

THE SCANDINAVIAN DIPLOMA BREWER — IS THE EDUCATION USEFUL IN THE DAILY WORK?



RIKKE BEKKER HENRIKSEN, QUALITY MANAGER, A/S BRYGGERIET VESTFYEN, E-MAIL: RBH@BVMAIL.DK AND KIM L. JOHANSEN, TRAINING MANAGER, THE SCANDINAVIAN SCHOOL OF BREWING, E-MAIL: KLJ@BREWINGSCHOOL.DK

The fourth class of Diploma Brewers graduated in February from the Scandinavian School of Brewing. We have asked one of the Diploma Brewers to describe her experience with the education and the relevance of the education in her daily work.

Since 2007, 71 Diploma Brewers have graduated from SSB. Of these, 86 per cent are from Denmark since the language of teaching is Danish, but also participants from Norway, Sweden and Finland have graduated.

The entry qualifications are practical experience with beer brewing for at least two months and understanding of English. Although taught in Danish, the material is in English. The education is divided into three modules. The first module takes place five days in August at SSB, the second module takes place five days in November at a microbrewery west of 'Storebælt' and the last two days take place in February at SSB. Between the first module and the beginning of January, the students are making an individual project on the brewery they are employed. The report from this project work is presented to the other students. On the last day of the third module, an exam is held and diplomas are handed over to the successful candidates at a ceremony the same evening. The diploma makes it possible to become a member of the Danish Master Brewers Association and to get a license as microbrewer in Denmark.

Just before the third module, a one-day training course in beer flavour is held at SSB. The course is useful for the students, but not compulsory to obtain the diploma.

GRADUATION YEAR	DIPLOMA BREWERS
2007	19
2008	25
2009	15
2010	12
TOTAL	71

Diploma Brewers graduated in the four classes.

COUNTRY	DIPLOMA BREWERS
Denmark	61
Norway	7
Sweden	2
Finland	1
TOTAL	71

Nationality of the Diploma Brewers

Although aimed at Danish microbrewers, several participants in the courses have been from larger national breweries.

Rikke Bekker Henriksen, quality manager at A/S Bryggeriet Vestfyen, graduated in 2010 and tells about her experience:

EXPERIENCES FROM A DIPLOMA BREWER

In June 2009, I started as quality (and laboratory) manager at A/S Bryggeriet Vestfyen in Assens, Denmark. From the very beginning, I was told that I was scheduled to join the diploma brewer course starting in August 2009. I was qualified as diploma chemical engineer in 1998 and have been working in the food industry with quality, food safety and laboratories since then. However, I didn't have any experience with beer brewing or production of drinks at all until June last year. One of my main tasks at Bryggeriet Vestfyen is to keep our HACCP system (Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points) up-to-date. In order to be able to carry out the HACCP process and to make the correct risk analysis, I need to know the processes all the way from the raw material coming in to the finished goods leaving the company.

The diploma brewer course has made this part of the job a lot easier. I have obtained a solid knowledge about all of the

processes: raw materials, brewing, fermentation, storage, filtration, pasteurisation and filling, but also knowledge about quality and food safety parameters as well as legal requirements specifically for breweries.

During the first module of the diploma brewer course, we had to choose and describe our exam project. The project had to be worked out during the education and be finished to the deadline between Modules 2 and 3. The natural choice for me was, of course, to choose a project I could use directly in my work afterwards. Therefore, I chose to write a project about 'Implementation of the HACCP principles in the brewhouse etc. by means of a risk analysis', which was quite a 'theoretical' project. I had received a lot of theoretical knowledge, which was used to make the risk analysis in cooperation with our brewmaster and his team. The conclusion of the risk analysis was that we could do several improvements to raise our level of food safety and hygiene. The project resulted in an action plan with nine actions – among others, internal hygiene courses for all employees in production areas and new hygiene rules as well

as some practical projects regarding inappropriate storage of corn and other ingredients.

I graduated as a diploma brewer in February 2010 together with two of my colleagues from Bryggeriet Vestfyen. In my daily work, I do not use the practical part of the education very much. Our brewmaster is responsible for the brewing process. He does, however, cooperate daily with our laboratory workers, who do the microbiological and chemical analysis of the raw materials, finished and partly finished beer. In my opinion, the diploma brewer education has given me a much better background to do my job as quality manager to everybody's satisfaction. For instance, when we taste the beer every day in the laboratory, or when I handle internal non-compliances or reply complaints from our customers. In all these cases, it is important to know about the brewing and production processes.

I could probably have learned about the processes myself, but it would have taken years to receive the same theoretical and practical level of knowledge, as I have learned within six months. ◻



Measurement of label glue thickness is demonstrated during Module 2 at A/S Bryggeriet Vestfyen



Rikke Bekker Henriksen receives 'Diplombryggerprisen' – a reward for her project work with implementing HACCP – handed over by Mariane Furbo of the Danish Brewers Association