following:

- The undertaking of any assessment of candidates by an individual who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment for any or all individuals concerned
- The undertaking of any moderation of assessment of candidates by an individual who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment for any or all individuals concerned

- The tutoring of candidates by any individual involved in the assessment process
- The undertaking of a WSET regulated qualification by any individual employed by Melbourne Wine School
- The undertaking of a WSET regulated qualification by any individual employed by WSET Awards
- The delivery of “coaching sessions” to examination candidates by any individual involved in the assessment of candidate scripts or the authoring of examination questions.

Some potential or perceived conflicts of interest can be managed and are therefore acceptable. In more problematic situations, Melbourne Wine School will take guidance from WSET Awards.

Where there are scenarios, other than those listed above, that could constitute a conflict of interest, the WSET will take actions to redress any such instances that come to their attention other than by declaration from the individual concerned. Such actions may also include the imposition of sanctions, if deemed appropriate.

Guidance on handling a conflict of interest

Any individual engaged with Melbourne Wine School in the provision of WSET regulated qualifications is required to make a declaration to Melbourne Wine School of any potential conflict of interest, and will inform Melbourne Wine School promptly of any change to their situation and potential conflict of interest.

Where a conflict of interest cannot be resolved or mitigated internally by Melbourne Wine School, we will declare said conflict of interest to WSET Awards to ensure this does not compromise WSET’s status of compliance with their regulator.

If Melbourne Wine School were to fail to declare a potential conflict of interest, this would be a breach of WSET criteria for approval, and sanctions may be applied to Melbourne Wine School’s approval status as a result of any such non-disclosure.

WSET Awards has processes and procedures in place to manage actual or perceived conflicts of interest. These include the exclusive involvement of WSET Awards staff in the creation of all assessment materials, moderation of all internal assessment conducted by Melbourne Wine School, and moderation of all written examinations not marked by optical mark readers.

There are of course many other instances of conflict of interest for which the WSET do not have documented procedures in place. Such instances will be handled on an individual basis to ensure that their integrity is not compromised.

Privacy Policy

Melbourne Wine School needs to use students' personal data to carry out its business, which may include sensitive data, e.g. relating to health.

As a WSET Approved Programme Provider, Melbourne Wine School needs to pass data to WSET Awards, for example for the purposes of candidate registration for assessments.

Melbourne Wine School will not pass data to any other third party, unless the student has given their prior consent.

Data passed to WSET Awards will be handled in accordance with WSET Awards' Data Protection Policy.

Melbourne Wine School will keep students' personal data safe and secure by storing and destroying such data securely and by protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure, and by ensuring that appropriate technical measures are in place to protect personal data.

In the event of an unauthorised use of data or data loss, the individuals concerned will be notified and a recovery plan implemented. Melbourne Wine School will review operating procedures to minimise any future risks of a data breach.

Melbourne Wine School will also take steps to ensure that all information is:

- Used fairly and lawfully
- Used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- Used in a way that is adequate, relevant, and not excessive
- Accurate
- Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- Handled according to people's data protection rights.

If you have any questions on how your data is handled, you can email Melbourne Wine School directly. We will aim to respond within 3 working days.

Diversity and Equality

Introduction

Melbourne Wine School is an inclusive school that focuses on the wellbeing and progress of every participant and where all members of our community are of equal worth.

Melbourne Wine School provides a framework to support our commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality, and fostering good relationships between people and students. We actively promote equality and diversity through the curriculum and by creating an environment in which all are welcome to study and learn.

Policy

Melbourne Wine School fully supports the principles of equal opportunities.

We strive to ensure that all Melbourne Wine School candidates are treated fairly and on an equal basis.

Our approach is based on the following principles

Equal value

Regardless of disability, ethnicity, culture, origin, national status, gender, gender identity, religious or non-religious affiliations or faith, and sexual orientation, all students are welcome and to be treated equally.

Diversity

We take account of differences and strive to remove barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, belief or faith and sexual orientation.

We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn and teach with us.

Cohesion and belonging

We want all students to feel a sense of belonging within the school and wider community and to feel that they are respected and able to participate.

All appropriate steps will be taken to welcome anyone who wishes to participate.

