

# DIPLOMA EXAMINERS REPORT – 2012/2013

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report has been compiled with the primary aim of assisting those who are preparing to sit Diploma Examination Papers in the future. It will also be of benefit to lecturers, course co-ordinators, tutors and mentors. It aims to give brief comments on candidates' answers to each question, as well as highlighting common pitfalls and successes. It is designed to provoke constructive thought as much as to give all the answers. Comments on individual questions are preceded by some statistics and general comments. In some instances, guidance notes are supplemented by extracts from candidates' responses. Where appropriate, advice is given on where additional marks could have been gained. Whilst examples are not provided for every question set, there are examples of sections from each of the specific types of question – coursework assignments, tasting questions and theory questions from closed book papers. In each instance, the scripts have been selected to illustrate good coverage of either the topic as a whole, or a specific sub-section of it.

It should be borne in mind that these are not the definitive answer to any of the questions. Some may omit a number of facts, or in the case of the coursework assignments, may express a degree of personal opinion rather than fact. Nevertheless, they are reproduced here because they are a good representation of the standard required to pass or excel in the Diploma examination. In some instances, we have also included less than perfect answers. These illustrate the difference between a very good script and one that requires more work to reach the standard to justify a pass, or in some instances to illustrate what is not acceptable in an examination of this level.

Candidates' responses published in this report were actual submissions in the 2012-13 examination cycle and as such are anonymous and are reproduced as submitted to the examiner. In some instances, they will contain information that is incorrect.

It is suggested that candidates revising and preparing for a particular type of question - tasting, paragraph, essay etc - read all comments on similar questions, as these often contain general advice, which is applicable across the board. Therefore, the candidate preparing for Unit 4, 5 or 6 may also find comments relating to both tasting and theory in Unit 3 helpful.

On a final note, as always, I would like to convey my thanks to all those who contribute their time and expertise to help the Awards team put the Diploma examination together and who contribute to the success of this qualification both in the UK and overseas.

To the internal and external members of the Examination Panel, the Moderating Panel, the examiners, the administration teams in the Diploma Approved Programme Providers, the examination invigilators and tasting teams who work so hard behind the scenes on the big day, the Results Panel and the Appeals Panel – my thanks to all of you!

Janet Bangs  
Chief Examiner, WSET Awards  
December 2013

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS  
Comparative Pass Rates by Paper**

Paper	2013			2012			2011			2010			2009			2008
Unit 1 CWA	April 88%	Nov 91%		April 90%	Nov 91%		April 88%	Nov 91%		April 75%	Nov 90%		April 99%	Nov 82%		(1)
Unit 1 Case Study	Nov 77%	Mar 71%	June 85%	Nov 87%	Mar 68%	June 74%	Nov 83%	Mar 67%	June 84%	Nov 76%	Mar 71%	June 68%	Nov 68%	Mar 77%	June 66%	Not applicable
Unit 2	81%			93%			90%			88%			81%			84%
Unit 3 Tasting	June 82%	Jan 64%		June 74%	Jan 66%		June 85%	Jan 72%		June 62%	Jan 62%		June 78%	Jan 76%		June 69% Jan 63%
Unit 3 Theory	June 40%	Jan 47%		June 43%	Jan 46%		June 54%	Jan 34%		June 66%	Jan 49%		June 59%	Jan 53%		June 63% Jan 50%
Unit 4	57%			67%			63%			61%			64%			60%
Unit 5	84%			75%			70%			64%			74%			63%
Unit 6	61%			65%			60%			66%			67%			61%

**NOTES:**

(1) Direct pass rates for Unit 1 are not given as this Unit was awarded on completion of four coursework titles.

## **GUIDANCE ON EXAMINATION PREPARATION**

The Candidate Assessment Guide provides plenty of valuable guidance on how to approach the various assessments of the WSET Diploma qualification. This report contains additional information, not only here but also under the sections on individual question types.

This section of the report covers some general comments on the issues and problems that come up year after year and also gives guidance on pitching responses at the right level, plus an insight into examination grading criteria.

### **Supplementary reading**

Candidates are reminded that the Study Guides issued by the WSET contain an overview of each section of the syllabus only and make frequent reference to additional sources of information. Candidates should be warned that the examination panel specifically refers to material listed as “required reading” when setting examination questions. Candidates who limit their study to the Diploma Study Guides in isolation run the risk of coming unstuck in the closed book examinations as a result. These additional sources of information should be just as much part of a study plan as the Study Guides themselves, and for candidates intent on achieving high grades; the importance of study beyond the “required reading” cannot be underestimated. In addition, there is clear evidence that candidates are not reading the Candidate Assessment Guide. This has been written specifically to help them prepare for assessment, and gives very clear guidance on the approach to assignment writing and the candidates' obligations in this respect, as well as general exam technique. Candidates who do not read this document may not reach their full potential in the examination.

### **Commercial awareness**

Unit 1, The Global Business of Wines and Other Beverages specifically examines candidates' commercial awareness through the means of coursework assignments and the closed book case study. There is some evidence that candidates are ignoring the fundamental fact that wine and spirit production and trading are business enterprises, and therefore fail to bring a commercial approach to their answers where appropriate. All coursework assignments have a commercial focus and a pass cannot be achieved simply by reiterating facts relating to production methods. Titles for the 2013/14 coursework assignments are on the WSET website under [www.wsetglobal.com/qualifications/diploma](http://www.wsetglobal.com/qualifications/diploma). Titles for the 2014/15 academic year will be published at the end of May 2014.

### **Examination Technique**

Taking note of these can make a big difference to your examination result.

- Answering the question as set.
- Writing legibly and presenting answers clearly.
- Avoiding careless errors such as mis-spelling a word contained in the question.
- Applying the Systematic Approach when answering tasting papers

In addition, we have noticed that candidates who take advantage of “examination preparation schemes” perform considerably better on the day than those who do not. Many of the Diploma Programme Providers run such schemes for their candidates.



Where these are not available, candidates can apply to join the Wine & Spirit Education Trust’s Diploma Assessment Preparation scheme (DAPs) and should speak to the administrator at their Approved Programme Provider in the first instance.

### Levels of Assessment Skills

Having an idea of the kinds of skills that are being assessed will help candidates to direct their study effectively and write an answer that demonstrates they have these skills. Consider the following types of assessment, and how each successive one requires a deeper level of expertise:

- Factual Recall - (how things are)
- Explanation - (how things could be and why)
- Analysis - (how things might become and how they ought to be)

#### Factual Recall

Factual recall tests basic knowledge. This usually takes the form of an answer to a ‘what’, ‘where’ or ‘who’ question. This knowledge can be simply recalled, if known. This is the simplest form of assessment and success can be achieved through “learning by rote”.

Sample question	What style of wine is Châteauneuf-du-Pape?
Answer	Full-bodied red wine with relatively soft tannins, lowish acidity and high alcohol.

#### Factual Recall + Application

Factual recall can be combined with application to assess to a greater depth. This is commonly achieved by putting the question into a relevant context, e.g.:

Sample question	A customer asks you to recommend a soft, full-bodied red wine. What would you recommend?
Answer	Châteauneuf-du-Pape. ( <i>This is obviously only one of several legitimate answers.</i> )

No matter how many facts the candidate has memorised, these do not constitute an **understanding** of a subject area. If the facts have been learnt by rote, the candidate either knows the answer or not. Using insight to work out what would be a correct answer, when the answer is not known, only comes at the next level: explanation.

The lower level WSET qualifications (Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced Certificate) mostly limit themselves to testing factual recall, assessed via multiple-choice format questions.

In the Diploma, the multiple choice Unit 2 examination, and the questions that require the candidate to write a paragraph about given topics which appear in units 3, 4, 5 and 6 are also mainly testing factual recall and recall + application. Factual recall will get candidates a reasonably long way in the WSET Diploma, but is not sufficient to guarantee success in Unit 1, and is unlikely to be adequate for the Unit 3 theory paper either.

### Explanation

Explanation goes beyond 'what', 'where', and 'who', and asks 'why'. This type of question tests not just memorised knowledge of the subject, but understanding as well. This is because in order to explain something, the candidate needs to know not just 'what is the case' but 'what would be the case if things were different'. This kind of 'counterfactual' understanding is achieved by spotting patterns in the basic facts, and deducing explanatory mechanisms behind them. Alternatively, a tutor could explain the mechanisms. However, if the candidate then finds that they have to memorise this information, it is a clear sign that they have not really understood it, and will not be able to apply the mechanism themselves in other scenarios, such as in the examination itself.

The human brain naturally tries to find patterns in data – though some people are able to do this more easily than others. These patterns mean that a lot of information can be deduced from a few simple principals. The skill of explanation is a higher order skill than recall, but the amount of data that needs to be memorised is less.

Sample question	Why is Châteauneuf-du-Pape a full-bodied, high-alcohol red wine with relatively soft tannins?
Alternatively	Account for the style of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, or explain the style of Châteauneuf-du-Pape.
Answer	The Grenache grape naturally gives wines that are high in alcohol, and full-bodied, but with soft tannins. The hot ripening conditions due to the location in sunny Southern France, aided by low-trained bunches benefitting from heat reflected from the ground also helps achieve fully ripe tannins and speeds sugar accumulation in the grapes.

A much more detailed explanation is also possible of course, and would be expected in the examination itself.

The basic facts (hot climate, Grenache-dominated blend) could be memorised and recalled, but what makes this a question about *understanding* rather than *factual recall* is the implication that if these causal factors were altered, then the style of Châteauneuf would change. For example, if the climate were cooler, then alcohol levels would be lower, and the tannins less ripe, or if more Carignan (or Cabernet) were used in the blend, then the wine would have firmer tannins, lower alcohol and less body.

Explanation + Application

Just like factual recall, explanation can also be applied to a particular situation to assess explanation combined with application. This is where the counterfactual implications of the causal process are explicitly put to work. For example, if X were not the case, then B, rather than A would be the outcome.

Sample question	You are a producer of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and one of your important clients has requested a wine with lower alcohol. How can you meet this demand?
Answer	This would take the form of a list of things you could do to achieve this style, such as altering the blend to include less Grenache; sourcing grapes from cooler sites; increasing yields; using the vine canopy to shade the ripening fruit; retraining the vines to raise the fruiting zone; using open fermenters and low-conversion yeast strains, etc, etc.....

The WSET Diploma assessment, particularly the essay-format questions in Unit 3, aims to test *understanding* of the subject, rather than an ability to *recall facts*, but there is another level above this which should be considered during preparation for Unit 1. This is *analysis*.

Analysis

Analysis requires you to draw conclusions from the facts and the causal mechanisms behind the facts. This might involve issues such as:

- Identifying and extrapolating trends to make predictions.
- Identifying which of a set of explanations is the most likely, or which of a set of causes is the most important.
- Identifying what the consequences of something are.

Sample question	Average alcohol levels in Châteauneuf-du-Pape have been rising over the last ten years. What are the main reasons for this and to what extent is the trend likely to continue?
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Answer	An important point here is that in this context the inclusion of the word ‘main’ (as in ‘main reasons’) is not making life easy by limiting responses to <i>some</i> rather than <i>all</i> of the possible reasons. It is challenging the candidate to identify which, of all the possible reasons, are the most important ones. Once these have been identified, the candidate would have to argue to what extent they are likely to continue to have an effect.
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### Analysis + application

In the same way that recall of knowledge and explanatory skills can be “applied”, so can analysis. This usually takes the form of making recommendations.

Sample question	What, if anything, should producers in Châteauneuf-du-Pape do in order to slow or reverse the trend towards increasing alcohol levels?
Answer	Note the subtle difference between ‘what <b>can</b> they do’ (a list of possible responses, as set out under ‘explanation + application’ above) and ‘what <b>should</b> they do’. In order to establish what producers should do, it is necessary to consider the possibilities, and argue which of these are going to be the most prudent or effective and this forms the basis of the response to the question.

### **Summary**

As candidates progress through the various levels of WSET Qualifications, they move from learning ‘what wines are like’ to understanding ‘why they are like that’. An understanding of the six factors taught at Level 3 will form an excellent foundation for Units 3, 4, 5 and 6, but Unit 1 offers the chance to go beyond ‘what the world is like’ and ‘why it is like that’ to examine ‘what the world could be like’, ‘what it should be like’ and ‘what we should do about it’. These are far more interesting and challenging questions than mere factual recall. They should inspire candidates to explore the possibilities as they ponder them and hopefully find some convincing solutions.

### **Examination Grading Criteria**

Grade bandings for the Diploma examination are largely determined by the content of the submission judged against the “marking key” or “marks schedule” for each question. For example, the candidate covering 75% or more of the content defined in the marking key has a good chance of achieving a distinction grade. However, there are also other elements that come into play beyond pure factual content. The grade bandings are summarised below:

**Fail Unclassified** <44%

Seriously inadequate answer, through lack of information, or errors, demonstrating in general a very weak understanding of the subject. Insufficient evidence of understanding to award a pass, through brevity, lack of detail or inaccuracies.

**Fail** 45 to 55%

Borderline candidate, who whilst close to a pass does not give the examiner enough to award a Pass grade. Insufficient evidence of understanding to award a pass, through brevity, lack of detail or inaccuracies.

**Pass** 55% to 64%

The candidate demonstrates an adequate understanding of the topic, covering sufficient of the main points to be "more right than wrong." A basic answer, with limited use of examples and depth of information, which may contain some errors.

**Pass with Merit** 65% to 74%

There should be evidence of clear understanding here, with a greater factual coverage, and better depth and accuracy of information and examples. Very sound, but without the extra edge for a pass with distinction.

**Pass with Distinction** >75%

The candidate should demonstrate a thorough and accurate understanding of the subject in depth, and show some flair, creativity or originality in analysis, argument or choice of examples.

## COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

### Unit I, The Global Business of Wines and other Beverages

Before commenting on each specific assignment title, here are some general comments about the grading of coursework assignments:

All assignments are graded out of 100. Of this, 20 marks are available for the candidate's handling of the assignment. This includes the diversity of the bibliography, the presentation of the work in terms of spelling, grammar and legibility and the structure and style of the assignment. The latter incorporates issues such as coherence, flair, fluency, use of illustrative examples and the candidate's method of approach to the assignment.

The allocation of the balance of 80 marks varies according to the individual assignment and will be detailed as appropriate under each Assignment Brief.

In terms of presentation, marks will be lost where work is presented with spelling and/or grammatical errors. With spell checkers on all PCs, there is really no excuse for errors of this kind. Structure is also important, particularly if candidates do not follow the format dictated by the various sections of the Assignment Brief, as an automatic fail grade is awarded where any section is not addressed. The bibliography is an essential part of the assignment and those submitted without one are penalised as a result. Many candidates appear confused over the difference between a bibliography and "Reference Notes". The Candidate Assessment Guide explains this. The bibliography needs to draw on a variety of sources – books, magazines, internet, interviews – and certainly needs to have strong commercial evidence of the kind that can be obtained from trade journals such as *Drinks Business*, or *Just Drinks*. These are vital for identifying trends and topical issues. The internet features strongly in many candidates' bibliographies. This is fine, so long as there are other sources as well, such as text books, personal contact with subject experts and trade press. There is however a worrying dependence on "unreliable" sources such as Wikipedia. The bibliography should be correctly referenced throughout the body of the assignment – something very few candidates actually do. This is where the "reference notes" or footnotes come into play. Guidance on this is given in the Candidate Assessment Guide. Failure to follow this will result in lower marks in this section of the Assignment Brief.

A number of examiners have commented on misuse of footnotes and appendices. Some assignments are submitted with footnotes which account for up to half of each page of the assignment. This is simply abusing the restriction on the maximum permitted word count and in such cases their content is not included in the marking process. In addition, some candidates submit excessive quantities of appendices. In many instances, these are not even referenced within the body of the assignment and their purpose is therefore questionable. There is a general feeling that these are often included to show how much work had been done but they are often actually surplus to requirements.

Next, a few words on the use of the SWOT analysis in coursework. Whilst these do have their uses, some candidates include them indiscriminately without really making any conclusion regarding their findings. At worst they can be repetitive, of limited relevance, and eat into the word-count with little to show for it. At best they can highlight key points, generate imaginative thought and clear the mind. They should be used with caution and should never form the bulk of the work unless the assignment brief instructs you to do so.

Finally a couple of general comments that apply to all assignment writing. Candidates are reminded that work submitted for assessment purposes must include no personal identifier beyond the candidate number – names should not appear on work in any format beyond the signature on the front sheet. Some pieces of work submitted show signs of collaboration or “leading” by the Approved Programme Provider, or in the worst cases, plagiarism or simply copying another candidate’s work. There have been some appalling instances of candidates simply lifting huge sections of work from papers published on the internet. Where this has been detected, a fail grade has been awarded. Candidates must remember that assignments are to be the sole work of the individual submitting them and they should be in no doubt that it is always very obvious to the examiner where this is not the case. The penalties in such instances can be very severe indeed, and in repeated instances, will lead to the candidate being barred from completing this qualification.

## Coursework Assignments

### November 2012

<b>Re-launching a Single Malt Scotch Whisky</b>	
<b>Required content and suggested approach</b> The production of malt whisky in Scotland has grown steadily over the past quarter of a century. Between 1982 and 1984 the annual production of Scotch malt whisky was less than 100 million litres of pure alcohol (LPA). By contrast, between 2007 and 2009 production was more than 200 million LPA per annum. Much of this malt whisky is destined for use in Blended Scotch Whisky and Blended Malt Scotch Whisky. However, a proportion will end up being bottled as Single Malt Scotch Whisky. This category enjoys premium pricing and is perceived to be rich in the heritage values that make Scotch Whisky unique.	
<i>Answers: 253</i>	<i>Passes: 230 (91%)</i>

The open book coursework assignments always generate high marks, and this was no exception.

For this assignment, candidates were initially required to give a brief market overview of the Single Malt Scotch Whisky category. They were then asked to look at the factors that should be considered when devising a re-launch. This was to be done by means of a SWOT analysis of the Single Malt Scotch Whisky category. This process would then highlight opportunities within the category that, if addressed, might produce significant growth. Some candidates failed to limit their comments to the Single Malt Scotch Whisky category, writing instead about Scotch Whisky in general or “Malt” as a generic term. This would have lost them marks as the brief was very specific in this respect.

Having carried out the SWOT analysis, candidates needed to review the options that were available from “the marketing mix” when re-launching a Single Malt Scotch Whisky brand, and in particular, which innovations might address some of the opportunities that had been identified earlier in the SWOT analysis. Most candidates were able to write knowledgeably about the “marketing mix”, but were less good at giving specific examples of innovations that they would adopt.

Finally, using the knowledge of the malt whisky market they had acquired during the research for this assignment, candidates needed to consider how effective a re-launch along the lines they were proposing would actually be, as well as speculating on the long term prospects for the Single Malt Scotch Whisky category. This tended to be the weakest section of the assignment as it was impossible to find the answer through research – answering this well relied fully on the candidate’s ability to draw their own conclusions.

The following script achieved sound marks. It is clear, logical and well written.



## Re-launching a Single Malt Scotch Whisky

### List of Contents:

- (i) **Introduction:** a brief market overview of the single malt Scotch whisky category
- (ii) **Factors that should be considered when devising a re-launch:** SWOT analysis on the single malt Scotch whisky category
- (iii) **The re-launch “marketing mix”**
- (iv) **Conclusion and personal commentary**

### (i) Introduction:

Now is a good time to be in the position to be able to re-launch a single malt Scotch whisky. Single malt has come not only to be the figurehead of Scotch Whisky quality, but also a highly profitable product class that is surging in popularity on emerging markets as traditional markets struggle. Like blended Scotch, single malts are experiencing strong growth, but they also fetch much higher prices. While just 8% of Scotch whisky sold in 2011 was single malt, it accounted for an impressive 18% of its overall value, according to HM Revenue & Customs figures (in Scotch Whisky Association 2011 Statistical Report, 2012). Moreover, the category's future prospects look good as single malt Scotch has been adopted by prosperous younger middle-class consumers in Asia and Latin America, emerging markets which account for most of the growth in consumption while recession has held back growth in the mature markets of Europe and the US.

Those distilleries and drinks companies that don't specialise in single malt are actively adding the category to their portfolios. Global drinks giants, such as Pernod Ricard, are looking to Scotch as a growth driver in emerging markets with premium products, especially single malts, at the fore. The market is also set to expand with heavy investment going into distilleries, with intensified focus on single malt, and distilleries outside Scotland releasing single malts. Diageo recently decided to invest £1 billion on expanding its production of all whisky, but with a focus on single malt Scotch in particular. M&A activity is rife with the likes of Rémy Cointreau, for example, obtaining its first single malt Scotch by acquiring Islay's Bruichladdich Distillery. Distillers are switching from bulk to premium products, especially single malts. United Spirits didn't acquire Whyte & Mackay for the group's bulk Scotch whisky business, but rather for its Jura and Dalmore single malts, which are two of the top three fastest growing malts in the world (Mercer, 2012). The category is also an exciting one to work in with the best people being hired to head the overseas sales push (Morton, 2012).

### (ii) Factors that should be considered when devising a re-launch:

#### Strengths:

Each single malt is distinguished from other single malts and from other types of whisky by its connection to a single place of origin, its strictly defined ingredients, the intricacies of its method of production and its unique taste profile. These factors make it an infinitely marketable product. Indeed, single malts possess the kind of distinctive individuality that fine wines pertaining from a particular terroir have. Furthermore, single malt has a strong association with Scottish heritage, which will increasingly become the focus of media attention as Scotland bids for independence over the next couple of years. The increased investment in production and marketing, which is set to further expand the market, is also gaining the sector more widespread media attention.

Single malt Scotch is increasingly becoming a global concern with the potential to expand the single malt sector beyond its current core markets in Europe and the US into the rapidly-growing Scotch markets as Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe being realised, according to a joint International Wine & Spirit Research (IWSR)/Just-Drinks report (in Cooper, 2011). The report states that developing markets are vital to malt's growth prospects, especially since the middle-class is expected to double in these countries in the next 20 years. In particular, single malt whisky is experiencing surging demand and rapid growth in new markets such as the BRIC countries, especially in Brazil, Russia and China. For its part, the fourth member of BRIC, India, will offer ever greater potential than at present if the European Union/India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) comes into effect at the end of 2012 (Britner, 2012). Other dynamically growing markets include the so-called MIST markets of Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea and Turkey. The same IWSR/Just-Drinks report predicts overall sales of single malt whisky will increase by 14.7% from 2009 to 2015 to reach 7 million cases.

Single malt is also sold for a premium price compared to blended Scotch whisky, fetching a significantly higher margin per bottle. Indeed, the business case for single malt production appears to be getting stronger. For example, single malt focussed Glenglassaugh Distillery in Aberdeenshire was able to turn profitable three years after reopening, as opposed to the anticipated 10 years (Crummy, 2012a).

The travel retail market exposes many travellers from the emerging markets to single malt. Not only is the retail travel market large, it can also lead to repeat purchases on the home market.

**Weaknesses:**

While developing markets are growing, the core markets of the UK and the US have been subject to prolonged recession, which affects the prospects of high-end products such as single malts. Despite economic growth of 1% in the three months to September 2012 being the most rapid growth in five years, implying the UK has come out of recession, the mood is only one of cautious optimism (Winter & Stewart, 2012). Meanwhile, supermarket promotions in the UK sell single malts at close to cost price, which has led many brands to exit the UK in pursuit of more lucrative international markets (Miller, 2012). Additionally, single malt is most associated with older consumers in the core UK and US markets, which doesn't bode well for the future.

Single malt is subject to regular and unpredictable increases in government taxation for various reasons in many markets. These range from attempts to reduce alcohol consumption to measures aimed at protecting domestic industries in such countries as India, Canada and Japan. Last year saw a 14% decrease in overall Scotch whisky sales to the previously buoyant market of France, which the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) attributed to a 15% tax increase (Britner, 2012). The Russian government is currently taking wide ranging steps to reduce the consumption of alcohol (Stanford, 2012).

Single malt is expensive to make, which means that the time taken to turn profitable is comparatively long and the barriers to entry significant. It takes 10 or more years to age and requires special casks to be kept in large warehouses, with strict supervision and control necessary. It is also subject to evaporation. In addition, the return on investment on single malts is often slower than on younger, cheaper whisky.

The single malt category is subject to highly sophisticated and established competition with many companies long having seen and exploited the undoubted potential. Leading drinks companies, such as Pernod Ricard, Rémy Cointreau and Suntory, which own single malt brands, have vast marketing budgets to draw on, while many family-owned distilleries have both brand power and sizeable funds to put into marketing.

**Opportunities:**

Firstly, considerable opportunity lies within the Scotch whisky category itself as existing whisky drinkers make receptive targets for trading up to more exclusive single malt. According to the Just-Drinks/IWSR report (in Cooper, 2011), potential to expand exists in both existing and developing markets, with huge opportunity lying in those emerging markets where their share is comparatively low. The IWSR/Just-Drinks forecast of 199% growth in single malt sales in India over the five-year period between 2009 and 2015 was made before the possibility of reduced important duties looked feasible. This could lead to even more accelerated growth in this hugely populated country of 1.3 billion, with its rapidly-growing and youthful middle-class. India offers massive potential since its increasingly wealthy population already has a love of whisky, which isn't shared by the Chinese (The Spirits Business, 2010). Furthermore, India's prohibitive taxes on imported Scotch could start to be lowered from the end of 2012 (Britner, 2012). Meanwhile, growth in China – the world's most populous country – is predicted to rise 114% from 2009 to 2015 by IWSR/Just-Drinks, with overall growth in Asia put at 34.6% over the corresponding time period. Although smaller in size, the still highly populated MIST markets have been recently outperforming BRIC in terms of economic growth (Martin, 2012).

It is not a case of having to build entirely new distribution channels in Asia. There is already quality wine retailing and distribution in place, which can provide a launch pad for single malt whiskies to enter, while many Asians are also exposed to malt whiskies when travelling to the West (Cooper, 2011). Single malts can also be sold via the same channels as already established blended whiskies.

An exciting trend is that women are becoming increasingly attracted to whisky, especially in the form certain single malts that are made with a female audience in mind. Record numbers of women have been joining the Scotch Malt Whisky Society, which opens up a larger demographic of potential consumers (Crummy, 2012b). Single malts that are fruitier and rounder than the usual are seen to appeal to female palates, such as Balblair 1989, which is matured in American oak barrels to impart toffee and vanilla aromas.

A major opportunity also lies in the on-trade, which requires less advertising than the off-trade and on-trade sampling can reach those consumers keen to try a new product by the glass first, before making the decision to buy a full bottle from an off-trade establishment should they like it. The on-trade has not as yet been the target of too much sales focus (Cooper, 2011).

