



**fifth taste**

## **Fifth Taste WSET Policies and Procedures**

### **Complaints Policy**

Fifth Taste aims to provide a consistently excellent level of service to students. While every care is taken to ensure high quality standards, there may be occasions where we fall short. When this is the case, Fifth Taste is committed to providing individuals directly affected by our services with the opportunity to provide feedback on whether or not standards have been met. Students and organizations must have confidence that they will be listened to, therefore all feedback received, both positive and negative, will be acknowledged. Fifth Taste encourages students to submit complaints in writing rather than over the phone.

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear and structured process which Fifth Taste commits to undertake to seek a resolution to the complainant's satisfaction.

Fifth Taste aims to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible
- An appropriate response is provided e.g. an explanation, apology or action taken
- Complaints are properly documented and reviewed to improve service

#### **Definition of a complaint**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Fifth Taste, a member of its staff or a representative.

Dissatisfaction may be associated with the service provided or with the way an individual perceives to have been treated by a Fifth Taste member of staff or representative, which may or may not be justified or associated with professional misconduct.

#### **Equality of access and treatment**

By making this document publicly available, Fifth Taste is committed to ensure individuals can access information about our complaints procedures. The act of filing a complaint will in no way prejudice the complainant. Complainants will be guaranteed confidentiality unless they waive that right in writing, but should be aware that while Fifth Taste will not divulge their name, the circumstances of the complaint could potentially make them identifiable to other parties involved in the investigation.

## **Who can make a complaint?**

Complaints can be made by any individual or group of individuals who have been adversely affected by or have witnessed, the cause of dissatisfaction, or someone acting on their behalf.

Third parties submitting a complaint on behalf of the complainant may only do so with permission to represent the complainant and their interests.

Students wishing to raise dissatisfaction about services provided by a Fifth Taste must first address their concern directly with Fifth Taste. Only when the Fifth Taste's full complaints procedure has been followed and the complainant continues to remain dissatisfied with the outcome should they contact WSET Awards.

## **Anonymous complaints**

Receiving a complaint from an unidentified source potentially limits Fifth Taste's power to effectively investigate that complaint. However, if an anonymous complaint is received, Fifth Taste will consider if there is enough information in the complaint to enable further investigation.

## **How to make a complaint**

### **Formal Complaint**

We recognize that most individuals who are dissatisfied will want a problem to be addressed as quickly as possible; therefore, an informal approach may be appropriate. The informal approach aims to resolve the concern quickly, keep matters low key and enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been directed.

Therefore, it is preferred that the complainant should contact Fifth Taste for an informal discussion, in response to which we will aim to resolve the concern by providing an explanation, apology or another desirable outcome. Concerned individuals should contact Fifth Taste via the phone number or email provided at the time of booking. As mentioned, complaints will be kept confidential.

When making a complaint, please include:

- The name and contact info for complainant(s)
- The WSET course and dates involved in the complaint
- A description of the incident(s) or concerns along with any relevant documentation
- Description of any attempts to remedy the situation

Complaint receipt will be acknowledged within 48 hours of making the complaint. An initial attempt to remedy the situation will be made within 7 business days of making the complaint. Since complaints are taken very seriously, all complaint reviews and remedy attempts will be made directly by Fifth Taste Senior Management. Therefore, escalation of complaints within Fifth Taste will not be necessary.

If a concern cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, the formal complaints procedure with WSET should be followed. Complaints made directly to WSET will not be accepted unless reasonable attempts have been made to first record a complaint and remedy the situation directly with the APP. It might be necessary to provide further information to ensure the complaint is fully understood, thoroughly investigated and allow for a comprehensive response to be provided.

