



## **Maritime & Mercantile International LLC**

### **WSET Policies**

#### **Policy I. Complaints and Appeals**

##### Complaints

We always strive for high standards as a provider of WSET courses, however, should any student wish to submit a complaint regarding the delivery of the course or administration of the exam they are encouraged to raise this by:

- I. detailing their concerns to Maritime & Mercantile International LLC (MMI) on an email and sending it to [info@mmiwineacademy.ae](mailto:info@mmiwineacademy.ae).
- II. by calling 0501892926 to discuss over the phone.
- III. emailing to request a face-to-face appointment at the course venue.

Complainants must provide:

- I. Name, address and contact information
- II. Full details of the complaint (with any supporting documents)
- III. Details of any previous attempts made to resolve the problem
- IV. An outline of what resolution they are seeking when submitting a complaint.

An acknowledgement will be issued by senior management within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint. A full response will be issued within 21 working days of acknowledgement.

**N.B. All complaints will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not prejudice the examination result of the complainant.**

##### Appeals

Should our response not satisfy the complainant, they are asked to email an appeal to Stephen Towler at [info@mmiwineacademy.ae](mailto:info@mmiwineacademy.ae). A full review will be conducted with a response issued within 14 working days from receipt of the appeal.

If the problem is still not resolved after receipt of response to the appeal, a complaint may be filed with WSET by emailing WSET's Quality Assurance Team ([qa@wsetglobal.com](mailto:qa@wsetglobal.com)).



## **Policy II. Conflict of Interest**

As an APP MMI is required to identify to WSET and assist in managing or monitoring actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest ('Conflicts of Interest') involving both APP staff and students. This policy complements WSET's conflicts of interest policy and works to safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications and promote confidence in WSET and MMI's processes and procedures.

This policy applies to all MMI's staff and students and to any individual acting on behalf of MMI.

A Conflict of Interest exists where an individual has interests or loyalties that could adversely influence their judgement, objectivity or loyalty to WSET or MMI when conducting activities associated with WSET qualifications.

Examples of Conflicts of Interest include:

- The assessment of candidates by an individual who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment for any or all individuals concerned;
- The 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 undertaking of a WSET qualification by any individual employed by an APP;
- The invigilation of a WSET assessment by any individual involved in the delivery of training leading to the assessment;
- The coaching of candidates by any individual involved in the assessment of candidate scripts;
- The employment by an APP of individuals engaged in the delivery of taught programmes or in the role of Internal Assessor in another APP;
- The investigation of a non-compliance incident by someone who is unable to act impartially.

Some of these Conflicts of Interest are manageable and therefore acceptable. For example, if family member of one of MMI's educators or APP staff takes a qualification and exam through MMI, or when an employee of MMI or of the WSET, takes a WSET qualification through MMI, we can notify WSET in advance and work with them to put in place measures to maintain the integrity of the exam.

Some Conflicts of Interest are not manageable and are not acceptable. For example, no mitigation efforts overcome the conflict created when a single individual serves as the educator and exam officer of an exam for a family member where an external invigilator is not available.

Any staff member or student of MMI who becomes aware of a Conflict of Interest must inform MMI as soon as possible as per MMI's Complaints Policy. MMI Main Contact Travis Kuhn will inform the WSET of the possible conflict of interest and will work with WSET to put any protective or mitigating measures in place to manage the conflict on a case-by-case basis. If WSET and MMI determine the conflict is not manageable, Travis Kuhn will inform any impacted APP staff or students.

Please note that the failure to declare a conflict of interest may have consequences for the student or MMI because we are required to report conflicts to WSET.



### **Policy III. Data Protection**

When enrolling in a WSET course with MMI we will require some key information, such as (but not limited to) name(s), date of birth, gender and email address. We use your personal information for a number of different reasons:

- I. To register you as a candidate for WSET and enable you to sit exams for WSET qualifications, including making arrangements for reasonable adjustments.
- II. To issue your exam results and qualification certificate as appropriate.
- III. To provide you with post-results services such as enquiries against results and appeals and solicit feedback from you on WSET qualifications.
- IV. To send you information regarding the course or event for which you are registered (or which you have registered interest in).
- V. To process sales of products or services you have purchased from us.
- VI. We can provide you with the relevant products and services;
- VII. To send you marketing communications including information about our qualifications, upcoming events and links to our blogs.
- VIII. To investigate any potential maladministration, malpractice or other non-compliance in connection with the delivery of WSET qualifications.

At MMI we take data protection seriously and make every effort to ensure that your information remains private, such as centralizing the storage of key data and avoiding the use of cloud based storage for sensitive files. Data passed to WSET will be handled in accordance with WSET's Privacy Policy.

In general, MMI will not send you any marketing information unless you have requested to receive email/text/social media message updates from us. However, if you have made a purchase from us in the past or contacted us in relation to one of our qualifications, we may contact you in the future about similar items or qualifications. We will always provide you with an opportunity to opt out of any further communication.