**Threats:**

Single malt whisky has been identified by whisky producers and global drinks giants alike as a driver of growth and profits, which has seen competition rapidly intensifying. Many companies have already spotted the opportunity and acted on it. This is the case from both fellow Scotland-based producers and single malt producers from such places as London, New Zealand, Tasmania and India. London distillery's move into producing single malt, which will

be the first London single malt whisky in a century, is set to change the UK market (Crummy, 2012c). Local producers, who have been protected by high important tariffs that protect the local whisky producers, have been busy adding single malt to their portfolios. Hence, there is a possible risk of over supply as many distilleries and drinks giants pile into the sector. Virtually every week there is news of new releases of single malts from both Scotland and the ever widening world of single malt.

Despite the seemingly endless growth offered by the single malt, the whisky market is dominated by sophisticated and powerful companies that can respond quickly to new and competitive outside initiatives, which could make entry challenging and indeed expensive. There is also a significant threat posed by other categories from high end spirits like Cognac, Armagnac and Vodka, while Tequila is becoming an increasingly premium product. Irish whisky is currently in vogue. Leading Bourbon producer Beam is looking to obtain 25% of its rise in annual sales from emerging markets, which includes doubling sales in Russia in three years (Stanford, 2012).

Back on the immediate home market of Scotland, as well as in the UK, there is the issue of minimum pricing to contend with. If whisky producers are forced to put up the prices of their blended products, then it could push those closer to single malt prices, which could interfere with established pricing models. The chief executive of the SWA, Gavin Hewitt, argues that minimum pricing could have an impact on exports while doing nothing to reduce alcohol consumption (Hewitt, 2012).

### **(iii) The re-launch “marketing mix”:**

#### **Price**

It is inadvisable to price single malt too low as it could lose its exclusive appeal, as well as make it hard to be profitable. It should be priced around the same as its competitors, perhaps a bit cheaper than established brands so that it can break into the market. However, if the product does very well at whisky tasting competitions, we could put it at the same or higher prices than established rivals. A price of around £30 per bottle for our core product is recommended. If our product is significantly superior to the average in terms of quality then we should consider charging a premium.

#### **Place**

We should explore a number of pilot markets to avoid putting all our eggs in one basket, closely follow progress on a monthly basis and put more emphasis on those markets with the best sales and growth rates. We need to work with local distributors, especially in foreign markets, although it could be difficult to find ones who don't also push competitors. If they do, then we should make sure that their other labels share a similar philosophy. It could be a case of strength in numbers to improve the overall offering, especially given the amount of growth in the market. The Point of Sale (POS) is important and we ought to consider working with POS specialists in local markets. In the key market of China, we could consider working with Rockwood & Hines, a specialist in producing marketing materials such as POS displays, with vast experience of the Chinese market (Jack, 2009).

Attendance at trade shows home and abroad is essential, with our single malt entered into key competitions such as London's IWSC (International Wine & Spirits Competition). We ought to establish a presence in London's burgeoning whisky bars and these bars could also be the



venues for masterclasses with representatives from our distillery guiding tasters through our portfolio.

A solid presence in the travel retail market is needed, thereby increasing numbers of global travellers coming into contact with our single malt. Based on a positive experience, they could well buy our single malt when back in their home countries.

### **Product**

We should have a core 12-year-old single malt that will be the mainstay of the business, and also launch a range of older, limited-edition bottlings to supplement our core brand since high margins can be attained from these add-ons without a huge increase in production costs. The core brand, and the limited edition whiskies, will have the term "single malt" on the label. Add-ons could include single-cask bottlings, a cask ownership scheme and vintage single malt. The label should be contemporary but also capture heritage values.

Our product must be bottled in Scotland to be considered a single malt Scotch. The bottle should carry the regional name since our single malt will be wholly distilled in that region. It will also carry the name of our distillery, having been made there in its entirety. It must be made from only water and malted barley, with no other cereals permitted, and the distillation has to be carried out in pot stills, according to the Scotch Whisky Society.

### **Promotion**

Initiatives to emphasise the uniqueness of the product should be pursued, although the approach will vary according to different markets. Terroir is a very trendy term in the world of wine and can be applied to single malt whiskey, such as with Bruichladdich's Islay Barley Series (Bruichladdich, 2012). This should encompass everything from where the base ingredients are grown to where the whisky is matured. A sense of place is something for which consumers could be prepared to pay something of a premium. Focussing on terroir is also a way of breathing new life into the heritage and tradition message.

Single cask bottling of the contents of individual barrels is another way of promoting uniqueness and rarity, and it proved to be a good technique for Glenglassaugh Distillery in becoming profitable three years after reopening (Crummy, 2012a). The number of the cask and the exact ageing dates can be printed on the label and put further focus on the one-off nature of the product. Also, we can say what kind of cask the single malt has been aged in, such as traditional 50-litre Octaves. Another technique, also used to good effect by Glenglassaugh is small cask ownership, which is a way of getting closer to consumers and giving them a sense of ownership in the business, a bit like shares do.

We should try to get our single malts into the Scotch Malt Whisky Society, which arranges very well-attended tastings across the UK and also has international branches. The experience of tasting whisky can be enhanced on the part of customers by participating in guided tastings given by representatives distilleries or from acknowledge experts. Matching single malts with food is a sophisticated technique that is emerging and is especially applicable to single malts (Harpers, 2012). An effective way to foster brand loyalty is to offer club membership, offering discounts for regular purchases.

We must make sure we make our web presence active with blogging, Facebook and Twitter playing a key role in reaching our customers and potential customers. The younger, more tech savvy consumers, who our vital to our brand's future, want and expect to be approached

through such channels. This is tied in with the need to shake off the image of whisky as an old fashioned drink, especially in the home market.

We should target influential journalists and arrange press trips to the distillery, which is an effective tool in capturing page space in key publications, which typically leads to readers searching out the product. We should also hold press conferences and press tastings in the markets we are targeting to reach a wider pool of journalists.

**Conclusion and personal commentary:**

It is an excellent time to re-launch the brand as those who can capture and consolidate share of new markets will be well placed in future. Although, competition is intensifying from global drinks companies that have huge marketing budgets and investment capability at their disposal, to hold back could be costly as the market gets taken by a rush of new entrants. Nevertheless, the cost of entry is high and a re-launched brand cannot be underfunded.

As with all buoyant markets, there is a threat of the market reaching saturation or the bubble bursting, although this doesn't yet appear to be on the horizon. The huge investment into single malt production indicates that the market is growing and if we have the ability to re-launch a brand, which implies that we have stocks of the finished product, then there's no reason to hold back on re-launching our product.

## April 2013

<b>Accounting for the success of Pinot Grigio, Prosecco and Brunello di Montalcino</b>	
<b>Required content and suggested approach</b> For those versed in conventional marketing wisdom, the behaviour of the Italian wine sector can seem odd if not inexplicable. Much of the success of the New World wine industries can be attributed to brand led marketing. By contrast, the achievement of the French industry can, in large part, be said to be based on emphasising the link between wine and its place of origin. Whilst elements of both these strategies have played a role in Italy, neither seems to fully explain the sales growth achieved by wines as diverse as Pinot Grigio, Prosecco and Brunello di Montalcino.	
<i>Answers: 360</i>	<i>Passes: 318 (88%)</i>

This was a straight forward assignment leaving it up to the candidate to make their own decision as to the wines they would use to illustrate their point in the second part of the question. Those who failed, tended to miss the finer points of the question or where unable to convince the examiner when it came to speculation about the future.

There were only two key parts to this assignment. The first was largely factual, with candidates needing to account for the commercial success of Pinot Grigio, Prosecco and Brunello di Montalcino. Those who did this well showed rather more imagination and backed up their arguments with statistical evidence of growth of these wines. However, when also asked to evaluate the potential of these wines for sustaining further growth, responses were often much weaker, or in some instances this issue was simply not addressed at all.

The second part of the assignment left it up to the candidate to identify potential candidates for the role of “Cinderella wines”. These needed to be other Italian wines deserving of success, but where this does not seem to have been forthcoming. Having selected likely wines to fit this profile, candidates needed to explore the reasons for their perceived lack of popularity and evaluate their prospects for success in the future. Once again, it was this second, speculative part of the question that was poorly answered or not addressed at all.

The following candidate addresses all aspects of the assignment well. The assignment is clearly set out and it used the format of a SWOT analysis to assess the potential for the three named wines to sustain further growth, which works well in this instance. The choice of Cinderella wines is good (Barbera and Nero d’Avola) and there is some good discussion relating to these.

## INTRODUCTION

The French wine industry has a long-standing reputation of producing generation after generation of high quality wines based on the attributes of terroir. The New World Wines, on the other hand, have had to use brand led marketing (in the form of promotion and packaging) in order to push their wines into the burgeoning and ever growing market. Italians have, not just had the 'terroir advantage' and the need to use brand marketing, but also a combination of various factors that have needed to be used, to gain an advantage. In this assignment we account for the recent commercial success of Prosecco, Pinot Grigio and Brunelli di Montalcino and how this can be sustained for the future. We will also analyse 2 Italian "Cinderella" upcoming wines which, amongst various indigenous grapes, that are now gaining high recognition around the world- Barbera and Nero d'avola.

### 1) PROSECCO

Prosecco is a sparkling wine that is produced using the "Tank" method where secondary fermentation occurs in a pressurized tank, instead of bottles like in Champagne. This gives a light and delicate wine of medium structure. It is usually non-vintage and comes in various styles- brut (dry), off-dry and sweet style, although in the past 10 years, production of Brut styles has dramatically gone up from 10% to 35% of the overall production<sup>1</sup>. Real prosecco comes from a delineated zone in the northeastern corner of Italy, north of Treviso.

#### *1.1) Reasons for Success*

- Product innovation<sup>2</sup> (in the form of economical Charmat/Tank method) has been its key growth driver. It is lower in alcohol (11%), which is an advantage in a market saturated with high strength spirits, and is less acidic and has softer bubbles than Champagne.

<sup>1</sup>Shah M, Meiningers' WBI, Wine Styles, p 46-47 "Prosecco keeps bubbling" retrieved from <<http://www.michelshah.com/wp-content/uploads>> on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2012

<sup>2</sup>Cooper B 2012, "Research in Focus- Prosecco leads the sparkling wine charge", retrieved from <<http://just-drinks/analysis>> on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2013



- A “treat” and a contemporary drink for the younger generation and is easily available in bars and pubs. Has become part of the “metropolitan life style.”<sup>3</sup>
- Versatile and can be used as an aperitif (served along with Aperol) or as a wine cocktail such as Bellini or for dinner drinks. Easy to pair with, especially the dry style. The President of the USA was seen drinking it in an inauguration party. Worked positively its for image and brand building.<sup>4</sup>
- Value reputation- In the current downturn, a lower price (about \$10-\$19)<sup>5</sup> makes it cheaper and more accessible than Champagne. Timing to introduce it (after the 9/11) was also useful, as there seemed to be a turn against French goods.
- Crisp, fresh and easy to drink. Some comments received from wine retailers being, “citrusy, fruity, creamy, explosive floral aromas, and makes one want to keep drinking it.”<sup>6</sup>
- Because prosecco can be cultivated anywhere in the world, countries such as Australia, America, Brazil started producing cheap versions of prosecco. This “agropiracy”<sup>7</sup> as named by the Italian agricultural minister, Luca Zaia really “hurt” the perception of the “Made in Italy Brand.” In retaliation, three DOC’s were upgraded to DOCGs in 2009, with strict regulations<sup>8</sup> and 9 IGTs were upgraded to DOCs (Appendix 1). To retain the importance of Prosecco as an

<sup>3</sup> Shah M, Meiningers' WBI, Wine Styles, p 46-47 “Prosecco keeps bubbling” retrieved from <<http://www.michelshah.com/wp-content/uploads/>> on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2012

<sup>4</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2009, “Prosecco reaches Obama’s inauguration: but what is the future for prosecco?” retrieved from <<http://Vinostrum.blogspot.hk/>> on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2012

<sup>5</sup> <<http://beveragemedia.com/index.php/2011/12>> – “A sparkling trio- With New Year’s coming into view, it’s a good time to focus on Cava, Prosecco and Champagne” accessed on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2013

<sup>6</sup> The Wall Street Journal 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010, “Does Prosecco deserve its sparkling success?” retrieved from <<http://www.onlinenewsj.com>> on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012

<sup>7</sup> Wilson J 2009, “The Smart Set” From Drexel University, retrieved from

<<http://www.drexel.edu/~wilsonj/articles/article05260901.aspx>> on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013

indigenous grape, Prosecco grown elsewhere is now named "Glera". This has helped to get back the trademark "Italian Prosecco".

### **1.2) Weaknesses and Resulting Threats**

- Not taken very seriously in the wine business, as it is not a heavy hitting brand like Champagne.
- With affordable Cava and Australian sparkling wines gaining importance, the market is getting saturated and Prosecco has been losing its selling edge.
- The New appellation change and its implications have not fully been understood by the world.
- Threat from Austria producing a cheap version of "Prosecco" took the Italian regulators by shock when they saw Paris Hilton's advertisement holding Prosecco in a can. Although the DOCG was initiated for this reason, it will only protect Italy in the EU area<sup>9</sup> and not for too long outside EU.
- Prosecco must be drunk when young since its non-vintage.

### **1.3) Opportunities and Potential**

- The ready and easy availability of Prosecco has changed the consumer behavior towards using it on an everyday basis, rather than only for celebratory occasions.
- Being classified as the first viticultural area recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site<sup>10</sup> is a great way to attract visitors and build up a loyal customer base.

<sup>9</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2009, "Prosecco reaches Obama's inauguration: but what is the future for prosecco?"  
retrieved from <<http://Vinostrum.blogspot.hk/>>

<sup>10</sup> Wilson J 2009, "The Smart Set" From Drexel University, retrieved from  
<<http://www.thesmartset.com/article/article05260901.aspx>> on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2013

- With the DOCG regulations being enforced, prices have gone up and hence it is important to communicate and capture consumer preference by informing (via promotional campaigns, wine fairs and road trips) about the area's uniqueness in terms of terroir, quality, vineyard practices and management, which involves manual labour to harvest on steep terraces.
- EU currently in an economic downturn, will help boost Prosecco's consumption. However competition outside EU must be recognized and fairs must be organized internationally, to help instill the brand of "Italian Prosecco". Introducing 'Prosecco Superiore' for DOCG wines creates a preference to go for the better option. Doing more research work on a "Reserva version" to cater for celebratory occasions will build up sophistication in the product.
- The objective of Prosecco is to be a preferred "elitist wine" over Champagne and also to conquer the cheaper Proseccos and consistently inform the customers about its quality (more so price-quality ratio) and steps are being taken in that direction.

## 2) PINOT GRIGIO

Pinot Grigio is a grape used for making crisp, floral, aromatic white wine, with mineral notes. It is grown in the Northern strip of Italy in the regions of Trentino-Alto Adige (8 DOCs) and Veneto and Friuli (IGT Venezia)<sup>11</sup>. Today 90% of the production is exported to the UK, USA and Germany. It has grown over the years from being a Pinot Bianco mixed spumante, to the modern style grape vinified "in bianco".<sup>12</sup> (Appendix 2)

### 2.1) Reasons for Current Success

- Very successful in export markets because of its versatility and light taste, unoaked and easy drinking ability. Great alternative to Chardonnay, which can be difficult to pair with food and very oak heavy. Pinot Grigio is aromatic but also soft and not as pronounced as a Riesling. Even though it is acidic, it does not have the gooseberry sting that Sauvignon Blanc can give to some tongues. Also simple to pronounce and remember.
- The basic form of the wine is simple and easy to grow and fermented using machine process. Production cost is low, which makes it an affordable product.
- However if grown at an altitude, it can show excellent complex flavours. Example, Benefizium porer from Alto Adige.
- Santa Margharita first made the initial push into the US market with its "obsessive pursuit to quality"<sup>13</sup>. It made good investments with DOC winegrowers and also heavily promoted the varietal brand, by making it attractive to distributors and restaurants. (Appendix 2)

<sup>11</sup> Sonkin L 2010, "Pinot Grigio: Italy's Trentino-Alto Adige region produces a great summer sipping wine", retrieved from <<http://www.intowine.com>> on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

<sup>12</sup> Imbibe 2008, "The wine that took over the world: Pinot Grigio", retrieved from <<http://www.imbibe.com>> on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013

<sup>13</sup> Shah M, WBI, "Life after Pinot Grigio" p16-17, retrieved from <[www.wine-business-international.com](http://www.wine-business-international.com)> on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013

## 2.2) Weaknesses and Resulting Threats

- Because it is easy going and not an impactful brand, it is not taken seriously by wine critics.
- Italian Pinot Grigio doesn't have the same image as the Pinot Grigios' of France and Oregon. A brand erosion has occurred, probably due to being sold mass volume at low cost<sup>14</sup> in the past.
- There are many more minerally driven, fruity wines like Gewurtztraminer, Muller Thergau,<sup>15</sup> so Pinot Grigio can be easily taken over by another of its own country grape unless it works out a solid brand image.
- A grape that can be easily grown is now becoming very common in the US, NZ Australia. Sadly the varietal name has taken over as a "brand" rather than the region.

## 2.3) Opportunities and Future Potential

- Very important to re-gain its lost reputation as an "Italian" origin grape but also to differentiate itself by capitalizing on the territorial origin and high quality from Friuli, Trentino and Alto-Adige.<sup>16</sup>
- Market research and surveys needs to be conducted to estimate the demand-supply gap and more quality grapes must be cultivated. Imposing stricter regulations, on the lines of a DOCG, will help raise quality.

<sup>14</sup> Grogan P 2008, The Telegraph, "Wine: Pinot Grigio- Bad? Misunderstood?", retrieved from <[www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)> on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012

<sup>15</sup> White D 2012, Canada Free Press, "The Electric white wines of Italy", retrieved from <<http://www.canadafreepress.com>> on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013

<sup>16</sup> Shah M, WBI, "Life after Pinot Grigio" p16-17, retrieved from <[www.wine-business-international.com](http://www.wine-business-international.com)> on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013

- Experiments have been conducted to create different versions. Such as, a rose blend that was successful. A “super-venetian” bottle was introduced by Masi, wherein, Pinot Grigio was blended with a dried portion of another aromatic grape, Verduzzo. The 2003 sold more than a million bottles. <sup>17</sup>
  
- Restaurants need to have price differentiated wine menu, apart from offering a simple house style of Pinot Grigio. A cheaper version and a premium Italian Pinot Grigio from Alto-Adige and Friuli will give a chance to appreciate its versatility.
  
- The objective is to make an impact with an Italian mark to it and re-gain the market dominance, by upgrading the quality of the wines and at the same time making it stylish and complex and offering differentiated version for different customer segments. Pinot Grigio is still at its peak and represents longevity in a market, that is tired of heavy Chardonnays and herbaceous Sauvignon Blancs.

### 3) BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

Brunello is a dry red wine, with a garnet colour, complex aromas of sour cherry, blueberries, earth, vanilla and is high in acidity and tannins. The rich, complex nature lends it to withstanding long periods of ageing in oak. It is made of 100% Sangiovese grapes and is grown in Tuscany, in the Montalcino (DOCG). (Appendix 3)

#### 3.1) Reasons for Current Success

- Its authentic character has gained world-wide reputation. "Montalcino is the holy grail of Sangiovese," says a local producer.<sup>18</sup> Pairs very well with complex dishes like red meats, games and mushrooms, cheeses. It is a big wine for big dinners.
- History of three generations of pioneers in the wine business. The experience has been passed on to the current generation, who are more educated and are working hard to retain its reputation as a quality wine. It is named as "A wine that knows no recession."<sup>19</sup>
- Riserva and normale Brunellos - both available.
- Strict DOCG regulations ensure top class vineyard management and low yield. Use of green harvesting and many technological improvements have been made.
- Delightful reviews from wine critics, who are attracted by its unique aromas and flavours has certainly helped the brand image.

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<sup>18</sup> Hyland T 2012, Sommelier Journal, "Brunello di Montalcino – Reputation on the Line", retrieved from <<http://www.sommelierjournal.com>> on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013

<sup>19</sup> Mitzman D, 2013, BBC, "Brunello di Montalcino: How a Tuscan wine kept growing", retrieved from <<http://www.bbc.com>> on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013

- DOCG regulations have become more flexible. For example, neither wood nor cask size is now specified. So some producers use modern smaller barriques now to compete with Bordeaux. In 1998, minimum ageing requirement was reduced from 3 to 2 years (for reserve from 4 to 3) so as to reduced the oak domination.<sup>20</sup>
- Many outstanding vintages have been produced- 2001, 2004, the bold 2007s and 2010s. Huge demand and hence prices have gone through the roof.<sup>21</sup> The brand name of “Brunello” has Montalcino all over it. Cannot be emulated by other countries.
- Flexible- some winemakers make both new world and old world Brunello that satisfies every customer in age group. Example- Poggio Antio<sup>22</sup>

### **3.2) Weaknesses and Resulting Threats**

- In 2008, with the upcoming Super Tuscan wines, there was doubt that Brunellos were also being tainted with Merlots and Rossos. This had a negative impact on its brand and US banned imports for a few years. Since then, the situation has been resolved, with an agreement signed by all producers that no blends will be involved.<sup>23</sup>
- Vandalism that occurred at Soldera in Dec 2012- Because of which 62,600 litres of wine were damaged and hence no vintage will be produced until 2019. This will be the biggest loss for a wine, whose supply lags far less than demand. Important to educate customers about this loss. Customer understanding and patience will give confidence back to the wineries.

<sup>20</sup> Hyland T 2012, Sommelier Journal, “Brunello di Montalcino – Reputation on the Line”, retrieved from <<http://www.sommelierjournal.com>> on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2013

<sup>21</sup> Shekn 2001, “Tuscan wines (crash course) – Part 1: Brunello di Montalcino and Rosso di Montalcino, retrieved from <<http://www.naviquan.com>> on February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2013

<sup>22</sup> Brown S, retrieved from <<http://www.winegeeks.com>> on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013

<sup>23</sup> Asimov E 2008, The New York Times, Diner's Journal, “Debating Brunello's future”, retrieved from <<http://www.dinersjournal.blog.nytimes.com>> on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013



### ***3.3) Opportunities and Future Potential***

- A lot of factors have favoured Brunello coming to the top, such as the complexity of terroir, better vineyard management, wine production and ageing techniques, positive exposure and coverage through media, dynamic growers, united consortium for regulating the winemakers, continuous improvement in R&D and pushing sales across Japan, China and Russia. Brunello has also opened its own facebook page to capture the ever-growing mass. The recent loss of vintage will be a huge setback for this business. However, with the loyal customer base and an undisputable reputation that it has accumulated over decades, this is a wine to live and breathe for a long time.

## **CINDERELLA WINES**

Are “low cost jewels” who although have great potential and a long history, have not received enough attention and hence not widely recognized. Following are 2 wines where it is aimed to understand why it has been so, and how it can be made better.

### **1) BARBERA**

Barbera is a red grape that grows in the Piedmont regions (north west Italy) of Asti, Alba and Monferrato, which are the 3 DOCs. (Appendix 4)

#### ***1.1) Reasons for Lack of Popularity***

- Historically, this was a vine that was easy to cultivate, early to mature, hardy and vigorous variety, for making table wines that were uncomplicated, fizzy, and very easy to drink. It used to be a wine for an every day dinner. Nothing beyond it. It has always been overshadowed by the more prestigious Barolo and remained lost behind its fortunes.
- It grew on sites that were less expensive and not sunny enough for Nebbiolo and hence a thought of as a less noble variety<sup>24</sup>.
- Although it has deeper colour than Barolo, it has high acidity with very little tannins. So it got added to Barolo in small amounts to increase colour and body. It has never had any identity of its own.

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<sup>24</sup> McInerney J 2010, The Wall Street Journal, “Barbera, the Cinderella of Italian Reds”, retrieved from <<http://www.onlinenewsj.com>> on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

### 1.2) Success and Future Potential

- Giacomo Balogna<sup>25</sup> was the producer who started barrel ageing Barbera to soften the acidity and the resulting Bricco dell Uccellone, changed the image of this region and got into the international bandwagon. It is then, that wine producers started experimenting with Barbera, by blending it with Cabernet Sauvignon, Friesa (which was successful). Also if accurately balanced and oaked, the fruit flavours and acidity comes out beautifully without being too harsh on tannins. Some winemakers are also subtly de-acidify it by adding calcium carbonate which seemed to have helped gain popularity.
- It is a flexible wine that can go well with tomato based acidic dishes and also red meats. It is not as earthy as Barolo but has the mushroom and sour notes to cut through rich fatty foods.
- There is also a difference in taste between the regions. Asti is more powerful, fruity and bold while Alba is more sophisticated with subtly balanced flavours.
- Angelo Gaja<sup>26</sup>, a renowned wine producer re-invented Barbera with single vineyard bottling, temperature controls, using oak barriques judiciously, blending a small portion of nebbiolo and aiming at low quality yields. These have led to some great vintages of 1991, 2000, 2001, 2006 and 2008<sup>27</sup>,

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<sup>25</sup> Robinson J, "Barbera", Tasting notes and reviews, retrieved from <<http://www.jancisrobinson.com>> on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013

<sup>26</sup> Rose A 1994, The Independent, "Food and drink: A new Barbera vine mystery- Who masterminded the rise to fame of an underrated grape?", retrieved from <<http://www.independent.co.uk>> on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013

<sup>27</sup> Robinson J 2004, "Barbera Pietmont's third B". retrieved from <<http://www.jancisrobinson.com>> on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2013

- With growing demand, prices of Barbera have increased from \$8 (1990s) to \$50 (2011)<sup>28</sup>. These wines have just settled in and are becoming a favourite of wine connoisseurs, who are helping spread the word. If the quality of vinification continues to grow along with low yield and good vineyard practices, this wine has a very strong future to stand up to Barolos and Barberescos.

## 2) NERO D'AVOLA

This is an indigenous red grape that is grown in Sicily, an island south west of Italy, once occupied by Greeks, who started vine growing long before France, Germany or Italy started their plantations. The wine is ruby colour with flavours of black fruit like plum and wild berries, some spice and good acidity. (Appendix 5)

### 2.1) Reasons for Lack of Popularity

- Until 1980s, Sicily was an industrial bulk producer with no major selling focus.
- Nero d'avola only used for blending with other indigenous varieties such as Nerello Mascalese and Pignatello<sup>29</sup>. It had no identity of its own.
- Agricultural practices were primitive with no external influence.

