



INTERNATIONAL  
WINE CENTER



# Student Policy Guide

International Wine Center  
2026 edition



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# Welcome!

We're thrilled to welcome you to International Wine Center! Whether you're new to the world of wine, spirits, sake, and beer or enhancing your existing knowledge, you're joining a lively community of eager learners led by expert educators. Our aim is to spark your curiosity, refine your palate, and support your goals in beverage education.

To maximize your experience, please review the handbook policies, which promote a fair and respectful learning atmosphere. Read them carefully before your course starts, and keep them for reference throughout your studies. We're here to help you succeed. Let's go!

*David E Rudman*



Dave Rudman, DipWSET  
Mary Ewing-Mulligan MW

# Section 1 – Introduction, Code of Conduct & Complaints Policy

## 1. Introduction

Welcome to the International Wine Center (IWC). We are proud to be New York City's leading wine, spirits, and sake education provider, and the first WSET Approved Program Provider (APP) in the United States.

This document sets out the policies that apply to all IWC students. These policies:

- Ensure our compliance with the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) requirements.
- Protect the integrity of WSET qualifications.
- Safeguard the interests of our students.

### *Student Acknowledgement*

By enrolling in a course at International Wine Center, you confirm that:

- You have read, understood, and agree to follow all policies in this document.
- You understand that these policies are designed to comply with WSET's requirements and to protect the integrity of WSET qualifications.
- You understand that IWC may update these policies from time to time to reflect changes in WSET requirements, local laws, or operational needs.

## 2. Code of Conduct

IWC is committed to providing a professional, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for all students, educators, and staff. All students are expected to:

- Treat classmates, educators, staff, and facilities with courtesy and respect.
- Contribute to a safe, inclusive, and disruption-free classroom environment.
- Comply with all IWC and WSET policies in this document.
- Abide by all local, state, and federal laws while participating in IWC activities.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, discrimination, or abusive behavior of any kind.
- Disruptive or disorderly conduct in class or during exams.

- Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or exam malpractice.
- Any behavior that brings IWC or WSET into disrepute.

Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in warnings, suspension, dismissal from the course, and/or reporting to WSET, which can impose further sanctions.

### 3. Complaints Policy

We aim to resolve any concerns or complaints quickly and fairly.

#### *Step 1 - Raise the complaint with IWC*

- Email your complaint in writing to the Student Services Manager at [info@internationalwinecenter.com](mailto:info@internationalwinecenter.com).
- Include your full name, contact information, a detailed description of the issue, any supporting documentation, and the outcome you are seeking.

#### *Step 2 - Internal review*

- If you are not satisfied with the initial response, you may request that your complaint be escalated to the **Managing Director** for final internal review.
- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
- We aim to resolve complaints within 20 working days where possible.

#### *Step 3 - Escalation to WSET*

- If you have completed all steps in IWC's complaints process and remain dissatisfied, you may submit your complaint to WSET Governance at [governance@wsetglobal.com](mailto:governance@wsetglobal.com).
- WSET will only review complaints that have been addressed through the APP's full internal process.

Appeals regarding exam results, sanctions, or other WSET-related matters will be handled in line with WSET's Complaints Policy.

## Section 2 – Privacy & Data Protection Policy

International Wine Center (IWC) respects your privacy and is committed to protecting your personal data. This policy explains what data we collect, how we use it, who we share it with, and your rights regarding that data. It also explains our relationship with the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET) in handling your information.

### 1. Data We Collect

When you enroll in an IWC course, we collect the following personal data:

- **Identity & Contact Information** – Full name, date of birth, gender, email address, postal address, phone number.
- **Course & Exam Information** – Course enrolment details, WSET candidate number, exam bookings, results, and certificates.
- **Special Requests** – Information and documentation you provide for reasonable adjustment or special consideration requests (including relevant medical information).
- **Payment & Transaction Information** – Course fees, payment dates, and payment method details. We do not store full credit card numbers; payments are processed via secure payment providers.
- **Communications** – Records of emails and messages between you and IWC for customer service, course delivery, or policy matters.
- **Marketing Preferences** – Whether you have opted in to receive marketing communications from IWC.