### **Policy IV. Reasonable Adjustments**

Both WSET and MMI want to make WSET assessments accessible for all students, so none are at an advantage or disadvantage based on a disability or differing ability. This policy and the reasonable adjustment process allows us MMI to work with you, our student, before an assessment to gather the information we need to submit a request to WSET and work with them to make arrangements that give students access to WSET qualifications.

A reasonable adjustment is any accommodation or arrangement that helps to reduce the effect of a known disability or difficulty that substantially disadvantages a student's assessment. Using a reasonable adjustment does not impact how WSET grades your exam, or your result, but WSET cannot agree to reasonable adjustments where your particular difficulty directly affects performance necessary to complete the assessment outcomes (e.g. inability to smell or taste for a Level 3 Exam). The goal of a reasonable adjustment is to give you equal access to a WSET qualification, not to give unfair advantages over other students who take an assessment without the same adjustment, or to affect the overall reliability of the assessment outcomes that are explained in the course Specification.

Examples of reasonable adjustments may be:

- Changing standard assessment arrangements, for example allowing candidates extra time to complete the assessment activity;
- Adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in large text format;
- Providing access facilitators during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or reader;
- Re-organising the assessment room, such as removal of visual stimuli for an autistic candidate.

MMI will gather the information we need from you to submit a Reasonable Adjustment Application form to WSET. WSET must approve and arrange reasonable adjustments before the assessment activity takes place. Before completing enrolment with MMI, we will give all students access to this policy and the chance to identify any special needs that could require a reasonable adjustment. If a student identifies a special need, MMI will give the student the Reasonable Adjustment Application form as soon as possible and work with the student to gather the necessary information.

For any student seeking a reasonable adjustment, please contact MMI with:

- Your full name;
- contact information;
- description of the special need, disability or differing ability that requires an adjustment; and
- supporting documentation.

You must submit this information at least 30 full days before the exam date for Levels 1-3 qualifications. The information you submit will be shared with WSET and will be handled under WSET's Privacy and Data Protection Policy.

## **Policy V. Special Consideration**

Special consideration is any adjustment given to a student who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or other event outside of their control at the time of the exam that significantly affects their ability to take the exam or their ability to show their knowledge and understanding in the assessment. Special consideration is only for things that happen immediately before or during an exam that have a material impact on your, the student's, ability to take the exam or on your performance. To be eligible for special consideration, you must have completed the whole course and would have been fully prepared if not for the temporary illness, injury or other uncontrollable event. A special consideration may be for an individual (e.g. a student becomes ill the day of the exam) or a group of students (e.g. an exam is interrupted by a natural disaster).

You may be eligible for special consideration if:

- Your performance on the exam is adversely affected by an event outside of your control. This may include temporary illness, temporary injury, bereavement or exam room conditions;
  - Reasonable adjustments which were agreed in advance of the exam proved inappropriate or inadequate;
  - The application of special consideration would not make a passing result and certificate misleading about the student's ability to satisfy the qualification's assessment criteria.
- Applying for special consideration

If you have taken an exam, or your exam is immediately approaching, and you feel that you have a temporary injury or illness, or other uncontrollable event that has interfered with your ability to complete your exam, please contact MMI's Main Contact Travis Kuhn at [travisk@mmi.ae](mailto:travisk@mmi.ae) as soon as possible. MMI will provide you with a Special Consideration Application Form, which must be completed and returned with supporting documentation within 6 working days after the effected exam. The information you submit will be shared with WSET and will be handled under WSET's Privacy and Data Protection Policy.

If there has been serious disruption during an exam affecting a group of students, MMI will submit a detailed report of the circumstances and candidates affected to WSET to request a special consideration.

MMI will keep records of all applications for special consideration.

## **Policy VI. Diversity and Equality**

MMI is committed to upholding the principles of diversity and equality in all areas of its work, seeking to ensure that all candidates and other stakeholders are treated fairly and equally at all times. This policy applies to all staff and to any individual acting on behalf of MMI.

MMI assures equality of opportunity for candidates by:

- I. Promoting open access to WSET qualifications (having regard to the legal restrictions for the retail purchase and consumption of alcohol in the UAE and assessment competence standards)
- II. Allowing candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access WSET assessments without changing the demands of the assessment in line with our Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policies
- III. Collating and monitoring data on candidate age, gender, ethnicity and access arrangements, which are reportable in a non-attributable format.
- IV. Inviting feedback on diversity issues from candidates and other stakeholders.
- V. Reviewing this policy regularly to ensure it continues to meet legislative and organisational requirements and is fit for purpose.

MMI assures equality of opportunity for candidates by considering enrolment applications from any individual who can demonstrate that they meet the legal requirements for the retail purchase and consumption of alcohol in the UAE. Candidates who believe they may have been unfairly discriminated against or who have any questions concerning this policy should contact our team by emailing [info@mmiwineacademy.ae](mailto:info@mmiwineacademy.ae) .