### **Appeal to WSET**

If a student is unsatisfied with the APP's response, they may submit their complaint to WSET. Contact: [QA@wsetglobal.com](mailto:QA@wsetglobal.com)

## **Conflict of Interest Policy**

As an APP, Fifth Taste Sake School is required to identify to WSET and assist in managing or monitoring actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest ('Conflicts of Interest') involving both APP staff and students. This policy complements WSET's conflicts of interest policy and works to safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications and promote confidence in WSET and Fifth Taste processes and procedures. This policy applies to all Fifth Taste staff and students and to any individual acting on behalf of Fifth Taste. A Conflict of Interest exists where an individual has interests or loyalties that could adversely influence their judgement, objectivity or loyalty to WSET or Fifth Taste when conducting activities associated with WSET qualifications. Examples of Conflicts of Interest include:

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

Some of these Conflicts of Interest are manageable and therefore acceptable. For example, if family member of one of Fifth Taste's educators or APP staff takes a qualification and exam through Fifth Taste, or when an employee of Fifth Taste, or of the WSET, takes a WSET qualification through Fifth Taste, we can notify WSET in advance and work with them to put in place measures to maintain the integrity of the exam. Some Conflicts of Interest are not manageable and are not acceptable. For example, no mitigation efforts overcome the conflict created when an individual when a single individual serves as the educator and exam officer of an exam for a family member where an external invigilator is not available. Any staff member or student of Fifth Taste who becomes aware of a Conflict of Interest must inform Jesse Pugach at [jesse@sipfifthtaste.com](mailto:jesse@sipfifthtaste.com) as soon as possible. Jesse will inform the WSET of the possible conflict of interest and will work with WSET to put any protective or mitigating measures in place to manage the conflict on a case-by-case basis. If WSET and Fifth Taste determine the conflict is not manageable, Jesse will inform any impacted APP staff or students. Please note that the failure to declare a conflict of interest may have consequences for the student or Fifth Taste because we are required to report conflicts to WSET.

## **Privacy & Data Protection .**

Fifth Taste strives to maintain and protect the privacy and data of all our students by complying with all regulations concerning privacy information, including but not limited to collection, retention, destruction, and

disclosure of such data. The personal data collected by Fifth Taste will only be used to maintain student records, communicate with students, and register students with WSET Awards

Fifth Taste will not share any personal data with third parties unless approval is given by the student, except for email marketing services used by Fifth Taste, banks for processing payments, couriers, or to cooperate with a law enforcement agency as required by law.

Data shared with WSET will be handled in accordance with WSET's Data Protection Policy.

## **Diversity and Equality Policy**

Fifth Taste is committed to upholding the principles of diversity and equality in all areas of its work, seeking to ensure that candidates and other stakeholders are treated fairly and equally at all times.

- All students will always be treated fairly and equally
- All materials will be free from discriminatory words, phrases, images, etc.
- Students with special circumstances can request reasonable adjustments or accommodations
- All students may lodge a complaint following the Complaints & Appeals policy above, if they feel they have been unfairly discriminated against by Fifth Taste

## **Reasonable Adjustments Policy**

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

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

**Examples of reasonable adjustments may be:**

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

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

For any student seeking a reasonable adjustment, please contact Jesse Pugach at [jesse@sipfifthtaste.com](mailto:jesse@sipfifthtaste.com) with:

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

You must submit this information at least 25 working days before the exam date for Levels 1-3 qualifications.

The information you submit will be shared with WSET and will be handled under WSET's Privacy and Data Protection Policy. Fifth Taste will keep records of all reasonable adjustment applications.

## **Special Consideration Policy**

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

You may be eligible for special consideration if:

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

### **Applying for special consideration**

If you have taken an exam, or your exam is immediately approaching, and you feel that you have a temporary injury or illness, or other uncontrollable event that has interfered with your ability to complete your exam, please contact Jesse Pugach at [jesse@sipfifthtaste.com](mailto:jesse@sipfifthtaste.com) as soon as possible. Fifth Taste will provide you with a Special Consideration Application Form, which must be completed and returned with supporting documentation within 5 working days after the effected exam. The information you submit will be shared with WSET and will be handled under WSET's Privacy and Data Protection Policy. If there has been serious disruption during an exam affecting a group of students, Fifth Taste will submit a detailed report of

the circumstances and candidates affected to WSET to request a special consideration. Fifth Taste will keep records of all applications for special consideration.