### 2. How We Use Your Data

We use your data to:

- Process your course enrolment and payment.
- Register you with WSET for exams and certification.
- Communicate essential course and exam information.
- Ship study materials where applicable.
- Respond to your enquiries, complaints, or policy requests.
- Maintain accurate student records for quality assurance and audit purposes.
- Send marketing emails and newsletters if you have opted in.

### 3. Data Sharing

We share your personal data only with:

- **WSET** – For exam registration, administration, certification, and compliance with WSET requirements.
- **Shipping Couriers** – Where you have purchased shipping for your study materials.

We do not sell, rent, or trade your personal data to third parties for marketing purposes.

### 4. Data Storage & Security

- Student data is stored in a **secure cloud service**.
- Files are not encrypted by default, but especially sensitive data (e.g., medical documentation) is encrypted or password-protected before sharing.
- Access to student data is restricted to IWC staff members who need it to fulfil their job responsibilities.

### 5. Retention Periods

IWC retains student records **indefinitely** in our secure cloud system to ensure accuracy of course history and certification verification. WSET retains candidate data for 10 years in accordance with their own policies.

### 6. Marketing Communications

- During course registration, you may choose to **opt in** to receive marketing emails and newsletters from IWC.
- You may unsubscribe at any time by using the “unsubscribe” link in any marketing email or by contacting us at **info@internationalwinecenter.com**.
- All students must consent to receive **non-marketing** communications necessary for course delivery and fulfilment.

### 7. Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Request a copy of the personal data we hold about you.
- Request correction of inaccurate or incomplete data.

- Request deletion of your personal data where we have no legal or operational reason to retain it.
- Withdraw consent for marketing communications at any time.

To exercise any of these rights, email **info@internationalwinecenter.com**. We will respond within 30 calendar days.

## 8. WSET Privacy Policy

IWC shares certain personal data with WSET in order to deliver WSET qualifications.

WSET's Privacy Policy explains how they process your data and can be viewed here: [WSET Privacy Policy](#).

## Section 3 – Non-Discrimination & Equal Opportunity Policy

International Wine Center (IWC) is committed to providing all eligible students with equal access to our courses and qualifications.

We do not discriminate against any applicant, student, or staff member on the basis of:

- Race
- Color
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation
- National origin
- Age
- Disability
- Marital or family status
- Any other status protected under applicable local, state, or federal law

Access to our courses is determined solely by:

- Meeting any published course prerequisites (including the legal minimum age to purchase or consume alcohol in New York State, which is 21 years old).
- Payment of the course fee in accordance with our Refund & Cancellation Policy.
- Compliance with all IWC and WSET policies contained in this document.

IWC will make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities or differing abilities in accordance with our **Reasonable Adjustments Policy**.

Questions or concerns about equal access to IWC courses should be sent to the Student Services Manager at [info@internationalwinecenter.com](mailto:info@internationalwinecenter.com).

## Section 4 – Refund & Cancellation Policy

We understand that plans can change, and we aim to make our refund process clear and fair while maintaining the integrity of our course scheduling.

### 1. Student-Initiated Cancellations

If you cancel before the course registration deadline:

- You will receive a refund of your course fee **minus** the non-refundable registration fee (the registration fee amount is stated in the price breakdown for each course on our website).
- The materials fee is refundable only if your study materials have not yet been shipped or picked up.
- **Credit Option** – Instead of a refund, you may choose to receive credit towards a future IWC course. This credit will **include** the non-refundable registration fee, making it a better value than a refund.

If you cancel **on or after the registration deadline**, no refund or credit will be issued, except in cases where IWC approves a **Leave of Absence** under our Leave of Absence Policy.

### 2. IWC-Initiated Cancellations

If IWC cancels a course:

- You will receive a full refund of all course fees paid, including the registration fee.
- The materials fee will be refunded only if materials have not been shipped.