## **Policy VII. Malpractice and Maladministration**

Both MMI and WSET have policies and procedures in place to protect WSET students and safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications. MMI ensures compliance with MMI's and WSET's policies through this Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, which gives a framework for both us and you to identify, report and manage potential malpractice or maladministration.

Non-compliance with MMI or WSET Policies and Procedures can fall into two distinct, but related, categories:

1. Maladministration, where the non-compliance is generally unintentional, or the result of mistakes, carelessness, inexperience or poor processes; and
2. Malpractice where the non-compliance is intentional or the result of a negligent or reckless action without consideration of the consequences of the action.

Context is important and the line between maladministration or malpractice is not always clear: for example, maladministration incidents may become malpractice (e.g. if you fail to implement corrective measures, repeat the same or similar incident, or attempt to misrepresent or hide information during an investigation); or there may be mitigating factors that turn potential malpractice into maladministration. Though malpractice and maladministration are distinct concepts, they can shade into one another. Malpractice and maladministration are always case, context and fact specific. Both APPs and students can commit malpractice and maladministration.

There are many ways that malpractice or maladministration could occur, including new ways we have not seen yet. But some examples of malpractice or maladministration include:

**For APPs:**

- Failure to adhere to WSET Policies and Procedures;
- Failure to follow WSET requirements for course delivery or exam regulations;
- Failure to follow WSET's candidate registration and certification procedures;
- Late student registrations;
- Fraudulent claim for certificates/fraudulent use of certificates/reproduction or forgery of certificates;
- Withholding critical information from WSET quality assurance;
- Insecure storage of exam materials;
- Revealing or sharing confidential exam materials with candidates ahead of an exam;  
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- Intentional attempts to manipulate exam results so that they do not reflect the candidate's actual exam performance;
- Failure to disclose a Conflict of Interest;
- Issue of incorrect exam results/failure to issue results to students in a timely manner;
- Failure to timely respond to WSET;
- Unauthorised reading/amendment/copying/distribution of exam papers;
- Failure to report changes in APP ownership/personnel/location/facilities;
- Denying WSET access to information, documentation, workforce, facilities;
- Failure to return exam papers within the specified timeframe or to follow delivery and tracking regulations;
- Infringements of WSET copyright, trademarks, intellectual property rights and brand identity;
- Use of unqualified and/or unregistered educators or internal assessors;
- Breach of confidentiality
- Misleading advertising/publicity;
- Any action likely to lead to an adverse effect.

**For students:**

- Cheating, or facilitating cheating, including the use of unauthorised devices or materials;
- Disruptive behaviour in an exam;
- Plagiarism of any nature by students;
- Impersonation (including forgery of signatures);
- Unauthorised reading/amendment/copying/distribution of exam papers;
- Any action likely to lead to an adverse effect;
- Breach of confidentiality.



In general, we also expect that both MMI staff and our students should treat others and be treated professionally and respectfully at all times. We will treat inappropriate behaviour including verbal or physical abuse, persistent or unrealistic demands, or threats that cause stress to staff as misconduct and may report student misconduct to WSET as necessary.

### **Reporting and Investigation of Malpractice or Maladministration**

As an APP, we aim to ensure compliance with WSET Policies and MMI policies and will keep records of potential or actual malpractice or maladministration by you, our students, or our staff.

We are required to notify WSET immediately of any non-compliance issues that could be malpractice or maladministration, so that WSET can investigate the non-compliance under their own Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

We ask that you also raise any concerns or non-compliance issues that may be malpractice or maladministration with MMI as soon as possible by following the process outlined in our Complaints policy.

During WSET's investigation, they may reach out to MMI or to you directly to request further information or conduct an interview. Please respond to any requests promptly and honestly.

## **Policy VIII. Cancellations and Refunds**

Any request for cancellation should be notified to MMI by email to [info@mmiwineacademy.ae](mailto:info@mmiwineacademy.ae) not less than 16 full days before the beginning of the course. Providing due notice has been received and study materials have been returned in a usable condition, the candidate will be entitled to an 80% refund by bank transfer within 14 full days. Cancellation after 16 full days before the beginning of the course will result in forfeiture of all application fees.

Candidates will also be allowed to transfer to another course date prior to 16 days before the beginning of the course by emailing [info@mmiwineacademy.ae](mailto:info@mmiwineacademy.ae) (no further transfer will be possible). Failure to provide such notice of request to transfer will result in forfeiture of application fees.

Non-attendance of the course will result in forfeiture of all application fees.

Occasionally, it may occur that MMI will need to cancel a WSET course. If the course is cancelled by MMI a full refund will be offered, in which case MMI will contact students individually to arrange refund of course fees.

## **Policy IX. Re-sits**

Re-sit exam requests for students enrolled with other organisations will be subject to approval.

Cancellation after 16 full days before the exam date will result in forfeiture of all exam fees.