Good equality practices for our staff

We ensure that policies and procedures benefit all employees and potential employees in all aspects of their work, including in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.

Actions to eliminate potential issues

Melbourne Wine School ensures that all decisions give due regard to this policy so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment, promotion, or learning opportunities.

Melbourne Wine School will ensure that those who are affected by any policy or activity are consulted and will be involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones when and where applicable.

Melbourne Wine School will ensure, to the best of our ability, that any documentation produced does not contain language or images which may be regarded as offensive, stereotypical, or unreflective of the diversity of contemporary society.

Melbourne Wine School takes seriously the need to consider equality implications when we develop, adapt, and review any policy or procedure and whenever we make significant decisions about the day-to-day life of the school.

Melbourne Wine School will make a record of each specific equality consideration if required.

If you require more information, or have any questions regarding this policy, please contact Melbourne Wine School by email on info@melbournewineschool.com.au.

Reasonable Adjustments

Melbourne Wine School is committed to treating its students and applicants fairly. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled students and applicants are not put at any disadvantage in comparison to students and applicants who are not. Melbourne Wine School aims to meet the unique needs of every single teacher, student, or potential student.

This policy does not seek to cater for every situation but is intended as a general statement, which sets out the principles underlying our approach to providing adjustments for disabled students and the factors Melbourne Wine School will consider upon receipt of requests for adjustments.

Melbourne Wine School shall consider making reasonable adjustments for students and applicants who are disabled if they are put at a substantial disadvantage compared with students and applicants who do not have disabilities. Reasonable adjustment requests can be made in respect of both classroom teaching and examinations.

A student or applicant is disabled if they suffer from a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Examples of such disabilities can include, but are not limited to, conditions such as dyslexia, autism etc. Consideration will also be given to any student suffering from a temporary disability caused, for example, by an accident.

Melbourne Wine School seeks to ensure that disabled students and applicants are not put at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments:

1. To our policies, criteria, and practices
2. By providing auxiliary aids and services if needed.

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Examples can include (but are not limited to):

- Pieces of equipment
- Extra staff assistance
- Note-taking
- Readers.

Melbourne Wine School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. Similarly, Melbourne Wine School does not need to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with the education and services provided by the school.

How do I request an adjustment?

A student should submit a request in writing to Melbourne Wine School setting out in full the adjustment requested and (if necessary) how this adjustment could be put into practice.

The student should also specify whether the adjustment is required for classroom teaching, an examination, or both. Eligibility will only be considered if accompanied by supporting independent documentation.

In most cases, Melbourne Wine School should be able to agree to and implement the requested adjustment. Melbourne Wine School will consider whether there is any adjustment it could make to overcome any substantial disadvantage suffered by a disabled applicant or student. However, we do not always think of all possible adjustments.

All requests for reasonable adjustments must be received at least 20 working days prior to the course commencement date. Where a reasonable adjustment request has been made in respect of an examination, the request will be sent to WSET Awards for approval.

How will the school decide whether an adjustment is reasonable?

When considering whether it would be reasonable to make the adjustment, Melbourne Wine School will consider the following factors:

- Whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled student is suffering
- The practicability of the adjustment
- The effect of the disability on the student
- The cost of the proposed adjustment
- Melbourne Wine School's resources
- Health and safety requirements
- The need to maintain academic standards
- The effects on other students' learning ability.

In cases, for example where the adjustment would be logistically difficult or more financially costly, Melbourne Wine School may need to consider in more detail how best to overcome the substantial disadvantage that the student or applicant is suffering and what measures are reasonable to take. In such cases, Melbourne Wine School may seek input from teachers and/or other experts (such as medical guidance from doctors or educational psychologists).

Confidentiality

You may request that the existence or nature of your disability be treated as confidential by Melbourne Wine School. Any such request will be taken into account when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable. Once Melbourne Wine School has determined whether the relevant adjustment is reasonable, we will write to you, setting out the decision and reasoning.

If you are not happy with the school's decision about the reasonableness of the adjustment, you may lodge a complaint using Melbourne Wine School's Complaints Procedure.

Special Considerations

Special consideration is an action taken to allow candidates who have been disadvantaged by temporary illness, injury, indisposition, or adverse circumstances either during a course or at the time of assessment to demonstrate attainment.

