

# WSET Level 3 Award in Wines

Paper 01

---

**Time allowed:** 120 minutes

**Pass mark:** 55%

**Structure:** Paper 1: Multiple Choice: 50 questions; Paper 2: Short Answer: 4 questions

## **Instructions**

This examination consists of two papers. Paper 1 contains 50 multiple-choice questions to be completed in 60 minutes. Paper 2 contains 4 short-answer questions, each worth 4 marks, to be completed in 60 minutes. A combined score of 55% or higher is required to pass.

## Paper 1: Multiple Choice

*Time allocation: 60 minutes*

1. Which of the following sustainability certifications is specific to the wine industry in New Zealand?
  - A. Demeter
  - B. Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ)
  - C. LEED
  - D. Fair Trade International
2. The French classification system for Burgundy and Bordeaux differ fundamentally because:
  - A. Burgundy classifies individual vineyard plots (climats) while Bordeaux's 1855 Classification classifies chateaux (estates/brands)
  - B. Bordeaux classifies individual vineyard plots while Burgundy classifies negociant houses
  - C. Both systems classify producers rather than vineyards
  - D. Both systems classify vineyards rather than producers
3. Which of the following is a key distinction between the Left Bank and Right Bank of Bordeaux?
  - A. The Left Bank primarily grows Merlot on limestone, while the Right Bank favours Cabernet Sauvignon on gravel
  - B. The Left Bank is dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon on gravel soils, while the Right Bank favours Merlot on clay and limestone
  - C. Both banks grow equal proportions of all five Bordeaux varieties
  - D. The Right Bank has larger estates and more corporate ownership than the Left Bank
4. Which of the following is classified as a secondary aroma in wine?
  - A. Blackcurrant from Cabernet Sauvignon
  - B. Butter and cream from malolactic fermentation
  - C. Leather and tobacco from bottle ageing
  - D. Petrol from aged Riesling
5. The term 'Super Tuscan' originally referred to wines that:
  - A. Were made from traditional Tuscan varieties and classified as DOCG
  - B. Used international varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon and were labelled as Vino da Tavola because they did not conform to DOC regulations
  - C. Were sparkling wines made in Tuscany using the traditional method
  - D. Were sweet wines from the coastal Maremma region
6. A winemaker uses oak alternatives (staves, chips, or powder) rather than barrels. What is the primary motivation?
  - A. Oak alternatives provide identical micro-oxygenation to barrels
  - B. Oak alternatives are significantly cheaper and faster at imparting oak flavour
  - C. Oak alternatives are only used in organic winemaking
  - D. Oak alternatives produce wines with longer ageing potential than barrel-aged wines
7. The en primeur system in Bordeaux involves:
  - A. Selling finished wines directly from the chateau cellar door
  - B. Selling wines as futures while still in barrel, typically 18-24 months before bottling
  - C. Auctioning rare back-vintages of classified growth wines
  - D. A government-regulated pricing mechanism for all AOC wines

- 8.** Which of the following best explains why gravelly soils are prized in the Haut-Medoc?
- A. Gravel provides essential nutrients that sandy soils lack
  - B. Gravel reflects heat, retains warmth, and provides excellent drainage, promoting stress and concentration
  - C. Gravel prevents phylloxera from reaching vine roots
  - D. Gravel creates acidic soil conditions that favour Cabernet Sauvignon
- 9.** Which Bordeaux commune is most associated with the highest proportion of Merlot in its blends and exceptionally small estate sizes?
- A. Pauillac
  - B. Saint-Julien
  - C. Pomerol
  - D. Margaux
- 10.** Which of the following is a primary role of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in winemaking?
- A. To promote the growth of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* during fermentation
  - B. To act as both an antioxidant and antimicrobial agent
  - C. To increase the rate of malolactic fermentation
  - D. To enhance colour extraction during maceration of red grapes
- 11.** When using the SAT to assess quality, a wine that shows good balance, moderate length, moderate intensity, and limited complexity would be rated as:
- A. Faulty
  - B. Poor
  - C. Good
  - D. Outstanding
- 12.** Which of the following statements about Chablis is correct?
- A. Chablis is made from Chardonnay grown on Kimmeridgian limestone, and Grand Cru vineyards face south-west
  - B. Chablis uses predominantly new oak barrels to achieve its characteristic minerality
  - C. Chablis Grand Cru vineyards are scattered across both banks of the Serein river
  - D. Chablis permits the use of Aligote for its Premier Cru wines
- 13.** Which of the following best describes the Chianti Classico DOCG regulations?
- A. 100% Sangiovese is mandatory with no other varieties permitted
  - B. Minimum 80% Sangiovese, with up to 20% other approved red varieties (including Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot); white grapes are no longer permitted
  - C. A blend of Sangiovese, Canaiolo, and mandatory inclusion of white Trebbiano
  - D. Any combination of Tuscan red varieties with no minimum for any single grape
- 14.** In the SAT, 'body' is influenced by which combination of factors?
- A. Acidity and tannin only
  - B. Alcohol, sugar, extract, and glycerol
  - C. Colour intensity and viscosity only
  - D. Aroma intensity and length of finish

