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**WSET (Wine & Spirit Education Trust)  
PRESS RELEASE**

On January 21 2008 over 500 people – *graduates, scholars and their guests, as well as the 'good and the great' from the wine and spirit industry* attended the WSET (Wine & Spirit Education Trust) inaugural Graduation Ceremony at London's historical Guildhall. The evening, for 2006-07 students, was integrated alongside the WSET's annual Awards event which has been presented since the creation of the WSET in 1969 (formally presented by The Wine Trade Club, 1946-68) celebrating the successes of the top performing students from qualification levels 1 – 4.

The combined celebrations were presented by Ian Harris, (Chief Executive, WSET) and presided over by Michael Broadbent MW (Honorary President, WSET) and also witnessed the first presentation of the Riedel Trophy for the WSET Educator of the Year, with the 2008 prize going to the International Wine Center New York in recognition made by them for their 'significant contribution to WSET courses and qualifications over the past year'.

Broadbent said: "The WSET - its core values and its drive to deliver wine and spirit education to the very highest standards the world over - is central to the continued growth of the industry and I am delighted to convey to all Diploma graduates and scholarship winners my heartiest congratulations."

Ian Harris added after the event: "After our 2007 Awards event we had to, sadly, bid a fond farewell to Vintners' Hall, our traditional venue and the WSET's spiritual home as we were bursting at the seams. We knew that we would have strong interest again this year, with the enlarged ceremony. I am however, very impressed by the sheer number that came here tonight in order to recognise the efforts and the hard work of, not only the students, but the WSET as a whole. Needless to say that we have pencilled January 19 for the 2009 Graduation Ceremony, so please put it in your diaries."

A full list of 2006/07 Graduates and the Scholarship winners can be found at:

[www.wsetglobal.com/about\\_us/annual\\_events/default.asp](http://www.wsetglobal.com/about_us/annual_events/default.asp)

**Additional Editors Notes:**

The last academic year proved very successful for the WSET, as well as the 20% (y/y) growth in students taking WSET exams there was also growth in the number of centres (Approved Programme Providers), with 336 now delivering WSET qualifications in 41 countries. A significant development in the 39-year history of WSET was that international students outweighed the number of UK-based students for the first time – and this trend is set to continue as WSET has expanded into India, China and Eastern Europe, and grown the number of centres offering qualifications in the US to 21. Nearly 5,000 candidates sat the WSET Foundation Certificate, with just under 10,000 students sitting the Intermediate Certificate. The Advanced Certificate grew by 11 per cent and the number of Diploma candidates reached the highest level for 10 years. The Professional Certificate in Spirits has also shown impressive growth, albeit from a small base. So we can now say that WSET is the biggest global provider of education and qualifications in the field of wines and spirits. To reflect this, we changed our website address last year to [www.wsetglobal.com](http://www.wsetglobal.com).