It is our policy that special considerations will not give unfair advantage over candidates for whom special considerations are not being applied.

A candidate may be eligible for special consideration if:

- Performance in an examination is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the candidate. This may include (but is not limited to) recent personal illness, accidents, bereavement, or examination room conditions
- Alternative assessment arrangements, including any approved requests for reasonable adjustments, which were agreed in advance of course or assessment dates proved inappropriate or inadequate
- The application of special consideration would not mislead the end-user of the certificate.

Please note, as a general rule, Melbourne Wine School does not consider the following circumstances to amount to a need for special consideration to apply:

- Failure to attend course days or an examination due to work commitments
- Suffering from the common cold or other minor illness
- Excessive drinking prior to course days or an examination (i.e. hungover)
- Attending course days or an examination date late due to traffic disruptions or adverse weather conditions.

How do I request special consideration?

A student should submit a request in writing to Melbourne Wine School setting out in full why special consideration should be applied. Eligibility for special consideration will only be considered by Melbourne Wine School if accompanied by supporting independent documentation.

In respect of special consideration requests for the teaching element of a course by Melbourne Wine School, such requests must be made in writing within 2 working days of the course day. If a candidate is unable to attend a course day due to circumstances outside their direct control, they should notify Melbourne Wine School as soon as possible. Any missed classes will be at the detriment of the student and no equivalent or “catch-up” classes will be offered.

In respect of special consideration requests for an examination, such requests must be made within 5 working days of the examination date. Such requests will then be passed to WSET Awards for approval.

If a candidate is unable to attend an examination for which they have been registered due to circumstances outside their direct control, they should notify Melbourne Wine School as soon as possible, but note that no requests will be considered once the examination has commenced.

Any request for special consideration or to transfer a candidate's course dates or examination date will be reviewed by Melbourne Wine School on a case by case basis. All requests must be made in writing. Where applicable, students should be transferred to the next suitable examination date pending approval from WSET Awards. Please note that administration fees may apply (see "Cancellations and Refunds" for further information).

Examination disruption

In cases of serious disruption (e.g. fire, power failure, significant student illness) during the examination, the Examinations Officer will submit a detailed report of the circumstances and candidates affected to the Examinations Administrator at WSET Awards, in addition to the examination papers.

Malpractice and Maladministration

Introduction

This policy is aimed at Melbourne Wine School's students and those who are delivering or registered on Melbourne Wine School programmes, approved qualifications, or who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration. It is also for use by Melbourne Wine School's staff to ensure they deal with all malpractice and maladministration investigations in a consistent manner.

It sets out the steps Melbourne Wine School, student or other personnel must follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration and Melbourne Wine School's responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It also sets out the procedural steps Melbourne Wine School will follow when reviewing such cases.

Responsibility

It is important that all students and staff involved in the management, assessment, and quality assurance of Melbourne Wine School's qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy and that Melbourne Wine School has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.

Definition of malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of Melbourne Wine School or the assessment process and/or the validity of its certificates.

It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default, or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- The assessment process
- The integrity of a regulated qualification
- The validity of a result or certificate
- The reputation and credibility of Melbourne Wine School
- The Wine & Spirit Education Trust.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems, to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain individuals or groups of students.

Some examples of malpractice can include (but are not limited to):

- Falsifying results, assisting candidates with answers
- Allowing unauthorised material into the exam room e.g. phones, notes etc
- Allowing candidates to copy from each other
- Disruptive behaviours e.g. talking during the exam.
- Collusion in exams/assessments
- Plagiarism by any students or staff.

Definition of maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration.

Some examples of maladministration can include (but are not limited to):

- Inaccurate or fraudulent claims for certificates
- Failure, including deliberate failure, to maintain appropriate auditable records, e.g. certification claims and/or forgery of evidence
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act, from Melbourne Wine School, which is required to assure the WSET of its continued integrity and operation in the delivery of its approved courses
- Failure to carry out internal assessment, internal moderation, or internal verification in accordance with WSET requirements
- Intentional withholding of information from Melbourne Wine School which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance and standards of qualifications

How to make an allegation of malpractice or maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time, must immediately notify Melbourne Wine School.