- 15.** Which grape variety is exclusively permitted for red wine production in Cote-Rotie?
- A. Grenache
  - B. Mourvedre
  - C. Syrah (with up to 20% Viognier permitted as a co-fermentation)
  - D. Carignan
- 16.** Which statement about sustainable viticulture certifications is accurate?
- A. All sustainable certifications prohibit the use of any copper-based sprays
  - B. Sustainability programmes typically address environmental, social, and economic factors, going beyond just chemical inputs
  - C. Organic and sustainable certifications are interchangeable terms in EU law
  - D. Sustainable certifications require biodynamic preparations as a minimum standard
- 17.** Excessive levels of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in wine can be detected by:
- A. A bitter, metallic taste on the finish
  - B. A sharp, pungent aroma reminiscent of a struck match or burnt rubber
  - C. A sweet, perfumed aroma similar to rose petals
  - D. A sour, vinegar-like aroma on the nose
- 18.** How does climate change most directly threaten the traditional classification and appellation systems of European wine regions?
- A. By making all wine regions equally warm, eliminating regional differences
  - B. By shifting optimal growing conditions away from historically classified sites, potentially making traditional varieties and styles unviable in their current locations
  - C. By increasing global wine consumption beyond production capacity
  - D. By making organic certification impossible due to increased fungal disease pressure
- 19.** A viticulturist selects rootstock 110 Richter (110R) for a new vineyard planting. What is the most likely reason for this choice?
- A. The site has high limestone content and the vines need to avoid chlorosis
  - B. The site is drought-prone and needs a rootstock with deep root penetration
  - C. The site has high nematode populations requiring resistant rootstock
  - D. The site is in a very cool climate requiring early-ripening characteristics
- 20.** In the production of rose wine, which method involves short skin contact (typically 2-20 hours) before pressing?
- A. Saignee method
  - B. Direct pressing
  - C. Short maceration (skin contact) method
  - D. Blending method
- 21.** Phylloxera devastated European vineyards in the late 19th century. Which statement about phylloxera is correct?
- A. It feeds on the leaves of *Vitis vinifera* but not the roots
  - B. Grafting *Vitis vinifera* onto American rootstocks remains the primary defence
  - C. Sandy soils are the most vulnerable to phylloxera infestation
  - D. Chile was severely affected due to its proximity to Argentina

**22.** Downy mildew (*Plasmopara viticola*) is a significant viticultural hazard. Under which conditions does it thrive?

- A. Hot, dry conditions with strong winds
- B. Warm, humid conditions with rainfall during the growing season
- C. Cold, frosty conditions during dormancy
- D. Consistently cool temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius

**23.** Which statement about the global wine trade is accurate?

- A. France is both the largest producer and the largest consumer of wine globally
- B. China has overtaken the USA as the world's largest wine market by value
- C. Italy, France, and Spain are consistently the three largest wine-producing countries by volume
- D. Australia exports more wine by volume than France

**24.** The three sub-zones of Rioja are Rioja Alta, Rioja Alavesa, and Rioja Oriental (formerly Rioja Baja). Which sub-zone is warmest and most influenced by a Mediterranean climate?

- A. Rioja Alta
- B. Rioja Alavesa
- C. Rioja Oriental
- D. All three sub-zones have identical climatic conditions

**25.** Oidium (powdery mildew) differs from downy mildew in that it:

- A. Requires standing water on the leaf surface to germinate
- B. Can develop in dry conditions and does not require rainfall
- C. Only attacks the roots of the vine
- D. Is caused by a bacterium rather than a fungus

**26.** Which serving condition is most likely to make tannins in a red wine appear harsher and more astringent?

- A. Serving the wine at 18-20 degrees Celsius
- B. Serving the wine at 8-10 degrees Celsius
- C. Decanting the wine for two hours before serving
- D. Serving the wine in a large-bowled glass

**27.** When assessing the nose of a wine, 'development' refers to:

- A. How quickly the aromas dissipate after pouring
- B. Whether the wine shows primarily youthful, developing, or fully developed/aged aromatic characteristics
- C. The intensity of aromas when first poured versus after swirling
- D. The number of distinct aromas that can be identified

**28.** A winemaker decides to use whole-cluster fermentation for Pinot Noir. What effect does this primarily have on the wine?