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<sup>28</sup> Asimov E 2011, The New York Times, "Barbera: I knew it when", retrieved from [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2013

<sup>29</sup> Hyland T 2009, Nero d'avola, retrieved from <<http://www.learnitalianwines.com>> on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013

## 2.2) Success and Future Potential

- In the 1990s, Sicily witnessed a “Sicilian Renaissance” which shifted focus from quantity to quality. Enologist, Giacomo Tachis (father of Sassicaia) brought credibility to this island. Sicilia Vinters Association was formed to bring all winemakers together and to make them competitive with international players.<sup>30</sup>
- Many young viticulturalists and new generation of young winemakers focussing on R&D<sup>31</sup>, has brought in fresh blood into the wine industry here.
- Boutique, organic wineries and biodynamic producers have taken up the island by storm, producing niche sustainable red wine.
- Internet Marketing and social media of facebook, linked-in and interviews are being used to publicise their work.
- Sicily now boasts of 22 DOCs and one DOCS, Cerasuolo di Vittoria.
- Because Sicily has lot of microclimates, the same grape shows different flavours, which is becoming Nero's big USP now. This is capturing public attention in wine fairs and tastings.
- An easy to drink wine, which pairs well with any Italian dish, it is becoming American's choice of wines for pasta and sea food dishes. From being an industrial producer, it has worked its way up to being the top 2 producers in Sicily and has a huge potential to compete with mainland Italy wines. This wine is the upcoming younger generation's wine of choice and is here to stay.

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<sup>30</sup> Larner M 2012, Wine Enthusiast Magazine, “Red-Hot Sicily”, retrieved from <[www.winemag.com](http://www.winemag.com)> on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2013

<sup>31</sup> Research and Development

## CONCLUSION

Mother Earth has endowed Italy with rich terroir (soil, geography and climate) to grow some very indigenous grapes. It is evident that to keep up with times, Italy has needed to do brand led marketing, however it also has needed to tighten its Appellation regulations, get its disparate wine producers together, organize campaigns to influence customers' perception and educate them about their grapes. They have needed to adopt to the tastes of the younger generation, in order to keep its history alive. Using sustainable viticultural practices and ageing techniques, they need to remain competitive with the old world as well as the new world wines. They have to remain forwardly dynamic yet protect the uniqueness of their indigenous grapes, and at the same time, create the image of complexity and sophistication, by keeping quality in check - not just for the top grapes but also for the upcoming Cinderella wines.

## Closed Book Case Study

In comparison to other closed book theory papers, the pass rate for the case study in Unit 1 is high and reflects the fact that candidates go into the examination having already carried out the research required to answer the question. This means when they get to the examination hall and open the paper, they simply need to collect their thoughts and structure their response to address the sub-sections of the question on the examination paper. This is very similar to what is required for the open book coursework assignments, but with the added constraint of working in a timed environment and without access to research sources.

Those who fail, generally do so because they do not address the question as set or are too brief in their response.

## November 2012

<b>Wine Tourism</b>	
<b>Candidate Case Study Brief:</b>	
<p><i>“Wine-related tourism continues to be increasingly important to both producers and consumers. For many centuries, not even wine merchants travelled, but today many members of the general public deliberately make forays to explore a wine region or regions. This is partly a reflection of the increased interest in both wine and foreign travel generally, but also because most wine regions and many producers’ premises are attractive places.”</i></p> <p>The Oxford Companion to Wine (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition), OUP, Edited by Jancis Robinson MW</p> <p>On the basis of Thomas Jefferson’s visits to several of Bordeaux’s top châteaux in 1787, he could be described as amongst the first modern wine tourists.</p> <p>Successful wine tourism destinations offer visitors a range of opportunities and services. From tasting wine at a kitchen table in Alsace to balloon rides over the Napa Valley, entrepreneurs seem to have activities tailored to satisfy all tastes and budgets.</p> <p>A number of factors, such as transport infrastructure and scenery, all have an influence on how successful, or not, a region becomes as a wine tourism destination and whilst many regions have embraced this concept wholeheartedly, others appear reluctant to do so.</p>	
<i>Answers: 321</i>	<i>Passes: 245 (76%)</i>

**Examination question (all sections compulsory)**

- a) Give a brief account of the growth of wine tourism around the world. (20% weighting)
- b) What are the various opportunities and services that make up wine tourism? (30% weighting)
- c) What are the factors that need to be in place for a region to succeed as a wine tourism destination? (30% weighting)
- d) Select a wine region where you think wine tourism is relatively underdeveloped and suggest what could be done to improve this situation. (20% weighting)

Although the pass rate of 76% was reasonably good, there were a lot of very low marks for this paper, with as many candidates gaining the lower fail (unclassified) grade as those with a fail grade.

The following two scripts show the difference between a fail and a merit grade. Both candidates have given Bordeaux as an example of a region where they think wine tourism is relatively underdeveloped, and this was a popular choice amongst many candidates.

The first script (below) was given a fail grade. It is very short bearing in mind that the time allowed for this examination is just over an hour. This issue of brevity is exacerbated even further by the fact that the first paragraph simply lists what the candidate will do in the essay (i.e. it paraphrases the question). None of the sections of the question is clearly signposted and some are extremely brief, such as the response to section c) which appears towards the bottom of the second page and amounts to just 11 lines of text for a section that accounts for 30% of the marks available.



## Wine Tourism

After presenting the early stages and current developments of the wine tourism around the world, I will define the components of its products and services offer. Then, I will study the factors (infrastructures, management and marketing, ...) needed to bring a wine region to a successful destination. I will finish introducing a good example of <sup>an</sup> underdeveloped wine tourism destination: Bordeaux's left Bank's Medoc.

The wine tourism started very lately in Europe in the middle of twentieth century. Even if few persons as Thomas Jefferson (US's 3<sup>rd</sup> president) and French wine writer, Andre Jullien, travelled in the XVIII/XIX century, not a lot of persons started to visit abroad wine regions. The phenomenon starts with the first Deutschtour set up in 1938 in Pfalz, Germany, to help the wine producers of Rhine valley selling their wines directly to tourists and visitors. Then if, Burgundy & Champagne were the two first french wine regions to create a Route des Vins/Wine Road, Alsace's wine region was the first to be successful from 1954 thanks to its proximity with German borders and the two <sup>main</sup> german wine regions (Rhine and Mosel valley).

Since then, number of annual visitors has continued to grow. From the 1990's, wine tourism phenomenon started in Australia, (where more <sup>now</sup> than 5 millions of persons visit each year Margaret River and other Australian wine regions), in the USA (Napa, Sonoma valleys in California, Finger lakes' region in NY state), New Zealand, Italy (Tuscany's agriturismo), Spain's Rioja and Catalunya, Portugal's Douro valley, ... It's still today a fast-growing segment within the global wine market.

Wine tourism has been defined by Mitchell & C.M. Hall, in 'Wine Tourism in New Zealand', 1996 as: Visitation of vineyards, wineries and wine estates, wine festivals and wine fairs; which grape wine tasting and the discovery of wine region are the prime motivating factors <sup>by tourists</sup>. Wine tourism's activities include also: Gastronomy (lunch & dinner in fine restaurants, sometimes star-granted restaurants, but also pic-nic/lunch boxes taken in the midst of vines), Bed & Breakfast, which are traditional opportunities. Most recently, new trends appear in wine tourism's range of product and services in which entertainment & sport are crucial/important: Wine concerts, Marathon races (Cognac, Metz), Trails (NZ Classic Wine Trail, Saucune's trail, ...), cellars climbing in Champagne, but also tasting & blending workshops in Bordeaux and Cognac, ...

The offer is nowadays heterogeneous/wider in comparison with the first ages of the wine tourism market when the offer was basic (degustation-vente / Door sales).

To sell this wide range of opportunities and services to higher prices and/or to a larger number of wine tourists, and to be qualified as as a successful wine destination, a wine region needs four crucial factors:

The production of attractive and successful wines in the world is important to bring tourists and wine lovers to think programming a travel and a stay in the wine region. This factor has been explained by Brown & Getz in 'Linking wine preferences with the choice of wine region destinations' (2005).

The quality of transport (roads, airport & train stations, ...) and Hospitality (hotels, bedrooms, restaurants) is also a strong factor to develop. Partnerships between all the regional, local, national actors in the market (wineries, tour operators, travel agencies, public tourism agencies,

and Comités Interprofessionnels, ...) is another strategic factor <sup>as</sup> the choice of a strategic planning done after an external and internal diagnosis, of the involved <sup>collective</sup> actors <sup>of development</sup>.

Before my conclusion, let me present the case of the Medoc region (Bordeaux's left bank) which I think is still underdeveloped. Despite Bordeaux's sword-wild image and notoriety, wine tourism has started very lately, this century, in the middle of the last decade (2000's) in Medoc. Châteaux were traditionally closed to visitors even in the summers. To buy cases of wine tended to be impossible in some villages of this well-known wine region. It still lacks today hotel rooms' capacity, large restaurants and easy collective transports to accelerate the development of wine tourism in Médoc. Few good projects (Bages village of the Cases family, the "Le Wissey" of Philippe Rasou, ...) should be followed as example by wineries' owners and public administrations to create an attractive wine region destination for both french and international visitors. To conclude, wine tourism, as a growing market in all wine producing countries, should be seen as a solution (beyond others solutions) by wine regions presently in economical crisis or as an extra strong source of sales growth by healthier wine regions.

In contrast, the second script that follows amounts to over seven sides of text. It includes plenty of examples of tourist destinations, makes good use of statistics to illustrate some of the points that are made and provides evidence of secondary research in the form of an interview with the marketing director of a travel agency. However, it is slightly unfocussed in places and like the first script, the various sections of the question are not clearly signposted. This has therefore precluded it from the higher distinction grade.

It is expected that one billion tourists will travel in 2012, generating close to one trillion US dollars. (UNWTO). If we compare that with the estimated \$180bn in wine sales in 2011 (EUKOMONTE) there is without doubt a very large market of which wine tourism is a key and growing niche.

It is really only since the early 90's that wine tourism has started to really take off. The new world has led the way with a much more joined up experience. California, and Napa in particular (3m tourists in 2010), has a very strong market. Australia is also a leader in this area, especially Margaret River.

If we look at the old world we still see innovation over the last few years as producers and regions, and to a certain extent governments, recognise the benefits of growth in this sector. In France we have quite a different approach to how tourists should be attracted. Alsace has played on the chocolate box villages and food wine experience to become a leader in the field. It recently won an award (Coveted Vin) for the excellent offering. Bordeaux continues to lag in relative terms. Burgundy and Champagne are playing the UNESCO world heritage site benefit, and well as the many monuments and historical buildings. We (also) also have the wine routes and cycle trails.

South America is slowly building a market using Napa as the benchmark but is still a long way behind. South Africa has been able to marry the package of Cape Town as a beautiful city and the nearby wine regions. New Zealand is a perfect example of combining beautiful scenery, trails, sport (Rugby) and a very good selection of world class wines. One interesting point relates to an interview I had with Tessa Thomas from Felton Road in Otago on 24/10/12. She said that as much as they liked tourists to drop by for a tasting they exported 70% of their wine so it was not really a priority.

In summary much more effort is being put into growing this sector especially in light of increased competition in the wine business. One very good example of new investment is the Yeatman Hotel in Porto, a wine, spa, restaurant experience. Owned by PANGLOSS, 82 Rooms, and already has one Michelin star.

The rise in no frills airlines has also certainly enabled more travel to remote areas (e.g. Burgundy)



There are several opportunities across the various stakeholders. In terms of simple economics, producers are feeling the pinch from the economic slowdown, they need to work harder to achieve the same revenues. Cellar door sales are an excellent point of sale and in some regions such as Margaret River in Australia accounts for 35% of sales. One can also add to this the reduced distribution costs.

Here is the additional opportunity of increasing brand awareness, sometimes the word of mouth alone can generate quite significant sales.

Regionally the area can benefit from the tourist dollars brought in to what may be quite a rural location. More tourists need a bigger, better more efficient infrastructure. By way of example the new ~~Wine~~ Wine Cultural centre planned for Bordeaux in 2014 will introduce 750 new jobs. There is also the ~~knock on~~ knock on effect on hotels, restaurants and transport.

The opportunity for the tourist covers several areas. Firstly there is the opportunity to visit a beautiful rural area, there is the chance to visit the site where the wine is

made and possibly the chance to pick up rare wines. More often than not the wines will be cheaper. (Compare duty in the UK with France which is 0.2p)

In terms of service this is an area where producers need to be switched on. In the past it was enough to focus on the production of the wine however now there needs to be much more attention on the 'experience'. Staff need to be trained and service needs to be switched on.

There is the opportunity to move into other areas restaurants, attached, BBQ areas, wine trail with a guide. Marketing can cover wine clubs, emails, mailshots, offers. The overall objective is a trade off - ~~cost~~ invest, increase sales, increase brand awareness and increase brand loyalty. Lastly encourage return visits.

Wine tourism has moved on from the glass of not great wine to the tangible + intangible experience. According to the Great Wine Capitals report in 2011 approximately 65% of wine tourists are local (i.e. not foreign). To entice these visitors there needs to be more than just one winery in the middle of nowhere. There needs to be an easy way to get there, be it roads, river or by air.

Once there the tourist is expecting a positive experience which apart from the wine is somewhere to learn about the area / this is where we need a good joined up strategy with the local tourist office - they can offer advice on routes, walks and provide maps).

Let us not forget that there are different types of tourist from the wine lover to the casual (tourist) tourist (MITCHELL). There has even been reference to the mobile drunk! One way or the other the region/producer must cater for different needs. I recently visited Ridge in California and you could choose from several ~~for~~ different options from a simple tasting to a full blown wine dinner + vineyard tour.

It always helps if there are other non-wine sights nearby. A very good example of how a region has put a package together is San Francisco. A trip to Napa is considered to be part of the whole trip. This investment has put California at top of the tourist list with over 30% of the market.

I think we need to go back to the wine. Tastes change and disposable income goes up and down. Wine tourism is essentially a certain type



of consumer behavior. The wine tourist has at least a casual interest. The product has got to be there in the first place. The Italians have invested greatly in their wine tourism and they have a very broad selection of quality wine to support the overall experience. Florence is top of the wine spending tourist trail (WORKING WINE CITIES) with \$200 spent per person. It is not a coincidence that Italian wines such as Pinot Grigio and Brunello D'Montalcino are riding high in consumer tastes.

In summary, with the participation of all stakeholders with a joined up strategy there is substantial revenues to be had from tourism. The wine festivals and tastings are <sup>JUST</sup> not enough.

I recently ~~interviewed~~ interviewed Emma Pike the marketing director of well known UK travel agency 'Arbaster and Clarke'. I asked Emma who she felt were the leaders and leggyards in wine tourism. Her response was that California and Burgundy made real efforts, and that was because there was a concerted effort ~~to~~ by the regions to zone in on the wine tourist. In contrast she felt that Douro was an example of a region that although efforts had been made to shake off the image of 17th century winemaking techniques it was still considered to be a non event.

In my opinion a region that is missing some huge growth opportunities is Bordeaux. Yes, they have a fantastic image across the world for amazing wines, now with amazing prices (£1000 per bottle for a ~~2012~~<sup>2009</sup> First Growth!) and they ~~to~~ also have an amazing history which ~~includes~~ includes many Irish and English owners from the 17th century however the producers have a ~~real~~ real image problem.

They are considered to be very stuffy and look down their nose at wine tourists.

I think the main reason for this is that their wines have always sold, especially the classed growths, so there was no motivation to offer additional services. Bordeaux town itself is not the most pretty of places and apart from St. Emilion as a UNESCO cultural site there is not much for the tourist to do.

In recent years there has been some improvement, they will open the new wine cultural centre in 2015 which should attract an additional 425,000 tourists to the existing 3m per annum however much more could be done.

I believe there needs to be much more done by the producers. It is quite unusual for a vineyard to have a restaurant or even a picnic area. This is easily changed.

Until recently there was one producer with a spa and conference centre attached, and restaurants were not that common outside of the main town.

I suggest they make more of the river, and introduce boat trips between Chateau. The tourist office could do more to show walks and cycle routes. The image in general needs to become more 21st century.

### March 2013

<b>The influence of pop and celebrity culture on the drinks industry</b>	
<p>The influence of pop and celebrity culture on the drinks industry is not just a modern phenomenon. Royalty, opera stars and the like have had a long relationship with the drinks industry and this has evolved to reflect changes in society.</p> <p>There are many ways in which the fashionable and famous can be associated with alcoholic drinks. The association may be deliberately sought after by those responsible for the marketing of a product or it may just happen by chance.</p> <p>Choosing the right person to associate with a product is of key importance to a brand manager but the public reaction to the link is unpredictable. Sometimes there may be little interest in carefully planned campaigns but occasionally a winning combination proves extremely popular and results in a significant increase in brand awareness with corresponding commercial success. There have also been instances where pop and celebrity culture have caused a dramatic increase in popularity that has been totally unexpected, coming as a surprise to the brand owner, and not necessarily always a welcome one.</p> <p>It is often said that there is 'no such thing as bad publicity', but how well do celebrity and wine mix?</p>	
Answers: 269	Passes: 192 (71%)

**Examination question (all sections compulsory)**

- a) Discuss how the interaction of celebrity and the drinks industry has developed over time. (25% weighting)
- b) How are celebrities used by the drinks industry today as a marketing tool? Give examples of recent campaigns. (50% weighting)
- c) What factors should a brand owner consider when selecting a celebrity to promote their brand? (25% weighting)

This was a good pass rate with more candidates achieving merit than any other grade. Nevertheless, there were problems with some scripts. A particular area of weakness was section a), where a significant number of candidates simply wrote about recent celebrity marketing strategies rather than considering how the interaction between celebrity and the drinks industry has developed OVER TIME. Candidates clearly needed to bring an element of history to this section of the case study and this was often missing. Very few actually considered some of the earliest forms of celebrity endorsement, such as the Royal Warrant which has been around for centuries or the use of “famous” names on products such as Napoleon Brandy, Duke of Wellington Sherry etc. The most common “historical” reference was to George Laybourne, or “Champagne Charlie” who sang about Moet Champagne back in the 1800’s. This was mentioned by many candidates, but only the best included other examples as well.

Most candidates were able to come up with examples of recent marketing campaigns in section b), but in some cases these were simply listed rather than discussed in any depth. Similarly, weak responses to section c) amounted to no more than a few bullet points with little in the way of expansion or discussion.

The following script is an excellent example of what can be achieved in the time available for this examination, PROVIDED the candidate has researched the topic extensively ahead of the day, reads the question carefully and answers it fully. This candidate achieved a very solid distinction grade.

a) Since the beginning of grape cultivation and winemaking, which can be traced back to Mesopotamia between 6000-4000 BCE, "celebrities" and wine were linked. The celebrity figures of the time were royals and priests who were also the principal consumers of wine. In Greek and Roman times playwrights, politicians, philosophers and generals often owned their own vineyards and produced wine for personal consumption. Julius Caesar and Napoleon Bonaparte were wine lovers who helped diffuse wine as a product by bringing it with them during their many military campaigns.

French and Russian Kings were key figures in the development of the Champagne industry. They were key consumers and helped diffuse the image of the product as being associated to power and luxury. The anointment of French kings in the Champagne city of Reims helped communicate the knowledge of this product to the world and create an image that remains even in modern times.

Royalty, priests and generals - the celebrities of much of the Pre-World War I-II society helped diffuse vineyards

throughout the world and spread the consumption of wine. As social change became to come about and the middle class grew, <sup>increased</sup> social mobility led to increased consumption of "luxury" products, such as wine. These status symbols became more accessible and more popular with the masses leading up to the development of "Pop" culture in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The term "Pop" culture was coined in the 1950s and refers to mainstream culture. It was first associated with Western culture in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and then with mainstream global culture in late 20<sup>th</sup> - early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each nation has its own celebrity culture, but with globalization there is a shift to a more global mainstream celebrity culture.

Technology has greatly changed consumer behaviour and the development of mass media has created a change not only in pop culture, but also in celebrity culture. Now anyone can become a celebrity thanks to social networks: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. Today's celebrities are sports figures, actors, fashion designers, reality TV show stars. Gone are the days of royalty and cultural icons with perfect images. Now everyone is under constant scrutiny and information



moves so fast that it is almost instantaneously available. The drinks market has more discerning customers, who are also less brand fidelity and a new marketing challenge.

b.) Celebrities are used by the drinks industry in a number of ways:

- Brand Endorsement Partnerships
- Product placement in film <sup>(James Bond and the martini craze)</sup> and television shows, as legacy claims <sup>(P. D. James's Queen Sir Winston Churchill)</sup> and as testimonials of a particular product.

One recent example of a successful brand endorsement is Sean "Diddy" Combs and Ciroc Vodka. Diddy signed with Ciroc in 2007 as their USA Brand Manager, responsible for product placement and branding in the US market. When he was signed Ciroc sold more 120,000 cases a year according to Forbes magazine.

In 2009 they moved 400,000 and in 2011 over 1 million cases. Diddy is considered one of the Hip Hop Cash Kings, with extremely powerful social capital.

The Hip Hop <sup>market</sup> segment is one where ultra-premium liquors do well, and figures like Diddy can be successful in getting a product introduced into

a market, but with that power also comes the risk of their controversial lifestyle choices and their effects on the product.

Partnerships are another way celebrities become involved in the drinks industry - and not just as a marketing tool. Bonita Spirits' partnership with the rapper Xzibit seeks to differentiate their Ultra premium Bonita Tequila by making it one of few handful of spirits that are not only endorsed but also ~~partly~~ <sup>jointly</sup> owned by celebrities.

The Food Network in the US has also had an huge impact on the drinks industry. Celebrity chefs like Giada de Laurentis, Mario Batali, Paula Dean, Rachael Ray and Emeril Lagasse have been marketing tools for various drink brands - primarily in relation to their <sup>recent</sup> cocktail craze, ~~that has spread~~.

The exceptional growth of Prosecco is an example. IWSR and Just Drinks released a study showing that from 2002-2012 the amount of ~~prosecco~~ ~~consumed~~ ~~sold~~ ~~quadrupled~~ non-champagne sparkling wine quadrupled in great part thanks to the growth of Prosecco. Its use in shows like Giada de Laurentis's "Everyday Italian" in cocktails such as the Aperol Spritz and the Sgroppino have skyrocketed.



the popularity of a product that was only recently introduced into the mainstream US market by Monetto in 2000. This case is a little different because we are talking about a type of wine from a specific region "Prosecco" as opposed to a specific brand, but it has nonetheless had a huge impact on the brands that were able to capitalize on this success.

Another big phenomena of celebrities and the drinks industry is the creation of celebrity owned brands such as Barrymore Wines recently created by Drew Barrymore. Her \$20 Pinot Grigio with the Barrymore family seal on the label is an example of celebrities using the drinks industry as a place to invest their money and expand their businesses. This has an all around effect on the drinks industry and its use of celebrities as a marketing tool.

Skinny Girl Cocktails, founded by reality TV star Bethany Frankel, Francis Ford Coppola Wines, Greg Norman. The list goes on and the market continues

to feel the effects of celebrity saturation and will begin to differentiate between interest and passion in celebrity investments. Consumers today are continually looking for more integrity in their products especially in wine.

1.) Selecting a celebrity to promote a brand is an important decision. One of the key things to consider is whether or not you have a <sup>1)</sup> quality product, because not even a celebrity can carry a bad product. Next you want to consider who your <sup>2)</sup> target market is. Does this market have a consumer connection with this celebrity? Is he/she relevant to your market?

3.) The next consideration is the price segment of the market that you want to target. Celebrity endorsements are expensive, so often you are dealing with the ultra-premium market such as with Croc and P Diddy. Sometimes though there are great successes in the supermarket segment as well, such as Cliff Richards Vida Nova label sold in Tesco and Waitross.

4.) Brand Image is a huge consideration. Is the lifestyle of this celebrity in line with the type of lifestyle that you want to communicate in relation to the specific brand and product. Think of the Cristal and Jay-Z scandal. That was not the type of lifestyle that Roederer imagined for its Brand, but in today's technology driven society.

- you can't always control who will endorse your brand.

5) What is your marketing plan and what are your goals? What is this celebrity endorsement going to achieve? Market penetration? Increased sales? The creation of a long lasting brand image? Celebrity culture is ever changing and fickle. A brand has to be ready for the risks that come with celebrity power. Is this person reliable and will they have a positive impact on the long term goals of the product. Often celebrities are powerful tools for market penetration and increased sales, but it is necessary to have a short and long term plan with clear goals that are in line with those of the chosen celebrity.

## June 2013

<b>A renaissance in Spain?</b>	
<p>Spain has a venerable history as a wine producer. However, the country's tortured progress through much of the twentieth century left most of the wine industry in an antiquated state, isolated from modern innovations and poorly equipped to tackle export markets.</p> <p>Since the death of Franco, and particularly following Spain's accession to the European Union, huge changes have taken place in the wine sector. The area of land under vine has contracted. At the same time there has been a huge investment in state of the art winemaking equipment and the buildings that house it. The marketing of Spanish wine has become much more sophisticated. Many companies have become much more active in the export market. Enlightened consumers are becoming aware of the exciting diversity of regions and grape varieties that makes up the contemporary Spanish wine scene.</p> <p>Challenges remain though. Spain, whether rightly or wrongly, is still seen by many in the trade as the source of a wine that is "cheapest in list / cheapest on shelf". Despite the progress that has been made, many consumers still do not look beyond Rioja, Cava and one or two big brands like Torres. There is a danger that the wine industry will get dragged down by the general malaise afflicting the Spanish economy.</p>	
<i>Answers: 274</i>	<i>Passes: 234 (85%)</i>
<b>Examination question (all sections compulsory)</b>	
<p>a) Outline the state of the Spanish wine sector at the time of Franco's death in the 1970's. (20% weighting)</p> <p>b) Describe the key developments that have taken place in the Spanish wine industry over the last forty years and discuss the reasons behind these changes. (50% weighting)</p> <p>c) Evaluate the commercial prospects for the Spanish wine sector over the next ten years. (30% weighting)</p>	

Responses here were very good on the whole with a fairly equal split between candidates achieving pass and merit grades. Marks were generally lost because candidates did not pay enough attention to the specific wording and timespans given in the various parts of the question.

Section a) was often addressed poorly, with a number of candidates failing to answer the question as set, or simply giving an account of the history of Spanish wine, one even going back as far as 3000 BC. On the other hand, section b) was answered well in terms of identifying key developments over the last forty years, although candidates were less good at identifying the reasons behind the changes. This is a persistent problem in Unit 1, with too many candidates simply reporting facts rather than looking behind the facts. This lack of analysis and personal input was also evident in section c), which required an element of speculation on the part of the candidate.



## **Unit 2, Wine Production**

This report does not give examples of questions used on the Unit 2 paper as these are live questions and not in the public domain.

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that statistics continue to show a very good pass rate for this paper. Whilst the questions are certainly not easy, candidates have little to fear providing they study the Diploma Course Notes thoroughly and read around the subject. Visits to wine growing regions and winery tours are also invaluable in understanding the “theory” of this unit.

However, what has become increasingly apparent in recent years, is that many candidates appear to leave the study of viticulture and vinification behind once they have passed the examination for this unit. By the time they come to sit the Unit 3 examination, many of them have not looked at their study notes for Unit 2 for many months, or even longer than a year in some cases. This is evidenced by some very clear cases of confusion when it comes to questions on the Unit 3 theory paper that rely on sound knowledge of the winemaking process, or the work that is carried out in the vineyard. One of the most valuable things a candidate can do when revising for the Unit 3 theory paper, is to review the course notes for this unit as well, but far too few seem to think this is necessary.