In doing so they should put their concerns in writing, via post or email, and provide any supporting evidence. Melbourne Wine School will acknowledge receipt of the allegation, and where relevant pass on the allegation to any relevant external parties (e.g. WSET Awards).

All allegations must include (where possible):

- The person's name and registration number
- If involved in the case, the Melbourne Wine School staff member's name and job role

- Details of the course/qualification affected
- Nature of the suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration
- Associated dates and details

An assessment will be conducted to ensure that any staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no conflict of interest in the outcome of the investigation.

In all cases Melbourne Wine School will protect the identity of the “informant” in accordance with our stated duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Confidentiality

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous. Although it is always preferable to reveal your identity and contact details to us, if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences you may request that the investigating parties at Melbourne Wine School do not divulge your identity.

While Melbourne Wine School are prepared to investigate any malpractice or maladministration issues which are reported, we shall always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those to whom the allegation relates.

Responsibility for the investigation

All instances of malpractice related to assessments will be referred to WSET Awards by Melbourne Wine School. Any other instance of malpractice will be examined by Melbourne Wine School, escalating to WSET Awards where necessary.

Where Melbourne Wine School is responsible for investigating cases of maladministration and malpractice, a prompt examination will be undertaken to establish if any issues have occurred. Melbourne Wine School will take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect arising from the occurrence.

Melbourne Wine School will also be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will allocate a relevant individual to lead the investigation to establish whether or not malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

Any supporting evidence received will be reviewed by Melbourne Wine School.

All investigations will be conducted in a fair and reasonable manner to ensure that all relevant evidence is considered. If an investigation leads to the invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard.

Where a member of staff is under investigation, Melbourne Wine School may suspend them or move them to other duties until the investigation is complete. We reserve the right to withhold any results.

Throughout an investigation Melbourne Wine School will be responsible for ensuring that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping relevant external parties informed.

In the event of a non-compliance issue, Melbourne Wine School will notify WSET Awards immediately. WSET Awards will log the non-compliance incident and assign a case officer to investigate. WSET Awards will aim to conclude the investigation within 30 working days of receipt of the allegation. In some cases, the investigation may take longer. In such instances all concerned parties will be advised of the revised timescale.

Investigation report

After an investigation, Melbourne Wine School will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check its factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and Melbourne Wine School.

The report will:

- Identify where the breach, if any, occurred
- Confirm the facts of the case
- Identify who is responsible for the breach (if any)
- Confirm an appropriate level of remedial action to be applied.

Melbourne Wine School will make the final report available to the parties concerned and to other external agencies as required.

If it was an independent/third party that notified Melbourne Wine School of the suspected or actual case of malpractice, we'll also inform them of the outcome – normally within 10 working days of making our decision. In doing so, Melbourne Wine School may withhold some details regarding the outcome if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

Outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place, Melbourne Wine School will consider what action to take in order to:

- Minimise the risk to the integrity of certification now and in the future
- Maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications
- Discourage others from carrying out similar instances of malpractice or maladministration.
- Ensure there has been no gain from compromising our standards.

The action Melbourne Wine School may take includes:

- Imposing actions in order to address the instance of malpractice/maladministration and to prevent it from reoccurring (for example, by removing a student from a course without any reimbursement of course fees or materials)
- In cases where certificates are deemed to be invalid, inform the awarding organisation concerned why they're invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates. We'll also let the affected students know the action we're taking, inform them that their original certificates are invalid and ask – where possible – for them to return the invalid certificates to Melbourne Wine School or the WSET in London
- Informing relevant third parties (e.g. funding employers) of our findings

In addition to the above, Melbourne Wine School will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant internal colleagues to help prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from reoccurring.

If a relevant party wishes to appeal against our decision to impose sanctions, please refer to our Complaints Procedure.

Cancellations and Refunds

Bookings are not secured until full payment is received and the enrolment form completed and returned to Melbourne Wine School. Bookings will only be accepted on valid forms with a signed and dated student declaration.

All courses and events must be paid for in advance. To ensure timely delivery of study materials (WSET study packs, glassware, or other supporting materials) course bookings will close 15 working days prior to the course commencement date.