- A. It eliminates the need for SO<sub>2</sub> additions
- B. It introduces stem tannins that can add structure, herbal complexity, and aromatic lift
- C. It prevents malolactic fermentation from occurring
- D. It reduces colour intensity because stems absorb anthocyanins

**29.** Which factor has most contributed to the growth of organic wine production globally since 2010?

- A. Organic wines are exempt from all government duties and taxes
- B. Increasing consumer demand for transparency, sustainability, and perceived health benefits
- C. Organic grapes consistently produce higher yields than conventional grapes
- D. EU regulations now require all wines to be certified organic by 2030

**30.** In the context of terroir, which factor is NOT typically considered a direct component?

- A. Mesoclimate
- B. Soil composition and drainage
- C. Winemaker's choice of yeast strain
- D. Aspect and altitude of the vineyard

**31.** A winemaker ferments Sauvignon Blanc at 12-14 degrees Celsius in stainless steel. What is the primary reason for this low temperature?

- A. To encourage malolactic fermentation simultaneously with alcoholic fermentation
- B. To preserve primary fruit aromas and volatile thiols
- C. To promote the extraction of phenolic compounds from the skins
- D. To increase the rate of fermentation and shorten tank occupancy

**32.** The Spanish wine classification 'Crianza' requires:

- A. A minimum of 24 months total ageing with at least 6 months in oak for red wines
- B. A minimum of 36 months total ageing with at least 12 months in oak
- C. No minimum ageing requirement, only a quality tasting panel approval
- D. A minimum of 60 months total ageing with at least 18 months in oak

**33.** The Haute Valeur Environnementale (HVE) certification in France represents:

- A. The highest level of a three-tier environmental certification scheme for farms, covering biodiversity, phytosanitary strategy, fertiliser management, and water management
- B. A biodynamic certification specific to French vineyards
- C. A classification of vineyard sites based on soil quality
- D. A consumer label indicating organic wine with no added sulphites

**34.** Volatile acidity (VA) in wine is primarily caused by which compound?

- A. Tartaric acid
- B. Acetic acid
- C. Malic acid
- D. Citric acid

**35.** Which fining agent works by carrying a positive charge that attracts and binds with negatively charged proteins and tannins?

- A. Bentonite
- B. Egg white (albumin)
- C. Isinglass
- D. Casein

- 36.** Compared to French oak, American oak (*Quercus alba*) is generally characterised by:
- A. More subtle, spicy flavours and tighter grain
  - B. Higher levels of whisky lactones giving pronounced coconut and dill notes
  - C. Lower levels of extractable tannin and vanillin
  - D. Greater porosity allowing faster micro-oxygenation
- 37.** Brunello di Montalcino DOCG requires that wines are made from:
- A. A blend of Sangiovese with up to 20% international varieties
  - B. 100% Sangiovese (locally known as Brunello)
  - C. A minimum of 80% Sangiovese with Canaiolo and Colorino
  - D. 100% Sangiovese Grosso aged for a minimum of one year in oak
- 38.** Which of the following correctly describes the 'finish' or 'length' of a wine?
- A. The time it takes for a wine to reach serving temperature
  - B. The duration that flavours persist on the palate after the wine is swallowed or spat
  - C. The number of different flavours perceived on the mid-palate
  - D. The intensity of tannin at the back of the mouth
- 39.** Which of the following is a key economic argument in favour of screwcap closures over natural cork?
- A. Screwcaps are more traditional and command higher consumer confidence
  - B. Screwcaps eliminate TCA taint risk and provide consistent seal quality, reducing both financial losses and brand damage from faulty bottles
  - C. Screwcaps allow the same micro-oxygenation as natural cork
  - D. Screwcaps are more environmentally sustainable than cork because cork forests are being destroyed
- 40.** Lees stirring (batonnage) during white wine production primarily:
- A. Increases acidity by releasing tartaric acid from dead yeast cells
  - B. Adds body, creaminess, and complexity by releasing mannoproteins and amino acids
  - C. Removes off-flavours caused by hydrogen sulphide production
  - D. Clarifies the wine by promoting rapid settlement of suspended particles
- 41.** From a business perspective, why do cooperatives play a significant role in certain wine regions?
- A. Cooperatives always produce higher-quality wine than private estates
  - B. They allow small growers to pool resources for winemaking, marketing, and distribution, achieving economies of scale that individual smallholders could not
  - C. Cooperatives are required by EU law in all wine-producing regions
  - D. Cooperatives exclusively produce organic and biodynamic wines
- 42.** What is the primary role of a negociant in the Burgundy wine trade?
- A. To grow grapes and make wine exclusively from their own vineyards
  - B. To buy grapes, must, or finished wine from growers, then blend, age, bottle, and sell under their own label
  - C. To regulate prices and allocations for Grand Cru wines
  - D. To certify the authenticity and provenance of wines for export
- 43.** *Brettanomyces* (Brett) contamination in wine is associated with which aromatic descriptor?
- A. Green bell pepper and pyrazines
  - B. Barnyard, band-aid, and sweaty saddle
  - C. Petrol and kerosene
  - D. Struck match and flint