## Unit 3, Wines of the World

### Tasting Papers

It is clear from analysis of candidate performance that some struggle to get to grips with the Systematic Approach to Tasting (SAT) and how exactly this should be used.

In August 2012 the WSET issued a fully revised edition of the Candidate Assessment Guide with a long and detailed section on the SAT and its use. It is imperative that all candidates read this document which can be found on the Diploma student section of the WSET website. Rather than repeat its full content here, this report will simply highlight important general guidance on how to use the SAT along with some common errors that examiners frequently encounter.

### Important General Guidance

#### Hyphens and Commas

It would be helpful to read the following guidance with a copy of the Systematic Approach to Tasting to hand. It will then be seen that the SAT is formatted to include two different lines of text, one where entries are separated by hyphens and one where they are prefixed with the words “e.g.” and separated by commas.

Where terms in the right hand column of the SAT are separated by **hyphens** (for example lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown), candidates should select only ONE of the terms to describe the wine. It is important to be specific, even if, for example, the wine appears to be on the border between ruby and garnet. Candidates need to be decisive, rather than use a range such as “ruby-garnet” or “ruby to garnet”. If both ruby and garnet are valid descriptions, then this will be noted in the marking key and examiners will be instructed to award marks for either colour. If candidates use a range statement such as “ruby to garnet”, “low to medium (-)” etc., then examiners will NOT award the mark even where the marking key notates a range of options. This is because candidates would not be using the SAT correctly. In addition, where candidates use alternative words such as “straw”, “cherry” etc. for colours, or “crisp” for acidity without qualifying a level, they will also NOT be awarded marks. Candidates and/or educators may know personally (or within their community) what they mean by these and other additional terms. However, for the examination to be valid and reliable, the use of terminology between examiners and candidates needs to be consistent. The main reason for limiting candidates to the terms defined in the SAT is that calibrating eyes, noses and palates to arrive at consistent use of these words presents a challenge in itself, but one that is manageable. Achieving the same consistency with a wider vocabulary would be considerably harder, and is in any event unnecessary because the terms provided in the SAT are sufficient to describe any wine with accuracy for the purposes of the WSET Diploma qualification.

Where terms in the right hand column are preceded by the words “e.g.” and the items are separated by a **comma**, the candidate is not restricted to the terms in the SAT in isolation. In the case of the lines relating to aroma characteristics, flavour characteristics and “palate: other observations” candidates are strongly encouraged



to use the lexicon on the reverse of the SAT. This lexicon is used in the production of the marking keys, and candidates will be able to gain full marks where relevant using just these terms. However, should candidates wish to use other words or descriptors to supplement their tasting note, the examiner will award marks where these are judged to be appropriate. This means any additional terms used by candidates should be capable of being understood by the examiner, as well as being valid descriptions of the wine.

### Three Point and Five Point Scales

In most instances where hyphens are used, candidates are required to place the level of the various components on a scale ranging from low (or pale, light, dry, short) to high (or deep, full, luscious, long). These should be treated as three-point scales (as with the WSET Level 3 qualification) that are further subdivided. Medium (+) is therefore not a point that is equidistant between medium and high, but is a subdivision of the “medium” level descriptor. It can be thought of as being “medium that is towards the upper end of the medium band”. “Medium” is sub-divided in this way because the majority of observations for the majority of wines lie within the “medium” band, and subdividing it in this way makes it possible for candidates to differentiate between this large number of wines. For most components of the SAT, it is only “medium” that is subdivided in this way, but sweetness is the exception. In this instance, each point on the three point scale is further divided into two. “Dry” is subdivided into “dry” and “off-dry”, “medium” into “medium-dry” and “medium-sweet” and “sweet” is subdivided into “sweet” and “luscious”. This reflects the fact that most wines are dry or off-dry and takes into account the huge differences in sugar levels between sweet wines.

It can be tempting for candidates to over-use the term “medium” (including + and -), but the danger is that their tasting notes will fail to sufficiently capture the differences between the wines they are assessing. Some candidates have found it useful to make their initial assessment of the wine using a non-subdivided three point scale. The restricted range of terms encourages them to be bolder in their use of the full range of the scale. Having done this, they can then return to the components they have described as “medium” and decide whether these need any further refinement using the (+) or (-) notation. Another way to help avoid over-use of the term “medium” is to think of this (including medium + and medium -) as meaning the same as “unremarkable”. For many components of many wines, the level is indeed unremarkable, and in these cases it is appropriate to use medium (including + and -). However, many of the wines presented to candidates in Diploma examinations will have at least some components that are markedly high or low.

Candidates should remember to use the terminology as it appears in the SAT when using the scales. This may appear to be very stark language but these terms facilitate fairness and consistency in the examination process.

### Assessment of Quality

Many candidates give insufficient information when assessing the quality of the wine or simply repeat the observations made under the nose and palate without explaining how they relate to quality. The assessment of quality should seek to place the wine in an appropriate quality category, and, **most importantly**, explain why it belongs in that category. It is not sufficient to simply state what the wine is. Ask yourself how

you would describe it to a customer. Is it a large volume wine that is correctly made but lacking in complexity? Is it a top quality, premium wine, and if so, what leads you to this conclusion? The components that contribute towards quality are intensity, structure, balance, complexity, typicity and length.

It is important to remember that quality judgements in the Diploma examination should be absolute – i.e. not taking price or origin into account. However, if candidates are sure of the origin, they may find it helpful to use established quality scales (such as regional, commune, premier cru, grand cru in Burgundy) to convey more precisely how good they think the wine is. This is optional.

### **Country of Origin**

In most instances, one mark is allocated for correctly identifying the country of origin and two for the region. This is to allow those candidates with superior tasting skills to demonstrate these by identifying the origin of the wine as precisely as possible. However, the increased “homogenisation” of some wines makes it increasingly difficult to identify regional typicity in all cases and sometimes it is genuinely felt that some wines could be from a number of countries. In these cases, we sometimes reverse the emphasis of the marks, giving two marks for country and only one for region, or markers may be instructed to allocate marks for more than one country or region. This is particularly true in the case of some New World wines and a case in point was a California Chardonnay where marks were also awarded for identifying this as Australian. However, candidates should not list more than one place of origin in their answer, particularly where multiple origins cover different styles of wine or simply appear opportunistic such as the following candidate:

*“This wine is from Italy, although it could also be from California or Australia.”*

### **Common Errors that lead to the loss of marks**

#### **Comment on every line of the SAT**

One way to lose marks on this paper is through poor application of the Systematic Approach to Tasting (SAT). Missing out key features such as sweetness, acidity, body, alcohol etc. is simply throwing marks away.

#### **Judge each wine individually**

Many candidates still do not appear to understand what is required in a professional, analytical tasting note. There is a tendency for some to compare the three wines rather than describe them individually. This leads candidates to write imprecise comments such as “deeper than wine no 1”, “more intense than wines 1 and 3”, “higher acidity than wine 2”. This is not correct application of the Systematic Approach. Each wine must be assessed on its own merits with all attributes analysed according to the terminology defined in the SAT.

#### **Do not jump to conclusions**

Finally, the most common problem is that of smelling and tasting the wine and deciding what it is before writing the tasting note. This inevitably means the candidate writes the tasting note “to fit” their (often incorrect) conclusion rather than concentrating on what is in the glass and then drawing conclusions based on this information. It is vital to keep an open mind when writing tasting notes.

## Order of tasting

Do not assume the order the wines are presented is the best order in which to taste them. In any tasting examination, whether Unit 3, 4, 5 or 6, the first step should always be a quick nose of all three samples to determine in which order they should be sampled. This usually results in assessing the least intense wine first and working up to the most intense or complex. This ensures that your palate does not get overwhelmed by a heavily oaked Chardonnay which then makes it impossible for you to detect the delicate, yeasty aromas of a simple Muscadet for example.

## Tasting Paper 1

### Question 1: Wines from a single grape variety (not given)

It is clear that candidates find the format of the questions in Paper 1 more challenging than those in Paper 2. The easiest way to lose marks in this paper is by failing to identify the grape variety. A number of candidates insist on giving a different variety for each wine despite being told in advance that one variety applies to all three wines. Another classic mistake is assuming the identity of the grape variety on the basis of the first wine tasted. It is easy to become distracted and attempt to make the remaining descriptions fit the variety chosen rather than using the information in all three tasting notes to arrive at the correct variety. A number of candidates give two varieties rather than one. This is "hedging your bets" and earns no marks at all even if one of the varieties is correct. If asked to give one variety, that is what you must do. In addition, the candidate must give evidence of the logic behind their decision. It is not sufficient to simply recognise what the grape variety is, you must be able to demonstrate how you arrived at this conclusion. This section carries five marks, and you should therefore aim to give at least five valid reasons for your choice.

<b>January 2013: White wines exclusively or predominantly from Semillon</b>	
<i>Answers: 171</i>	<i>Passes: 118 (69%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country: Region Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Australia Hunter Valley Tyrrell's Vat 1 Semillon 2004 Tyrrell's Vineyards 10% John E Fells & Sons Ltd
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Wine no 2	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	South Africa Franschhoek Franschhoek Vineyards Semillon 2011 Franschhoek Cellar 14% The Wine Society
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Wine no 3	Country:	France
	Region:	Bordeaux
	Wine:	Chateau Laville Sauternes 2008
	Producer:	Château Laville SCEA
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	Liberty Wines Ltd

This was a rather disappointing pass rate with only 5% of candidates achieving a distinction grade and the bulk of candidates (40%) falling within the pass grade band. Those who failed generally either did not identify the variety correctly and/or gave a very poor assessment of wine 1 (the Tyrrell’s Vat 1). Many candidates underestimated the quality of this wine and assessed the structural components inaccurately.

It was hoped that the sweet wine in the line-up would be the obvious clue that drew candidates to the correct variety. However, many candidates seemed to make up their minds that the variety was either Riesling or Chenin Blanc and wrote a tasting note for the Sauternes to match this incorrect assumption, despite neither variety actually fitting the profile of this wine.

Another problem identified by the examiner was a tendency to simply repeat observations made in the tasting note under the “assessment of quality” section. Too many candidates do not seem to appreciate the difference between **describing** a wine (which should be done under “appearance”, “nose” and “palate”) and **assessing** it in terms of its absolute quality.

Choice of grape variety was also often illogical, even on occasion when the right variety was given. For example, the candidate who proposed Riesling based on “use of oak” and “full body”, or the candidate who correctly identified the variety as Semillon but identified the wines as “Soave”, “Austrian Semillon” and “Semillon from Alsace”. Such comments really made the examiner question the factual knowledge and logic of these candidates.

<b>June 2013: Red wines from Grenache</b>	
<i>Answers: 400</i>	<i>Passes: 383 (85%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country:	Spain
	Region:	Navarra
	Wine:	Gran Feudo Rosado 2012
	Producer:	Bodegas Chivite
	a.b.v.:	13%
	Supplier:	Matthew Clark

Wine no 2	Country:	Australia
	Region:	McLaren Vale
	Wine:	Simon Hackett Old Vine Grenache 2010
	Producer:	Simon Hackett Wine Pty Ltd
	a.b.v.:	14%
	Supplier:	Awin Barratt Siegel
Wine no 3	Country:	France
	Region:	Rhône Valley
	Wine:	La Bastide Saint Dominique Châteauneuf du Pape 2011
	Producer:	SCEA G et MC Bonnet
	a.b.v.:	15%
	Supplier:	Bibendum Wines Ltd

This was a very good pass rate with an equal split between those candidates achieving a pass grade (36%) and those gaining merit (38%).

Issues highlighted by the examiner were that many students underestimated the quality of wine 3 (Châteauneuf de Pape), with one candidate even describing it as “lousy”. In contrast, many overestimated the quality of wine 2 (Australian Grenache), and this is a trend that is all too frequent with far too many candidates equating ripeness with quality. This is a very simplistic approach.

Weaker candidates continue to lose marks under the “assessment of quality” with many of them simply describing the wine, repeating observations they have already made under the “nose” and “palate”.

When it came to identifying the grape variety, a number of candidates made comments that once again led the examiner to question their knowledge, such as identifying the variety as Pinot Noir with one of the wines from Piedmont. Other suggestions were opting for Zinfandel as the variety with wines from Languedoc and Spain, or Grenache with one of the wines from Beaujolais, or Cinsault from the Loire. In other instances, candidates “hedged their bets” by giving two answers when identifying the wines or the variety. In such instances no marks were awarded even when one of the options was correct.

## Question 2: Wines with a common theme

Despite being given information in the question regarding the common theme, a number of candidates ignore this and lose marks as a result. The importance of reading the question cannot be stressed enough. There is often information in the stem that is there to help and guide you in your assessment of the wine – ignoring this is careless and simply throws marks away unnecessarily.

<b>January 2013: Wines with a common link in respect of origin</b>	
<i>Answers: 177</i>	<i>Passes: 61(53%)</i>

Wine no 4	Country:	USA
	Region:	California
	Wine:	Migration Chardonnay 2010
	Producer:	Duckhorn Wine Company
	a.b.v.:	14%
	Supplier:	The Wine Treasury
Wine no 5	Country:	USA
	Region:	California
	Wine:	De Loach Heritage Reserve Zinfandel 2009
	Producer:	De Loach Vineyards
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	Liberty Wines Ltd
Wine no 6	Country:	USA
	Region:	California
	Wine:	Frog's Leap Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon 2007
	Producer:	Frog's Leap Winery
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	Fields, Morris & Verdin

With questions 1 and 2, it is important to use the information within the tasting notes themselves to arrive at the information that will provide the answer to the final part of the question. In this instance, identifying the grape varieties correctly would help to place the wines in the correct country. The key here was clearly the Zinfandel, a grape that is not really grown elsewhere in any significant volume. If this was identified correctly, the inclusion of a good quality Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon should have left the candidate in no doubt that California was the most logical location.

However, the relatively low pass rate showed that many failed to make this connection.

<b>June 2013: Wines with a common link in respect of origin</b>	
<i>Answers: 450</i>	<i>Passes: 305 (68%)</i>

Wine no 4	Country: Argentina Region: San Juan Wine: Elementos Torrontés 2012 Producer: Andean Vineyards a.b.v.: 13.5% Supplier: Ehrmanns
Wine no 5	Country: Argentina Region: Mendoza Wine: Bramare Malbec 2010 Producer: Viña Cobos S.A. a.b.v.: 15% Supplier: Alliance Wines Ltd
Wine no 6	Country: Argentina Region: Mendoza Wine: Santa Julia Selección Cabernet Sauvignon 2011 Producer: Bodega Santa Julia a.b.v.: 14% Supplier: Waitrose Ltd

In the June exam, the common link was once again “country of origin” – in this case Argentina and, like the January examination, the wines included both red and white samples.

This was a fairly sound result with a good distribution of marks within the pass, merit and distinction grade bands. The Malbec generated the best tasting notes on the whole, and although many missed the variety, other options given were often not illogical, such as Syrah. The Torrontes was also missed by a reasonably large number of candidates, but also here, substitutions were logical such as naming another aromatic variety. This meant that the tasting note itself was usually accurate enough for good marks.

Inevitably, some candidates failed to read the question, which advised that all three wines shared a link in respect of “country of origin”, giving the link as “New World” or “South America” (too vague) or “cool climate” (completely irrelevant).

The examiner commented that candidates frequently give more descriptors under “palate” than they do under “nose” when in fact far more marks are available for these under the “nose”. There is also a tendency to list synonyms such as “cassis and blackcurrant”, “blackberry and brambles” or “liquorice and anise”. These comments would only ever generate one mark, as they are simply other ways of saying the same thing.

## Tasting Paper 2

### Question 3: Partly-Specified Wines

As the focus of this question is to test the candidates’ ability to differentiate between the quality levels of the three wines, it is vital that the candidate fully understands how to demonstrate this skill. Unfortunately many are confused or not precise enough when it comes to the quality assessment. Comments such as “average quality” will not gain marks. This section of the paper carries a large number of marks and comments such as “good” or “AC level” are simply not sufficient. What the examiners are looking for here is a statement of the quality of the wine that is supported by well argued reasoning and analysis that demonstrates an understanding of the elements of a wine that contribute to its quality. The key to success with this part of the question is being able to recognise these characteristics. Once the premium wine has been identified, the other two should fall into place.

The format of this question also allows the Examination Panel to sometimes select wines, which, in a blind tasting, could be considered too much of a challenge. In some cases, we might consider a grape variety that may be less familiar to some candidates. Removing the pressure of needing to “identify” the wine, means that candidates can concentrate on writing accurate tasting notes describing the wine and focus on relating the evidence they extract in this process to an evaluation of the possible quality level. In reality, for many, quality assessment is a significant area of weakness so this paper is not as easy as it appears.

<b>January 2013: German Riesling</b>	
<i>Answers: 170</i>	<i>Passes: 109 (64%)</i>

Wine no 7	Country: Region: Wine:	Germany Rheingau Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Spätlese Trocken 2009
	Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Weingut Josef Leitz. 12% Awin Barratt Siegel

Wine no 8	Country: Region: Wine:	Germany Pfalz Kendermanns Special Edition Riesling 2011
	Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Reh Kendermann GmbH Weinkellerei. 12.5% Reh Kendermann UK Ltd



Wine no 9	Country:	Germany
	Region:	Nahe
	Wine:	Diel Riesling Trocken Dorsheim Burgberg 2010
	Producer:	Schlossgut Diel KG
	a.b.v.:	13%
	Supplier:	Bibendum Wines

Once again, the pass rate in January was fairly unimpressive, with only 3% of candidates achieving distinction and the bulk of candidates (65%) falling within the 50% - 64% boundary.

As in previous years, it was in the assessment of quality where marks were inevitably lost. This accounts for 30% of the marks on this paper and is costly when done badly. Far too many candidates insist on identifying the grape variety and country of origin instead of concentrating on evaluating the structural components of the wine that contribute to quality (or lack of it). A worrying number of candidates completely misjudged the quality of wine 8, describing it as "very good" and some even felt it was "outstanding". Correctly assessing the sweetness levels of these three wines was also a challenge for some candidates.

The following extracts from one candidate's script focus on the assessment of quality for each wine. Although this candidate achieved a pass grade for this question, it was a very weak pass based entirely on their description of the three wines. The assessments of quality duplicated here are very weak and unconvincing.

Wine 7

Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks) Good quality.  
The wine is pleasant and refreshing and in balance. It is a simple wine that is easily understandable to the public. For an educated drinker I think they would enjoy the extract but it is not remarkable

Although the candidate has correctly judged the quality level to be "good", the logic behind this assessment is weak and very superficial, referring to it being "pleasant" and "refreshing". Better candidates commented on the clear varietal character that is just beginning to show some complexity from development. Some candidates picked up on the fact that the acidity was a little high for perfect balance with the alcohol and flavour intensity and although there was some weight on the mid palate, it lacked the concentration and richness of a higher quality wine.

## Wine 8

Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks) *Very good quality.  
While this is a simple wine the fruit  
is linear and clean. The minerality  
and acid is in check but very refreshing.  
This a very viable commercial style but  
has an intensity that is surprising  
on its long finish*

Comments here are very unconvincing. Not only has this candidate vastly overestimated the quality of this acceptable quality wine as being “very good”, but (s)he then contradicts this by describing it as a “simple wine” and “a very viable commercial style” In themselves, these are not unrealistic comments, but in combination with an assessment of “very good” are illogical. Better candidates commented on the “pear-drop character” and lack of complexity, weight and length. Some also picked up a slight bitterness on the finish.

## Wine 9

Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks) *Very good quality.  
The wine is of simple nature but in  
a good way. The citrus is rich as in  
almost jelly form. The mineral is  
beautiful. This is a great food  
pairing wine. Butter, caper, poached  
seabass would be excellent with this  
wine.*

This outstanding, premium wine was judged to be of the same quality level as the previous one, which was in fact the cheapest of the three. Once again, this candidate contradicts themselves in describing this as “very good” but of a “simple nature **but in a good way**” without explaining how simplicity can be “good”. The comment relating to food and wine matching is totally irrelevant and has nothing to do with quality in terms of the WSET systematic approach to tasting.

<b>June 2013: White Burgundy</b>	
<i>Answers: 450</i>	<i>Passes: 338 (75%)</i>

Wine no 7	Country: France Region: Burgundy Wine: Puligny-Montrachet Clos de la Garenne 2008 Producer: Maison Joseph Drouhin a.b.v.: 13.5% Supplier: Pol Roger UK Ltd
Wine no 8	Country: France Region: Burgundy Wine: Mâcon-Villages 2012 Producer: Cave de Lugny a.b.v.: 13% Supplier: Bibendum Wines Ltd
Wine no 9	Country: France Region: Burgundy Wine: Pouilly-Fuissé 'Les Crays' 2010 Producer: Jean-Pierre & Michel Auvigie a.b.v.: 13% Supplier: Ellis of Richmond

This was a good pass rate. As always, marks were lost under the assessment of quality. In addition to many candidates overestimating the quality of wine 2 (Mâcon Villages), many simply do not write enough for a section worth 10 marks. Similarly, observations relating to “readiness for drinking/ageing potential” were often too superficial for this section which was worth 4 marks.

The following candidate achieved a very sound merit grade. The tasting note for wine 7 is excellent, but marks were lost in the case of the other two wines as this candidate has also overestimated the quality of wine 8, and wine 9 (Pouilly Fuissé) has been identified as “high volume”.

**WINE No. 7**

**Appearance:** This wine is clear + bright, pale gold (just!), with some legs on the glass and small bubbles forming in the bowl of the glass

**Nose:** Clear, intense, developing notes, ~~the~~ with a complex nose.

This wine has notes of lemon, lime, green apple, peach, pear, apricot. Toasty oak, ~~vanilla~~ vanilla, wisp of wood smoke, creamy, buttery, saucy, dairy notes.

**Palate:** On the palate this wine is dry, with ~~high acidity~~, with medium acidity, medium body and medium alcohol. Flavours of lemon, lime, pear, green apple, grapefruit, toasted oak-vanilla, smoke, touch of pepper and creamy buttery dairy finish. It is of medium intensity and developing with a long finish.

**Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks)**

This wine is very good. It has been through a complex vinification yet still speaks stylistically of its provenance. Judicious use of oak offers complexity without interrupting the primary fruit. The acidity is well balanced against the fruit and alcohol very well integrated. It has great complexity, balancing primary, secondary and tertiary flavours. The fruit character is concentrated, and were it slightly more intense the wine could reach 'outstanding'.

**Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (4 marks)**

Drinking now, will continue to improve for 4 years. Fruit is still bright enough, there is sufficient alcohol + acidity to keep this fresh whilst the tertiary character develops.

**WINE No. 8**

**Appearance:** This wine is pale lemon, clear and bright, with small bubbles in the bowl and thin legs. Watery rim.

**Nose:** Clean, medium intensity, developing notes.

Primary fruit: green apple, lemon, lime zest, grapefruit with some ripe stone fruit coming through: peach, apricot. Pear orchard fruits. A Savoury note indicative of lees, adds an extra dimension. Creamy, yeasty, biscuity.

**Palate:**

This is a dry wine with medium acidity, medium body and medium alcohol. The intensity is also medium: green apple, lemon zest, lime zest, peach, pear, apricot, grapefruit. Yeasty flavour comes through towards the end. Savoury, sweet, slightly creamy. The finish is medium+, developing.

**Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks)**

This is a very good wine. It has a clean, crisp fruit character well balanced with the acidity. The alcohol is well integrated and balanced with the body. Clearly defined fruit is present, though lacking in complexity. A touch of depth comes from the suggestion of well-used lees, but in no way overpowering. Suspect this would be of medium to high volume due to its comparatively ashy composition: fresh, fruity and light. Well made, though difficult to state any degree of typicality given its international style.

**Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (4 marks)**

Drinking now, will improve with age. There is enough fruit and acidity to preserve for 2 years, and with any luck more lees character will develop.

**WINE No. 9**

**Appearance:** This is a clear, bright, pale lemon wine with a waxy rim and some legs on the glass.

**Nose:** Clean, medium-intensity and youthful aromas: crisp green apple, lemon zest, lime, sleek minerality & flint.

**Palate:** This is a dry wine with medium acidity, medium body and medium alcohol. It is of medium intensity, with primary fruit flavours: green apple, lemon + lime zest, grapefruit. A touch of floral (blossom) and herbaceous (cut-grass), but otherwise simple and youthful flavours. It has a medium minus finish.

**Detailed assessment of quality: (10 marks)**

This is a good wine: an example of a cleanly made high volume wine. There is plenty of fresh fruit, though not of great intensity or distinction. It lacks any degree of complexity, though this is part of the appeal of such an approachable commercial style. It has been cleanly made - stainless steel throughout - and blended to create a wine replicable year after year. It cannot be considered greater since it lacks typicity, complexity and intensity, though (as mentioned) this would perform well commercially.

**Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (4 marks)**

Drink now, not intended for aging. There is simply not enough fruit exposed here for the wine to develop. It will begin to fade within the next 12 months, lacking in acidity or alcohol to preserve the fruit available.

## Question 4: Unspecified Wines

It is a common misconception amongst candidates that if they identify the wines correctly, they will pass this paper. This is simply not the case. If you total up the marks available for the conclusion compared to marks awarded for the sections on the appearance, nose and palate of each wine, you will see that the tasting note itself generates the bulk of the marks, (20 marks for the description, 8 marks for the assessment of quality and state of maturity and only 4 marks for identifying the provenance of the wine and the grape variety). This means it is quite feasible for someone to write accurate tasting notes, yet not identify the wines and still pass (sometimes even with a high grade), whilst another candidate can identify the provenance all three wines yet be graded “fail” because their tasting notes are inaccurate and/or brief. It is not enough to simply recognise what the wines are (anyone can do this if they taste a wine often enough). The candidate needs to be able to strip the wine down to its component parts, describe these accurately and make judgements based on this information. This is what professional tasting is all about. Without an extensive and accurate tasting note, the examiner has no way of knowing whether the correct identification was anything more than a lucky guess or the result of tasting something familiar – no tasting skills have actually been demonstrated. The answer lies in the accuracy of the tasting notes themselves and in the assessment of quality.

Candidates often fall prey to the common error of deciding what the wine is having smelt or tasted it, and they then write a tasting note to match their conclusion, which in some instances may be incorrect. This is easy to do under examination conditions and is very tempting when you think you know what the wine is. However, it is always a bad move as the tasting note is invariably less accurate because the candidate tends to describe how they “expect” the wine to taste rather than how it actually does taste. It is vital to keep an open mind until the tasting note has been completed and reviewed, and only then to reach a conclusion as to what the wine might be.