If IWC cancels a session of a course, due to weather or other circumstances outside of our control:

- The session will be held virtually at the originally scheduled date and time, if possible. Otherwise, a virtual make-up session will be scheduled for the earliest possible date and time.
- If the cancelled session included wine tasting, the wines will be made available for self-guided student tasting one hour prior to the next scheduled course session. If the cancelled session is the final scheduled session of a course, IWC will make reasonable efforts to schedule a one-hour self-guided student tasting at the earliest possible date and time.

- In the event that make-up tasting cannot be scheduled, or that a student is unable to attend a rescheduled one-hour self-guided tasting, no refunds or credits will be given.

### 3. Requesting a Refund or Credit

To request a refund or credit:

1. Submit your request in writing to **info@internationalwinecenter.com**.
2. Include your full name, course title, start date, and whether you prefer a refund or a credit.
3. Refunds will be processed within 45 days of receiving your written request.

### 4. Notes

- If your materials have been shipped, the materials fee is non-refundable.
- All credits are valid for **12 months** from the date of issue.

## Section 5 – Conflict of Interest Policy

As an Approved Program Provider (APP) of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET), International Wine Center (IWC) is required to identify, declare, and assist in managing or monitoring actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest (“Conflicts of Interest”) involving both IWC staff and students. This policy complements WSET’s Conflict of Interest Policy and works to safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications and promote confidence in IWC and WSET processes.

This policy applies to all IWC staff, contractors, educators, and students, and to any individual acting on behalf of IWC.

### 1. Definition

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

### 2. Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Examples that may apply at IWC 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 assessments 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 IWC.
- The invigilation of a WSET exam by any individual involved in the delivery of training leading to that assessment.
- The coaching of candidates by any individual involved in the assessment of candidate scripts.
- The employment by IWC of individuals engaged in the delivery of taught programs or in the role of Internal Assessor at another APP.
- The investigation of a non-compliance incident by someone who is unable to act impartially.
- **Personal relationships between IWC staff (including educators) and students** that could reasonably be perceived to affect impartiality in teaching, assessment, or exam delivery.

### 3. Manageable vs. Non-Manageable Conflicts

Some Conflicts of Interest can be managed with appropriate measures. For example:

- If a family member of an IWC educator takes a qualification and exam through IWC, IWC will notify WSET in advance and work with them to put measures in place (e.g., using an independent invigilator).

Some Conflicts of Interest are not manageable. For example:

- When a single individual serves as both the educator and exam officer for a family member, and an independent invigilator is not available.

### 4. Declaring a Conflict of Interest

Any IWC staff member or student who becomes aware of a potential Conflict of Interest must inform the **Student Services Manager** at **info@internationalwinecenter.com** as soon as possible.

- The Student Services Manager will notify WSET Governance at **governance@wsetglobal.com** and work with WSET to determine appropriate mitigation measures.
- IWC will not manage Conflicts of Interest internally without consulting WSET first.

### 5. Consequences of Non-Disclosure

Failure to declare a Conflict of Interest may have consequences for the individual and for IWC, including sanctions under WSET's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

# Section 6 – Reasonable Adjustments Policy

IWC and WSET are committed to making WSET assessments accessible to all students so that no one is placed at an advantage or disadvantage due to a disability or differing ability. This policy explains how IWC works with students and WSET to arrange reasonable adjustments before an assessment.

## 1. Definition

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.

- Reasonable adjustments aim to equalize access, not to give an unfair advantage or alter the assessment's reliability or validity.
- WSET cannot agree to a reasonable adjustment where the student's difficulty directly affects a performance outcome necessary for the qualification (e.g., inability to taste for a Level 3 tasting exam).

## 2. Examples of Reasonable Adjustments

Examples include:

- Allowing extra time to complete the assessment.
- Providing materials in large text format.
- Providing access facilitators, such as a sign language interpreter or reader.
- Re-organizing the exam room to remove visual stimuli for an autistic candidate.

