

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT

D6, WSET Level 4 Diploma in Wines

Assignment 1: January 2027 submission – Alternative packaging for wine

Context

Glass has been the standard packaging format for wine for many years, yet we are now seeing the adoption of alternative packaging options that do not use glass at all. These include bottles made from a range of non-glass materials, cans, pouches, bag-in-box, and more.

There are many positive reasons for their wider use, including environmental concerns, supply-side developments and increasing consumer demand. However, challenges remain and acceptance varies across markets.

[See below for required sections and allocation of marks]

Instructions for candidates

- Assignments must adhere to the word count of 3,000 words. A tolerance of 10% will be allowed which means the research assignment should be no fewer than 2,700 words and no longer than 3,300 words in length. The word count excludes references, bibliography, appendices, diagrams or tables.
- Candidates must include a bibliography showing the sources used to research the topic.
- Candidates are reminded of the need to draw on a range of sources in their assignment and that it will be necessary to read around the subject matter. It will not be sufficient to rely solely on the Diploma materials. There should be clear evidence of critical analysis of the source material and well-reasoned personal commentary, together with relevant examples to support the points made.
- There are 100 marks available, of which 15 are allocated to presentation (spelling, grammar, legibility, bibliography and referencing) and answer structure/style (coherence, flair, fluency and use of examples). Footnotes, references and appendices must be used correctly. Candidates are advised to read the *D6 Independent Research Assignment Guidelines* before starting their research.
- Candidates must address all required sections and gain a minimum overall mark of 55% to qualify for a pass grade.

Required sections and allocation of marks

Candidates must address the following required sections:

- 1) Describe the various packaging alternatives to glass that are available. (15% weighting)
- 2) Evaluate the factors that are driving the growth of alternative packaging. (45% weighting)
- 3) What is the future of alternative packaging for wine? To what extent will glass bottles be replaced? (25% weighting)

15% weighting is allocated to presentation and structure, as outlined in Instructions for candidates above.