<b>January 2013: Red and White wines</b>	
<i>Answers: 171</i>	<i>Passes: 93 (54%)</i>

Wine no 10	Country:	France
	Region:	Rhône Valley
	Wine:	Condrieu 2010
	Producer:	E. Guigal SA
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	John E Fells & Sons Ltd
Wine no 11	Country:	France
	Region:	Beaujolais
	Wine:	Beaujolais Villages 2011
	Producer:	Maison Louis Jadot
	a.b.v.:	12.5%

	Supplier:	Hatch Mansfield
Wine no 12	Country:	Italy
	Region:	Veneto
	Wine:	'Mara' Valpolicella Ripasso 2009
	Producer:	Gerardo Cesari SPA
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	Alfie Fiandaca Ltd

Like all the January tasting papers, this was disappointing, with only 2 candidates achieving a distinction grade. The Condrieu and Ripasso posed a real challenge to most candidates with only four from the 171 sitting this paper identifying the Valpolicella as such. Whilst pinning this wine down specifically to the Ripasso style was something examiners were not necessarily expecting of candidates, they were expecting far more of them to have recognised this as a style of Valpolicella made from dried grapes, since there are very few wines that could compete with this in terms of power (both in colour and flavour) and structure.

<b>June 2013: Red and White wines</b>	
<i>Answers: 450</i>	<i>Passes: 334 (74%)</i>

Wine no 10	Country:	Australia
	Region:	Eden Valley
	Wine:	Pewsey Vale 'The Contours' Riesling 2007
	Producer:	Pewsey Vale Vineyard
	a.b.v.:	13%
	Supplier:	Negociants Ltd
Wine no 11	Country:	USA
	Region:	California
	Wine:	Fogdog Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 2009
	Producer:	Freestone Vineyards
	a.b.v.:	13.5%
	Supplier:	Private Cellar Ltd
Wine no 12	Country:	France
	Region:	Alsace
	Wine:	Trimbach Gewurztraminer 2010
	Producer:	F.E. Trimbach
	a.b.v.:	14%
	Supplier:	Enotria Winecellars Ltd

As with other tasting questions, it is in the final sections of the paper where the most marks are lost. Many candidates seem to have got to grips with the fact that the elements that contribute to quality are complexity, balance, intensity, length etc, but these are often just referred to without any analysis to back them up. Similarly, when it comes to assessing the readiness for drinking and ageing potential of wines, many candidates simply indicate whether the wine is ready to drink and give a number to



indicate the number of years that it can be kept, rather than considering whether it will hold, or improve over time or simply develop to display a completely different taste/aroma profile.

As always, candidates place too much importance on the identity of the wine rather than the assessment itself. The following candidate achieved a distinction grade despite only identifying one of the wines correctly. This is because they scored high marks in all other sections.

ASSESSMENT GUIDE.

**WINE No. 10**

Appearance:

Clear & bright, medium lemon with legs on the glass

Nose:

Clean, pronounced intensity with of baked stone fruits (peach) lemon pith <sup>pineapple</sup> orange pith and loath, vanilla and waxes & honey

This wine is developed.

Palate:

dry wine with medium (+) acidity, medium alcohol and medium ~~body~~ body. Medium (+) flavour intensity of: baked peach, medicine, orange & lemon pith, vanilla waxes toast honey and vanilla.

This wine has a long finish.

Assessment of quality: (5 marks)

This is an outstanding wine with huge complexity of flavour fully in balance with the acidity and alcohol. It is obvious as a semillon with rich fruit and concentration pointing to a fabulous region of the Hunter Valley in Australia. It has a long finish that is full of the waxy note.

Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (3 marks)

This wine is ready to drink with already some bottle age. It will hold for 3-5 years but as it is already so concentrated & complex it is unlikely to get any better. After 5 years the wine may start to fade as the fruit disappears and just the waxy honey which will give hollow text

Approximate age of wine: (2 marks)

5 yrs - 8 years

Predominant grape variety/varieties: (1 mark)

Semillon

Country of origin: (1 mark)

Australia

Region of origin: (2 mark)

Hunter Valley.

**WINE No. 11**

**Appearance:**

clear & bright, medium ruby with legs on the glass

3

**Nose:**

clear nose with a medium intensity, bursting with red current, black cherry, smoke, wild strawberry and black current. Simple, fresh, youthful.

6

this wine is youthful

**Palate:**

dry wine with, medium (+) acidity, medium alcohol and medium body. The tannins are medium and are grippy. The flavour intensity is medium (+) with flavours of red cherry, red current, green herbs, vanilla, sweet spice, smoke/cornmeal.

9

The wine has a medium clean finish

**Assessment of quality: (5 marks)**

This is a good quality fresh and fruity wine. It has a good depth of red and black fruits (balanced) by the medium acid, acidity and body. The flavours are clean and crisp and old world in style with the lighter alcohol and slightly less ripe fruit. The wine could be more concentrated, integrated and needs a longer finish to be of a higher quality.

**Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (3 marks)**

This wine is ready to drink and will not age. It may hold for up to 2 years before the fruit fades but is a mass-produced mid-priced wine.

**Approximate age of wine: (1 mark)** neat for early drinking & easy enjoyment.

2 yrs

**Predominant grape variety/varieties: (1 mark)**

Sangiovese / Cabernet Sauvignon Blend

**Country of origin: (1 mark)**

Italy

**Region of origin: (1 mark)**

Chianti Classico

The reasonably high acidity and cherry flavours make me think this is a varietal blend from Italy.

**WINE No. 12**

**Appearance:**

clear & bright, medium lemon with legs on the glass.

3

**Nose:**

clean white with a pronounced flavour intensity of blossom, lychee, white peach, white flowers, fesh, highly aromatic

6

this wine is youthful

**Palate:**

medium-sweet, high acidity, medium (+) alcohol wine with a medium body and pronounced flavour intensity. The flavours are of lychee, white flowers, white peach, sweet rich spice, apricot and orange blossom with a slightly bitter aftertaste.

7

The wine has a medium finish.

**Assessment of quality: (6 marks)**

Good quality wine, very fresh and fruity, aromatic flavours in balance with the sweetness vs the acidity. The alcohol is a little hot and the finish a little short and bitter to quality as very good quality. Flavour a well made, concentrated and mostly balanced wine with a rich concentrated Readiness for drinking/potential for ageing: (4 marks)

5

This wine is ready to drink and will not age. Over time the fresh positive floral flavours will fade just leaving the high acidity and alcohol out of balance with the sweetness. A good wine, per spicy food.

3

**Approximate age of wine: (1 mark)**

2-3 yrs

**Predominant grape variety/varieties: (1 mark)**

~~Celestia~~ Gewurztraminer

**Country of origin: (1 mark)**

France

**Region of origin: (1 mark)**

Alsace

that shows absolute typicality of the Gewurztraminer varietal

1  
1  
1

## Theory Paper

There is definitely a technique to answering questions in the Unit 3 theory paper and a few simple, common sense rules can help to maximise marks.

1. With a requirement to answer five questions in total in three hours, some candidates clearly do not pace themselves appropriately, producing three answers of reasonable length, then two that are skimpy or rushed, or in some cases only one more question is attempted. More practice at writing essays within the time allowed is valuable examination practice. Candidates should allow themselves a maximum of 30 minutes to answer each question. This will leave them half an hour to spare. The best way to use this time is to read through the examination paper and decide which questions to attempt, spend around five minutes on an essay plan for each question, and use any time remaining to read through responses before submitting them for marking.
2. There is often very little evidence of candidates planning their responses. It is always a good idea to make a quick essay plan before starting to write. This ensures that the key points are covered in a logical way. Those who do not follow this advice often fail to address specifically the key words in the question. The five minutes spent jotting down key facts is never time wasted. This is often the best way of determining which questions are the best ones to attempt. A question that seems easy initially may be one that is difficult to come up with hard facts for. An essay plan is the best way to determine if this is the case.
3. When drafting questions for the Diploma examination, the Examination Panel takes great pains to ensure that the wording they choose leads candidates to the answer they require. This means that questions contain vital, key words that form the basis of the question and therefore, by default, the answer. It is a really good idea to underline these key words and use them as the basis for the essay plan. This ensures that all aspects of the question are covered and the writer does not stray "off topic".
4. Some candidates do not appear to read the question carefully enough. This is often a problem with "multi part" questions where the candidate may be asked to write about four or five topics from a list of six for example. Candidates who mistakenly answer all six sections are creating unnecessary work for themselves as the examiner will only mark the number of sections requested in the question and ignore any surplus.
5. A number of candidates simply write generally "around" the question, without actually answering it as set. Remember, questions are set with a purpose – none of them are phrased "write all you know about....." Examiners work from a marking key or marks schedule that details the scope and detail required in an answer. They will not allocate marks for information that is not relevant to the question as set.

## January 2013

### Group A: Compulsory Question

Explain how factors and work in the vineyard, combined with winemaking techniques, determine the style and quality of the following wines:

- a) *Cru Classé Saint-Estèphe*
- b) *Niagara Peninsula Ice Wine*
- c) *South East Australia Semillon Chardonnay blend*
  
- a) *AC Bordeaux Rouge*
- b) *Alsace Gewurztraminer Vendanges Tardives*
- c) *Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc*
  
- a) *Premier Grand Cru Classé St Emillion*
- b) *Rheingau Riesling Eiswein*
- c) *Napa Fumé Blanc*

Answers: 214

Passes: 114 (53%)

There were three different variations on this question as shown above, but all three focussed on the production of three very different styles of wine – red, dry white and sweet white. The problem with most scripts was that candidates simply wrote in broad terms about the wines and the regions without explaining how the factors associated with grape growing and winemaking determine the style of these wines.

Scripts for all three variations of the question also showed a worrying lack of basic knowledge on vinification from many candidates. This may in part be due to the fact that most candidates sit the examination for Unit 2 (wine production) long before the Unit 3 examination. However, they need to remember that grape growing and wine making also form a considerable part of the syllabus for Unit 3, and in this instance, knowledge needs to be very specific to the regions defined in the syllabus. Results for this and many other questions on the Unit 3 theory paper show that candidates would do well the build some form of revision for Unit 2 into their study plan for this examination.

Some of the fundamental errors encountered were as follows:

- Pressing red grapes prior to fermentation.
- Barrel fermenting red wines.
- Confusing Eiswein/Ice wine production with botrytised grape production.

Other problems arose in connection with specific wines. For example, many wrote about the Bordeaux region in general terms, listing all available soil types, districts and grape varieties rather than concentrating on the specific AC wine as defined in the question. This was particularly noticeable in the case of the AC Bordeaux Rouge where the inclusion of gravel soils and Cabernet Sauvignon had far less relevance. Comments relating to the Fumé Blanc were also often poor, with many candidates

describing it as an inexpensive Sauvignon Blanc wine made using oak chips or essence and often with some residual sugar.

**Group B: 4 questions to be answered from a choice of 6**

<i>In the past Chile has been primarily a producer of simple, inexpensive wines. Discuss how this is changing. (An essay format is COMPULSORY for this question)</i>	
<i>Answers: 156</i>	<i>Passes: 65 (42%)</i>

Every Unit 3 theory paper contains one question that must be answered in an essay format. These questions are usually more topical and discursive in nature and are therefore more suited to this form of response. They are also some of the more challenging questions, and therefore often generating poor results, and this was no exception. There were no distinction grades at all for this question and many of the 91 candidates who achieved fail grades did so because they did not answer the question that had been set.

Far too many candidates simply wrote an essay about wine production in Chile, often describing how the climate is perfect for grape growing and that there is no phylloxera. This was not the focus of this question. To answer this well, candidates needed to look beyond the obvious facts that allow Chile to produce good wine and explore what they are doing NOW to move on from being a producer of simple, inexpensive wines. This meant considering initiatives such as planting in the right place in terms of climate and soil. Not simply looking at mainstream, established regions such as Maipo and Casablanca, but the newer regions that are attracting attention such as those further south (Itata and Bio-Bio) or those planted at altitude (e.g. Luis Filipe Edwards in Colchagua and Falernia in Elqui), those in proximity to the Pacific Ocean in addition to Casablanca, such as Limari, San Antonio/Leyda and Aconcagua Costa and those in extreme environments like Huasco in the Atacama Desert or Chico in Patagonia. Soil is something that was hardly given any thought in the earlier days of wine production in Chile (in the 70’s and 80’s) but now viticultural experts like Pedro Parra are bringing the “terroir” concept to Chile. Producers as far apart as Viñedo Chadwick (Quaternary gravels) and Maycas de Limarí (presence of lime) are working to understand the influence of soil on their wines.

Yield management was also worthy of discussion, particularly in the context of irrigation, since over-irrigation and astronomical yields had been the norm in the past. The move from flood irrigation to drip has made yield management possible and vineyards aiming to make premium wines are now judiciously irrigated and yields are much lower. Green harvesting and a trend towards higher density plantings have also helped to moderate yields.

The elimination of inferior plant material was something else that has contributed to increased quality. As Chile moved from supplying the domestic market to the export market it became clear that not everything in Chile’s vineyards was what it claimed to be. A lot of “Sauvignon Blanc” turned out to be Sauvignonasse and many “Merlot”

vineyards were co-plantations of Carmenère and real Merlot. Good candidates wrote about the work that has gone into sorting out this confusion. The best of them also described how varieties and clones completely new to Chile have been planted over the last twenty years (e.g. Syrah, Pinot Noir and more recently Tempranillo) and how a few happy rediscoveries have also been made such as O. Fournier: Cabernet Franc planted in 1890s and Carignan in the 1940s. It is always a good idea to illustrate such statements with specific examples such as Vignadores de Carignan (Vigno) which was established in 2009 to champion Maule's old vine Carignan.

Something that many candidates did comment on was the ethical wine sector that has slowly emerged in Chile allowing them to move away from the "bulk wine" image of the past. Some candidates took this further, explaining that the Fairtrade movement is important in parts of the Valle Central (e.g. Los Robles) or how Emiliana have carried the flag for organic and biodynamic viticulture. Really good candidates mentioned new initiatives such as the Sustainability Code that has recently been introduced by Viños de Chile or the Movement of Independent Vineyards (MOVI), which aims to champion boutique wineries across Chile.

Most candidates wrote about winery investment, but comments were often very simplistic. Better candidates explained how the first wave of post-Pinochet investment was mainly focussed on installing all the latest vinification equipment (stainless steel vats, refrigeration, new oak barrels) on an industrial scale, but that today's premium producers are now looking at small batch, almost artisanal, equipment and techniques, such as the winery at Almaviva and Eduardo Chadwick's gravity fed premium red wine "winery within a winery" at Panquehue.

PR and marketing was another topic worthy of mention and good candidates explained that a lot of work is being done at both generic and corporate level to get the quality message out with Wines of Chile active in key export markets and also hosting buyer and press visits to Santiago. Eduardo Chadwick's "Judgement of Berlin" circus was also cited by some as helping to show that top Chilean wines can compete with Bordeaux and Tuscany's finest, with the fact that Almaviva trades on the Bordeaux "place" being seen as evidence of this status.

The following script is an example of a merit grade. The candidate covers a number of the points discussed above and the answer is clearly set out in an essay style.

In the past, Chile gives impression of producing simple.

In expensive wines. In early 1990's it start shifting to more quality wine due to climate change, improvement of R&D, foreign investments, pioneer wine maker, better marketing agents, etc to make it changes. In following paragraphs we will explain how this is changing.

The differentiation of carmenere and cabernet sauvignon in early 1990's provens Chile ~~stop~~ gradually stop making simple, in expensive wine. Chile put heavy emphasis on R&D ~~to~~ research improve the clones, study different soil profile in different terrain and improving the quality of carmenere growing in Chile.

In the past grapes are growing without yielding limitation, now growers put emphasis on canopy ~~management~~ manage grapes with enough sunlight but not overripe before harvesting. They are using different clones in different soil for experiment. find out different terrain suits which grape grow.

~~The~~ Chile wines mainly on high altitude with Andes mountains to provide clean water source for irrigation. This makes gradually understand the large diurnal range helps to retain acidity and fruit purity of grapes, they are ~~not~~ now concern about pruning, training, yielding ~~to~~ and slope facing of vineyards to ensure grapes grown in best region.

There is an increase of foreign investment and joint venture group e.g. Sena (Errazuriz + Robert



Modavia) and Almaviva (Mouton Rothschild family) have shared to set up in Chile to boost up the brand of Chile wine and show Chile can make super premium price wine. In the past, most wineries are focus in ~~the~~ ~~central~~ ~~part~~ ~~of~~ ~~Chile~~ ~~and~~ ~~now~~ ~~its~~ ~~spreading~~

central part of Chile and now its spreading towards north to Aconcagua, Limari, Elqui and ~~the~~ Bio Bio, Italia region. Each region now has its uniqueness eg. Limari & Elqui are now good for Sauvignon Blanc. Bio Bio is a up coming region for subtle, restrain, elegant Pinot Noir, and now not just only limited in Casablanca for its Sauvignon Blanc.

The global warming and dry weather condition makes Chile a perfect region of organic farming. It's not prone to any rot or disease relates to high humid weather. Grapes grow healthy in Chile which cause the uprise of quality. Also wine maker are ~~not~~ now seriously making wine, by putting harvested grape in stainless steel for temperature controlled fermentation. After fermentation, they tend to put in French oak for aging to increase the wine complexity and extend its aging potential. ~~There~~ Chilean wines are not made for longer aging period and shift to quality wine.

As mentioned, Ilce Sena, they are adopting the premium Bordeaux wine making method in Chile though using local grapes its helps to boost up the standard of Chilean wines. Sena had organised Berlin tasting to boost up the Chilean wine image by making it comparable to Bordeaux First growth wines. The active involvement of Chile wine maker in International wine marketing helps to boost up

	chilean wine image.
	Also the rediscovery of carmenere with the distinctive soft, ripe tannin in of merlot and ripe black fruit character. Wine maker has put effort to make the carmenere to be a easy drinking, with <sup>soft</sup> good tannin and acidity, structure to change consumer's mind of inexpensive, simple wine in the past.
	All in all. Chile wine is not drifting from simple inexpensive wine to quality ones with the aid of natural factors (eg. climate, <del>less</del> good sunlight, low disease stress), active involvement in R&D, change of cloudy. He discovered terrior in small <del>at</del> region. Improve the wine making techniques, <del>plans</del> <del>to</del> control fermentation. careful canopy management and with <del>for</del> foreign investment and pioneer wine maker's help to make Chilean wines a new star of quality wine producer in the world.

In contrast, the following script was awarded a fail grade. It is considerably shorter and therefore, inevitably superficial. There are some valid points, but they are only made very briefly and there is a great deal missing.

The emerging country of Chile has been started of having <sup>bulk</sup> wines available in many ~~sp~~ supermarkets, this give people, not just as a producer, for the cheap wine of Chilean wines, where mostly are produced in dilute and harsh style.

In the past, Chilean native producers don't know much the knowhow to produce quality wines. However in recent years, it attracted the like of foreign producers to make wines in Chile, because of its relatively cheap land, cheaper labours, but the climate ~~is~~ can ~~still~~ be suitable for producing great wines. ~~by producers~~

Since then people like Chateau Latite, Mouton were all coming to invest their best knowhow and facilities and made the like of Los Vasco with a wide range of quality ~~also~~ also the outstating Almaviva & Sena, which ~~also~~ always achieved high ratings from wine critics, that Chilean wines start getting more popular, not just in quantity, also in quality. ~~They~~ They all brought in advance wine making techniques e.g. new french barrel, temp. controlled tanks and also highly skilled wine consultants, planting vines on this lovely Phylloxera free countries. ~~Now they are joined in started to co~~ Thereafter, Chilean big producers like Concha & Toro has copied and learned those skills in how to produce quality wines and expanded to outside markets, all over in the world. It isn't just imitating quality, they also created meaningful & informative labelling e.g. Reserva (though have no official meaning), but ~~all~~ all the wine information were written on labels, telling the customer knowing the style & quality of these wine, virtually building confidence to customers.

As a result, the Chateau produces have been more willing to produce good quality and more expensive wines and ~~that~~ especially in Bordeaux style blend style, to offer customers an alternative to quality wines, still cheaper for many Bordeaux Cru Classés reds.

In relation to Burgundy, write a paragraph on FIVE of the following:

- a) Boisset
- b) Climate
- c) Grand Cru
- d) Hospice de Beaune
- e) Limestone
- f) Volnay

Answers: 140

Passes: 80 (57%)

This was a fairly straight-forward question on a mainstream topic and it was surprising that it was not answered by more candidates. The sections on climate and Grand Cru were generally answered well by most candidates, but Volnay and Hospice de Beaune were the sections that caused some to achieve lower marks. As with all the questions on the January examination, most of those achieving a pass grade, did so with a fairly low mark in the 55% - 59% range and only one candidate was awarded distinction.

Outline the renaissance of Tokaj wine since 1989 (20% weighting). Describe the climate, topography, soils and grape varieties of the region (30% weighting). Explain how the different styles of wine are produced (50% weighting).

Answers: 76

Passes: 40 (53%)

This was the least popular question on the January paper, answered by only 36% of candidates. The quality of results ranged from very good (with a maximum mark of 89%) to extremely poor (lowest mark 26%). The majority of candidates knew the basics of production – use of botrytised grapes, the different levels of puttonyos etc, but responses often lacked the level of detail expected for a higher grade. Very few candidates mentioned the shift from the old oxidative style of wine to the fresher more modern style and many forgot to mention Szamorodni or did not describe it

accurately. The majority were able to name the key grape varieties but were less competent at discussing the characteristics of these and what they contribute to the style of the wines in which they feature.

The following script is a good example of a candidate who simply lists facts with no detail at all. The first part of this question has not been addressed at all. The second part (accounting for 30% of the marks) is covered by a single sentence as follows: *“Climate is continental, soil is base (sic.) on limestone and clay, grapes use (sic.) are Harzlevelu, furmint.”* This candidate is not performing at the level required of the WSET Diploma and achieved a fail (unclassified) grade.

## Renaissance of Tokaj

Tokaj is becoming more and more popular because of his sweet wine, late harvest or the one with puttonyos 3,5,6

Climate is continental, soil is base on limestone and clay grapes we are Hárslevelű, Furmint.

Style of wine - At the beginning Tokaj region become popular for sweet wine and from there people realize that Hungary is also dry white wine of good quality, easy to drink.

Tokaj is situated in Hungary in the North, East side corner. Soil is mainly limestone, silt and clay. A great soil for Furmint to have his rootstock going deep to the soil to keep freshness and get Minerality.

Dry furmint is usually bone dry, no oak, fresh, medium body, well stone minerality, good to high acidity

Hárslevelű ~~is~~ dry = is Med to full body Richer honey with peach apricot pear, medium body and Alcedid more recommend with food

Age oak furmint is also made,

All this grape (below) are white, Tokaj is also making some red wine, little production, indigenous hungarian grape

White wine and sweet wine is really what Tokaj is known for especially since the classification in 1989, and the regulation were in place

Some of the Best producers are Ivan Szepes<sup>Óbony</sup> for dry white for Sweet Tokaj, Diósház, Royal Tokaj - Hétzola

In contrast, the following candidate gives extensive and relevant responses to all three sections of the question.

ToKaji is legendary region producing wine since the 1300's. It's wine were some of the most expensive + sought after in history, however sweet wine has fallen out of fashion since those times, and Hungary fell under communist rule which stagnated growth and the possibility of growth. Since the fall of communism in 1989, there has been a flood of outside foreign investment and capital, as well as modern winemaking techniques that have made Hungary more fashionable again. For example, Hugh Johnson is a partner/investor in the Royal Tokaji company, one of the largest producers of Tokaji today.

The climate in Tokaji is moderate ~~and~~ European continental with short cold winters and long warm summers. It is protected by the Carpathian mountains to its north and is surrounded on 3 sides by rivers (the Bodrog, Hernod + Tisza). This makes it the perfect region for the facilitation of noble rot. The northern mountains + their rivers help keep air circulating in this area, however frost is a threat in the springtime. Sudden storms can affect the area, including hail and rain, but rot is its gift. The soils are sandy-alluvial on the river valleys moving up the steep terraced volcanic slopes (up to 350m high). The shape of vineyards in the area form a V-shape allowing for South, South West and Southeastern aspects for the vineyards. The volcanic soils provide spiciness, body and an oily minerality to the grapes. (see note at end)

The main grapes used in Tokaji production include: Furmint, Hárslevelű, and Székely Muskotály. The Furmint grapes usually dominates due to its high acid levels. It provides floral aromatics, green apple + pear flavors. This is the hardest grape and is frost resistant, however it is prone to botrytis.

It is landlocked.



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The hasleved grape adds body, a creamy mouthfeel and apricot + peach notes. It is also prone to rot due to its large berries. The final grape, which is less important than the other 2 in terms of quantity of plantings ~~are~~ is the Sarga Muscotale which is the Muscat of Alexandria grape. It provides a floral, white flower note, honey and peaches. A usual blend would be 70% Frensch, 70% Haslevede & the rest Sarga Muscotale.

Production of Tokaji can vary depending on the vintage. The most famous wine produced is Tokaji Aszu, made with botrytized berries. It is produced by picking the <sup>botrytized</sup> grapes (botrytized grapes and healthy grapes are separated), in a measure of Puttonyos, which represents 25 kg of grapes. These botrytized grapes are picked after the healthy grapes by hand and in trays (several passes through the vineyard). Traditionally the ~~wine~~ grapes were picked & left in the puttonyos for 6-8 days & would become oxidative. Today, however, the approach is more modern & fresher. The healthy grapes (rot-free) are pressed & then fermented into a ~~dry~~ 'base wine'. The botrytized grapes are added to the base wine. (Note - the base wine can be partially fermented, must, dry fully fermented wine or somewhere in between). Once the botrytized grapes are added it restarts fermentation bringing the final alcohol to ~~12~~ 12.5% ABV.

The grapes are <sup>usually</sup> no longer (as they were traditionally) crushed into a paste, however some producers still do this. The final residual sugar is measured in RS + dry extract as follows:

3 puttonyos	= 60g/L RS	+ 25g/L <sup>dry</sup> Extract
4 Puttonyos	90g	30
5 Puttonyos	120	35
6 Puttonyos	150	40

The wine is then aged in a 136L Ganga Hungarian oak cask for a minimum of 3 years and up to 6 or more.

Other styles of Tokaji include: Szaradni, Tokaji Essencia.



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## And Essenzia

Smaradri means "chuck all the grapes together" and is produced in a dry or (Sgarz (Sgarz) or sweet (Etes) style. It is produced by combining all grapes instead of processing them separately. The dry style is fermented + aged in a hungarian gone ~~for~~ without filter it completely + leaving village albura flour yeast to grow. It takes like a duo sherry, the sweet style is of Auslese sweetness levels (28 g/l+) and is glyceric + rich.

Tokaji Essenzia is produced by with over 600000 sweetness levels (150g+), from the best grapes from one of the 73 Grand cru vineyards in the best years. It ages seemingly forever.

Essenzia can ferment for years and only reach 40% ABV. It is made from the free-run juice of the aszu berries, is very expensive and ages for decades.