## 3. Application Process

- Before enrolment is completed, IWC provides all students with access to this policy and the opportunity to declare any special needs that may require a reasonable adjustment.
- If a student identifies a need, IWC will provide them with the **Reasonable Adjustment Application Form**.
- Students must submit their completed form, along with supporting documentation, to IWC by the deadlines below:
  - **Levels 1–3:** At least **25 working days** before the exam date.
  - **Level 4 Diploma:** At least **45 working days** before the exam date.

These deadlines are 5 working days earlier than WSET's minimum requirements, to allow IWC time to review and process the application before submitting it to WSET.

#### 4. Data Handling

Any personal data and supporting documentation provided will be shared with WSET and handled in accordance with both IWC's **Privacy & Data Protection Policy** and WSET's Privacy Policy.

#### 5. Approval

- WSET must approve and arrange all reasonable adjustments before the assessment activity takes place.
- IWC will work with WSET to agree and implement approved adjustments.
- Costs associated with a reasonable adjustment are the responsibility of the student unless otherwise stated.

#### 6. Records

IWC will keep a record of all reasonable adjustment applications.

# Section 7 – Special Consideration Policy

Special consideration is an adjustment given to a student who has temporarily experienced illness, injury, or another event outside of their control at the time of the exam, which significantly affects their ability to take the exam or to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

## 1. Scope

Special consideration applies only to circumstances that occur **immediately before or during** the exam and have a material impact on the student's performance.

It is not available for:

- Circumstances that could have been addressed through a **Reasonable Adjustment** request prior to the exam.
- Situations arising well in advance of the exam, where rescheduling or postponement would have been possible.
- Personal arrangements such as holidays, medical appointments, or unauthorized absences.

## 2. Examples of Eligible Situations

A student may be eligible for special consideration if:

- Their performance in the exam is affected by a temporary illness, injury, or bereavement.
- Exam room conditions during the assessment disrupted their performance.
- A previously agreed reasonable adjustment proved inappropriate or inadequate on the day.

## 3. Application Process

- If you believe you are eligible for special consideration, you must notify IWC **as soon as possible**, and **no later than 2 working days after the exam date**.
- Email your request to [info@internationalwinecenter.com](mailto:info@internationalwinecenter.com) with:
  - Your full name and contact details.
  - The course name and exam date.
  - A description of the circumstances affecting your exam performance.
  - Supporting independent documentation (e.g., medical note).

- IWC will review your request and, if appropriate, submit a Special Consideration Application to WSET.
- WSET's decision on whether special consideration will be granted is final.

#### 4. Group Circumstances

If a group of students is affected (e.g., disruption to an exam session), IWC will submit a group application to WSET with a detailed report.

#### 5. Data Handling

Any personal data and supporting documentation will be shared with WSET and handled in accordance with IWC's **Privacy & Data Protection Policy** and WSET's Privacy Policy.

# Section 8 – Malpractice & Maladministration Policy

IWC and WSET have policies and procedures in place to protect students and safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications. This policy explains what malpractice and maladministration are, how they are handled, and the possible outcomes for students.

## 1. Definitions

- **Maladministration** – Unintentional non-compliance with policies and procedures, usually due to mistakes, carelessness, inexperience, or poor processes.
- **Malpractice** – Intentional non-compliance, or negligent/reckless action without consideration of the consequences.

## 2. Examples of Student Malpractice

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating or attempting to cheat during an exam.
- Using unauthorized materials, devices, or notes during an exam.
- Disruptive behavior in an exam.
- Plagiarism.
- Impersonating another student.
- Unauthorized copying or sharing of WSET exam papers or materials.
- Breach of confidentiality regarding exam content.

## 3. Reporting

- If you witness or suspect malpractice or maladministration, report it immediately to **info@internationalwinecenter.com**.
- IWC is required to notify WSET at once of any suspected or actual cases.
- WSET investigates all suspected cases and makes the final determination.