### **Malpractice and Maladministration Policy**

Both Fifth Taste and WSET have policies and procedures in place to protect WSET students and safeguard the integrity of WSET qualifications. Fifth Taste ensures compliance with Fifth Taste and WSET's policies through this Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, which gives a framework for both us and you to identify, report and manage potential malpractice or maladministration. Non-compliance with Fifth Taste or WSET Policies and Procedures can fall into two distinct, but related, categories:

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

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

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

For APPs:

- Failure to adhere to WSET Policies and Procedures;
- Failure to follow WSET requirements for course delivery or exam regulations;
- Failure to follow WSET's candidate registration and certification procedures;
- Late student registrations;
- Fraudulent claim for certificates/fraudulent use of certificates/reproduction or forgery of certificates;
- Withholding critical information from WSET quality assurance;
- Insecure storage of exam materials;
- Revealing or sharing confidential exam materials with candidates ahead of an exam;
- Intentional attempts to manipulate exam results so that they do not reflect the candidate's actual exam performance;
- Issue of incorrect exam results/failure to issue results to students in a timely manner;
- Failure to timely respond to WSET;
- Unauthorised reading/amendment/copying/distribution of exam papers;
- Failure to report changes in APP ownership/personnel/location/facilities;
- Denying WSET access to information, documentation, workforce, facilities;

- Failure to return exam papers within the specified timeframe or to follow delivery and tracking regulations;
- Infringements of WSET copyright, trademarks, intellectual property rights and brand identity;
- Use of unqualified and/or unregistered educators or internal assessors;
- Breach of confidentiality
- Misleading advertising/publicity;
- Any action likely to lead to an adverse effect.
- Failure to disclose a Conflict of Interest;

For students:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Managing Non-Compliance** If WSET identifies malpractice or maladministration, they will consider its impact and may apply sanctions. WSET will take all reasonable steps to ensure the sanctions do not disadvantage uninvolved students affected by malpractice or maladministration. However, in some cases, they may need to disallow or withhold results and/or certificates.

Potential sanctions may include:

<b>Sanctions Applicable to Students/Candidates</b>	
<b>Sanction</b>	<b>Description</b>
Written Warning	The student is issued with a written warning that if the offence is repeated within a set period of time then further specified sanctions will be applied.
Exam Result Declared Null and Void	A student's exam result is disallowed. This may include invalidation and recall of a certificate already issued.
Disqualification from a Qualification	The student is disqualified from participating in the concerned qualification with immediate effect and further excluded from participating in any further WSET qualifications for a period of 12 months. This includes access to WSET materials.
Student Disqualification	The learner is disqualified from participating in any courses or assessments leading to WSET qualifications. This includes access to WSET materials.
Disqualification from use of WSET certified logos and postnominals	Actions bringing WSET into disrepute may result in the student or graduate being barred from use of WSET postnominals and WSET certified logos.

### **Appeals**

If you wish to appeal penalties or sanctions WSET has imposed due to Malpractice or Maladministration, please follow the procedures laid out in WSET's Complaints Policy.

## **Cancelations & Refunds**

Fifth Taste strives to provide the highest level of service and spirits education to every student, seeking to maintain an open, transparent, and welcoming educational environment. We recognize that sometimes circumstances beyond our control may force either Fifth Taste or a student to cancel the course, requiring a refund to be made in good faith. In the event of a cancelation on the part of the school, the student will be refunded all money. If the student cancels no less than 7 days before the course date begins, they will be refunded all money. If the student cancels fewer than 7 days before the course date begins, they will be refunded all money, minus the \$100 registration fee.