A typical taste note for a Tokaj Aszu is:

Ambur color, honey, floral, peaches, apricots, rye bread (from the botrytis), iodine, full bodied, sweet to luscious, glycerous (produced from the botrytis) and high in acid.

It ages for 10-15 years.

Note: Botrytis converts the sugars in the grape and relies on misty, humid mornings + dry sunny afternoons. It's filamentous attach to grape skin causing water to evaporate, adding glycerol + rye bread, iodine flavors.

<p>Write a paragraph on FIVE of the following regions:</p> <p>a) Central Otago  b) Clare Valley  c) Robertson  d) Salta  e) Stellenbosch  f) Yarra Valley</p>	
<p>Answers: 167</p>	<p>Passes: 88 (53%)</p>

Paragraph style questions are usually popular choices for candidates who do not like the more discursive style questions or those that focus on a single topic, and this was no exception, being the second most popular question on the paper.

The examiner marking this question commented that there seemed to be a general lack of understanding of climatic terms, especially “maritime”. This is surprising, given that these terms are defined and used at Level 3. Often there was a lack of logic, such as describing a climate as maritime yet saying it was hot and dry, or describing the climate as continental and saying that rain was common at harvest. There was very little link between the type of climate and the resulting varietals or styles of wine, showing a fundamental lack of understanding of viticulture (something that had been evident in many other questions in the January examination). The examiner also commented on the fact that the majority of candidates seem to believe that every wine region in the world has limestone and marl as soil types. However, although these soils are common in Europe (Burgundy being the classic example), they are the exception in the New World.

Taking each of the 6 sections in turn, these are the key points to note:

- a) Central Otago – answered by most candidates and for the most part, done well. It was hard to achieve a pass grade if Pinot Noir was not mentioned or the fact that this region has a vastly different climate to the rest of New Zealand’s wine regions.
- b) Clare Valley – answered by most candidates reasonably well. If Riesling was not mentioned, it was hard to achieve a pass grade. There were a surprising number of candidates who wrongly believed the cooler climate was due to ocean influence rather than altitude. It should also be noted that many candidates cited this as a cool climate region, which it is not, with many mentioning Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz as being grown there which would not make logical sense if it were a cool climate. A cool climate for Riesling would be somewhere like Germany, whereas Clare Valley Riesling is an expression of Riesling grown in a warm climate where canopy management is used, not for ripening, but to prevent sun burn.

- c) Robertson – the least popular topic on the question and the one that was answered the least well. Many did not know where exactly this is in South Africa, and as a result comments relating to climate were often incorrect as were the grape varieties listed as being grown. Although this region is inland, it is a valley that is situated west to east, allowing the Cape Doctor to blow through the region in the afternoon, cooling down the vineyards which means that both red and white varieties are grown here successfully. This was one region that does have limestone soils.
- d) Salta – answered by about a third of those attempting this question, and for the large part, done well. It was hard to achieve a pass grade if Torrontes was not mentioned, nor the extreme altitude.
- e) Stellenbosch – answered reasonably well by most candidates. As the region is part of the larger Coastal designation, many candidates incorrectly took this to mean that Stellenbosch is on the coast and has a maritime climate. In addition, some felt that since Bordeaux varieties are common, the climate and latitude must be similar to Bordeaux, whereas in fact there is a 10 degree difference, making the climate more similar to that of the Southern Rhône. Varied climates ranging from continental to Mediterranean should have been mentioned as well as the varied topography (ranging from flat vineyards to elevations up to 600m), meaning that a number of different varieties grow here successfully.
- f) Yarra Valley – answered by about half the candidates, and for the most part, done well. This is the region where candidates **should** have mentioned a maritime climate, but it seems due to the recent bush fires in 2009 and record temperatures in 2012/13 many candidates incorrectly assumed this has a hot continental climate. It was hard to achieve a pass grade without mentioning Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and those who mentioned only Cabernet blends and described the leafy Bordeaux character of these did not make the logical link to the cooler, maritime climate which means these grapes often struggle to ripen.

It was clear that this question was answered by a number of candidates out of desperation with some very low marks indeed (11%, 19%, 20%), and some answered all six sections (inevitably too briefly to achieve convincing marks in any of them). There was however one notable exception. The following candidate answered all six sections and still managed to achieve a high mark even though their responses clearly tailed off in terms of quality towards the end. In instances where candidates do answer all six sections, examiners are instructed to disregard the lowest mark and only count the top five marks. In this instance, the mark awarded for the section on Stellenbosch was discounted.

### a) Central Otago.

Region on the southern end of New Zealand's South Island, Southern Hemisphere.

Unlike the rest of New Zealand, Central Otago has a Continental climate - whereas the rest of the Island is largely maritime.

Central Otago is an inland wine growing area producing predominantly Pinot Noir. Continental climate brings more extreme summer and winter months with a risk of frost and spring hail. The climate creates a long

growing season & good diurnal temperature range for ripening grapes and developing full drama profiles.

The soils are mainly limestone over clay, which helps to retain heat and aid ripening also.

Vineyards are positioned on South or South East gentle slopes in order to maximise exposure to the sun and minimise the risk of frost.

Pinot Noirs produced from Central Otago are a premium style and are regularly compared to those of Burgundy. They have ripe red fruits and supple structure in youth, developing complex savoury flavours in age with great longevity.

Success also in this region with Chardonnay and also dramatic varieties such as Pinot Gris and Gewürztraminer.

### b) Clare Valley is a GI

~~located~~ in Southern Australia's Mount Lofty Ranges.

With a history of wine making the region has recently seen massive investment and interest. The North of Eden

Valley ~~has~~ ~~produces~~ the wines here are more austere with higher acidity & fuller, more complex style.

Clare valley is inland and a similar climate to Barossa, lots of sun and minimal rainfall. However the vineyards at Clare Valley are planted at altitude on slopes over 500m above sea level. They have long sunny days and much cooler evenings than neighbouring Eden valleys. Soils are granite based, well draining and retain the heat. Long diurnal temperature range, maintains acidity.

Most planted variety is Riesling but also showing ~~lots of~~ very good quality Shiraz that develops subtle flavours at altitude. Producers of note here are Knappstein

Riesling produced here is dry, high acidity, racy line and citrus notes, hints of minerality and smoky note, med body & long finish.

#### c) Robertson.

Robertson is a wine growing region in the Breede River Region of South Africa, over the Bains Kloof pass in the rivers valley.

The climate is hot ~~continental~~ mediterranean with very little rain. and irrigation is permitted and necessary from the Breede River. Soils are fertile.

The region is dominated by co-operatives and production is of bulk fruit driven styles focused on ~~SA~~ Sauvignon Blanc and Chenin Blanc. Some international varieties merlot and Shiraz also grown.

Sauvignon Blanc only thrives here due to efficient canopy management. Chenin Blanc makes up ~~15%~~ 40% of all planting in South Africa where it is known as Steen.

Robertson is producing 15% of South Africa's total annual production.

#### d) Salta

Is a wine producing region in Argentina and is the most northerly of the country. The hot continental climate, means growing at altitude is necessary. In

Cafayate, La Salta vines are grown up to 2000m above sea level.

Soils are mainly sandy top soil over alluvial and this helps anchor vines and retain water as annual rainfall is very low. Irrigation is plentiful from the Andes Gap melt. Vines used to be trained high on pergolas and now there is a move to wire training. Mechanisation very difficult due to steep terraces and altitude.

Torrónés and Tannat both grow very well here.

Lot of sunshine hours and cool nights, long growing season & good diurnal temperature.

Foreign investment interested in the region and its potential for developing premium wines. Lots of modern winemaking techniques, stainless steel fermentation, new oak barriques.

e) Stellenbosch.

Wine producing district in South Africa. Continental climate with maritime influences from the ocean and Benguela current which cools the country to cooler than latitude. Soils are gravel over ~~stone~~<sup>CLAY</sup> and climate is slightly warmer than that of coastal Constantia.

Reds ripen well here notably Bordeaux varieties Cabernet & merlot.

Vergelegen produce very good wine in this region at a premium price point.

A) Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula Australia

Maritime climate. Sand & gravel soils. Rain throughout year & sun in ripening period.

Recent interest in the region and investment, linked



to tourism & proximity to Melbourne.  
 Excellent sparkling wines Chabonnay & Pinot, along  
 with more variety as still wines. Crisp in whites  
 with little ageing and Pinots have class and quality of  
 Old world

*Describe the climate, topography, soils and grapes of the Northern Rhône. (40% weighting).  
 Indicate how these are responsible for the different styles and qualities of wines produced in  
 the various appellations. (60% weighting).*

Answers: 197

Passes: 103 (52%)

This was the most popular question on the paper, but like all the questions on the January paper, the pass rate was not exceptional with marks ranging widely from a low of 4% to a high of 86%.

The first part of the question was very straight-forward, simply describing climate, topography, soils and grapes. However, far too many candidates failed to take this to the next level in the second part of the question and simply described the various wines of the Northern Rhône rather than explaining how climate, topography, soil and grape determine and influence the quality and style of these wines. For example, in the case of Côte Rôtie, most candidates wrote about steep, narrow terraced vineyards, but did not explain the significance of these in terms of yields and therefore the quality of the wine produced. Similarly, when it came to soil, very few were able to write knowledgeably about the way in which soil determines the difference in style between the wines of the Côte Brune and those from the Côte Blonde for example.

Another problem for many candidates with this question was not identifying all the relevant wines of the Northern Rhône, with a number of them forgetting to mention wines such as St Joseph and Cornas.

*Oak ageing is common in the red wines of Rioja. What are the oenological, cooperage and legal requirements/options for the production of red Reservas and Gran Reservas in this region? (70% weighting). From the perspective of producers and consumers, what are the advantages and disadvantages of these styles of wine? (30% weighting)*

Answers: 119

Passes: 59 (50%)

This was a very disappointing set of scripts with almost as many fail (unclassified) grades as passes.

Many candidates simply wrote everything they knew about Rioja, ignoring the structure of the question. This inevitably caused them to lose marks because they failed to address key sections such as considering what the advantages and disadvantages of these styles of wine are for the producer and the consumer. In general, this was the section of the question that was answered poorly. A summary of the key points that should have been covered was as follows:

#### **Advantages for the producer**

The status associated with producing these wines.

The benefits accruing from the racking process – formation of pigmented tannins, discourages reduction of excess sulfur to H<sub>2</sub>S.

Maintaining consistency of style and quality.

Options to experiment with different oaks – age, origin, toast etc., and feature this in wine related literature.

#### **Advantages for the consumer**

Access to already mature wine, since legislation states that barrel ageing must be complemented by ageing in bottle before the wine can leave the winery.

Perceived higher quality status.

#### **Disadvantages for the producer**

Cost of barrels, and cost of holding stock.

Loss of wine in the racking process.

Cost of labour for racking and barrel cleaning.

Regulations only define ageing process, not quality, so some producers are moving away from these appellations.

Not every vintage is suitable for extended ageing, (however, new winemaking techniques are able to mask faults, so poorer wine can potentially be used).

If a producer is focussed on the production of Reserva and Gran Reserva from a marketing point of view, a run of average quality vintages (e.g. 1988, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993) could spell disaster.

#### **Disadvantages for the consumer**

The above can lead to retail price variations which skew the market.

Wines can be perceived as “old fashioned” in a market driven by fruit forward styles.

A lack of clear information about future ageing potential (i.e. it doesn't need to be consumed immediately).



## June 2013

### Group A: Compulsory Question

<p>Using your knowledge of the style of the two wines depicted below, describe them based on the following criteria:</p> <p>a) Climate                  b) Harvesting                  c) Vinification and maturation                  d) Resulting style of wine and target market</p> <p>Wines version 1: De Bortoli Noble One Botrytis Semillon / Chateau Ducla Entre Deux Mers                  Wines version 2: Chateau de la Roulerie Coteaux du Layon / Spice Route S African Chenin Blanc                  Wines version 3: Chateau Climens Barsac / Tyrrell’s Vat 1 Hunter Semillon</p>	
Answers: 496	Passes: 260 (52%)

Once again, there were three different variations of this question, with each pair of wines featuring a sweet white and a dry white made from the same grape variety(ies). The emphasis here was clearly on being able to explain why the two wines differed so much in terms of style and target market and this was done by highlighting the differences in terms of climate, harvesting, vinification and maturation.

Each pair of wines generated problems. Version 1 caught many candidates out, since they failed to realise that the Entre deux Mers had to be a white wine, since red wines produced in the Entre deux Mers are not permitted to be labelled under the Entre deux Mers AC, but are simply Bordeaux Rouge AC. Those who made this error inevitably failed. Version 3 was only answered well by those candidates who were familiar with the style of Tyrrell’s Hunter Semillon. Many candidates simply described a generic Australian Semillon and their comments were therefore often incorrect.

### Group B: 4 questions to be answered from a choice of 6

<p>What are the characteristics of Sauvignon Blanc that make it such a success with producers and consumers? Illustrate your answer with examples produced in both northern and southern hemispheres. (An essay format is COMPULSORY for this question)</p>	
Answers: 479	Passes: 276 (58%)

This question was answered badly by a large number of the candidates who attempted this. This was because they largely ignored the question that had been set and wrote a general essay about the many different Sauvignon Blanc wines produced around the world.

The key to success here was concentrating on the characteristics of these wines that make them so popular with consumers and producers. It was important to include examples of specific wines, but these should only have been used to illustrate the points made about the characteristics of the grape. A loose essay based on a number of tasting notes would not have been sufficient.

Although the following candidate starts promisingly, looking at why Sauvignon Blanc might be a popular grape, this is limited to just half a page of text before they veer off into a series of tasting notes with very little in the way of discussion that links them with the question. This candidate was awarded a fail grade.

Sauvignon blanc is a world wide planted very popular, white grape. It can produce different kind of styles from bone dry with lively acidity and pungent grassy and lemon aromas to oak aged examples showing nice complexity and ageing potential like in the AOC Pissac-Leignan. But it is the first style for which Sauvignon Blanc is mainly known and appreciated: the refreshing acidity makes it easy to drink such as the moderate alcohol. The nose is often very expressive and distinct with citrus fruit and gooseberry as well as grassy notes which comes from the molecule Thiop. For producers it's quite easy to handle because of early harvesting due to early ripening and possibility to wire train and machine harvest it. The yields ~~are~~ can be quite high and still quality is good. The current trend ABC makes people look for lighter wines, with livelier acidity and less or not at all oak ageing.

One top example from the ~~North~~ Southern Hemisphere is Cloudy Bay from Marlborough in New Zealand showing ~~the~~ a remarkable pungency and grassy, citrus and even exotic character with a zest acidity.

Other great examples are found for example in Chile, especially in Aconcagua region, Casablanca, San Antonio, for example in Leyda Valley by the producer Leyda. Here the Sauvignon is still very intense, a little less on the grassy side, but showing interesting aromas of citrus, exotic fruit, gooseberry and spiciness as well as green tea. Other good examples can be found in ~~the~~ South Africa often blended with Chenin blanc.

Concerning the Northern Hemisphere, in it's home country

France, Sauvignon Blanc shows excellent results in the Eastern Loire Valley (Centre region) in <sup>AOC</sup> Sancerre or AOC Pouilly Fumé for instance. Here the style is more restrained with citrus fruit aromas, green apples, gooseberry, elderflower and two characteristic indicators of origin: minerality and cat pee. Excellent producers are ~~Joseph~~ <sup>Alphonse</sup> Mellot, Guy Saget and Reverdy families. Acidity here is at least medium(+) with medium to medium body and alcohol.

Sauvignon blanc is also popular and widely planted in South/West of France: AOC Bordeaux and AOC Entre-deux-Mers and Gasconne where it is often classified as IGP. Good Bordeaux producers are Chateau Bonnet or Chateau Louvière in AOC Pessac-Leognan.

Outside France Sauvignon gives great results in Italy in the Friuli region, for example Collio, producer example: Scarbolo. It's also ~~was~~ planted in Veneto region, for instance DOC Piave, e.g. Castellodi Ronco is an easy drinking style.

<p>The production of wine from dried or semi-dried grapes has a long tradition in the Veneto. Describe the techniques involved and the resulting styles of wine. (Each wine carries equal weighting)</p>	
<p>Answers: 431</p>	<p>Passes: 148 (34%)</p>

This was an extremely popular question that was answered badly by the majority of candidates attempting it.

The key starting point was in identifying the wines that were relevant for discussion. There were four wines that examiners were looking for and as the question stated that each carried equal weighting, missing out just one of these meant the loss of

25% of the marks that could not be made up elsewhere in the answer. Obviously this was exacerbated even further if more than one of these four wines was omitted as was done by a number of candidates. The omission of one wine was often down to a misconception on the part of the candidate that this was a question about Valpolicella. There was deliberately no mention of Valpolicella in the question – just a reference to the Veneto region. This is because in addition to the wines made from dried grapes in the Valpolicella DOC, candidates also needed to include the sweet wine produced in Soave, which is also in the Veneto.

In addition to the problems caused by restricting answers only to the wines of Valpolicella, there were also those candidates who included wines that were not relevant, either because they are not produced from dried grapes or because they are not produced in the Veneto. Vin Santo was one such wine that many candidates included incorrectly.

The following script is by no means outstanding, but it does answer the question that was set. All four styles of wine are mentioned. Descriptions of the style of these are good and the candidate has used examples of specific producers in some cases to support these descriptions. Details relating to the production of these wines are good although some of the basic processes involved have been omitted and more detail could have been included in some instances. It was one of the few higher scoring scripts for this question, but is by no means outstanding.

The production of ~~sweet~~ <sup>from dried or semi-dried grapes</sup> wines is typical in Veneto because traditionally (especially in the middle ages, up to the ~~14th~~ <sup>15th</sup> century) the Venetians were leaders in the trade of sweet wine from Greece. When such wine was unavailable, they had to "make" it themselves, to the extent that one of the first polite expressions in the wine trade to call a fraudulent wine was "a la moda di Venezia" (= in the Venetian style).

Amarone della Valpolicella D.O.C.G.  
~~Amarone~~ <sup>D.O.C.G.</sup>

~~one~~ <sup>bone</sup> dry wine made from semi-dried grapes. The name Amarone in Italian means "bitter" and it refers to the fact that ~~one~~ the first "amarone" was produced by mistake by someone who forgot a barrel of wine in the cellar, and the sweet wine was fermented to dryness (= bitter, hence not sweet, hence Amarone). The grape varieties used are Corvina, Corvinone, Rondinella. Traditionally Molinara was allowed as well. The grapes are ~~not~~ late harvested ~~and~~ (they can be given an extra <sup>time</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>semi-dry</sup> ~~on~~ drying mats), then they are crushed, destemmed, and fermented to dryness. The wine is then removed from its ~~the~~ marc, the new wine is ~~is~~ left to deposit the gross & lees, then usually put in tonneau / ~~old~~ <sup>old</sup> oak for 2 years.

The wine is then bottled and ~~it is not usually so~~ cannot be sold for another 2 years.

The resulting wine is an extremely concentrated, complex red, usually 14/14,5% ABV, dense with confectioned very ripe red and black fruit notes and lots of complexity given by ~~marc~~ the oak and the ageing. It is not

unusual for the wine to throw a deposit. It is very expensive. Quintarelli's for instance retails well over 40€, also Tomas; is a very good producer. (Another similar style is Valtellina Nebbiolo based Sforzato)

Valpolicella "Ripasso" is a ~~st~~ red light wine that is fermented a second time on the mark of Amarone D.O.C.G. This way, the wine acquires a bit of complexity. (It is nowhere near the "real" Amarone, but it offers very good value and recalls the style. (It obviously costs much less).

Recioto della Valpolicella: same grapes as amarone, but only from dry grapes. The ~~healthiest~~ <sup>healthiest</sup> grapes are hand selected and hand picked when they are fully ripe, and they are placed on drying mats or hung on ~~walls~~ <sup>ceilings</sup> ~~and~~. ~~allow the~~ ~~no~~ The room must have no humidity, perfect ventilation and staff need to check the bunches regularly in order to throw away any bunch showing a sign of rot, (~~but~~ artificial ventilation is permitted)

When the grapes are completely dry, they are pressed and a very dense juice is extracted. The juice is inoculated with a selected strain of yeast (it is very difficult for ambient yeasts to survive in a highly sugary environment, and a stuck fermentation may cause off flavours) and fermentation goes on until either the wine maker decides (chill and filter ~~if 50%~~) ~~the yeasts die~~ or until the yeasts die.

The resulting wine ~~is~~ then aged in barrel ~~to~~ <sup>to give it extra</sup> complexity, filtered and bottled.

The resulting wine is a ~~very~~ dessert wine with different degrees of sweetness, according to the wine maker's decision. Usually Recioto is never luscious; it is usually semi-sweet or sweet. There is also a very interesting light tannic grip to it, which may give it a pleasant



<p>1/1/1</p>	<p>(continuation of Recioto)  <del>The</del> bitter flavour. The structure, the complexity and the "not too sweet" flavour profile make it ideal to match with chocolate (quite difficult for other wines).</p>
<p>1/1/1</p>	<p>Another <del>wine</del> wine from dried grapes is Recioto di Soave. Pieropan's is an outstanding example, <del>it also</del> Gini's. As opposed to Recioto della Valpolicella, this wine is white and made from Garganega.          Wine making technique very similar.          The resulting wine is sweet, with very good natural acidity.</p>
<p></p>	<p>The wines are called "Recioto" because in Veneto "Recia" means ear, and farmers used to use only the "ears" (lateral parts) of the bunch because the grapes were riper and healthier (more exposed to winds, so less fungal diseases). <del>The</del> <sup>Recioto</sup> wines are usually bottled in 500 ml or 375 ml.</p>
<p></p>	<p>The Veneto is a Region in North Eastern Italy, on the border with Lombardy to the West and Friuli Venezia Giulia to the east. It has maritime influence from the Adriatic sea, limestone soil with a mix of sea sediments and soils originated from the Dolomites.          Warm continental climate</p>

<p>Describe the annual cycle of work in a typical Médoc vineyard.</p>	
<p>Answers: 243</p>	<p>Passes: 128 (53%)</p>

This was another very disappointing result for a question on a key region – Bordeaux. Responses tended to be very superficial and the weakest showed a worrying lack of understanding of viticulture. There was also a lot of confusion and lack of real understanding of techniques employed in the vineyard. For example, terms such as bud rubbing, green harvesting and canopy management were often used without showing any real understanding of how they differ and when each is appropriate. Knowledge of frost damage was often also extremely simplistic, with a failure to



differentiate between the very limited damage caused by frost in winter as opposed to the considerable damage that results from frost occurring during bud break.

A number of candidates also failed to read the question carefully enough and wrote about the work that takes place in the winery as well as in the vineyard. This was pointless, as there was no allocation of marks available for this, irrespective of how accurate it might have been.

The wording of the question itself dictated the most obvious structure for responses and the majority of candidates realised that the best approach was a seasonal one, taking each of the four seasons in turn and discussing the work that takes place in each. It was not sufficient however to simply state what is done, examiners were looking for discussion of the various tasks, such as describing what they entail, why they are done, what equipment is used, what the benefits are, what the dangers of not doing the work might be etc. It was this discussion and demonstration of understanding that was often missing in candidates’ responses.

<i>Write a paragraph on FIVE of the following:</i>	
a)	<i>AP Number</i>
b)	<i>DAC</i>
c)	<i>Dornfelder</i>
d)	<i>Rudesheim</i>
e)	<i>Valais</i>
f)	<i>VDP</i>
<i>Answers: 116</i>	<i>Passes: 33 (28%)</i>

This was an extremely poor set of scripts as shown by the very low pass rate of only 28% and the fact that 44% of candidates attempting this question achieved the lowest grade possible – fail (unclassified).

It is not unusual for these “multi-part” questions to generate low pass rates as they tend to be answered by the weaker candidates sitting the examination in the mistaken belief that they are easier than questions on a single topic. This is not always the case. The danger of the five part paragraph style question is that there is nowhere to hide if the candidate is unable to answer all five sections or if more than one section is weak. With all five parts carrying equal weighting, it only takes two weak sections for the candidate to be at a real disadvantage and likely to fail.

Many responses were simply too brief – just a few lines of text on each topic. Responses for this style of question tend to be longer in length, simply because the candidate leaves gaps of blank paper between each section. The average script is around 3 sides of text therefore, with the best candidates submitting considerably more, with 5 or 6 sides not unusual. Anything less than 2 sides of text is unlikely to contain enough detail for a pass grade.

Looking at specific sections of the question, there were clearly problems in some areas. A number of candidates mistook VDP to be an abbreviation for Vin de Pays and lost all the marks in this section as a result. Many also struggled to come up with anything to say about Rudesheim, which was described as a grape variety, a place in Australia and a place in Austria amongst other things. When it came to the section on DAC, far too many candidates wasted time writing about the Austrian wine scandal rather than concentrating on what DAC is.

<i>Describe South Africa as a wine producing country with specific reference to:</i>	
a)	<i>Wine laws</i>
b)	<i>Trade structure</i>
c)	<i>Grape varieties</i>
<i>(Each section carries equal weighting)</i>	
<i>Answers: 305</i>	<i>Passes: 177 (58%)</i>

Although the pass rate was reasonably good for this question, most of these were fairly basic passes in the very narrow 55% - 60% margin. Only 2% of candidates achieved a distinction grade and only 12% were on merit.

Whilst most candidates were able to write knowledgeably about the grape varieties, some of them had very naïve views when it came to the politics and history of South Africa as a wine producing country and these come across when writing about wine laws, and more specifically, trade structure.

The following candidate was one of the few achieving distinction. Their response is clearly set out, making it easy to follow (and inevitably to mark) and it includes plenty of good discussion of the various topics that form the basis of this question.

South Africa is a rich and diverse country with some 350 years wine-making experience. It is commercially active on the international market, placed sixth in terms of volume as in the UK on AWB off traders, with a respectable above-average bottle price. It has seen enormous improvements in the past 20 years as the end of apartheid and beginnings of the democracy saw huge levels of investment and innovation. We will consider this vast wine growing country in terms of its wine laws, trade structure and grape varieties.

a) The most important aspect of the South African wine laws comes in the form of the Wines of Origin (WO) scheme, devised and rolled out in 1973. Earlier than you might expect, this pre-dates the French VdP laws by some 6 years. The French influence on the country is evident in the structure: Wine regions, districts, wards, and estates are, nominally, of decreasing size. However, not all ~~as~~ wards fit within districts so this is not a 'perfect fit'.

The laws align well with the key export markets for South Africa (namely EU and USA), since the WO rules stipulate that any named varietal, vintage or geographical area must constitute at least 85% of what's in the bottle; a typical new-world arrangement.

Inclusion of the vast 'Western Cape' as a region allows co-ops to blend from around 95% of South Africa's ~~the~~ grape-growing area and maintain geographical labelling: fantastic news for brands (eg Komag).