## 4. Possible Sanctions for Students

If WSET determines that malpractice or maladministration has occurred, they may apply one or more of the following sanctions:

- **Written Warning** – Formal notice that repeated behavior will result in stronger sanctions.

- **Exam Result Declared Null and Void** – Your result is invalidated, and the certificate (if issued) is recalled.
- **Disqualification from a Qualification** – You are excluded from completing the qualification and from enrolling in any WSET qualifications for 12 months.

## 5. Appeals

If you wish to appeal a sanction imposed by WSET, follow the procedure in WSET's Complaints Policy.

## Section 9 – Exam Conditions & Conduct

WSET exams are run under strict conditions to ensure fairness and maintain the integrity of your qualification. All students must follow these rules.

### 1. Before the Exam

- Bring **valid government-issued photo ID**. Without it, you cannot sit the exam.
- You must take the exam in the same language in which you studied the course.
- Arrive early to check in. Students arriving more than **30 minutes after the start time** will not be admitted.
- Store all personal belongings (bags, coats, study materials, phones, smart watches, etc.) in the designated area.

### 2. During the Exam

You must **not** have any of the following items at your desk or on your person:

- Textbooks, study packs, or written notes.
- Mobile phones, smart watches, or any web-enabled devices.
- MP3/4 players, tablets, or any device capable of storing information.
- Calculators (unless specified for your exam).

Other requirements:

- Follow all instructions from the invigilator.
- Write only on official exam materials provided.
- Remain seated unless given permission to leave by the invigilator.
- Do not talk to, copy from, or otherwise communicate with other students during the exam.

### 3. Leaving the Exam Room

- You must stay in the room for the first 15 minutes.
- You cannot re-enter if you leave before the end of the exam.
- No one may leave in the last 10 minutes.

## 4. Emergencies

If an emergency occurs, leave all materials on your desk and follow the invigilator's instructions. Additional time may be granted if appropriate.

## 5. Academic Integrity

Any breach of exam regulations will be treated as suspected malpractice and reported to WSET for investigation. Penalties may include your result being voided or disqualification from future WSET qualifications.

# Section 10 – Attendance & Leave of Absence Policy

## 1. Attendance Requirements

Active participation is essential for success in IWC courses.

- Students are expected to attend all scheduled sessions, arrive on time, and remain for the full duration of each class.
- Missing more than **20%** of scheduled course sessions will trigger an **attendance warning** from IWC.
- Excessive absence may impact your ability to take the exam on the scheduled date; in such cases, IWC may advise postponement.

## 2. Make-Up Sessions

- Make-up sessions are only available for Level 3 students.
- Students may audit up to two missed sessions of their Level 3 course for a fee of \$30 per make-up session.
- IWC will make a reasonable effort to accommodate make-up session requests but cannot make guarantees; accommodations are contingent upon availability and capacity of other Level 3 courses that may be running.

## 3. Leave of Absence

- Granted only for serious personal circumstances such as accident, prolonged illness, maternity leave, or bereavement.
- Requests must be made in writing to [info@internationalwinecenter.com](mailto:info@internationalwinecenter.com) no later than one week after your last attended class.
- Approval is at the discretion of IWC's Managing Director.
- Any remaining tuition will be applied to a future course; refund eligibility will follow IWC's Refund & Cancellation Policy.

## 4. Course Completion/Exam Re-sit Deadline

All make-up sessions and exam sittings/re-sittings must be completed within one year from the original course's scheduled exam date, without exception.

## Section II – Contact Information

If you have any questions about these policies, your course, or your rights and responsibilities as an IWC student, please contact us:

International Wine Center  
350 Seventh Avenue, Suite 1201  
New York, NY 10001  
Email: [info@internationalwinecenter.com](mailto:info@internationalwinecenter.com)  
Phone: (212) 239-3055  
Website: [www.internationalwinecenter.com](http://www.internationalwinecenter.com)

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- You understand that IWC may update these policies from time to time to reflect changes in WSET requirements, local laws, or operational needs.