

Brewing Science Graduate Profile



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*MSc Brewing Science & Practice 2014-15.
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Tell us about your current role and what it means in terms of the day to day work you get involved with....

I am the Project Brewer at Butcombe Brewery in Somerset. We are a small brewing team, so I get to be really hands on and get involved with almost everything that happens across the site, from raw materials intake to racking into cask.

I spend most of my time brewing, looking after all our beers, performing quality checks in the lab and of course cleaning! I am also responsible for adapting and improving our processes in the brewery. As an example, my focus at the moment is on adapting our yeast handling system to cope with an increase in production as the business expands. I also get to be involved in the development of new beers, which is very exciting.

Is this the kind of role you thought you might get involved in when you first came to study brewing at Nottingham?

I really wasn't sure what to expect from a job in industry when I began my studies. I am a very practical person though and always knew that I wanted a role where I could be hands-on, which this one certainly is!

How does working in the industry match your personal aspirations and expectations of it?

It is every bit as fantastic as I hoped it would be! The work is often challenging and demanding and there are lots of early starts, but the brewing community is very friendly and working with a team who are all equally passionate about beer and brewing is an incredible experience that has far surpassed my expectations.

In what ways was the MSc Brewing Science & Practice helpful in preparing you for a career in the brewing industry?

Aside from arming me with a solid base of brewing knowledge, the MSc really opened my eyes to the diverse range of opportunities that exist in brewing and to roles that I never would have considered previously. I met some great and interesting people through the course, both other participants and guest lecturers from industry and began to build a network of contacts throughout the industry, which has come in useful both for support and guidance and for identifying new opportunities.

The industry-based project was a great introduction to brewing in the 'real world' and gave me confidence going into my first role after graduation.



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What skills and knowledge gained (through the MSc) have been most significant in your career so far?

I don't think there has been anything gained in the MSc that I haven't yet found an application for. In my current role, microscopy skills and quality testing have a lot of significance, as well as a depth of knowledge about yeast. In my previous role, I worked in process development, so a thorough understanding of the different options for processing in the Brewhouse was essential. Knowledge of basic engineering principles has also come in very handy and combining this with brewhouse experience is helping me to develop really useful plant troubleshooting and maintenance skills.

Has being a Nottingham graduate been helpful in 'opening doors' to job opportunities, do you think?

I was very fortunate that my first role after graduation was an opportunity that was highlighted in a career workshop during my MSc, so yes definitely! It has also been helpful in a less direct way when applying to other roles though. Nottingham is a great University and employers are usually intrigued by the degree - it's a great talking point during interviews.



Which of the beers you brew is your personal favourite and why....?

We've been brewing a lot of cool seasonal beers recently, but my all-time personal favourite is Goram, our core IPA. It's packed full of lovely New Zealand hops and in my opinion is a fresh, well balanced IPA. It also makes the fermentation cellar smell amazing, which is a bonus!

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