The Beer Academy Accredits 50-Plus Beer Stewards

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The Beer Academy has accredited more than 50 Beer Stewards from 11 countries in the three months since the launch of its innovative e-learning qualification.

With many more staff from pubs, bars and brewers registered for the entry-level online course, there are high hopes that more than 200 people will achieve Beer Steward accreditation by the end of 2015.

The Beer Steward is the first online training programme from leading global beer education body the Beer Academy, and has been developed to meet the growing need to equip front-of-house staff around the world with practical beer knowledge early in their careers.

The course is made up of eight e-learning modules which candidates can work through at their own pace and at times to suit them. It covers cask, keg and bottled beers and looks at beer styles from around the world.

Australian brewer Coopers has put four staff members through the Beer Steward qualification, both as an internal training initiative and to improve support for trade customers serving Coopers award-winning beers.

Nick Sterenberg, operations manager, says: "We've been putting a lot of thought into our training, both internally and for the trade, and we were interested to see how the Beer Steward qualification would fit into our overall approach.

"One thing we were very pleased with is the fact that the e-learning technology works effectively, as this can often be a big frustration with online training. For staff starting out, it's great to have a certificate to say that you know your beers. The Beer Academy is taking a lot of the mystery out of brewing, and the Beer Steward qualification shows there's more to beer and brewing than you may expect."

The White Horse pub in Clun, Shropshire, prides itself on being the area's premier real ale pub, with seven cask beer handpulls, as well as two lagers, and cask and keg cider. Co-owners Hannah and Jack Limond have successfully completed the Beer Steward qualification, and are now putting eight more members of the pub's team through the course.

Hannah says: "Cask ale is our biggest seller. I was the guinea pig for the Beer Steward qualification, and it's definitely the right course for us. As well as covering how to serve beer properly, unlike some other courses we looked at it also covers how beer is made and some of the history and background.

"It's always very useful to have some knowledge about the product you're selling. Many of our customers take a real interest in the ales, and it's great to be able to talk to them confidently about our beer."

The eight Beer Steward modules take candidates on a journey from the origins of beer via the brewing process and beer styles, through to how to serve beer and engage with customers. Each module is tested with a set of multiple choice questions, and candidates are emailed a printable certificate once they have passed all eight.

Alex Barlow, Beer Academy director of training, said, "Training is one of the biggest challenges facing operators as consumer expectations of both beer range and quality are increasing.

"Bar staff increasingly need to be 'up to speed' quickly, and the take-up of the Beer Steward qualification shows the benefits of e-learning as a quick and convenient way to equip staff with the basics. The Beer Steward also dovetails with the next step on our ladder qualifications, the Beer Foundation course, enabling staff who develop an interest to continue their training."

For more information and to book courses go to www.beeracademy.co.uk/courses/beer-steward/

ENDS

Notes to editors

The Beer Academy was established in October 2003 as an independent educational trust, becoming an operating arm of the Institute of Brewing & Distilling in 2007. More than 10,000 delegates – employees in

breweries, pubs, bars, restaurants, supermarkets and off-licences as well as interested consumers – have completed a Beer Academy course since launch. The main courses for employees in the brewing/licensed trade industry are:

- **Beer Steward:** An entry-level online course which enables bar staff to gain a sound understanding of the basics of beer
- **Foundation:** one day introduction to beer, including beer styles, brewing process and history and some beer and food matching
- **Advanced:** two day course designed to enhance delegates' understanding of beer, distinguish between beer styles and equip them to construct beer lists and beer and food menus
- **How to Judge Beer:** one day course designed to help delegates identify beer styles, spot key flavour faults and judge beers against the appropriate style criteria.
- **Beer Sommelier accreditation:** awarded to individuals with a significant depth of knowledge of beer styles and beer and food matching. Beer Sommelier candidates must have completed Foundation, Advanced and How to Judge Beer courses, and are assessed via written application followed by interview at the Beer Academy.

For more information and to book, visit www.beeracademy.co.uk

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