The 1973 WO system is doing well, though the developments since 1994 indicate (with the increase of

smaller producers) that future subdivision will become necessary in the near future.

b) The trade structure of South Africa has also seen significant change in the past 20 years. Dissolution of the state owned co-operative (mimphly) - which goes by a three letter acronym I've managed to forget - (KMD?) has seen the rapid emergence of estates growing, vinifying and bottling their own wines.

Loosely speaking a three-tiered system is in place:

- Co-operatives are still very important, making almost half of South Africa's wines. They grow their own grapes as well as buying in both grapes and wines for distribution, usually under their own brand names.
- Negotiants/Merchants buy and blend large parcels of wines, again under their own brands.
- An increasing number of estates are growing/vinifying/bottling their own wines. These tend to be owned by highly motivated producers (such as Stellenbosch) who are keen to experiment with site suitability for various varieties as well as vinification techniques such as temperature controlled fermentation, new vs old barriques, staves and so forth.

c) South Africa has a wide range of grape varieties. Until recently it was primarily concerned with white grapes (75% in the 1970s), whereas the current split is nearer 50/50. It is fair to say there are two 'champion' grapes: Chenin Blanc and Pinotage.

Although Chenin Blanc has suffered the majority of the reduction in white plantings, most of that removed was destined for the huge quantities of domestic brandy production.

That which remains has become the poster-boy for SA whites. Crisp, fresh acidity with light citrus flavours, herbaceous tendencies and an affinity for oak. Chenin Blanc remains extremely popular both domestically (where it is known as Steen) and internationally. South African Chenin outsells chardonnay from New Zealand several times over on the global market (but to be fair, SA is much bigger than NZ).

The most famous black grape is SA's 'own' grape: Pinotage. Developed as recently as the 1950s it is a crossing of Pinot Noir and Cinsaut (aka 'the kintji') developed for its crisp red fruit flavour (Pin) and ability to withstand the hot climate of SA (Cinsaut). It brings with it a burnt rubber / tar flavour and has great aging potential.

Bordeaux varieties constitute a large portion of the other Black grapes, with Cabernet Sauvignon - Merlot - Cab franc blends being extremely popular, as well as Southern France blends (Garnache, Syrah, Mourvedre).

For the whites, international varieties such as Chardonnay excel in the cooler maritime climate of Walker Bay, (Pinot ~~noir~~ also successful here). Despite the intense heat of the Breede river region, Sauvignon blanc produces lively zesty wines (which sit stylistically between Sancerre and Marlborough) thanks to clever canopy management techniques. Champagne varieties are also successful here for the same reasons and used for some very good sparkling wines.

<p><i>With reference to Rosé wine, write a paragraph on each of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <i>California</i></li><li>b) <i>Tavel</i></li><li>c) <i>Navarra</i></li><li>d) <i>Anjou</i></li><li>e) <i>Portugal</i></li></ul>	
<p><i>Answers: 404</i></p>	<p><i>Passes: 167 (41%)</i></p>

Results for this question were also very poor with more fail (unclassified) grades than any other.

Responses were often superficial with insufficient detail to differentiate between each of the five wines listed. Many candidates simply wrote the same generic description of the production process for rosé wine in each instance, along with a tasting note that was also inevitably similar for all five wines. The only point of differentiation in most instances was in the grape varieties listed (and even here, Grenache/Garnacha was common to some wines), so this certainly was not enough for a pass grade.

A surprisingly large number of candidates failed to mention Zinfandel at all when writing about rosé wine in California, despite the huge significance of this from a commercial point of view. Similarly, the two key brands that underpin rosé wine production in Portugal were often overlooked. Responses on Anjou tended to only mention one wine (Rosé d'Anjou) rather than the three wines which are covered by the AC in this sub-zone.

The following two scripts show the clear difference in the quality of scripts submitted in the Diploma examination. The first contains a full page of text for each of the five wines, whilst the second barely manages a page of text for all five.

Good script:

Rose Mediterranean climate  
 a California is a<sup>1</sup> rose producing state in the Western U.S. These roses use Zinfandel (Italy's Primitivo grape) Grenache blanc, Cabernet blanc, and Grenache among others ~~to~~ in their blends. Roses came to fame in California in 1972 when Sutter Home made the first white Zinfandel thus creating a marketing triumph that ~~was~~ made instead of down. These wines look pink in color, are sweet, moderate in alcohol and inexpensive.

Other labels a consumer may see on a label are Cabernet Blanc, Merlot Blanc and Blush. The wines are made by adding some red wine into a white blend and NOT Oaked. Americans like them in hot summer months with light summer fare. White Zinfandel's popularity is fading in the U.S. but has ~~found~~ found a following in other countries as an export.

Americans are increasingly interested in ~~more~~ finer rose made from Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier in Oregon and other Grenache blends in California that taste less <sup>flavor</sup> sweet and more complex. There are some very good examples of Rose in Carneros AVA and Sonoma AVA in California also made from the traditional Champagne grapes (Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay.)



	<p><u>Tavel</u></p>
b	<p>Tavel is a premier rose AC in the Southern Rhone. It produces Rose only and commands high prices (sometimes unjustified) for its well known rose. The climate here is Mediterranean with altitude in Tavel. The</p>
Slopes,	<p>altitude and limestone soil present produces low yield, well ripening grapes for Rose. Primary grapes used are Grenache and Cinsaut. The grapes may be hand or machine harvested depending on what site they are on. Wines produced use cool fermentation in stainless steel vats and are not aged but meant for early drinking. Resulting style is dry and salmon in color with pink edge</p>
Red	<p>fruit aromas of strawberry and herbs in the nose medium finish, moderate to <del>high</del> acid <del>balance</del> and alcohol around <sup>ml</sup> 12.5% due to Grenache's high alcohol characteristic.</p> <p>Some styles may be oaked and develop additional complexity. Yields are around <del>95</del> 95 hl/ha and more likely to produce due to altitude terraces. Altitude helps provide cooler climate in Southern Rhone's warmer climate. Wind from Mistral also an issue here but provides drying element that helps prevent <del>rot</del> <sup>rot</sup> and frost in other regions.</p> <p>Tavel rose is always bone dry but may taste sweeter due to higher alcohol. It's never produced as a sweet style here.</p>





## Anjou

d. Anjou is a wonderful and famous wine region. There are many styles of wine here from dry to sweet. Anjou is in the Loire along the river north of it. Climate is <sup>with</sup> continental <sup>with</sup> influence from North region and Atlantic Ocean. Soils are schist granite, limestone and clay and sandstone volcanic origins with tuffeau as well which can serve as caves.

There are 3 different kinds of wines from Anjou - Cabernet d'Anjou, ~~the~~ rose d'Anjou, and rose de Loire. Cabernet d'Anjou is made of cabernet Sauvignon and cabernet franc for the most part. It is the sweetest style of the three. Rose d'Anjou is made from Gamay's Grouseau as well as some other grapes like pinot noir. Grouseau is only permitted and grown here for rose de Loire. Rose de Loire is 30% cabernet (either cabernet Sauvignon or cabernet franc) and other Loire grapes. It is <sup>always</sup> ~~usually~~ a ~~dry~~ dry style with a quality level between cabernet d'Anjou and Rose de Loire.

Grapes are planted on slopes over the river and machine harvested for the most part. Resulting wines vary in color (from deeper pink if more cabernet used) and sweetness based on style above. Most meant for early drinking. ~~Planted in~~ Planted in ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~area~~ and usually not dark aged. The same may be for a short time. Anjou roses have more depth and complexity due to darker grapes used in my opinion.

## Portugal

e Portugal has two famous ~~used~~ - Mateus and Lancers. Mateus was first made in 1942 and had great success in the U.K. Mateus is medium sweet and light. Lancers was made a few years later ~~and~~ while successful, it didn't do as well. It was more popular in the U.S. than U.K. Lancers is also <sup>medium</sup> sweet. Both are moderate in alcohol and ~~are~~ palmar to pink colored with red fruit on the nose.

Both are meant to be drunk early, not oak aged, fermented in cool temperatures with controlled strains and were Portugal's biggest exports for a long time. Periquita grapes are used for many reds due as well as some other varieties, ~~and~~

Some other variety examples are paderna, Douro Nacional <sup>and</sup> Douro Rouge. ~~and~~

Climate here is <sup>mainly</sup> ~~moderate~~ to mediterranean on the southwest corner. Continental inland with rivers bisecting much of the country. It is hot and dry in Alentejo and more moderate on the coast by Barralida - Ribatejo. ~~Green~~ Grapes for rose are machine harvested and may be drained higher to either avoid rot or heat from the ground depending on site. Mifetia is required in the southern parts.

Poor script:

(a)	<p>Rosé wine California major market &amp; production with Zinfandel to have a medium-dry style of Rosé wine. Very popular <sup>chilled</sup> in summer with BBQ meat &amp; <sup>Football party</sup> Zinfandel is deep color, high tannin with good <sup>Picnic</sup> fruit intensity of cherry, strawberry, red</p>
(b)	<p>Tavel this is from South Rhone in South France close to popular tourist area of Provence. It is made from Grenache and Cinsault grape variety with a deep color and alcohol level often dry and good flavor intensity of strawberry, cherry, lime Grenache provide good <del>color</del> tannin and Cinsault add <sup>white flower</sup> late the good fruit intensity. Refreshing summer drink. Famous and highest price Rosé but sometimes in in consistent qualities often found not justifying the price</p>
(c)	<p>Navarra the Spanish Region with Grenache and Tempranillo grapes for making Rosé wine dry with good alcohol and red fruit-flavors</p>
(d)	<p>Anjou — made from Cabernet Franc <sup>Gamay some</sup> grape. Grolleau <sup>allowed</sup> <sup>sweet</sup> with three style - (i) Cabernet de Anjou - medium dry <sup>sweet</sup> (ii) Rosé de Anjou, less sweet from Cabernet Franc <sup>from better site ones</sup> with good <sup>fruit</sup> <sup>intensity</sup> (iii) Rosé de Loire - General one where Gamay and Grolleau <sup>allowed</sup> more dry and general ones from <sup>least favorable</sup> <sup>site</sup> all these grapes allowed varieties.</p>
(e)	<p>Portugal — Great success of Mateus &amp; Rosé wine to UK and Europe, continued with several local varieties, Arinto and others good acidity level. Light body easy to drink with a bit CO<sub>2</sub> bubbled. Light and Refreshing</p>

## Unit 4, Spirits of the World

The examination for Units 4, 5 and 6 requires good all round knowledge on the part of the candidate for them to do really well, as the tasting and theory paper carries equal weighting. However, the paragraph format of the theory question still allows those who give good responses in two sections (but may be weak in a third) to pass the paper as a whole, providing their tasting paper achieves high marks.

The approach to this question is no different to that for paragraph questions in the Unit 3 examination, you should aim to get as many facts down as possible. Nevertheless, it is still important to make sure that what is written relates specifically to the question as set. For example, if asked about the production of a particular style of spirit, there is no point describing at length the basic principles of distillation that apply to any style of spirit. This is something examiners comment on time and again.

In terms of the tasting question, there is evidence to suggest that some candidates do not add water to their samples when assessing them. This is foolish, as they inevitably “blast” their taste buds to the point that they are unable to assess the samples properly.

The examination for Unit 4 was run on three separate occasions in the academic year 2012/13, in November, March and June. The overall pass rate for the unit as a whole for all these dates combined was 57%

The questions and individual pass rates for each of the three examination dates were as follows:

### November 2012

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 352</i>	<i>Passes: 260 (74%)</i>

Spirit no 1	Country:	Mexico
	Spirit:	Sauza Hornitos Añejo Tequila
	Producer:	Tequila Sauza, S. A de C. V.
	a.b.v.:	38%
	Supplier:	Coe Vintners
Spirit no 2	Country:	Scotland
	Spirit:	Chivas Regal Whisky
	Producer:	Chivas Brothers (Europe ) Ltd
	a.b.v.:	40%
	Supplier:	Gerry’s of Soho

Spirit no 3	Country:	France
	Spirit:	Martell VS Cognac
	Producer:	Martell & Co
	a.b.v.:	40%
	Supplier:	Gerry’s of Soho

This trio of spirits generated a very sound set of results, with 16% of candidates achieving distinction grade, 26% on merit and 33% on pass. The maximum mark of 91% was in stark contrast to the weakest script on only 16%.

The Tequila seemed to cause most problems for candidates, but the marker commented on a number of issues that led to low marks, such as:

- Not using the correct terminology as defined in the Spirits SAT
- Not commenting on all aspects in the SAT
- Repetition (one candidate described the alcohol as “integrated” three times under the palate for one wine)
- Vague and “waffly” comments such as “good finish”, “heady alcohol”, excellent length”
- Opportunistic actions such as listing 15 different aromas for a single spirit, many of which are entirely inappropriate.

Question 2 – In relation to spirits, write about each of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Absinthe</li> <li>b) Guyana Rum</li> <li>c) Charcoal</li> </ul>	
Answers: 351	Passes: 161 (46%)

This was an extremely poor pass rate, although there were clearly a number of candidates with very good knowledge of all three subjects.

Candidates generally scored good marks in the sections on Absinthe and charcoal, but the section on Guyana Rum was a challenge for all but the best candidates. Many simply wrote about rum in very broad terms rather than concentrating on what differentiates Guyana Rum from others. Some thought Guyana was an island or confused this rum with Rhum Agricole, others believed it is produced from Demerara sugar.

The section on Absinthe also generated some rather strange observations, such as the candidate who believed it was “aged in wormwood” or another who wrote that it is “coloured with spinach”.

## March 2013

Question 1 – Tasting	
Answers: 202	Passes: 161 (80%)

Spirit no 1	Country:	UK
	Spirit:	Tanqueray Export Strength London Dry Gin
	Producer:	Charles Tanqueray & Co.
	a.b.v.:	47.3%
	Supplier:	Gerry's of Soho
Spirit no 2	Country:	Poland
	Spirit:	Zubrowka Bison Grass Vodka
	Producer:	Polmos Białystok Spółka Akcyjna
	a.b.v.:	40%
	Supplier:	Gerrys of Soho
Spirit no 3	Country:	Jamaica
	Spirit:	Wray & Nephew Overproof Rum
	Producer:	J Wray & Nephew Ltd
	a.b.v.:	63%
	Supplier:	Wray & Nephew (UK) Ltd

As the high pass rate shows, there were no real problems with this trio of spirits.

However, there were the inevitable problems caused by those who did not follow the Systematic Approach for Spirits. This differs considerably from that used for assessing wine, and this is an easy way to lose unnecessary marks. Some candidates also pay no attention at all to the wording of the question, and just work their way through the various headings at the end of the Systematic Approach, including quality assessment, readiness for drinking, identification, estimated retail price etc. This is pointless in an instance such as here, where the final question asked for an outline of the key steps in the production of each spirit.

Taking sample one as an example, this should have generated a response along the lines of the following:

- Neutral spirit, usually of grain origin, redistilled to 96% ABV
- Reduced to about 60% with demineralised water
- Botanicals, (juniper and others) added to the spirit, or placed in a basket in the still head
- Redistilled in a pot still.
- Multiple distillation may take place, with different botanicals being added at each stage
- Reduced with demineralised water to bottling strength
- Bottled without ageing.



The following two extracts show the difference between a good response (1) gaining all five marks and one that is less focussed (2), including information that is irrelevant.

(1) - good response

Outline the key steps in the production of this spirit: (5 marks)

Neutral grain spirit is produced through the <sup>hydrolysed</sup> distillation <sup>Permentation &</sup> of a grain such as wheat, corn & Rye to around 25% - 30% <sup>abv</sup>. This colourless, fairly neutral grain spirit <sup>wash</sup> is placed in a pot still, ~~above which~~ into which a selection of botanicals are placed to steep. As the spirit is distilled the botanical <sup>tails</sup> flavours become more pronounced & the heads & ~~heads~~ of the spirit are discarded, the fragrant, <sup>potable</sup> clear spirit is ~~bottled~~ taken off, reduced & bottled unaged.

(2) – weak response

Outline the key steps in the production of this spirit: (5 marks)

This is a very good quality spirit, the raw material is probably ~~grain~~ grain and it is distilled ~~twice~~ once to make the spirit ~~strong~~ ~~and a second time~~ from a fermented wash and a second time with botanicals. I believe this is a Gin at retail price of 225230.

Question 2 – In relation to spirits, write about each of the following:

- a) Mash bill
- b) Armagnac
- c) Legal requirements for Scotch whisky

Answers: 202

Passes: 120 (59%)



Although responses on Armagnac were generally good, many candidates either did not know what the mash bill is or confused it with the mash tun and so described the production of wort.

The following script is a good answer to this section of the question. It is rather messy and not particularly well written, but contains plenty of relevant facts.

In Mashbill, it is ~~is~~ a term rather found in Bourbon, Tennessee, Canadian & even Irish whisky. The mashbill is generally identical that the mix of grain that the distillers use used in the process for the base materials. Each distillers have different own ratios that there are different flavors will come out in their products.

Different areas have different regulations. In Bourbon it is by law have to use at least 51% of corn. But in Tennessee, corn is not dominant. In Irish, Unpeated barley have to be use between 20 to 60%.

In Bourbon, ~~the use~~ following characteristic can be found in different grains.

wheat  
~~Wheat~~ = Honey & Rounded  
~~Wheat~~ Barley = Biscuit sweet, Dry finish  
Corn: Soft & clean, with tight-structure & slightly grainy when young.  
Rye = Give bourbon attack, lime-zestiness, slightly dusty when young. It is intense in middle palate with acidity, slightly oily & begin with bite, finish with spicy.

If use more corn in the mashbill, this will come out with lighter & flavor & structure.

In Irish whiskey, the unpeeled ~~the~~ barley is  
 fruity, oily, sweet & give firmness in palate.  
 that can balance with the malt balance. It can  
 pay less tax bill ~~to~~ & have higher  
 yields.

## June 2013

Question 1 – Tasting	
Answers: 144	Passes: 65 (45%)

Spirit no 1	Country: Spirit: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Guyana El Dorado 5 year old Demerara Rum Demerara Distillers Ltd 40% Gerry's of Soho
Spirit no 2	Country: Spirit: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Guyana El Dorado 3 year old Demerara Rum Demerara Distillers Ltd 40% Gerry's of Soho
Spirit no 3	Spirit: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Captain Morgan 'The Original' Rum Captain Morgan Rum Company 40% Gerry's of Soho

This was a very poor set of results and was almost entirely due to poor exam technique on the part of those who failed this paper. Many of them lost unnecessary marks because they did not read the question at the top of the paper. This is a common problem but one that is totally avoidable. The instructions at the top of the paper were that all three samples were made from the same raw material. Information on examination papers is there to help candidates, and not reading it in this instance was a costly error for many. We always recommend that candidates underline or highlight important information in questions, irrespective of whether they are tasting or theory. It is easy in the heat of the moment, and with exam nerves, to lose sight of the question and go off on a tangent. There were two such traps with this paper, not realising that all three spirits were from the same raw material and not understanding what was required in the final part of the question which asked candidates to describe how production of each spirit differed and how this determined the style.

The key to success here was in identifying these as three different styles of rum. Some candidates did this, but then lost marks later on when asked to identify the style within the category by simply writing “rum” in all three instances. This earned them no marks. “Rum” is the category, not the “style”. Responses here needed to be precise for the mark available – “Golden Rum”, “White Rum”, “Dark or Navy Rum”. Further marks were lost in the concluding section because many candidates simply wrote an “assessment of quality” or listed general points about production rather than specifically explaining how production differed in the case of each spirit. This meant considering issues such as the length of fermentation, choice of still type, strength of spirit off the still, ageing options, use of caramel etc.

Question 2 – In relation to spirits, write about each of the following:	
a) Pernod Ricard b) Calvados c) Polish Vodka	
Answers: 142	Passes: 55 (39%)

Results were also poor for the theory question in the June examination. This was largely due to the fact that many candidates did not understand what was required in the section on “Pernod Ricard”, writing about Pernod (the product) rather than Pernod Ricard (the company). Many responses were also weak on Polish Vodka, where too many candidates simply wrote about vodka production in general terms rather than concentrating on how Polish Vodka differs from others.

## Unit 5, Sparkling Wines

The examination for Unit 5 was run on three separate occasions in the academic year 2012/13, in November, March and June. The overall pass rate for the unit as a whole for all these dates combined was 84%.

The questions and individual pass rates for each of the three examination dates were as follows:

### November 2012

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 257</i>	<i>Passes: 215 (84%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	France Champagne Laurent-Perrier Demi Sec NV Champagne Laurent-Perrier 12% Laurent-Perrier (UK) Ltd
Wine no 2	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	France Champagne Devaux Grand Reserve NV Champagne Veuve A.Devaux 12% Liberty Wines
Wine no 3	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	France Champagne Champagne Tarlant 2000 Champagne Tarlant 12% Charles Taylor

Of the three smaller units, it is the sparkling wine unit that tends to generate the best results, and this was no exception.

The focus on this paper was the candidates' ability to assess the quality of three different Champagnes. The question even advised candidates that all three samples were Champagne, but this did not help those who failed to read the question and identified wine 1 as an Asti.

Despite the high pass rate, many scripts were disappointing with very generic tasting notes for all three wines, focussing only on autolytic character without really differentiating between the three different styles.

Question 2 – In relation to sparkling wine, write about each of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Chardonnay</li> <li>b) Yeast</li> <li>c) South Africa</li> </ul>	
<i>Answers: 256</i>	<i>Passes: 209 (82%)</i>

As with the results for the tasting question, this was also a very good pass rate. However, this belied the fact that most of those passing did so with a fairly basic pass grade rather than the higher merit and distinction grades which were relatively scarce.

The section on Chardonnay was answered well on the whole. Candidates needed to consider the characteristics of this variety as well as its use in sparkling wines, remembering to extend the scope of this beyond Champagne. Yeast needed to be discussed in the context of all three roles it plays in the production of sparkling wine – the initial fermentation of grape juice for base wine, the initiation of the second fermentation to create the “sparkle” and its role in the development of autolytic flavours. Responses relating to South Africa were often weak. A good approach to have taken here would have been to consider the factors that influence wine production – climate, soil, grape variety, method of production, style etc.

### March 2013

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 179</i>	<i>Passes: 146 (82%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country:	France
	Region:	Champagne
	Wine:	Pol Roger 2002
	Producer:	Champagne Pol Roger
	a.b.v.:	12.5%
	Supplier:	Pol Roger UK Ltd

Wine no 2	Country:	Germany
	Region:	Nahe
	Wine:	Schäfer Classic Extra Trocken Riesling 2008
	Producer:	Weingut Michael Schäfer
	a.b.v.:	12.5%
	Supplier:	Peter Osborne Wines

Wine no 3	Country:	South Africa
	Region:	Western Cape
	Wine:	Graham Beck Chardonnay Pinot Noir NV
	Producer:	Graham Beck Wines
	a.b.v.:	11.5%
	Supplier:	Bibendum Wine Ltd

This was a very high pass rate with a high percentage of merit and distinction grades.

The aromatic, floral notes of the Sekt made this an easy wine to describe and candidates generally gained high marks for the description, even if they did not identify it correctly. A surprising number missed the classic petrol/kerosene aromas that pointed to the Riesling variety, and as a result this was identified as Cremant by a number of candidates.

As with most tasting questions, it was in the assessment of quality that candidates lost marks, although in this instance this only accounted for 3 marks on each wine. Candidates who answer this badly tended to simply repeat observations they had made in the tasting note itself, rather than considering the attributes that contribute to “quality” such as complexity, length, balance, concentration etc.

Question 2 – In relation to sparkling wine, write about each of the following:	
a)	Chenin Blanc
b)	Louis Roederer
c)	Dosage
<i>Answers: 179</i>	<i>Passes: 141 (79%)</i>

This was a good pass rate but there were relatively few distinction grades awarded. Responses were weakest on Louis Roederer, with many candidates unable to give much more than a generic description of a Champagne producer. Those with better knowledge wrote about its historical links with the Russian court and the resulting style and packaging of Crystal Champagne. They were able to give an indication of the size of their vineyard holdings and the effect this has on production. This in combination with additional information on the various styles produced by this House (e.g. the classic “oaked style” NV), together with an idea of the scale of production would have been enough for a good mark in this section of the question.

A surprising number of candidates confused dosage with “liqueur de tirage”, describing it as the mixture of yeast and sugar used to induce the second

fermentation in bottle. This is a worrying error to be making at this level of qualification.

The following candidate gave excellent, extremely extensive responses in all three sections, gaining a very high mark.

### Chenin Blanc:

Chenin Blanc is a white grape variety also known as Pineau de la Loire (where it is native) and Steen in South Africa.

It is a versatile, neutral grape but with lower yield can produce interesting wines with grassy hay, greasy characters.

In the Loire Valley, in France, Chenin Blanc is called Pineau de la Loire. It is a major proportion for the regions Sparkling Wine Cremant de la Loire. In two regions, it is grown at 50hl/ha yield to produce stronger character. Often wines will be 100% Chenin Blanc, but may be blended with other Loire varieties and increasingly Chardonnay.

Within the Loire, the sub-AOCs Sancerre and Vouvray use Chenin in their sparkling wines as well. These regions utilise Chenin Blanc's neutrality and naturally high acidity to create excellent sparkling wines. Vouvray Mousseux and Touraine Mousseux, ~~as well~~ will be generally Chenin only, where as sparkling wines from St Anjou-Sancerre will have some local varieties blended in.

In this region, Champagne houses such as Bollinger (Langlois Lefebvre) and Grafton (Crabon and Meyer) can use Chenin Blanc in Champagne styled Cremant sparkling. These are traditional method and limited to 100L from 150kg grapes, with minimum 9 months on lees.

Chenin Blanc is used elsewhere in France as part of the Linnoux region's Cremant de Linnoux. Here, Chenin Blanc makes up 20-40% of the blend and is added to Chardonnay, Mauzac Blanc + Pinot Noir.

Chenin Blanc may be used in other French sparkling but is only small packages.

Chenin Blanc is used in South Africa where it is called Steen. Here, Steen accounts for 20% of all national plantings and is used in sparkling wines of varying quality.

In South Africa, a sparkling Chenin Blanc may also have Chardonnay and Pinot Noir and if made in the traditional method will be called "Cep Classique".

Chenin Blanc is also grown and used in other New World sparkling wines including from the United States, Australia and New Zealand, where its ↑ acid, neutral character gives good results.



A typical tasting notes for Chenin Blanc.

Cremant from the Loire

- (A) Bright and clear, medium length, bubble
- (N) Clear medium intensity, developing notes of green, citrus, hay, apples with some yeast autolysis
- (P) Dry and acid + acid, medium alcohol, medium body, flavors as above, creamy mousse.

Louis Roederer:

Founded in 1776, Champagne house Louis Roederer is a Negociant-Manipulant (N.M.), based in Reims, in the Montagne de Reims.

Still family owned, Louis Roederer, is controlled by the family holding group Louis Roederer.