- 44.** The Bordeaux place de negociants system distributes wine through a unique three-tier structure. What are these three tiers?
- A. Chateau, cooperative, and supermarket
  - B. Chateau, courtier (broker), and negociant
  - C. Grower, regulator, and exporter
  - D. Producer, government agency, and retailer
- 45.** In Burgundy, which of the following correctly describes the hierarchy from broadest to most specific appellation?
- A. Grand Cru, Premier Cru, Village, Regional
  - B. Regional, Village, Premier Cru, Grand Cru
  - C. Village, Regional, Grand Cru, Premier Cru
  - D. Premier Cru, Grand Cru, Village, Regional
- 46.** A producer wishes to reduce the impact of spring frost on their vineyard. Which of the following is the LEAST effective strategy?
- A. Using wind machines to mix warmer air from above with cold air at ground level
  - B. Spraying water on vines to form a protective ice layer (aspersion)
  - C. Planting on mid-slope sites that benefit from cold air drainage
  - D. Applying additional nitrogen fertiliser to promote early budburst
- 47.** Which of the following would be classified as a tertiary aroma in wine?
- A. Rose petal from Gewurztraminer
  - B. Vanilla from new oak barrel fermentation
  - C. Mushroom, forest floor, and dried fruit from extended bottle ageing
  - D. Grapefruit from cool-climate Sauvignon Blanc
- 48.** What is the standard size of a Bordeaux barrique?
- A. 228 litres
  - B. 225 litres
  - C. 300 litres
  - D. 500 litres
- 49.** What is the primary risk of a stuck fermentation?
- A. Excessive alcohol production above 20% ABV
  - B. Residual sugar left in the wine, creating a medium for spoilage bacteria
  - C. Over-extraction of tannins causing extreme bitterness
  - D. Rapid loss of colour in red wines
- 50.** Which statement correctly compares the terroir of Pauillac and Saint-Emilion?
- A. Both appellations share identical soil types and grape varieties
  - B. Pauillac features deep Quaternary gravel mounds ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon, while Saint-Emilion has diverse soils including limestone plateau, clay slopes, and sandy gravel
  - C. Saint-Emilion is closer to the ocean and therefore has a stronger maritime influence than Pauillac
  - D. Pauillac produces primarily Merlot-based wines due to its clay soils

## **Paper 2: Short Answer**

*Time allocation: 60 minutes*





# Answer Sheet

Circle the letter corresponding to your chosen answer.

1. A B C D

2. A B C D

3. A B C D

4. A B C D

5. A B C D

6. A B C D

7. A B C D

8. A B C D

9. A B C D

10. A B C D

11. A B C D

12. A B C D

13. A B C D

14. A B C D

15. A B C D

16. A B C D

17. A B C D

18. A B C D

19. A B C D

20. A B C D

21. A B C D

22. A B C D

23. A B C D

24. A B C D

25. A B C D

26. A B C D

27. A B C D

28. A B C D

29. A B C D

30. A B C D

31. A B C D

32. A B C D

33. A B C D

34. A B C D

35. A B C D

36. A B C D

37. A B C D

38. A B C D

39. A B C D

40. A B C D

41. A B C D

42. A B C D

43. A B C D

44. A B C D

45. A B C D

46. A B C D

47. A B C D

48. A B C D

49. A B C D

50. A B C D

























