

Get Lancashire **working**

I want to be ...

a wine taster

Emma Bailie, owner of The Wine Taster, based in Preston

What qualifications do you need?
 Officially none but the international industry standard is from the Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET).

Any other requirements for example health and fitness or age?
 A great sense of smell, tip top taste buds and the willpower to spit out even the most amazing wines.

How long does it take to qualify for the role?
 You can get to the advanced stage of WSET with a couple of years hard work but you can only hone your palate by tasting and more tasting over many years.

What sort of starting salary and package can you expect?
 Most wine tasters are self-employed and independent so you charge what the market will stand.

But it's up to you to prove you are worth the money.

What sort of personal skills make someone best suited to a career?
 You must be able to communicate confidently with others. There's no point in tasting a wine and keeping it to yourself.

What sort of career prospects and structure is there?
 There isn't a formal career structure, you just have to build up your reputation. However, the first rung on the ladder could be as bar staff in a reputable bar, restaurant or hotel who will probably help with WSET training. There are then further opportunities in the hospitality trade as sommeliers, who match food and wine or top-flight bar staff in the best establishments. Oenologists make wine and there's always the sales side of things where

you still have to have an impeccable understanding of how to taste wine.

What kind of job satisfaction can you expect from a career?
 I have chosen to host wine tasting events, small and large. I love changing people's view of wine and broadening their tastes. Many people say to me they didn't feel confident talking about wine until they came to one of my events. They are wine snob-free zones!

In 50 words sell your profession?
 Wine is fascinating. You will never know everything about wine and that's what keeps it interesting, there are over 400 grape varieties in Sicily alone. Every wine you taste is a revelation and it feels great to share those experiences and introduce others to the vast world of wine.



BOTTOMS UP: Emma owns a wine hosting and events service