The Champagne house has various styles of Champagne, these include but are not limited to:

- x Louis Roederer Brut Imperial (also Rose)
- x Vintage Brut
- x Carte Blanche (an extra-dry style)

Additionally, the house has a Prestige Cuvee style, called Cristal, which was first conceived in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century for the Russian Court particular Tsar Nicholas II. Since its launch in 1945 as a dry style, it has popularised in hip-hop songs and popular culture and has gained a reputation as a cult-Champagne product.

Sales of Louis Roederer total approximately 3.2 million bottles/year, with 75% of these sales attributed to the NV Brut Imperial.

Louis Roederer has shown innovation in a number of ways, initially the supply of wire to the Russian Court was particularly innovative at the time. It opened up new markets for Champagne sales, particularly lucrative ones. The glass used was strong enough to be punt-less and the same solid base bottle is still used today.

Also particularly innovative is the significant proportion of vineyards that the house owns. At present approximately 230 ha, which supply 80% of the house's needs. This reduces the requirement of contracts to growers and helps guarantee security of good product each year. This was due to Camille Ulys-Roederer's vision in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Louis Roederer has many other investments. They own 60% of Champagne Deutz since 1996, also owning several Chateaux at St-Estephe. Like many other houses Louis Roederer has investments in California including Roederer Estate (1988) in Anderson Valley. Recently Roederer purchased Schertzenberger from Pommery and added that to its portfolio too.

Also recently, Louis Roederer purchased Leclerc Briant, a significant biodynamic producer and is now the largest holder of organic / biodynamic vineyards in Champagne ~ 65 ha.

Louis Roederer also was known to be looking at sites in Kent and Sussex in 2007.

A tasting notes for Brut Penne

(A) Clear + Bright, pale gold, bubbles

(N) Clean, medium + intensity, develops, citrus, apple in yeast and toast.

(P) Dry, high acid, medium + body  
As above.

## Dosage

Dosage is the sugar content within the liqueur d'expédition and determines the final sweetness level of the Champagne sparkling wine.

Recently, there has been a trend to reduce dosage levels in line with consumer demand and Moët has reduced the dosage on their Brut NV by 5g/L.

The levels of sweetness, determined by dosage are as follows.

- 0g/L Zero Dosage.
- 0-3g/L Brut Nature
- 0-6g/L ~~Brut~~ Extra Brut
- 6-12g/L Brut
- 12-20g/L Extra Sec
- 17-35g/L Sec
- 33-50g/L Demi-Sec
- 50+g/L Doux.

Recently, some producers, particularly Reims-based growers in Champagne have been making zero-dosage wines to show the pure fruit expression. These wines are very acid and austere but are a delicate taste.

Dosage will add complexity and richness to the palate of a wine and it is suggested that wines that undergo extended maceration on their lees require less.

In the end it is up to the house and the chef de cave will choose the right amount to maintain the house style.

Dosage sugars will react with the proteins released into the wine during autolysis. These form complex proteins in the Maillard reaction which gives rich nutty characters to old champagne and other premium sparkling wines. However the science is still poorly understood.

In Australia, in sparkling Shiraz production, sometimes the dosage is added in the form of Port, fortified wine.

With the increased threat of ~~the~~ global warming there has been a comment that dosage levels in wines will decrease. Since the cooler, continental (or other) wines may be warmer, the ripeness of the fruit will increase, lessening the need for sugar complexity in the dosage.

In contrast, although the following script is correct in as far as it goes, it is very basic and quite short on sections a) and b) and therefore only sufficient for a borderline pass even though the section on dosage is much better.

Chenin Blanc is an early budding & late ripening grape variety that is vigorous, but through careful yield management it can produce wines w/ honey, wet wool, apple, guinea & pear characters.

In the context of sparkling wine, in France, it is used extensively in the Loire valley, in Crémant de Loire, as well as sparkling Vouvray & Saumur. Further south it is used in Crémant de Limoux, together with Chardonnay.

It is also used in South Africa, in the production of traditional cap classique & tank method sparkling wines.

In sparkling wines, it is prized for its natural acidity.

Roederer is a family owned champagne house (NM) who used to have strong connections with Russia at the beginning of the 20th century, and used to supply the Russian palace.

Currently it is mainly known for its prestige cuvee 'Crystal'. Crystal is a well-marketed name through its positioning in music & sports industries. Although most prestige cuvees are vintage wines, Crystal is produced almost every year which makes it unique.



c) After disgorgement dosage is added to sparkling wines in order to make up for the amount lost during disgorgement and also to add sugar in order to adjust the sweetness level of the final wine. It is also called *liqueur de' Expedition*. Based upon the composition of the dosage, final wines can be in the following categories:

Extra Brut : 0-6 g/L ✓

Brut = 6-15 g/L

① →

Extra Sec = 12-20 g/L ✓

Sec = 17 g/L & 33 g/L ✓

Demi-sec = between 33 g/L and 50 g/L ✓

Douce = > 50 g/L ✓

It is becoming popular, particularly among grower champagnes, not to add any dosage & produce bone-dry wines ✓

For better quality wines it's important to age the wine after dosage has been added, so that wine can recover from the 'shock' of disgorgement. Aging after dosage has been added ensures sugars in the bottle develop honey characters ✓

Dosage is added to bottles in the traditional method, & to the tank in the transfer & tank methods.



**June 2013**

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 215</i>	<i>Passes: 191 (89%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country: New Zealand Region: Marlborough Wine: Nautilus Cuvée Marlborough Brut NV Producer: Nautilus Estate a.b.v.: 12% Supplier: Negociants UK Ltd
Wine no 2	Country: Italy Region: Piemonte Wine: Cantine San Silvestro Asti NV Producer: Cantine San Silvestro a.b.v.: 7% Supplier: Hallgarten Druitt
Wine no 3	Country: Australia Region: Barossa Valley Wine: Black Queen Sparkling Shiraz 2008 Producer: Peter Lehmann Wines Ltd a.b.v.: 14% Supplier: Hallgarten Druitt

This was an excellent set of results, not simply from the point of view of the high pass rate, but because almost half the candidates sitting this paper achieved a merit grade. This was almost certainly down to the relative ease with which they were able to identify the Asti and the Sparkling Shiraz – both very distinctive wines.

Where marks were lost was inevitably in the assessment of quality for these wines. Many candidates still do not seem to understand what it required here, simply repeating their observations from the tasting note, with no indication of why these have any significance in terms of defining quality. Others just described the ageing potential of the wines and whether they were “ready to drink”, or in some cases, just explained what the wine is and how it is produced.

Question 2 – In relation to sparkling wine, write about each of the following:	
a) Tank method b) Pinot Noir c) Limoux	
<i>Answers: 171</i>	<i>Passes: 153 (71%)</i>

This was also a good result, with many good descriptions of the tank method, but also inevitably some who confused it with the transfer method.

With the paragraph sections in Units 4, 5 and 6 it is a good idea to think in terms of trigger words or questions. For example, who, what, where, when, why, how? All of these would have generated relevant information in response to these questions. Taking the tank method as an example, candidates could have considered the following:

- Who invented it?
- What is it?
- Where is it used?
- Why is it used?
- How does it work?

This is not going to provide all the information examiners are looking for in relation to this section, but will certainly go a long way towards achieving this.

The following candidate has given a good, clear description of the tank method, but is missing some of the finer detail that would have made this an “excellent” response.

Tank method is one of the cheapest way of producing sparkling wine. It is also known as Autoclave (Italy) Gran Vasco (Spain), Cuvée Close & Charmant Methode (in France). Eugene Charmant invented the process in the beging of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Boredeaux.

The method involves subjecting a base wine, to a second fermentation in a closed pressurized tank. The base wine needs to be low in alcohol & high in acidity to stabilize fermentation in the absence of SO<sub>2</sub>.

Second fermentation is done in tank quite rapidly. when wine reaches 5 atmospheric pressures the wine is chilled to <sup>0°C to</sup> stop fermentation. The wine is filtered & (liqueur d'expedition) dosage is added. Dosage is a mixture of wine and sugar used to fix sugar levels.

The method produces a sparkling wine with medium sized bubbles. It is used for wines that have no capability to age and the aim is to conserve purity of fruit in the absence of autolytic character.

Prosecco, Sekt, Asti, among others all use the tank method to produce the sparkling wine.

Although the style is considered to produce simple wines, all of the above mentioned have showed that with a good quality ~~wine~~ base wine, a good sparkling wine can be produced using the tank method!

The tank method saves money as it does away with the riddling and disgorgement process, which are labour intensive. Money saved may be used to buy better quality grapes for base wine.

## Unit 6, Fortified Liqueur Wines

The examination for Unit 6 was run on three separate occasions in the academic year 2012/13, in November, March and June. The overall pass rate for the unit as a whole for all these dates combined was 61%.

The questions and individual pass rates for each of the three examination dates were as follows:

### November 2012

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 273</i>	<i>Passes: 197 (72%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country: Region: Wine:  Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	France Rhône Valley Domaine de la Pigeade Muscat Beaumes-de-Venise  Domaine de la Pigeade 15% O.W. Loeb
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Wine no 2	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Portugal Douro Offley Tawny Port Offley Forrester 19.5% Stevens Garnier
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Wine no 3	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Portugal Madeira Blandy 10yo Verdelho The Madeira Wine Company S.A. 19% J.E. Fells
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The emphasis here was on the candidates' ability to differentiate between three different styles of wine and then discuss how maturation affects this. In a number of instances candidates did not appear to read the final section of the question relating to maturation and simply repeated the standard information from the SAT, relating to quality assessment, readiness for drinking etc. This had not been asked for and earned them no marks.

Picking up the three marks relating to maturation was dependant on knowing what the wines were. For example, mistaking the Madeira for Sherry would have led to a

description of the solera system rather than maderization through the Canteiro system.

<b>Question 2 – In relation to fortified wine, write about each of the following:</b>	
a)	Quinta do Noval
b)	Techniques for achieving sweetness
c)	Amontillado
<i>Answers: 273</i>	<i>Passes: 111 (41%)</i>

Results for this question were considerably worse than for the tasting, resulting in a poor result for this unit as a whole.

In fact, more candidates achieving a fail (unclassified) grade than any other, suggesting that they either did not prepare sufficiently for this exam, or simply are not yet ready for a qualification of this level. A lot of the low marks were the result of candidates writing nothing at all in answer to section a), or simply writing about Port production in very general terms. An alarming number of candidates still do not seem to be able to differentiate between Sherry and Port in terms of location of production, with many candidates writing that Quinta do Noval are located in the Douro Valley in Spain, or in “Porto” de Santa Maria.

The following two scripts show the difference between a candidate who has written a generic and deliberately vague response on Quinta do Noval that gained very few marks, and one who clearly knows who they are and what they produce.

Poor response

Quinta do Noval is a well respected producer of Port based in the Douro region of Portugal. It produces a wide range of Port styles including Ruby, Tawny, Tawny Reserve, Late Bottled Vintage, Colheita, Vintage and White Port.

It has also had some success at producing some excellent dry wines, made from Tinta Roriz and international grape varieties.

The main grapes used at this estate are: Tinta Roriz, Tinta Franca, Verdelho, Touriga Nacional

Good response

Quinta do Naval. - is both the name of the estate + Portuguese shipping company established in the early 1700's. It is one of the oldest Port houses changing hands only twice in its history.

There are many unique specialities to this estate such as the fact it is one of the few Port houses that produce the majority of its wines from its own estate fruit. Its signature wine NOVA is produced from a single vineyard of Nacional grape whereby the vines have not been grafted onto phylloxera free root stock. The vines are old + produce only a small amount of concentrated fruit + therefore a very low yield. The wine is only produced in the most exceptional of vintages + depends a steep price. ~~One of the~~

Their large claim to fame came in 1931 when it was one of few shippers to declare a vintage. This vintage went on to be declared one of the best of the century + Quinta do Naval has been considered one of the best estates since.

Their vineyards are also distinguished by the winter freeze which was developed by Luiz Porto in the 1890's with other producers following suit.

In addition Quinta do Naval created

DTT →

the first late bottled vintage ports in the 1950's as well as the blended tawny ports with average age.

~~Being one of the leading innovators in the Port industry~~

In addition it ages its ports in large air conditioned lodges in the Douro Valley rather than the Vila Nova de Gaia like most other producers.

These as well as other innovations and creativity have led Quinta do Noval to become one of the leading estates in the Port Industry.

**March 2013**

Question 1 – Tasting	
Answers: 252	Passes: 174 (69%)

Wine no 1                      Country:                      Portugal  
 Region:                      Douro  
 Wine:                      Graham's 10 Tawny Port  
 Producer:                      W. & J. Graham's & Ca., S.A.  
 a.b.v.:                      20%  
 Supplier:                      John E Fells & Sons Ltd

Wine no 2                      Country:                      Portugal  
 Region:                      Douro  
 Wine:                      Graham's Late Bottled Vintage Port 2007  
 Producer:                      W. & J. Graham's & Ca., S.A.  
 a.b.v.:                      20%  
 Supplier:                      John E Fells & Sons Ltd

Wine no 3	Country:	Portugal
	Region:	Douro
	Wine:	Graham's Quinta dos Malvedos Vintage Port 1999
	Producer:	W. & J. Graham's & Ca., S.A.
	a.b.v.:	20%
	Supplier:	John E Fells & Sons Ltd

With a tasting of three Ports, the emphasis here was on being able to differentiate between the three styles, and more importantly on being able to show the logic that led to this. However, although the better candidates understood what was required here, far too many ignored the question as set and simply wrote out the standard “assessment of quality”, “readiness for drinking” etc. Even some of those who did appear to understand that this was not asking for an assessment of quality, simply repeated observations they had made in their tasting note without explaining WHY this was evidence of a particular style of Port.

Some of the “evidence” was very obvious and common to all three styles of wine, for example the levels of sweetness implied the “Port method” of production, the colour indicated the use of red grape varieties and therefore discounted Sherry, the high alcohol and presence of tannin both suggested Port rather than any other fortified wine. However, there were also clues that pointed to each individual style of Port. In the case of the 10 year old Tawny, the colour was indicative of oxidative ageing, the slight red tint to the colour was the clue that this was a younger aged Tawny rather than a 20 year old, the development, concentration, complexity and wood character discounted an inexpensive Tawny and confirmed that this was an aged Tawny.

In the case of the Late Bottled Vintage, it was the ruby colour that discounted a Tawny here, so this was clearly some sort of Ruby style. However there was higher concentration of fruit and more wood maturation than would be found on an inexpensive Ruby, but not enough concentration to fully balance the alcohol and more evidence of wood ageing than would be found on a Vintage.

This is the kind of analysis that candidates need to bring to their answers in order to succeed with this qualification.

Question 2 – In relation to fortified wine, write about each of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Gonzalez Byass</li> <li>b) The Sherry Solera system</li> <li>c) Port grape varieties</li> </ul>	
<i>Answers: 251</i>	<i>Passes: 153 (61%)</i>

This was a good pass rate, but the very wide span of marks from 12% to 80% showed that there were a number of candidates who are a long way short of the standard required for a pass grade in this qualification.



The majority of candidates were able to give a reasonably convincing account of the solera system and were certainly able to name the Port grape varieties if not write extensively about their characteristics and use in Port production. However, it was inevitably in the section on Gonzalez Byass where most marks were lost. This is a recurring weakness and shows that while many candidates are happy to learn facts by rote, they are less willing or able to absorb commercial knowledge relating to the wine and spirit industry. This is costing many of them a pass grade in this qualification.

The following candidate was not one of these. The response on Gonzalez Byass is faultless and the other sections are also extremely sound earning this candidate one of the few distinction grades awarded.

a) Gonzalez Byass

History: The winery was started by Manuel Mario Gonzalez (1812-1882) under the guidance of his ~~uncle~~ uncle Jose Angel de Penha in 1923. At the age of 22. In 1933 in a partnership with Dubose a English Sales Director he exported 10 barrels increasing to 62 and 440 barrels by 1839. The Gonzalez Dubose partnership was born. Later on the Dubose's death he partnered with Mr Robert Byass in 1863 to form the current day Gonzalez Byass which is looked after by the 5<sup>th</sup> generation. They are the largest Sherry company today with other interests.

Vineyards: 850 hectares in Jerez in the pagos Camascal and Marchanudo

Viticulture: They use Vana de Pulgar method

Vinification: Takes place at their Las Cepas unit which has a capacity to crush 22,000 tonnes of grapes per day. They use classic solera system.

Vision: To produce high quality Sherry and through their UK distribution office in St-Albans acquire a portfolio of global high value brands for distribution in this country.

Market share: Account for nearly 40% of Sherry exports.

Three Brands

- ① 10 Pepe - one of their most famous brands of fresh fruit Sherry
- ② Solera 1847 - Gran Reserva
- ③ Nectar - P.P Sherry

④ Alphonso - Auvent Kado

⑤ Desidre - olivoso dulce

### Premium Sherrys

① du duc - Auvent Kado vops

② Appstelle - Palo Cortado vops

③ Marcellan - Sweet olivoso - vops

④ Noe - Pa vops

### Branly:

① Sepante - gran reserva

② Sobera - sobera.

### Other blends

① Quinta do Noval - Portugal

② Jackson finity - New Zealand

③ Wiera Wiera - Australia

④ Matero messa - Libra del corso

⑤ Uenduragga - New tie up with Chilean winery.

### Appints

London 1801 Company Gin - by Charles Maxwell.

### Challenges

1. Declining popularity of Sherry
2. Continuous litigation for defence of DO to protect Sherry globally

### Future Goals

1. Consider byers are investing heavily in making Rioja wine in these young generation especially with Pio Pepe
2. Pio pepe with red hat and Australian Tuxedo. ~~has a pig as~~ ~~Canada is their~~ hands on lips and Spanish guitar is their mascot.

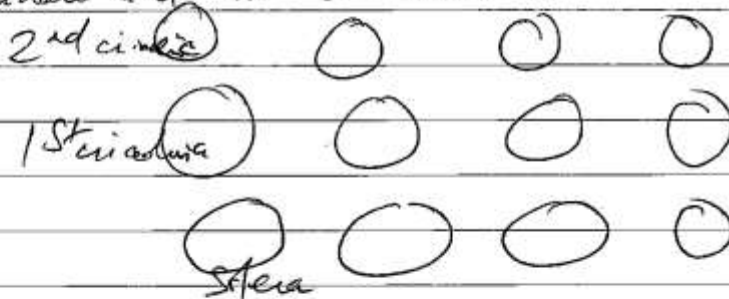
3 Ford and Sherry passing in Japan bars and recently concluded on 25<sup>th</sup> January in Birmingham. ✓

b) The Sherry Solera System

Definition: This is a system of dynamic aging and fractional blending devised in Jerez in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The system is what gives sherry its aged vinous characteristics. Sherry goes through a stage of solera (2<sup>nd</sup> classification) after being initially selected from vinification. When final decision is made along with fino sherry as the flor may have dissipated and it would be classed a Palo Cortado or Oloroso.

System consists of bodega. The one at the bottom is called solera from where sherry is bottled. One above it are criaderas. As with one immediately above called 1<sup>st</sup> criadera and the 2<sup>nd</sup> above it.



Right at the top is the cava where the young wine comes.

The sherry is bottled from the solera and the amount replaced by the amount from 1<sup>st</sup> criadera and that from 2<sup>nd</sup> criadera. Removal of wine is called exca and filling is sochío.

The process is known as measuring the scale. The capacitor has to be careful so as not to disturb that.

Only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of sherry allowed to be bottled up to 3 Haas a year. The total amount divided by amount bottled gives the age. Solera may contain wines of hundreds of years.

Some solera systems are used for making VOS and VORS but it is only about individual sacriste.

The solera bottles are 550 litres and neutral.

- c) Port Grape Varieties (7)
- The following are the best grape varieties in order of ~~top~~ volume of plantation
- 1) Touriga Franca - 22% of the total plantation. Has Merlot like characteristics, grown on south facing slopes. It is hardy but has inconsistent yield and prone to excessive lignin. Particularly favoured for its floral aroma.
  - 2) Tinto Roriz - 12% known as Tempranillo. This is favoured for ease of growing. It is late budding, late harvest and early ripening. Very susceptible only ripens well in 2 out of 8 yrs. When ripens well changes of decay in later part is high. Inconsistent yield and high lignin.
  - 3) Tinto Barroco - 11% favoured for its high sugar content 16-18 Baumé, high north facing slopes in Cima Corga. Ability to season as wine.
  - 4) Touriga Nacional - The absent descendant of Port varieties. Thick skin, very high quality juice. In Premium vineyards of Cima Corga. Not planted as much but a constituent of the best ports / vintage port of Singleton Estate & Pledge partnership. The body and tannin are very high.
  - 5) Tinto Cao: 'Red dog' was one of the most popular in old British port houses. Preferred for its high density juice and resistance to disease and rot.
- White grapes  
 Moscatel, Rabo de Uva.

**June 2013**

Question 1 – Tasting	
<i>Answers: 395</i>	<i>Passes: 328 (83%)</i>

Wine no 1	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Portugal Madeira Henriques & Henriques 10 year old Sercial Henriques & Henriques Vinhos S.A. 20% Mentzendorff & Co Ltd
Wine no 2	Country: Region: Wine: Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	France Languedoc-Roussillon Maury Jean-Marc Lafage 2011 Maison Lafage SCEA 15% Bibendum Wines Ltd
Wine no 3	Country: Region: Wine:  Producer: a.b.v.: Supplier:	Spain Jerez Williams & Humbert 'Don Guido' Pedro Ximenez VOS  Bodegas Williams & Humbert 18% Ehrmanns Wines

This was a very good result with an equal split between pass and merit grades and a good number of distinctions. Many of these high marks were down to the relative ease with which candidates were able to describe the PX Sherry. On occasion, this was confused with Rutherglen Muscat, but the tasting note itself was usually accurate enough for this to have little impact on the final mark.

However, the other two wines caused problems for some candidates. The Maury was often mistaken for Ruby Port, although the alcohol was really too low for this to be a valid option. The Madeira was often mistaken for Sherry. Very few candidates were able to assess the sweetness level on this correctly, with most overestimating it. This led many of those who did identify it as Madeira to opt for one of the varieties used in sweeter styles rather than Sercial.

Question 2 – In relation to fortified wine, write about each of the following:	
a) b) c)	The Fladgate Partnership Flor Tinta Negra Mole
<i>Answers: 394</i>	<i>Passes: 199 (51%)</i>

The good pass rate in the tasting paper was offset by a poor result in the theory question. This was almost certainly down to a weak set of responses on the Fladgate Partnership. Many candidates simply left this section blank or just wrote about the production of Port in very generic terms. Far too many believed they are a Sherry producer and some described them as a regulatory body for the Port industry.

The following candidate submitted good responses in all three sections of the question and gained a high mark as a result.



## The Fladgate Partnership

The Fladgate Partnership, often referred to as 'Taylor Fladgate' comprises the esteemed Taylors, Fonseca & Croft Port houses.

It can trace its beginning back to Job Benseley - the foundation of Taylors in the late 17th Century (1692), Douro Valley, Portugal.

The partnership occurred in 1838 - was between Joseph Taylor, John Alexander Fladgate ~~Wentworth~~ + Morgan Yeatman making it the largest Port shipper - producer of its time.  
~~The Fladgate~~

'Taylor Fladgate' have been closely involved in improving the technology + image of ~~Port~~ Port wines + in the late 1990's under Australian-trained winemaker David Guimaraens, Taylors trialled several different winemaking techniques including pump overs, + piston plunger tanks, trying to match quality - extraction of traditional foot-trod lagares. The piston-plunger tanks proved successful + were subsequently installed in the Taylors winery.

Croft introduced the Rose Port style (in the early 2000's) to try and attract more non-Port drinkers into the market. It has been successful, more so as a mixer with cocktails than as a standalone Port.

The Fladgate brands can be found in supermarkets ~~right~~ with Ruby + Tawny examples right through to regarded Vintage ports.

They remain one of the top 5 <sup>Port</sup> producers (volume + value) in ~~Portugal~~.

They invented the Late Bottle Vintage (LBV) style of Port when they released their 1965 LBV in 1970. This was an innovative attempt to bridge the gap between Ruby / Tawny drinks + consumers of vintage port.

b) Flor.

'Flor' is a surface-film yeast, closely associated with the production of biologically age sheries, that produces a distinctive 'crisp bite' acetaldehyde character.

It is an aerobic yeast which forms a protective layer across the surface of newly (fully dry) fermented Palomina Sherry, preventing the wine from oxidising.

It feeds on oxygen, alcohol, glycerine + some unfermentable sugars, + produces a large amount of acetaldehyde (normally a fault in table wines). This aldehyde character is expressed via flavours + aromas of braised apple, stale hay, yeast + bread. Because it feeds on glycerine + unfermentable sugars it makes the wine appear very crisp + dry, + through its protective layer the resultant wines are typically pale lemon in colour.

The most commonly found examples of Sherry with distinctive Flor characters are Fino + Manzanilla + Jantucar de Barrameda.

Flor requires humidity, warmth (15-20°C), low SO<sub>2</sub>, pH 3.3-3.4, alcohol 15-16% + nutrients in order to survive.

In terms of Sherry production - how / where Flor occurs it begins when at the end of the primary fermentation the Capataz classifies the wine as Fino or Oloroso. If the wine is pale - delicate - exhibits the right properties to continue as a Fino the wine will be fortified to around 15% (acetobacter can't spoil the wine + flor thrives). For Oloroso it is fortified to 17% which inhibits flor production.

Provided the flor continues to develop through the intermediate 'sobretablas' phase the wine will then enter the solera system + via fractional blending of old wines with young, may continue to survive for upto 7-8 years.

Flor characters may also be present in Sherry like Amontillado + Palo Colorado which have both seen some degree of biological ageing under flor.

## Tinta Negra Mole.

Tinta Negra Mole is a Portuguese black grape variety (*Vitis Vinifera*) closely associated with the production of Madeira.

It is considered a workhorse variety -  
is adaptable to many climates.  
Disease-resistant - produces high yields.

It is grown at all altitudes up to 800m + on all parts of the island (warmer south + cooler northern side).

It is not considered a 'Noble' variety + along with a newer, more disease resistant clone complexa, is used to produce cheaper examples of Madeira via the estufagem (Cuba de Calor) ending up in such 'Fine + Rich' <sup>(3 year old)</sup> + 'Reserve' grade (5 year old) wines.

It cannot be varietally labelled as Tinta Negra Mole.

100% examples come in a range of sweetness levels from <sup>(dry)</sup> Seco, <sup>(very dry)</sup> Muy Seco to Dolce + ~~Muy~~ Muy Doce (sweet + very sweet).

Like with the Noble varieties Tinta Negra Mole is grown on a pergola system - known as a 'latada' on narrow terraces (poios).

Tinta Negra Mole can mimic the noble styles of Madeira + so is made in the same way.

Some skin contact to add richness, like with Malvasia + Boal (aka Bual) + arrested early (Day 1 for Malvasia, day 4 as with Verdelho + Bual) + after about a month to match the drier style of Sercial).

It is arrested using 95% grape (Brandy) spirit.