Cancellations for bookings on any Melbourne Wine School WSET courses are refundable up to 20 working days prior to the course start date. An administration fee of \$55.00 plus the full cost of the study materials supplied will be deducted and the remainder of the course fee refunded to the payee.

Should a student wish to return their study materials to Melbourne Wine School, the study materials must be returned in a reusable, unmarked condition before a refund can be issued, although a \$55.00 administration fee will still apply.

Melbourne Wine School reserves the right to cancel any course or event. Should Melbourne Wine School need to cancel a course, we will give appropriate notice to students and offer them alternative course dates or refund the student's booking fee. Please note all transfers are subject to availability on alternative course/examination dates.

In the event of "no-shows" no refunds or credits will be provided. Any transfers are subject to Melbourne Wine School's "Transfers" policy.

Any missed classes will be at the detriment of the student and no equivalent or "catch-up" classes will be offered. Please note that it is the student who is ultimately responsible for their examination result – Melbourne Wine School takes no responsibility and has no liability in cases where a student fails an examination. Students may opt to resit an examination, however this will be at their own expense. For any questions regarding our cancellation policies, please email Melbourne Wine School.

Transfers

Transfers by a candidate of a confirmed booking either to another course or applicant are not permitted by Melbourne Wine School. This includes any request to transfer a candidate's examination date. Melbourne Wine School reserves the right to review any request for a transfer on a case by case basis (for example, due to extenuating circumstances – see "Special Considerations" for further information). Requests for a transfer must be made in writing to Melbourne Wine School.

Any successful transfer of a confirmed booking or examination date either to another course or applicant will be subject to a payment of a \$55.00 administration fee, as well as any other costs that may be incurred by Melbourne Wine School.

Complaints and Appeals

Melbourne Wine School's commitment to you

At Melbourne Wine School, each student is important to us and all complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with accordingly.

Once we have receipt of your complaint, we will deal with it as soon as possible in an effective and positive manner. We aim to resolve any and all concerns as quickly as possible.

All complaints will be treated as confidential. If the complaint is on behalf of someone else, you must have their permission signed, and in writing, before we can proceed.

Melbourne Wine School will aim to resolve all student complaints in a timely manner with the aim of settling a formal complaint within 15 working days or less.

A complaint may be submitted by either a student or prospective student. We will aim to assist students or prospective students in resolving all issues regarding bookings, courses, exam or non-exam related concerns.

If, on occasion, the complaint has need to be advanced to any of the senior members of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust, located in England, it may take longer to settle the complaint.

All records of students' complaints will be retained for a minimum of 12 months, and no student will be criticised or retaliated against for using this procedure in a co-operative manner.

If you have a complaint or concern that you wish to raise, please do not hesitate to contact Melbourne Wine School at any stage.

Examples of complaints could include (but are not limited to):

- Dissatisfaction with teaching, facilities, or administration of WSET courses
- Allegations of disruptive behaviour, cheating, discrimination, or unfair treatment.

To make a complaint, please contact Melbourne Wine School following our Complaints Procedure.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints against any action or practice which threatens the integrity of Melbourne Wine School's courses, staff or students should in the first instance be discussed with Melbourne Wine School. All complaints will be investigated thoroughly.

If you wish to submit a written complaint you should email Melbourne Wine School – support@melbournewineschool.com.au.

Some examples of complaints can include, but are not limited to:

- Dissatisfaction with teaching, facilities, or administration of WSET courses
- Allegations of discrimination or unfair treatment
- Disruptive behaviours e.g. talking during the exam Complaints against the awarding body

If you would like to lodge a complaint please provide us with your contact details (address, email address, telephone number) specific details of the complaint and any supporting evidence you may have to help us to be as effective as possible in resolving your complaint.

We will aim to acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days, with the goal of sending a final response to you within 15 working days of the initial complaint. If we are unable to provide you with a final response within this period, we will update you explaining why and advise a date as to when you can expect a resolution.

If you do not agree with the outcome of the complaint you may appeal Melbourne Wine School's conclusion. In such instances Melbourne Wine School will re-review the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint. Please note: the outcome may still be the same even after the appeals process has been completed.

If the final response you receive is still not satisfactory, you may file a complaint with the WSET Quality Assurance Team about Melbourne Wine School via email at qa@wsetglobal.com.